

Sunderland Strategic
Transport Corridor
Commercial Links
STRATEGIC CASE ONLY

Outline Business Case
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Contents

1. Strategic Case	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1 Business Strategy	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2 Responsibility of the Scheme Promoter	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3 Description of the Corridor	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4 The Problem Identified & Justification for the Scheme	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5 Background to Scheme Development	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.6 Impact of Doing Nothing	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.7 Objectives	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.8 Key Constraints	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.9 Inter-dependencies	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.10 Stakeholders	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.11 Stakeholder Considerations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.12 Key Stakeholders	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.13 Stakeholder Conflicts	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.14 The Options	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Figures

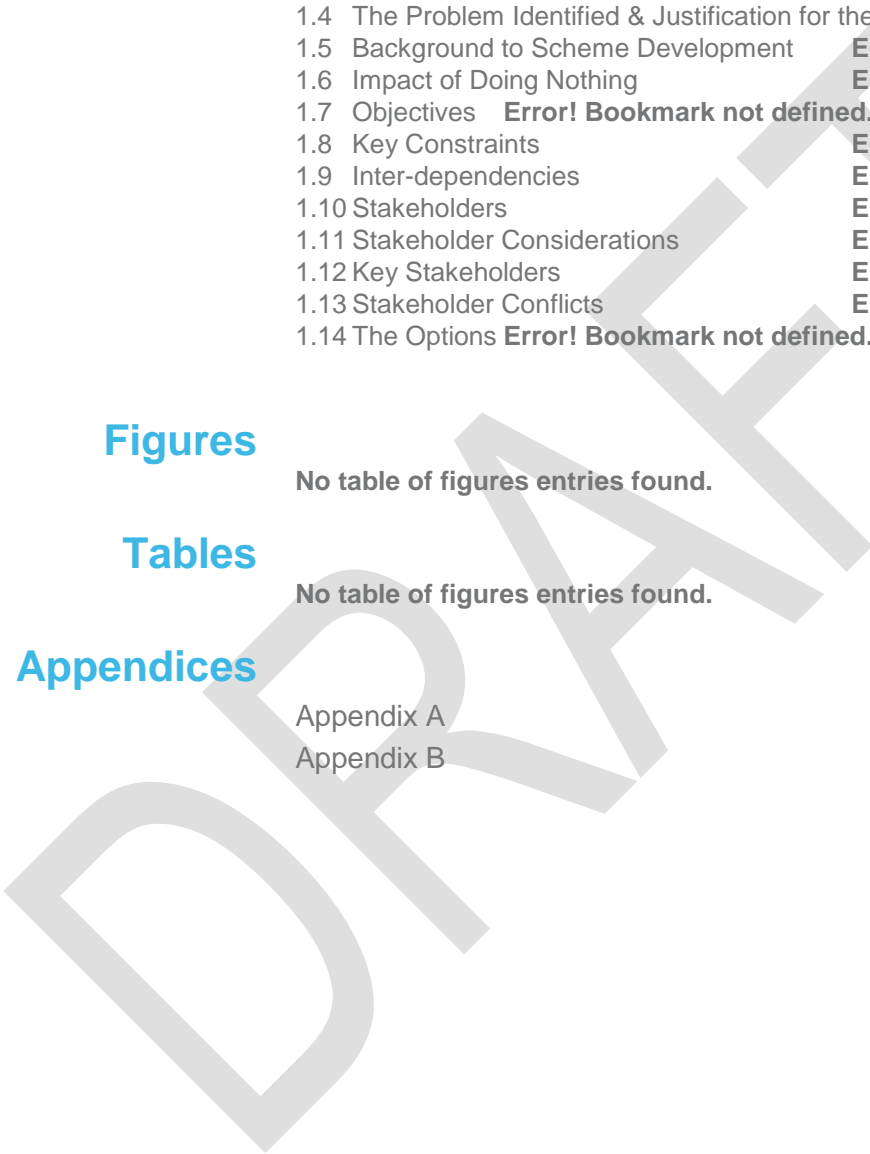
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Tables

