

**Transport, Infrastructure and  
Climate Change Committee**

**7th Report, 2010 (Session 3)**

**Inquiry into the relationship  
between transport and land use  
planning policies**

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The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Climate Change Committee**

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The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee

### 7th Report, 2010 (Session 3)

#### Report on the inquiry into the relationship between transport and land use planning policies

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13 April (9th Meeting 2010 (Session 3))

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Jonny Moran, Development Management Manager, Trunk Roads Network Management, Scottish Government; Alison Irvine, Senior Transport Planner, Transport Scotland; Helen Wood, Principal Planner, Directorate for the Built Environment, Scottish Government; Graeme Purves, Assistant Chief Planner, Directorate for the Built Environment, Scottish Government.

Supplementary written evidence

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20 April (10th Meeting, 2010 (Session 3))

Oral Evidence

Derek Halden, Director, DH Consultancy; Professor Angela Hull, School of the Built Environment, Heriot-Watt University.

Supplementary written evidence

[Derek Halden, DH Consultancy](#)

11 May (13th Meeting, 2010 (Session 3))

Oral Evidence

Richard Dixon, Director, WWF Scotland, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland; Clifton Bain, Director, International Union for Conservation of Nature UK Peatlands Programme, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland; Ian McKay, Director of Scottish Affairs, Royal Mail Group, 2020 Delivery Group; Jo Bucci, Managing Director, People's Postcode Lottery, 2020 Delivery Group; James Withers, Chief Executive, NFU Scotland, 2020 Delivery Group; George Baxter, Public Affairs Manager, Scottish and Southern Energy, 2020 Delivery Group; Paul Finch, Committee Member for North East Scotland, Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport; Petra Biberbach, Chief Executive, Planning Aid for Scotland.

25 May (15th Meeting, 2010 (Session 3))

Oral Evidence

Allan Lundmark, Director of Planning & Communications, Homes for Scotland; Garry Clark, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Scottish Chambers of Commerce; Anthony Aitken, Member, Scottish Chambers of Commerce; Ian Shearer, Interim Director, Scottish Retail Consortium; George Mair, Director, Scotland, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK; John Halliday, Director, Transport Planning (Scotland), Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation.

Written Evidence

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Oral Evidence

Vance Sinclair, Partnership Development Manager, South Lanarkshire Council; Stuart McMillan, Team Leader, Planning and Building Standards, South Lanarkshire Council; Tony Curran, Head of Capital Planning and Procurement, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board; Paul Tetlaw, Chair, Transform Scotland; John Lauder, National Director for Scotland, Sustrans; Keith Irving, Manager, Living Streets Scotland; Dr Margaret Bochel, Chair, Heads of Planning Scotland; Ewan Wallace, Vice-Chair, Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland.

Supplementary written evidence  
[Living Streets Scotland](#)

15 June (17<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 2010 (Session 3))

Oral Evidence

Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure, and Climate Change, Helen Wood, Principal Planner, Department for Built Environment, Alastair Mitchell, Local Authority and RTP Liaison, Transport Directorate, and David Anderson, Head of Transport Economics and Research, Transport Scotland, Scottish Government.

Supplementary written evidence  
[Scottish Government](#)

## ANNEXE C: LIST OF OTHER WRITTEN EVIDENCE

The Committee received written submissions in response to its calls for views from the following individuals:

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[Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation \(46KB\)](#)

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[Councillor Barry Turner \(32KB\)](#)





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## **Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee**

### **Remit and membership**

#### **Remit:**

To consider and report on matters relating to transport, infrastructure and climate change falling within the remit of the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth.

#### **Membership:**

Jackson Carlaw  
Rob Gibson  
Marlyn Glen  
Charlie Gordon  
Patrick Harvie (Convener)  
Alison McInnes  
Cathy Peattie (Deputy Convener)  
Shirley-Anne Somerville

#### **Committee Clerking Team:**

Clerk to the Committee  
Steve Farrell

Senior Assistant Clerk  
Alastair Macfie

Assistant Clerk  
Clare O'Neill

Committee Assistant  
Lauren Spaven-Donn





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## Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee

### 7th Report, 2010 (Session 3)

#### **Inquiry into the relationship between transport and land use planning policies**

The Committee reports to the Parliament as follows—

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee agreed to conduct an inquiry into transport and land use planning to investigate how effectively the two planning policy areas work together, and whether there is scope to improve levels of integration to increase sustainable economic growth and limit climate change in Scotland.

2. Many witnesses who appeared before the Committee acknowledged the significance of the relationship between transport and land use planning.

3. Mark Savelli from the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK told the Committee that ‘we cannot emphasise enough the importance of the relationship between land use and transport planning, which certainly affects the long-term moulding of our society as a whole’.<sup>1</sup>

4. Paul Tetlaw of Transform Scotland argued that ‘of all the policy areas that the committee has considered and which shape our lives, this is the key area that shapes the type of society in which we live now and in which we will live for generations to come’.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Remit of the inquiry**

5. The formal remit of the Committee’s inquiry was to consider—

- the nature and extent of the current relationship between transport and land use planning policies;
- the scope for further integration of these policies; and

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 25 May 2010, Col 3102.

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3142.

*Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee, 7th Report, 2010  
(Session 3)*

- the benefits that further integration might deliver in terms of sustainable economic growth and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

## **Evidence**

6. The Committee took evidence from the following witnesses at six committee meetings in April, May and June 2010—

- Jonathan Moran, Development Management Manager, Trunk Roads Network Management, Scottish Government
- Alison Irvine, Senior Transport Planner, Transport Scotland
- Helen Wood, Principal Planner, Directorate for the Built Environment, Scottish Government
- Graeme Purves, Assistant Chief Planner, Directorate for the Built Environment, Scottish Government
- Derek Halden, Director, DH Consultancy
- Professor Angela Hull, School of the Built Environment, Heriot-Watt University
- Paul Finch, Committee Member for North East Scotland, Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
- Petra Biberbach, Chief Executive, Planning Aid for Scotland
- Allan Lundmark, Director of Planning and Communications, Homes for Scotland
- Garry Clark, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, and Anthony Aitken, Member, Scottish Chambers of Commerce
- Ian Shearer, Interim Director, Scottish Retail Consortium
- George Mair, Director, Scotland, and Mark Savelli, Chairman, Scotland, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK
- John Halliday, Director, Transport Planning (Scotland), Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation
- Vance Sinclair, Partnership Development Manager, South Lanarkshire Council
- Stuart McMillan, Team Leader, Planning and Building Standards, South Lanarkshire Council
- Tony Curran, Head of Capital Planning and Procurement, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
- Paul Tetlaw, Chair, Transform Scotland
- John Lauder, National Director for Scotland, Sustrans
- Keith Irving, Manager, Living Streets Scotland
- Dr Margaret Bochel, Chair, Heads of Planning Scotland
- Ewan Wallace, Vice-Chair, Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland
- Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure, and Climate Change
- Alastair Mitchell, Local Authority and RTP Liaison, Transport Directorate, Scottish Government
- David Anderson, Head of Transport Economics and Research, Transport Scotland, Scottish Government

7. The Committee issued a call for views as part of the inquiry and received written submissions from 31 individuals and organisations.

