

Go SEStran Freight Strategy

About SEStran

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) is the statutory regional transport partnership of eight local authorities, City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish borders and West Lothian.

The GO SEStran Forth Freight Strategy

SEStran in conjunction with Forth Ports, wishes to undertake a research project to determine the potential cargo flows in/out/within the River Forth region and its associated ports and hubs which could be transferred onto more sustainable transport modes. This study will look to investigate existing freight movements, the barriers faced by multimodal freight terminals when trying to target and encourage customers to make the switch and evaluate the potential environmental benefits of sustainable approaches to freight movements. The study will also assess the feasibility of reinstating/introducing rail freight facilities where appropriate.

The GO SEStran Forth Freight Strategy is being funded by Transport Scotland through the Local Rail Development Fund, with the central aim being to help provide the evidence base for local areas to bring forward schemes that can enter the Scottish Government Rail Enhancement and Capital Investment Strategy pipeline. The SEStran region is of significant economic value to the

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1. Fife
 2. Clackmannanshire
 3. Falkirk
 4. West Lothian
 5. City of Edinburgh
 6. Midlothian
 7. East Lothian
 8. Scottish borders

Scottish and wider UK economy and is a major generator of freight movements.

Consultants AECOM has been asked to deliver this study and explore how an efficient and sustainable freight sector can boost the regional economy and deliver modal shift from road freight to 'greener' modes of transport.

Freight in the SEStran Area

The recently published National Strategy 2 (NTS2) recognises the importance of freight to the success of Scotland's economy, but also urges that the negative impacts generated by the movement of goods be addressed. A willingness to promote efficient and sustainable transport for freight, particularly the shift from road to rail is also expressed within the NTS2.



Due to its gateway role in South East Scotland, the **SEStran area is home to a large concentration of freight operations**. 30 million tonnes of freight were dispatched from the SEStran region to other areas in Scotland in 2017.

The area is well served by a combination of transport modes (road, rail, air and sea) and the transport network in the SEStran area is also influenced by neighbouring areas, namely the "Central Belt" of Scotland and the North of England.

Minimising the impact of goods vehicles in urban areas is an ongoing concern for SEStran, as urban areas become

even more heavily congested, with air quality and the local environment suffering as a result. A key aspect of improving air quality is reducing congestion, as this directly affects pollution levels.

With the growth of e-commerce, there has been an expansion in the number of delivery vans on UK roads, resulting in numbers passing the 4 million mark in 2016. LGVs (Light Goods Vehicles) are often tasked with carrying out "last mile" deliveries, which is impacting roads that are designed for local access and residential usage.

Road remains the dominant mode for freight movement, principally because of its flexibility and the need to service a widely dispersed range of premises. The SEStran area is a key gateway for Scotland and **congestion** is a key challenge on many roads, with increases in road freight meaning more of SEStran's road network will have to function at or beyond peak capacity.

Due to the high level of industrial land in the area, high levels of freight traffic are seen on the local roads surrounding the industrial areas, as well as strategic roads. This combination of high traffic levels and limited road capacity cause congestion on different parts of the road network, and as a result, reduces the productivity of the road haulage sector, preventing the fast and reliable distribution of goods.

Road freight vehicles contribute 25% of **transport emissions**, despite only being responsible for 16% of traffic. This is contributing to the significant air quality challenges in the SEStran area. Currently, local measures are being employed to tackle particular hotspots in the region, and an Air Quality Management Area has been declared to address illegal areas of pollution.



Vessles docked at Port of Leith

The actions to be undertaken by SEStran to address these issues

This section details our approach to delivering the study, which will be composed of four work packages. Given that the study is being partially funded through Transport Scotland's Local Rail Development Fund (LRDF), central to its success will be to deliver a robust yet proportionate Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) study which benefits local stakeholders, Transport Scotland, and freight industry partners.

Action 1 Initial Appraisal – Outlining the Case for Change

A robust initial appraisal provides the foundation to the study, promoting the analysis of opportunities in parallel to the identification of the transport problems:

- The Assessment of Problems and Opportunities
- Development of Transport Planning Objectives (TPO)
- Option Generation and Sifting
- Industry Stakeholder Consultation

Action 3 Detailed Appraisal – Detailed Options Appraisal

Prior to embarking on the detailed options appraisal, we will hold a stakeholder session to update on the findings of the Preliminary Appraisal. Options would be presented to representatives from the freight sector, with project team members on hand to talk through the findings from the Preliminary Appraisal and obtain feedback on the proposed options for detailed assessment.

Action 2 Initial Appraisal – Preliminary Options Appraisal

The Preliminary Appraisal would begin by further developing and defining the scope of the potential options emerging from the Initial Appraisal. In keeping with the proportionate nature of the study, options would be developed at a high concept level.

Having created a comprehensive list of measures across all modes, we will then suggest an order of implementation for the measures, forming the basis of an action plan. The action plan will include a prioritisation rating system, an assessment of both the market penetration and potential audience of each component, and a critique of the costs and benefits. The measures will then be grouped according to a recommended timeframe e.g. short, medium and long term.

Action 4 Post Appraisal – Monitoring Arrangements Report

The purpose of this output will be to outline the elements to be monitored, the appropriate tools to be used, the frequency of the checks, etc. It will ensure the systematic gathering of timely, accurate, reliable and objective information.

We anticipate that the project will be complete Spring-Summer 2021, subject to Covid-19 restrictions enabling appropriate and timely completion.

How can you help?

It is vital that this study is informed by a wide-ranging stakeholder group and that any recommendations emerging from it have buy-in from those responsible for moving freight, ship goods in the region or are impacted by freight.

Therefore, we would like to speak to you about the issues and opportunities relating to moving freight in South East Scotland. It would be great if one of our team could contact you to discuss your views and help shape the strategy.

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