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Appendices

Appendix A
 Appendix B



1. Strategic Case

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Sunderland has previously set out its ambitions clearly in its widely endorsed Economic Masterplan, which sets out that there is a vision for Sunderland to become 'An entrepreneurial university city at the heart of a low-carbon regional economy'. As such the city's future is tied to the wider economy and so Sunderland City Council is outward facing, innovative and collaborate in its approach and its wider ambitions will be underpinned by the delivery of the necessary infrastructure.
- 1.1.2 *Commercial Opportunities*
- 1.1.3 Below the multitude of commercial sites in the vicinity of the Borough of Sunderland and Sunderland City Centre are described. The project put forward here aims to improve links between each of these locations, and the wider region.
- 1.1.4 *The Port of Sunderland*
- 1.1.5 The need for a high quality road link between Sunderland Port and the A19 was first identified by the City Council in its 1998 Unitary Development Plan. Construction of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (SSTC) route is a key feature of this need and the wider vision of the Council to regenerate the City, whilst also meeting many of the Government's over-arching objectives for improving transportation, health and access to jobs and education.
- 1.1.6 *Nissan*
- 1.1.7 Sunderland City Council has submitted to Government an expression of interest for a City Deal proposal relating to the expansion of employment led development on land to the north of the Nissan estate, which itself sits just to the North West of the A19 / A1231 Junction.
- 1.1.8 *New Commercial Sites*
- 1.1.9 Since 2012 the North East Local Enterprise Partnership has invested in 115 hectares of new site across three locations with a particular focus on supporting businesses to start-up, grow and expand in three key areas of economic strength.
- 1.1.10 *North East Enterprise Zone*
- 1.1.11 The Enterprise Zone (EZ) for the North East includes a cluster of sites close to the A19 in Sunderland. This is a clear indication of the Government's endorsement of Sunderland's sector growth ambitions. Government has been actively supporting growth on Enterprise Zones by focusing other activities such as United Kingdom Trade and Investment (UKTI) support for inward investment or trade opportunities there. As stated above, demand for the EZ sites in Sunderland is becoming even stronger as a result of Nissan's performance and this is projected to continue for many years.
- 1.1.12 As a result of this demand around Sunderland and the NE, further sites have been included in Round 2 of the EZ program. In particular the delivery of SSTC Commercial Links (SSTC CL) package of works will enable the ongoing delivery and prosperity of the following sites:

- **International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP)**

25ha site providing 62,700m² of new floor space

As part of the nationally significant International Advanced Manufacturing Park development this site will bring forward major industrial and manufacturing space and facilities. This will specifically support development of businesses operating in the low carbon and automotive / passenger vehicle areas as well as wider potential for logistics, energy and offshore manufacturing linked to local economic strengths.

- **Port of Sunderland, Sunderland**

8.3ha site providing 49,930m² of new floor space

The Port of Sunderland has ambitious growth plans to take advantage of its location at the mouth of the River Wear and direct access to the North Sea as well as integrated modal shift with a reinstated rail head and strong road connectivity.

The site development will focus on manufacturing, storage and distribution particularly for offshore energy, marine industries such as cabling and export focused sectors which.

- **Follingsby Business Park, Gateshead**

28ha site providing 122,000m² of new floor space

Well sited on the A19, the Enterprise Zone site builds on the existing Follingsby site, significantly increasing the site available. The site links closely to wider activities on the A19 corridor and will provide logistics, distribution and industrial space. It will support particular growth in distribution and logistics due to its location along main transport corridors.

1.1.13 *Existing Connectivity and Issues*

- 1.1.14 Currently, the EZ, Nissan and A19 areas are linked to the City Centre and onwards to the Port of Sunderland by a series of dual and single carriageway roads that provide a protracted approach to the city centre and Port through a series of existing gyratory and roundabout systems.
- 1.1.15 The River Wear forms the major constraint to the local highway network with the only two bridge crossings providing direct access between the wards to the north and the city centre and key services to the south. This natural barrier has considerable impact upon accessibility within Sunderland as route choice and is limited to only two river crossings and associated junctions that cannot meet the demands of vehicular traffic. The lack of cross river highway capacity and high traffic volumes (AADT 64,000), particularly within the morning and evening peak periods, results in significant congestion at these pinch points.
- 1.1.16 The congestion queues back along the corridors that lead to the existing Wear crossings. This is causing traffic to re-distribute along adjacent routes through residential areas/business parks where this is not appropriate. The existing A1231 corridor has the physical capacity to accommodate current traffic demand however the operation of the gyratory junctions at the existing Wear crossing points do not, with further delays experienced at the numerous roundabout junctions along the route.