8. The Committee acknowledges the time taken by the individuals and organisations who gave evidence to the Committee or provided written submissions in response to the call for views, and thanks them for their contributions.

### **Transport and land use planning framework**

9. A summary of the main elements of transport and land use planning framework in Scotland has been provided by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre as an appendix to this report.

## **VIEWS RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

### **Different perspectives on transport and land use planning**

10. There are several different perspectives on the issue of how to improve the relationship between transport and land use planning, and some of these were explored in the evidence received by the Committee.

11. Some written evidence took the debate back to first principles and set out the criteria which should be employed in designing settlements which are accessible by sustainable transport modes. A written submission from Sustrans highlighted what it termed ‘the most decisive factor’<sup>3</sup> in achieving low levels of car usage: a development’s proximity to existing facilities and services.

12. Other submissions explored the sometimes complex relationships between different kinds of settlement and the use of sustainable modes of transport. The written submission from Living Streets Scotland noted, for example, that the number of trips and distance travelled by car falls with increasing population density.

13. Several submissions set out practical steps which could be taken to promote sustainable and active travel, such as the construction of new cycle routes and reducing car parking spaces. Many respondents linked discussions about transport and land use planning with the climate change agenda, including the Scottish Wildlife Trust, which argued that integrated land use and transport policies could help deliver cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, as well as helping us adapt to climate change. This is particularly relevant given the climate change duties placed on local authorities under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

14. The importance of these issues is well understood by the Committee and, indeed, they have been the subject of much of its work during this Parliamentary session, including scrutiny of climate change legislation and a recent inquiry into active travel.

15. Therefore, the approach taken by the Committee in this inquiry has been not only to identify the benefits of greater integration between the two policy areas, but

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<sup>3</sup> Sustrans. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

also to focus on the transport and land use planning framework itself, and to investigate whether there are practical steps which can be taken to improve the way it operates.

### **The transport and land use planning framework**

16. The Committee received mixed views on the extent to which transport and land use planning policies were working well together.

17. A number of witnesses expressed the view that, in principle, there were positive aspects to the current transport and land use planning framework.

18. George Mair of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK noted that 'policy and guidance are clear, and the most recent Scottish planning policy document is an excellent piece of work'.<sup>4</sup> Derek Halden of DH Consultancy noted that the new Scottish Planning Policy document is 'a huge improvement because it simplifies everything and puts it under one hat'.<sup>5</sup>

19. In written evidence, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport stated that the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, the National Planning Framework 2, Scottish Planning Policy and the Designing Streets publication 'provides a greater focus on integration between transport and land use planning policies'<sup>6</sup>. A written submission from the City of Edinburgh Council also mentioned the good guidance provided in the Scottish Government's Designing Streets publication.

20. The Committee did not receive a significant body of evidence which suggested that the current transport and land use planning framework was, in principle, fundamentally flawed, although a few witnesses did advocate a major rethink of how it worked.<sup>7</sup>

21. The main area of concern expressed by witnesses related to a perceived disconnect between the principles set out in the framework, which were generally supported, and the reality of how they are implemented in practice. The Scottish Association of Public Transport, for example, argued in written evidence that—

'In principle, the current relationship between transport and land use policies is sound (as stated in National Planning Policy Guidance and in the revised National Planning Framework)...In practice, however, actual planning

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<sup>4</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 25 May 2010, Col 3102.

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 20 April 2010, Col 2762.

<sup>6</sup> Strathclyde Partnership for Transport. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>7</sup> Professor Greg Lloyd, Professor of Urban Planning and Head of the School of the Built Environment at the University of Ulster, argued in written evidence, for example, that 'it is necessary to think creatively from first principles and rethink the entire apparatus of planning, governance and policy'.

decisions, transport programmes and budget priorities appear to diverge from the principles.’<sup>8</sup>

22. Transform Scotland provided a similar analysis, stating in written evidence that—

‘We already have a raft of local, regional, and national planning policies – most of which say positive things about prioritising sustainable development, sustainable land use decision-making, reducing the need to travel, transport hierarchies, etc...What isn’t happening is the implementation of these policies. Instead we see the continuation of the status quo of consenting unsustainable development proposals.’<sup>9</sup>

23. Derek Halden of DH Consultancy told the Committee ‘either the Government should not bother publishing national planning guidance or it should enforce the guidance that it has published’.<sup>10</sup>

24. A number of individual developments were cited in evidence as examples of the apparent disconnect between the principles of planning guidance and practice. Types of development mentioned included retail parks constructed on the edge of towns, housing developments with limited public transport access, and developments which included large amounts of car parking.

25. The Committee believes that it is important to understand the reasons why there has been concern about an apparent disconnect between the principles and reality of transport and land use planning. The Committee also believes that there is a need to consider whether action is required to address these concerns.

## DIVERGENCE BETWEEN PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE

### **A new planning framework**

26. The first possible reason for the disconnect between the principles of planning guidance and the reality of developments on the ground, is that many elements of the current land use planning framework were introduced comparatively recently by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and may not yet fully have had an impact.