- 1.1.17 Without improved capacity at key junctions and the third Wear crossing (addressed by SSTC 2, discussed below) future increased traffic demands are likely to exacerbate the existing problems leading to increased congestions along the corridors and increased traffic volumes along inappropriate adjacent routes - in particular through the Sunderland Enterprise Park and Pallion areas.
- 1.1.18 *SSTC*
- 1.1.19 The SSTC is a key strategic corridor in the development of the wider Sunderland area; in particular it will form a link between the EZ developments, the Advanced Low Carbon and Motor Manufacturing Cluster proposed in the vicinity of the Nissan plant and the A19 to the west, with the City Centre and Port of Sunderland in the east. This link will promote and encourage the use of the existing port infrastructure, and will kick-start the economic redevelopment of a number of key growth areas on the south bank of the River Wear.
- 1.1.20 The whole SSTC package of measures intends to achieve this much needed link by:
- improving the junctions between the A19 and the Port;
 - providing a new high quality dual carriageway route;
 - constructing a landmark bridge, which will provide Sunderland with; and
 - provision of continuous cycleway / footway and bus facilities;
- resulting in a more efficient and direct approach to the A19, the City, the Port, the Enterprize Zone as well as promoting modal shift to sustainable transportation.
- 1.1.21 The traffic model developed as part of the successful SSTC Phase 2 MSBC to the DfT demonstrated that delays are experienced on the south side of the river that will not be resolved by the provision of the new bridge alone. Phase 3 addresses those issues and a new traffic model is being developed to demonstrate the journey time savings that the scheme will provide.
- 1.1.22 *The Solution*
- 1.1.23 The SSTC CL will provide wider benefits to the junctions of the A19 (SRN) by improving the links to Wessington Way (A1231) and encouraging drivers to use the new SSTC route rather than using the A19 to move across the River Wear.
- 1.1.24 SSTC CL achieve this by providing an enhanced link between the new bridge and the A19, removing the existing roundabouts and providing new signal controlled junctions that will encourage the development of the surrounding areas and improved journey time and increased journey time reliability.
- 1.1.25 Further to this it will provide vastly improved access to the Port from the City Centre and then onwards to the A19 in the north and also improve connectivity for access from the Port to the south
- 1.1.26 *Expected Impacts and Outcomes*
- 1.1.27 The SSTC CL has a vital role to play in the contribution towards the creation of new jobs and retention of existing jobs by greatly improving access to the Port and city centre. As a result, this scheme will enable a number of key sites along the river corridor to be advanced, supporting:
- the delivery of over 6,000 employment opportunities on largely vacant sites;
 - increased job density on existing sites;

- the retention of existing jobs;
 - significant city centre regeneration; and
 - a number of new residential schemes delivering new housing in the city.
- 1.1.28 The scheme will also support wider economic growth, improving access between the city's manufacturing hub around Nissan, the City Centre and the Port, and therefore encouraging closer integration of the manufacturing hub with the rest of the city, widening the sphere of benefit.
- 1.1.29 The City Deal Expression of Interest (EOI) proposal submitted to Government by Sunderland City Council will assist the attraction of Advanced Manufacturing business. This could potentially create up to 16,000 additional jobs relating to the expansion of employment led development on land to the north of Nissan, and indirectly throughout the wider region.
- 1.1.30 Congestion and unreliable journey times are accepted as deterrent factors that influence the efficient delivery of business operations and outcomes. Such factors are a key consideration for business in deciding whether to remain or relocate – and indeed the degree to which they prosper in their current location. The SSTC CL will make a major contribution to reducing congestion and enabling reliable journey times, and provide new enterprise opportunities by opening up new local markets as well as sites for development. In this way it will increase the efficiency and competitiveness of local businesses, reduce the probability of businesses moving away and provide a better offer for prospective investors in the area.
- 1.1.31 The level of traffic growth associated with Sunderland's regeneration aspirations and emerging Local Plan will see significant increases in travel demand to cross the Wear. Furthermore SSTC CL represents a key enabler to assist in the large regeneration areas on the South bank of the Wear around the former Vaux Brewery Site and Pallion shipyard. This regeneration forms part of the emerging Sunderland Local Plan and SSTC CL is a critical piece of infrastructure that is necessary to deliver the Plan over the coming 15 years.
- 1.1.32 Future development in Sunderland will be led by the Sunderland City Council Local Plan. The Core Strategy Preferred Options report details the areas where new development is expected over the next 20 years.
- 1.1.33 The Core Strategy recognises that the need to regenerate the city centre is a key priority. As part of this regeneration, the Vaux/Farrington Row site on the south bank of the Wear is identified as a strategic site for major development. This site is around 19 ha in total size, of which around 15.4 ha is reserved for development, and would support employment-led mixed-use development, with an emphasis on office and residential development. It is estimated the Vaux site could support up to 4,000 jobs.
- 1.1.34 The TEMPRO software with the National Trip End Model dataset 6.2 (released 2011) also contains forecasts on changes in population, households and employment. This data shows that there is a forecast increase in population across the Sunderland district.