27. A Scottish Government official told the Committee that—

‘[...] it is important to be clear that we are still at a fairly early stage in the preparation of the new generation of development plans. Many planning authorities are only now at the stage of publishing main issues reports.’<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Scottish Association of Public Transport. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>9</sup> Transport Scotland. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>10</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 20 April 2010, Col 2761.*

<sup>11</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 13 April 2010, Col 2722.*

28. In written evidence, Midlothian Council commented that ‘the new system is in its infancy’<sup>12</sup> and the City of Edinburgh Council also noted in its submission that ‘the new system of strategic and local development plans is at a very early stage’<sup>13</sup>. The result of this, according to the Scottish Wildlife Trust, is that—

‘[...] it is impossible to say with any degree of certainty whether or not sufficient thought to proper integration of transport and land use planning policies has been given.’<sup>14</sup>

29. A number of witnesses also mentioned that there is generally speaking a time lag between new planning guidance being introduced and the impact of change being seen on the ground. Ewan Wallace of the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland commented—

‘An issue that has particular resonance in transport is the time lag after policy documents, guidance and so on are altered. Officers on the ground can be asked to apply the new policy and guidance as developments come through, but it can take a long time to develop policies in the first instance.’<sup>15</sup>

30. Some witnesses also noted that the time lag between a development being approved and it actually being completed can mean that some developments finished quite recently were in fact approved under a previous planning framework, which may have placed less emphasis on sustainability. SEStran made the point in written evidence that—

‘Unfortunately previous development strategy decisions have not been defined on such a sound basis and many of these development sites are still in the “pipeline” for future development.’<sup>16</sup>

31. Dr Margaret Bochel of the Heads of Planning Scotland referred to the example of a development in Aberdeen which has limited access to parking for disabled people, which was planned about 10 years ago, but not actually completed until recently.<sup>17</sup>

### **Weight attached to transport in planning decisions**

32. A second factor which can lead to an apparent disconnect between the principles embodied in transport planning guidance and the reality of developments, is that transport is just one factor which planning authorities can take into account when considering planning applications.

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<sup>12</sup> Midlothian Council. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>13</sup> Midlothian Council. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>14</sup> Scottish Wildlife Trust. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>15</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010*, Col 3172.

<sup>16</sup> SEStran. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>17</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010*, Col 3174.



33. An official from the Scottish Government was asked about the weight which planning authorities should attach to transport when considering applications for planning permission. She said that—

‘The general answer is that it very much depends on the individual application. Basically, the decision maker will consider the application in terms of the development plan. That is the first reference point for the decision. Then other material considerations will be taken into account. Transport considerations could be significant or, in other cases, they might be less so.’<sup>18</sup>

34. Another Scottish Government official noted that ‘local planning authorities are elected bodies in their own right, and they take decisions in the light of the specific proposals in front of them’<sup>19</sup> and the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change told the Committee that Scotland’s 34 planning authorities were ‘masters of their own destiny’.<sup>20</sup> The Minister was asked about the circumstances which would trigger a Scottish Government assessment of a planning authority under the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, and commented that—

‘Where illegality is present, where national issues are associated with the matter, we would do so. Otherwise, it is for local authorities to take local decisions.’<sup>21</sup>

35. This position was also taken by Dr Margaret Bochel of the Heads of Planning Scotland, who told the Committee that—

‘[...] planning will take account of all the transport issues, but it also has to take account of a range of economic and environmental considerations. The policies may be there, but when we make decisions on planning applications, transport might not, in all circumstances, be the primary consideration.’<sup>22</sup>

36. Dr Bochel suggested that ‘planning involves balancing a range of considerations and, ultimately, making a decision about what is in the best interests of a community or place at the time’.<sup>23</sup> She implied that there could be a tension between different policy areas within the planning process, with some elements appearing to work against other elements, but she felt that this was a natural part of the planning process.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 13 April 2010, Col 2732.

<sup>19</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 13 April 2010, Col 2733.

<sup>20</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3190.

<sup>21</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3214.

<sup>22</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3169.

<sup>23</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3171.

<sup>24</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3169.

37. This point was illustrated by several witnesses who gave evidence to the Committee. Tony Curran of Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board noted, for example, that in respect of planning for NHS facilities 'transport is fundamental and is a key issue, but it is not the only issue and, from our perspective, is probably not the most important one'.<sup>25</sup>

38. The Committee heard that there were several other factors that planning authorities could potentially view as being significant, or more significant, than the transport element of planned developments.

39. Councillor Barry Turner noted in a written submission that 'large developments very often will have to go where there is little or no public transport because large sites tend not to be available on transport corridors or at transport nodes (where plans invariably say development is preferred)'.<sup>26</sup>

40. Written evidence from the City of Edinburgh Council mentioned that there was a tension between the desire to require developers to provide appropriate transport interventions and the desire to minimise burdens on development for economic reasons. According to the City of Edinburgh Council, this has been a particular issue in the current financial climate as there is a risk that excessive developer contributions could render a development unviable.

41. Paul Tetlaw of Transform Scotland asserted that 'at a local level, developers in particular place such pressure on politicians and officials that they bend the rules for the developers' short-term benefit'.<sup>27</sup>

42. Paul Finch from the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport argued that there has been sufficiently strong guidance in relation to transport in the national planning frameworks, the structure plans and the development plans, but that 'ultimately, the incentives and pressures within local authorities to achieve economic development have outweighed some of that guidance'.<sup>28</sup>

### **Financial constraints**

43. A third reason which might explain the criticism of an apparent disconnect between the principles set out in planning guidance and the reality of developments, relates to the funding of transport improvements associated with developments.

44. This point was mentioned by a number of witnesses and in several written submissions. The written evidence from East Lothian Council stated that 'it is often clear what the preferred solution is but it can be very difficult to implement due to

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<sup>25</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3126.

<sup>26</sup> Councillor Barry Turner. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>27</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3143.

<sup>28</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 11 May 2010, Col 3011.

the difficulties in funding.<sup>29</sup> Dr Margaret Bochel of the Heads of Planning Scotland told the Committee—

‘Investment is also required. Where will it come from, particularly in the current economic climate? It is very difficult to persuade developers to put in place that infrastructure.’<sup>30</sup>

45. The Committee heard that current financial constraints meant that it was more difficult to secure funding from developers for transport improvements in advance of the completion of the development. Written evidence from the City of Edinburgh Council noted that ‘the main constraint is the lack of funding to ensure that new transport infrastructure is provided in parallel with new development’<sup>31</sup>.

46. From the perspective of developers, Allan Lundmark from Homes for Scotland told the Committee that as a result of the downturn since 2007, the ability of developers to generate value out of developments has ‘disappeared completely’. He commented that ‘the ability of the private sector to deliver that up-front investment in infrastructure has almost evaporated’.<sup>32</sup>

47. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change confirmed that recently it had been proving more difficult for planning authorities to use ‘section 75 agreements’ which required developers to make public transport provision at their own cost.<sup>33</sup> He suggested that, increasingly, developer investments in transport infrastructure was being retimed to the point at which the development itself delivers the money back to the developer.<sup>34</sup> This was, he suggested, an approach which reflected the current economic circumstances.

48. The Minister stated that ‘from time to time, a price will be associated with that’ and noted that ‘there might be degradation of the local transport system because some of the impacts that are associated with the development begin before we have upgraded the local transport infrastructure’.<sup>35</sup>

#### IMPROVING INTEGRATION OF TRANSPORT AND LAND USE PLANNING

49. The Committee has highlighted, above, some reasons why there can appear to be a gap between the principles of planning guidance which should support sustainable transport and the reality of developments on the ground.