- 1.1.35 The data also shows that there is a forecast increase in jobs across the Sunderland district, with the majority of these jobs in Sunderland city itself. Coupled with the decrease in working age population, this suggests that the proportion of people commuting into Sunderland from nearby districts across Tyne and Wear and County Durham again strengthening the case for the delivery of the SSTC CL.
- 1.1.36 Further to this the Port is another key asset, with council ownership and control meaning that its role can be shaped to fit with the wider economic needs of the city. The presence of a rail head at the port with a direct link to the national rail network, allows direct access by locomotives and rolling stock operated by main line rail freight companies, providing an ideal solution for cost-effective and greener alternative to road haulage. The ability to provide enhanced road links from this rail head will clearly assist in the growth of the Port of Sunderland and increase its economic importance, with the delivery of the SSTC CL being a key driver in this.

1.2 Wider Strategic Context – Policy Review

- 1.2.1 The proposals are strongly aligned to various National, Regional and Local policies, helping to achieve both their immediate goals and contribute to longer-term aims. Details of these policies and the scheme's contributions are presented below.
- 1.2.2 *National Planning Policy Framework*
- 1.2.3 The NPPF was released on 27th March 2012, replacing all previous planning policy guidance immediately and designed to be the primary source of national planning guidance in England.
- 1.2.4 Central to the NPPF is a "presumption in favour of sustainable development", which for planning means that:
- Local Planning Authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area; and
 - Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or
 - specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 1.2.5 The NPPF states: All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment Plans and decisions should take into account whether:
- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
 - safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
 - improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that could effectively limit the significant impacts of the development - development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

- 1.2.6 It further states that “Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.”
- 1.2.7 *North East Local Enterprise Partnership*
“More and Better Jobs A Strategic, Economic Plan for the North East” (2014)
The Economic Plan outlines a vision to have over 1 million people in employment in the Area Economy by 2024. This would represent an increase of circa 100,000 jobs from current employment levels, and would deliver an employment rate of around 73%, closing the current gap with England excluding London. As such the North East Local Enterprise Partnership highlights its Vision as follows:
“Our vision
Today the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area is a globally competitive economy, with more and better jobs being created through making, trading and innovating across a range of sectors by a broad diversity of businesses. With a concerted effort to invest in what is best for businesses and communities we can go even further. So we are setting ourselves a vision: By 2024 our economy will provide over one million jobs.”
- 1.2.8 It is clear, given the tag line to the Economic Plan for the North East, that a priority has been placed on the delivery of enhanced employment opportunities in the NE. As highlighted the SSTC CL will enable the delivery of this by providing enhanced access by all modes to employment opportunities and also by improving the viability of business by enhancing their accessibility, both to a wider catchment of employees and to complementary businesses and the Strategic Route Network.
- 1.2.9 *Sunderland Economic Masterplan and Update (2012)*
- 1.2.10 The Economic Masterplan proposes that, to become more prosperous, Sunderland must focus on a small number of important sectors and on the city centre, and do this by developing a low-carbon economy. Its states that in order to achieve this it must make more of four key assets as follows:
- Nissan, to exploit electric vehicle technology and become a world leader in producing electric vehicles;
 - The University of Sunderland, to redefine the city as a place where knowledge is part of the way of life;
 - The Port of Sunderland, to enable the servicing of new offshore wind farms; and
 - using specific development sites to create a new business district in the city centre, more retail sites, and an electric vehicle technopole.
- 1.2.11 As such the Economic Masterplan and its subsequent update have set out the following 5 aims:
- Aim 1 ‘A new kind of university city’
 - Aim 2 ‘ A national hub of the low-carbon economy’
 - Aim 3 ‘ A prosperous and well-connected waterfront city centre’
 - Aim 4 ‘ An inclusive city economy – for all ages’
 - Aim 5 ‘ A one city approach to economic leadership’

- 1.2.12 The SSTC CL scheme will clearly contribute towards the five key aims identified, in particular strengthening the third aim by improving access to the city centre and linking the key assets in the city centre.

1.3 Description of the Project

- 1.3.1 The corridor from the A19 to the start of the New Weir Crossing passes along the existing alignment of the A1231 Wessington Way, which is a 4-lane dual-carriageway. There are a number of junctions along the route that are subject to improvement proposals, with these being as follows:

- A19 Junction.- the current junction is a grade separated 3 lane roundabout carrying the A1231 over the A19 via 2 structures on the circulatory;
- Ferryboat Lane Junction - this current junction is a 4 arm roundabout serving the dual A1231 east to west and Ferryboat Lane north to south;
- Barrons Quay Road Junction - this current junction is a 4 arm roundabout serving the dual A1231 east to west and Barrons Quay Road north to south; and
- Colima Ave Junction - this current junction is a 5 arm roundabout serving the dual A1231 east to west and Colima Avenue to the south. There are currently 2 arms to the north of the junction, serving a mix of industrial and residential plots.

- 1.3.2 The second part of the corridor under consideration runs from Sunderland City Centre to the Port of Sunderland along mainly urban roads with residential and commercial land use frontage, with the relevant junctions subject to improvement being as follows:

- High Street Junction - this current junction is a 4 arm roundabout serving the A1018 north to south and High St East and High Street West respectively;
- Borough Road Junction - this current junction is a 4 arm roundabout serving the A1018 north to south and Borough Road East to West; and
- Hendon Road / Dock Link Junction - this proposed junction connects the existing Hendon Road to the proposed link to the dock road.

1.4 The Problem Identified & Justification for the Scheme

1.4.1 *Strategic Overview*

- 1.4.2 As noted earlier, it is clear that a priority has been placed on the delivery of enhanced employment opportunities in the NE, with this emphasised by the promotion of the various Enterprise Zones in the region. In order to maximise the possibility a successful outcome to both the NELEP and Sunderland City Council policy aspirations, the provision of enhanced access by all modes to employment opportunities and the improved viability of businesses by enhancing their accessibility, both to a wider catchment of employees and to complementary business and the Strategic Route Network is a key trigger in this process.

- 1.4.3 The SSTC CL would provide a major enhancement of Sunderland's transport infrastructure. By more effectively connecting Sunderland city centre and the Port of Sunderland to the strategic road network, the transport connectivity of the Sunderland and the wider NELEP area will be greatly enhanced. As such this will give Sunderland the ability to contribute to prosperity of wider catchment and play a much larger role in the NELEP economy.
- 1.4.4 Congestion and unreliable journey times are accepted as deterrent factors that influence the efficient delivery of business operations and outcomes. Such factors are a key consideration for business in deciding whether to remain or to relocate – and indeed the degree to which they prosper in their current location. The SSTC CL will make a major contribution to managing and reducing congestion, improving public transport links, enhancing cycle and pedestrian connectivity and enabling reliable journey times, and provide new businesses further opportunities by opening up new local markets as well as sites for development. In this way it will increase the efficiency and competitiveness of local businesses, reduce the probability of businesses moving away and provide a better offer for prospective investors in the area. The SSTC CL will also assist in the delivery of the Enterprise Zone sites close to the A19, at the International Advanced Manufacturing Park and at the Port of Sunderland.
- 1.4.5 By improving accessibility the SSTC CL will provide a larger catchment of prospective employees. The improved efficiency and competitiveness gained through better transport connections and access to a wider pool of skilled labour will raise the performance of businesses located within a wide area. Further to this it will also improve accessibility to training and development opportunities for those wishing to enhance their skills and earning potential.
- 1.4.6 *Identification of Problems*
- 1.4.7 Particular barriers to improving accessibility and problems to be overcome within the city are summarised below. These have been identified through a range of methods including extensive local knowledge, site observations, consultation, technical analysis and traffic modelling that supported the promotion and delivery preceding SSTC projects.
- Problem 1 – poor access to major development sites identified for regeneration and economic growth has the potential to undermine future growth in the region;
 - Problem 2 – low levels of public transport accessibility from deprived communities to emerging new employment areas which exacerbates social exclusion and again potentially reduces the prospect of area wide regeneration;
 - Problem 3 – economic growth in the region (business growth in particular, and to a lesser extent housing growth) are becoming increasingly focussed in more peripheral areas where public transport accessibility is lower, reducing the potential for good public transport connections and encouraging private car use;
 - Problem 4 – journey time reliability of buses as a result of congestion on the local road network is negatively affecting the attractiveness of public transport use and limiting growth;
 - Problem 5 – new development sites across the whole of the region, regardless of the location within the urban centres or on peripheral sites require better public transport provision and integration;
 - Problem 6 – poor linkages from the port to the city centre and onwards to the strategic trunk road network have the potential to further reduce the prospect of wider regeneration;