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<sup>29</sup> East Lothian Council. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>30</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010*, Col 3178.

<sup>31</sup> The City of Edinburgh Council. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>32</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 25 May 2010*, Col 3080.

<sup>33</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 15 June 2010*, Col 3189.

<sup>34</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 15 June 2010*, Col 3191.

<sup>35</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 15 June 2010*, Col 3191.

50. It is clear to the Committee that these are challenging issues to resolve and that this is not a straightforward task. This fact was acknowledged by several witnesses during the inquiry, including, for example, John Lauder of Sustrans.<sup>36</sup>

51. The Committee has, however, identified some actions which could lead to improvements in the integration of transport and land use planning and which could, as a result, assist in improving the shift towards sustainable transport.

### **Improved integration between disciplines**

52. The Committee heard some arguments that improved integration between the professional disciplines of transport and land use planning could encourage better provision of sustainable transport options at new developments.

53. In written evidence, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport commented—

‘At present professions discuss issues in their own silos and can become frustrated when advising on or putting policies into practice. At present there is not a clear understanding of each others remit, knowledge of transport and land use planning and a sense of shared final objectives.’<sup>37</sup>

54. Strathclyde Partnership for Transport suggested that ‘further work and training is needed to communicate these documents with transport professionals, operators and indeed local communities’<sup>38</sup>.

55. Derek Halden of DH Consultancy argued in written evidence that there has been some training to encourage transport and planning professionals to take an integrated approach, but this has fallen short of practical support to deliver the required culture change amongst practitioners. He concluded that ‘many practitioners have shown an understandable desire to stick with the policies and practices they know best from the past’<sup>39</sup>. Professor Angela Hull of Heriot-Watt University commented that ‘it is difficult to overcome the barriers, even within the same authority’.<sup>40</sup>

56. Petra Biberbach of Planning Aid Scotland told the Committee that her organisation had found that only 13 of the 34 local planning authorities had located planning and transport in one department. She felt that ‘a lot more could be done for the sake of integration’.<sup>41</sup> The written submission from Planning Aid Scotland

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<sup>36</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010*, Col 3146.

<sup>37</sup> Strathclyde Partnership for Transport. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>38</sup> Strathclyde Partnership for Transport. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>39</sup> DH Consultancy. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>40</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 20 April 2010*, Col 2760.

<sup>41</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 11 May 2010*, Col 3013.

emphasised that 'it is essential that dedicated transport planners/engineers and mainstream planners collaborate closely to achieve sustainable places'<sup>42</sup>.

57. When the Committee took evidence from planning and transport professionals, a more positive picture was painted. Dr Margaret Bochel from the Heads of Planning Scotland told the Committee that 'we are not just sitting back and waiting for culture change to happen'<sup>43</sup> and pointed to proactive work undertaken by her organisation and the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland to share good practice, hold joint events, and work with trainees. She commented that—

'Integration between the two disciplines has actually improved significantly over the past few years. That has perhaps been facilitated by having that policy framework from the national level right down to the local level.'<sup>44</sup>

58. This position was echoed by Ewan Wallace of the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland who noted that a requirement for a higher level of awareness of planning, social and environmental issues has been included in training schemes for transport professionals.<sup>45</sup>

59. Ewan Wallace noted, as an example of good practice, that as part of the process for consideration of the local development plan in the north east of Scotland, a cross-sector group has been brought together that includes private sector contacts, utilities companies and all parts of the local authority in order to identify the future wider infrastructure requirements from all the services.<sup>46</sup> He commented that—

'From the SCOTS perspective, that type of high-level approach that looks towards the horizon and to the long-term aspirations for the area is the sort of thing that could be done.'<sup>47</sup>

60. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change told the Committee that the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation and the Transport Planning Society was developing a transport planning professional qualification, which he considered would join the two disciplines together.

61. David Anderson of Transport Scotland told the Committee that the traditional route to become involved in transportation planning has been through becoming a civil engineer or a chartered engineer, but that the new qualification has been

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<sup>42</sup> Planning Aid Scotland. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>43</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3177.*

<sup>44</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3166.*

<sup>45</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3170.*

<sup>46</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3175.*

<sup>47</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3176.*

developed to recognise that a number of different skill sets are involved in transportation planning.<sup>48</sup>

62. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change told the Committee that—

‘There is a coming together and a recognition that there are shared disciplines that can be applied to traditional planning but which are also required in transport planning.’<sup>49</sup>

**63. The Committee believes it is essential that transport and planning professionals develop a mutual understanding of each other’s disciplines in order to encourage good transport provision for new developments. This will be crucial if sustainable transport provision is to be embedded into the process of planning for new developments.**

**64. The Committee received mixed views on whether integration between the disciplines was proceeding at an adequate pace. On one hand, there were some signs of progress. The Committee notes, for example, the good practice cited in the north east by the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland. On the other hand, concerns were expressed regarding the lack of urgency in achieving integration. It is clear to the Committee that more needs to be done to improve the relationship between the two disciplines.**

**65. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government examines the examples of best practice cited in evidence, and collates other relevant examples of good practice identified by the Heads of Planning Scotland and the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government disseminates, via an appropriate mechanism, this information to local authorities in order to ensure that they do more to integrate the two disciplines.**

**66. The Committee welcomes the new professional qualification in transportation planning mentioned in evidence, but believes that action needs to be taken to provide training to planners already in post. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government should emphasise to local authorities the importance of training for all transport and planning professionals as a means of better integrating the two disciplines.**

#### **Relationships between bodies involved in transport and land use planning**

67. The Committee heard some suggestions during the inquiry that changes to the way that the various bodies involved in the transport and land use planning framework relate to one another might improve integration between the two disciplines and promote the provision of better and more sustainable travel options.

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<sup>48</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3200.

<sup>49</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3200.

68. Some witnesses argued that Strategic Development Planning Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships should be better integrated. In written evidence, the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation noted that—

‘There is no current requirement to consult with the RTPs [Regional Transport Partnerships] while preparing SDPs [Strategic Development Plans] nor is there a contrary requirement placed on RTPs in the preparation of RTSs [Regional Transport Strategies]. Neither is there a requirement in the preparation of RTSs or SDPs for the respective bodies to take account of and assimilate objectives, aims and/ or plans contained within the respective Plan or Strategy. It would seem appropriate for the Committee to consider whether there is a case to better align the development of these important strategy frameworks.’<sup>50</sup>

69. Dr Margaret Bochel from the Heads of Planning Scotland commented on the possible integration of Strategic Development Plan Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships by commenting that ‘obviously it is still early days, in particular for the strategic development plan authorities’.<sup>51</sup> She went on to make the point that—

‘It would be more important that the authorities covered the same geographical area—that would make a significant difference—and that the timescales for preparing the two suites of plans and the timescales that the plans cover were brought as close together as possible... If we could bring about that sort of integration, there would not necessarily be a need to integrate the two types of body.’<sup>52</sup>

70. Ewan Wallace of the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland felt that integration between the two sets of bodies might best be carried out without structural or organisational change—

‘The two boards can perhaps come together to discuss major issues at key points in the planning process so that, in considering the strategic development plan for a given area of Scotland, they can consider the transport implications as early as possible.’<sup>53</sup>

71. He went on to note that formal integration of the two sets of bodies could be a costly process, as well as requiring legislative change, and that ‘we can probably achieve the same result by working together as openly as possible’.<sup>54</sup> He commented that ‘from our discussions with SCOTS members, we believe that, rather than a physical conjoining or a change in governance, the key element

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<sup>50</sup> Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>51</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3167.*

<sup>52</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3167.*

<sup>53</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3167.*

<sup>54</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010, Col 3168.*

should be to ensure that the decision-making processes are as clear and joined up as possible'.<sup>55</sup>

72. Ewan Wallace provided an example of what he viewed as good practice from the north-east of Scotland, where the Strategic Development Planning Authority and the Regional Transport Partnership have members in common. He explained that—

'The bodies do not work together in their entirety, but at the very least they can be brought together when major issues need to be considered, so that each body is aware of the background to the different areas...The best advice is needed so that good decisions are taken.'<sup>56</sup>

73. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change commented on the relationship between Strategic Development Planning Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships in evidence to the Committee—

'RTPs and SPAs should work together. In a number of cases, they are co-located and are sharing administrative services, which is clearly a good thing from the point of view not just of operational efficiency and getting the biggest bang for the public buck but, more fundamentally, of ensuring that the co-ordination of policies and actions is appropriate.'<sup>57</sup>

74. The Committee heard some further views that relationships between certain other bodies involved in transport and land use planning could be improved.

75. Garry Clark of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce argued, for example, that at the time of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006—

'[...] we could have done more to bring together Transport Scotland and local transport partnerships and local authorities'. The relationship between them is still a bit disjointed. If we are going to make progress in bringing together planning and transport, we need leadership at the local and national level.'<sup>58</sup>

76. The written evidence from the Highland Council highlighted what it considered to be the 'policy integration "gap"' between local authorities and the national transport agencies: Transport Scotland and Network Rail.

77. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change told the Committee that he felt that that Regional Transport Partnerships should 'act at a local level, and within the national framework, to identify how transport will work locally', but that 'there is a disconnect in that regard'. He went on to say that—

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<sup>55</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3167.

<sup>56</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3168.

<sup>57</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3198.

<sup>58</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 25 May 2010, Col 3082.



'[...] in December we had the chief planner write to every planning authority, in essence to say that they ought to be talking to the relevant RTP, even though RTPs are not statutory consultees, because the involvement of RTPs, which are members of community planning partnerships, will benefit decision making and accelerate things.'<sup>59</sup>

**78. The Committee notes that a number of witnesses and written submissions suggested improvements which could take place to the relationships between the different bodies involved in transport and land use planning. A proposal which appeared to attract some support was that the work of Strategic Development Planning Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships should be better integrated.**

**79. The Committee notes that Strategic Development Planning Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships both have a strategic role to play in relation to transport and land use planning in their geographic areas and that it makes sense for these strategic roles to be as joined up as possible. The Committee heard various suggestions as to how this might be achieved. The Committee does not, however, believe that it would be necessary at this stage for the bodies to be merged, as each has its own separate and distinct role.**

80. Some other suggestions made in evidence included the idea of promoting common membership of the two bodies, aligning the geographical areas they cover, or holding joint meetings of their boards.

**81. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government consider these and other proposals, and develops a strategy to encourage Strategic Development Planning Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships to work together more closely.**

#### **Relationships between plans**

82. The Committee heard some evidence which argued that the timings of the various plans required to be brought forward under the transport and land use planning framework could be amended so that they are better integrated.

83. In written evidence, for example, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport argued that local transport strategies and local development plans 'should be undertaken and produced in a phased, logical and integrated way'.

84. Highland Council stated in its written submission that 'in order to assist integration, it should be a requirement that the Local Transport Strategy be developed in tandem with the Local Development Plan in order to inform the LDP, in much the same way as the Housing Need and Demand Assessments are at present'.

85. This view was also mentioned in written submissions from Aberdeen City Council planning officers and East Ayrshire Council.

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<sup>59</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3194.

86. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change was asked about the coherence of the current relationship between plans. He told the Committee that—

‘As one descends into greater levels of granularity, it is appropriate that the timescales become shorter, which is why although when work is done at any level of planning consideration should always be given to how a plan fits with surrounding plans, it is not appropriate that all plans should run to exactly the same timescales.’<sup>60</sup>

**87. The Committee notes the comments made in evidence, particularly from local authorities, in support of a more integrated approach to the timing of local transport strategies and local development plans. The Minister did not comment with clarity on this issue in his evidence to the Committee. The Committee therefore requests a response from the Scottish Government on this point which sets out the Government’s position and indicates whether or not it is receptive to the suggestion made by some local authorities.**

### **Provision of public transport**

88. The Committee heard from a number of witnesses that one of the challenges associated with integrating transport and land use planning has been the difficulty in securing commitments from public transport operators to serve developments, particularly in advance of their completion.

89. In written evidence, East Lothian Council argued that ‘the bus companies are reluctant to commit resources until the development is substantially complete’<sup>61</sup> and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport noted that ‘bus operators committing to providing new bus services or re-routing existing services to development sites, in a deregulated market, is problematic’<sup>62</sup>.

90. Stuart McMillan of South Lanarkshire Council told the Committee that it can be difficult to engage with private sector bus operators as they typically plan their services a year to 18 months ahead, whereas the Council might wish to enter into dialogue with them about a development that is five or six years away.<sup>63</sup>

91. The Committee heard some suggestions on potential ways in which these issues might be addressed.

92. Written evidence from SEStran argued that ‘bringing on board public transport operators at an early stage is important’ and that bus operators tend to require subsidy to operate new services until the commercial viability of the route is established.

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<sup>60</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3199.

<sup>61</sup> East Lothian Council. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>62</sup> Strathclyde Partnership for Transport. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>63</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3132.

93. Ewan Wallace of the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland suggested one possible solution to the problem of how to provide public transport to new developments might be demand-responsive transport—

[...] if we put in place demand-responsive transport, we can still provide a level of transport to individual developments and, as those grow incrementally, we can try to develop the patronage levels so that at some future point the service might become more commercial or at least involve lower running costs for the local authority.<sup>64</sup>

94. A written submission from Fife Council Transportation Services argued that 'there needs to be more developer led consultation with public transport providers in order for the public transport services to be provided in advance'<sup>65</sup>.

95. This theme of better consultation was mentioned by bus public transport operators themselves. Mark Savelli of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK and Managing Director at First Glasgow, told the Committee that—

'Buses seem not to be considered seriously in the planning of developments. The industry should be a statutory consultee when it comes to big developments and greater weight should be afforded to ensuring that developments serve the objectives of local transport plans.'<sup>66</sup>

96. George Mair of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK went on to say 'we are pretty convinced that if we could get earlier intervention in the way that Mark Savelli suggested—if we were consulted and involved early on—greater success would be inevitable'.<sup>67</sup>

97. An official from the Scottish Government explained the process by which planning authorities discuss public transport possibilities for developments with the operators as part of the development planning appraisal work that they undertake—

'The operators are much more interested in when a bus service will be needed, how many buses will be required and how many drivers will be needed than in whether it may be desirable to extend bus route X into an area in five years' time.<sup>68</sup>

98. The official went on to say that—

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<sup>64</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 1 June 2010*, Col 3176.

<sup>65</sup> Fife Council Transportation Services. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>66</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 25 May 2010*, Col 3102.

<sup>67</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 25 May 2010*, Col 3110.

<sup>68</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report, 25 May 2010*, Col 3110.

'If the planning authority has a high-quality public transport unit, such issues can be identified and built into the plan. However, if the authority's public transport unit is not so forward thinking, opportunities can be missed.'<sup>69</sup>

99. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change told the Committee—

'In essence, we want the commercial bus industry to take the lead in that regard, but we want developers to be a key part and to provide funding before bus routes become commercial. If we get it right, that is how it will work.'<sup>70</sup>

**100. The Committee believes that the provision of good public transport links to new developments is of crucial importance. It considers that it is particularly important that services are provided in the period immediately after a development is completed when travel patterns are formed and thereafter can often remain fixed. The lack of frequent reliable bus services to serve some developments has been a significant concern to many communities.**

**101. The Committee believes it is essential that dialogue takes place at an early stage in the planning of a development between planning authorities and public transport operators, to discuss the establishment of good public transport services to that development as early as possible from the time of its occupation. This dialogue should also involve discussion between planning authorities and providers of demand-responsive community transport.**

102. Scottish Government officials told the Committee that the extent to which this takes place varies between planning authorities, with some examples of good practice being seen, but other cases where this early dialogue does not appear to be taking place. **The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government considers issuing guidance to planning authorities on how best to engage with public transport providers and providers of demand-responsive community transport at an early stage in the planning of a development, which draws on the best practice of those authorities which have had success in this area. This engagement will also be important when local plans are being drawn up.**

**103. The Committee notes that representatives from the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK indicated that bus operators would welcome the opportunity to be statutory consultees during the planning of large developments. The Committee believes that this could be a positive initiative, and asks the Scottish Government for its views on this proposal.**

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<sup>69</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 13 April 2010, Col 2741.

<sup>70</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3194.

## **Improved monitoring**

### *Guidance*

104. A number of witnesses suggested that better monitoring of the extent to which new developments reflected the current planning guidance in relation to sustainable transport provision would help improve the integration between transport and land use planning policies.

105. The Committee was told by some witnesses that on a number of occasions, the consequence of the guidance not being followed properly had resulted in planning authorities granting consent for new developments which do not have sustainable transport provision in place.

106. Witnesses suggested that it is important that the new guidance is monitored effectively to ensure that it is properly being taken into account. Keith Irving of Living Streets told the Committee—

‘There would definitely be benefit in greater monitoring of development management. That would enable government—local and national—to know where the development pressure is, where the guidance is and is not working, where it needs to be changed or improved, and where it is working best, so that good practice could be spread around the country.’<sup>71</sup>

107. A Scottish Government official who gave evidence at the beginning of this inquiry was asked about the monitoring of the effectiveness of the guidance and told the Committee—

‘We monitor in a wide variety of ways. We try to go out and meet each authority at least once a year, and usually twice a year. We do not just produce the policy and run away; we go out and meet authorities regularly.’<sup>72</sup>

### *Travel plans*

108. The Committee heard from witnesses during discussions on travel plans that a lack of monitoring of the plans was a concern. Travel plans are referred to in the Scottish Government’s Planning Policy as a package of measures aimed at promoting more sustainable travel choices and reducing reliance on the car, and it states that it should be encouraged for all significant travel generating developments.

109. The Committee heard from a number of witnesses that it is not unusual for the existence of a travel plan to be a condition placed on the planning consent for new developments.

110. The Committee understands that there is no legal requirement for new developments to have a travel plan prior to planning permission being granted but notes the Scottish Government’s Policy which states—

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<sup>71</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3154.

<sup>72</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 13 April 2010, Col 2726.

*Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee, 7th Report, 2010  
(Session 3)*

‘Development plans should promote a pattern of development which reduces the need to travel and encourages active travel and travel by public transport, taking into account the likely availability of public transport in rural areas.’<sup>73</sup>

111. In evidence to the Committee, when asked about monitoring of travel plans, Ewan Wallace of SCOTS replied—

‘That is an area in which we have not done an awful lot. None of the local authorities in Scotland has picked up on that in any detail over a number of years. Some work has started in the past two or three years, with the use of software and databases to monitor the number of plans and the requirements in order to try and bring them together as you suggested.’<sup>74</sup>

112. In addition to the monitoring of the travel plans, Dr Margaret Bochel raised the issue of the difficulty of enforcing travel plans associated with a development—

‘Travel plans are a planning condition but—to add to what Ewan Wallace said—it is very difficult to enforce them, especially when the development is already there. First we need to monitor the plans so that we know whether they are being put in place and, secondly, we need the resources to enforce them. It is difficult to know exactly what powers we would use to ensure that they were enforced. It is a valid point.’<sup>75</sup>

113. The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation also shared these views saying to the Committee—

‘Often, a developer puts in place a travel plan that is all vetted and—it is hoped—subsequently approved, but what happens over the long term? Where does the travel plan go after five years? Whose responsibility is that?’<sup>76</sup>

114. In written evidence to the Committee, the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation also argued that there are no incentives for developers to undertake the development and monitoring of travel plans.

115. During evidence, a Scottish Government official confirmed that there had not been a national review of the effectiveness of travel plans in the longer term, although an official from Transport Scotland informed the Committee of its current review concerning the number of travel plan conditions that have been placed on planning consents and their effectiveness. However, he noted that—

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<sup>73</sup> Scottish Government. February 2010. *Scottish Planning Policy*, page 8, paragraph 42.

<sup>74</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3178.

<sup>75</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3179.

<sup>76</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 25 May 2010, Col 3104.

'It is fair to say that that work will focus solely on the trunk road network from the Transport Scotland perspective; it will not look nationwide at all 32 local authorities and the other planning authorities.'<sup>77</sup>

116. When asked how travel plans are followed up and monitored, a Transport Scotland official stated—

'The travel plan usually comes out as a planning condition attached to a consent. The monitoring and evaluation should therefore be set out in the travel plan, and it would be for the planning authority to follow that through in respect of whether it is being monitored and evaluated at that level.'<sup>78</sup>

117. The Committee asked the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change for his views on the suggestion made by some witnesses that insufficient resources are available for effective enforcement. He responded saying—

'We are in difficult times and we have been in difficulty for a while, because most people who graduate with planning qualifications have gone into the private sector, where the rewards have been greater and the work has been perceived as being more interesting.'<sup>79</sup>

**118. In cases where the production of a travel plan is a condition of planning consent for a new development, it appears to the Committee that there is a widespread lack of effective monitoring of these plans. Furthermore the Committee is concerned that planning authorities can impose travel plans as a condition of planning consent, however, in some cases there may be no proper method of enforcing them.**

**119. This is a concern to the Committee as it could result in developments being granted planning consent on the condition that a travel plan is implemented, but the travel plan could be unsuccessful or, in a worst case scenario, is never actually implemented.**

**120. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government explores the most appropriate way in which, in the case of a travel plan being a condition of planning consent being granted on a new development, this condition can be enforced and monitored effectively.**

**121. The Committee also heard concerns from witnesses regarding the extent to which there is no systematic monitoring of the Scottish Government's Planning Policy as it relates to the provision of transport at new developments. The Committee believes this monitoring is important in order to ensure the guidance is properly being taken into account.**

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<sup>77</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 13 April 2010, Col 2728.

<sup>78</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3201.

<sup>79</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3201.

**122. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government develops an approach to the monitoring of the effectiveness of the Policy and the extent to which local authorities take into account the guidance when considering development proposals. It also calls on the Scottish Government to set out how it proposes to implement this monitoring regime and to respond to any evidence that it is not being taken into account.**

### **Improved leadership**

123. The Committee heard suggestions from some witnesses that improved leadership was needed to help address the disconnect between the principles of planning guidance and the realities of developments approved.

124. In answering a question about the apparent drift between the principles and reality, John Lauder of Sustrans asked—

‘Why is there such a drift? One element is the lack of political leadership in being willing to drive the policy forward.’<sup>80</sup>

125. The Committee questioned witnesses where this leadership could be found. John Halliday from the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation commented—

‘I guess the real answer is that the responsibility lies nowhere. A lot of good words are said—“such and such a body should take account of”, “one should consult with” and so on—but, to be honest, over the years I have seen no single place where a strong responsibility is placed; hence, it becomes a fudge.’<sup>81</sup>

126. This view that no single person or body holds the key to leadership on the issue of transport and land use planning was mentioned in other evidence. In a written submission, East Lothian Council argued that ‘there is no single agency that controls all transport modes which makes it difficult to promote a co-ordinated approach’<sup>82</sup> and Derek Halden of DH Consultancy suggested that—

‘There are many failed examples around the world of attempts to put a single joint agency in charge of integrated land use and transport planning. The areas delivering the best practice have been the ones that recognise leadership coming from many sectors and levels.’<sup>83</sup>

127. Dr Margaret Bochel of the Heads of Planning Scotland told the Committee that affecting major change in the way that planning decisions are taken ‘requires

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<sup>80</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3146.

<sup>81</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 25 May 2010, Col 3101.

<sup>82</sup> East Lothian Council. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

<sup>83</sup> DH Consultancy. Written submission to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.



difficult political decisions, and not just politicians but everyone who is involved in development must be signed up to the agenda'.<sup>84</sup>

128. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change told the Committee that—

'[...] leadership is, of course, most certainly not about Government seeking to bully the planning professionals and the planning services that are a part of local authorities, because planning is essentially a local government service. We have sought to ensure that our Government agencies work in a different and more effective way with those planning authorities.'<sup>85</sup>

129. He went on to say that—

'We have also sought to assist local authorities and COSLA in their exercise of leadership, because COSLA is interested in ensuring that experiences—good and bad—are shared across councils. Leadership can be exercised at lots of different levels; this is not a hierarchy but a heterarchy.'<sup>86</sup>

130. The Minister was also asked about what, in his view, constituted a sustainable development. His response suggested that he believed the concept of a sustainable development should have a wide definition. He told the Committee—

'I do not think that unsustainable development happens. That is the point. Nobody would do unsustainable developments. There are economic, environmental and social aspects. If a development does not meet a social need, for example, it will fail anyway. Increasingly, the need for environmentally sustainable developments is part of the social need.'<sup>87</sup>

**131. The Committee agrees that no single body can have complete responsibility for leadership in the field of transport and land use planning. However, the Committee has identified in this report several examples of where the Scottish Government could do more to take the lead in guiding and assisting planning authorities in their work.**

**132. The Committee is also of the view that Scottish Government ministers could use appropriate opportunities to show leadership on this issue in their dealings with local authorities either on an individual basis or collectively, highlighting the importance of the effective integration of these policy areas.**

**133. There is also a clear role for elected members in local authorities to show leadership by ensuring that development plans and the process of considering individual planning applications take full account of the need for**

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<sup>84</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 1 June 2010, Col 3172.

<sup>85</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3205.

<sup>86</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3205.

<sup>87</sup> Scottish Parliament Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. *Official Report*, 15 June 2010, Col 3211.

**developments to be served by good quality, reliable and sustainable transport links.**

**134. The Committee also notes the Minister's comments regarding the definition of a sustainable development, and is concerned at the lack of clarity regarding the Scottish Government's position on this matter. The Committee believes that it is important for the Scottish Government, elected members in local authorities and developers to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes a sustainable development in order to promote sustainable transport access to developments in the future.**

#### **CONCLUSION**

**135. In this inquiry the Committee has investigated the important relationship between transport and land use planning, which plays a crucial role in how our communities are designed. The Committee has concluded that while some transport and land use planning professionals expressed reasonable satisfaction with the principles of the current transport and land use planning framework, which identifies the importance of sustainable transport to new developments, there was concern from other witnesses about how these principles are implemented in practice. A number of witnesses cited examples of developments which have been constructed with little thought to sustainable transport access.**

**136. The Committee has identified possible explanations for this disconnect between the principles and reality of transport and land use planning. The planning framework under the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 needs time to bed in. Financial constraints can affect the funding of transport improvements to developments. Most significantly, planning authorities are accountable for their own decision making, and they will take into account a range of factors before reaching individual decisions on planning proposals.**

**137. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that more action must be taken by the Scottish Government and local authorities to improve the integration of transport and land use planning. The Committee also believes that part of this work should involve reaching an openly shared understanding of how to define a sustainable development, and calls on the Scottish Government to initiate and take the lead on this exercise.**

**138. The Committee has made a series of recommendations in this report, including new initiatives to encourage planners and transport professionals to work more closely; proposals to encourage public transport operators to engage in earlier dialogue about providing services to new developments; and more effective monitoring of how travel plans are implemented. It is essential that the Scottish Government and local authorities take action to implement the improvements identified in this report, in order that new developments better meet the desire of communities to have good access to sustainable transport.**

## APPENDIX

### Transport and Land Use Planning Regime in Scotland

1. **Development Planning:** The Scottish Government sets out its national spatial development priorities in the National Planning Framework for Scotland, which is updated once every five years. It sets out key development policies in the Scottish Planning Policy, which replaced the Scottish Planning Policy and National Planning Policy Guideline series of documents. The National Planning Framework and Scottish Planning Policy provide a national context for the two types of development plan produced by local authorities:

- **Structure Plans (Strategic Development Plans):** provide a broad strategic overview of an area's development covering a period of at least 10 years. Structure plans tend to encompass large geographic areas and usually involve joint working between local authorities. Structure Plans are to be replaced by Strategic Development Plans, which will be produced by four Strategic Development Planning Authorities based on Scotland's four main urban centres. Strategic Development Plans will not cover the whole of Scotland. Strategic Development Plans must be reviewed every five years. Each strategic development plan must be accompanied by an action programme, which must be updated at least once every two years.
- **Local Plans (Local Development Plans):** set out detailed policies and specific proposals for the development and use of land and are key documents in guiding day-to-day planning decisions. A local plan may cover the whole, or part of a local authority's area. Local plans are being replaced by Local Development Plans, which should be shorter and more accessible than their predecessors. Local Development Plans must be updated at least once every five years. Each local development plan must be accompanied by an action programme that must be updated at least once every two years.

2. **Development Management (formerly known as Development Control):** The development of land normally requires permission from a planning authority, normally the local authority. Planning authorities are required to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include other national or local policies, e.g. Scottish Planning Policy or Area Waste Plans, and letters of objection and support for the proposals.

In determining an application a planning authority can:

- grant permission unconditionally
- grant permission subject to conditions
- refuse permission

Where an authority decides to grant permission subject to conditions or refuses permission the applicant has a right of appeal to the Scottish Ministers.

3. **Enforcement:** Planning legislation sets out the actions that a local authority should take on becoming aware of a breach in planning control.

### **Transport Planning in Scotland**

As with town and country planning, transport planning is dealt with at a national, regional and local level within Scotland, as described below:

**The National Transport Strategy:** The then Scottish Executive published the non-statutory National Transport Strategy (NTS) in December 2006.

The NTS sets out three key strategic outcomes for transport in Scotland:

- Improve journey times and connections between our cities and towns and our global markets to tackle congestion and provide access to key markets
- Reduce emissions to tackle climate change
- Improve quality, accessibility and affordability of transport, to give people the choice of public transport and real alternatives to the car.

The NTS sets the broad policy framework for regional and local transport strategies. In addition, it was accompanied by two supporting documents, Scotland's Railways and the Bus Action Plan. The Scottish Government is currently preparing to review the NTS, with consultation due to commence in the next few months.

**Regional Transport Strategies:** Regional transport planning in Scotland is the responsibility of seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) established by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. Each RTP is governed by a board which consists of councillors from each of the constituent local authorities, who have voting rights, and external members appointed by Scottish Ministers, who may only vote in certain circumstances. The main task of each RTP is the drafting of a Regional Transport Strategy. The Scottish Government published Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies during March 2006, which indicates that a Regional Transport Strategy should:

- Provide a vision and objectives for transport in the region over a 10 to 15-year period
- Provide an analysis of the current situation, covering transport needs and problems in the region
- Set out a programme of activities, projects and interventions by the RTP, its constituent councils and other stakeholders, that is prioritised and costed, and which will contribute to the achievement of regional transport objectives
- Provide a framework for local transport planning and support the National Transport Strategy

Every Regional Transport Strategy must be accompanied by an investment plan (updated when appropriate), delivery plan (updated annually) and an annual report. Regional Transport Strategies must be updated at least once every four years.

**Local Transport Strategies:** Local authorities are required produce a local transport strategy covering their area, which should be updated at least once every three years. Under the provisions of Section 79 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 the then Scottish Executive issued Guidance on Local Transport Strategies to local authorities in March 2005. This guidance sets out the following national objectives, aimed at guiding the policies and proposals to be included in local transport strategies:

*Our overall aim is to promote economic growth, social inclusion, health and protection of our environment through a safe, integrated, effective and efficient transport system.*

The guidance recommends that each local transport strategy be accompanied by an action plan which should be updated annually.

**Approval of transport projects:** Unlike the town and country planning system, transport developments are authorised through a number of different approval systems. Private residential roads are authorised through road construction consent granted by local authorities, local roads can be constructed by local authorities and trunk roads by Scottish Ministers under systems established by the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. New railways, tramways, guided bus ways, canals and trolley bus routes are authorised under the provisions of the Transport and Works (Scotland) Act 2007, which gives the ultimate decision making power to Scottish Ministers and in certain limited circumstances the Scottish Parliament. Network Rail also enjoys considerable scope to upgrade rail lines within operational railway land without the need for any specific authorisation. In addition, so called soft-measures aimed at changing travel choices (e.g. individualised travel planning) are generally developed, implemented and funded on an ad hoc basis by the Scottish Government and/or local authorities.



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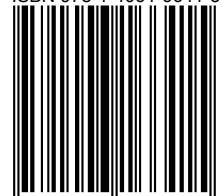
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