- Problem 7 – congestion hotspots on the approaches to the Weir crossing for extended periods of the day and in particular the AM and PM peak periods are hampering the efficient movement of traffic on local strategic routes; and
- Problem 8 – increasing traffic congestion at key locations is resulting in greater air and noise pollution within the city, which is affecting environmental quality and people's health and quality of life.

1.4.8 The overall SSTC programme is comprised of four projects – addressing 5 key sections. The agreed route begins at the A19 / A1231 intersection, along Wessington Way. The corridor then crosses the River Wear via the new SSTC 2 bridge crossing at Claxheugh and continues to travel east towards Sunderland City Centre and the Port of Sunderland via the southern banks of the River Wear. The five sections that have been developed are as follows:

- Section 1: St Mary's Way (adjacent to the former Vaux Brewery site) – construction completed December 2014;
- Section 2: New Wear Crossing (NWC) - construction commenced
- Section 3: Deptford (linking Phases 1 and 2) – program entry, outline business case and full scheme design ongoing for submission late 2016
- Section 4: Port of Sunderland (linking St Mary's Way and the Port of Sunderland)
- Section 5: Wessington Way (A1/ A19 to NWC)

1.4.9 The proposed SSTC CL (Commercial Links) combines sections 4 and 5 and completes the full Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor.

1.5 Previous Work Undertaken

As described above SSTC CL combines sections 4 and 5 of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (SSTC) programme. As such, an options' analysis study for the Scheme was undertaken in the context of the full SSTC programme. Initially this was undertaken by Arup during the development of a Preferred Option report in January 2005. Further to this, studies have been completed that consider Phases 2 and 3 of the SSTC individually.

1.5.1 The study initially considered several non-car based strategies. These failed to fully address the existing and future transport problems in the area and / or provide an adequate transport system for the regeneration areas along both banks of the River Wear without provision of highway infrastructure however they were incorporated into the Local Transport Plan (LTP) going forward. These measures included a Bus Strategy, Cycling Strategy and Access for All Strategy in association with initiatives such as the take-up of Travel Plan measures. Further to this the Metro extension to Sunderland city centre and South Hylton also informed the study and its outcomes.

1.5.2 The intervention measures that were proposed were assessed on the basis of the likely ability to meet the scheme objectives, and assessed on an adverse / neutral / beneficial scoring basis taking into account the viability of the schemes in construction terms and cost.

- 1.5.3 As such twenty potential schemes were identified during the options analysis process and where possible, grouped into sections. Subsequently a sift of all of the relevant options, based around the Government's overarching transport objectives (relating to environment, safety, economy, accessibility and integration), was undertaken and five options were developed comprising combinations of corridors or routes to the west, Riverside, City Centre, and Port access sections of the SSTC, together with an option for a new Wear crossing.
- 1.5.4 In order to assess these further the options were then subjected to a wider transport appraisal to determine those that performed best in terms of dealing with anticipated traffic levels. The transport appraisal delivered two main conclusions:
- that a new bridge crossing of the Wear would be required to relieve traffic congestion on existing river crossings; and
 - that the best locations for a potential bridge crossing would be either at Claxheugh or Deptford.
- 1.5.5 The SSTC findings were further assessed and concluded that two options should be developed and taken to public consultation and that these should be based on two schemes at Claxheugh and Deptford.
- 1.5.6 Alongside the consultation process, further analysis of the above alternatives was undertaken in terms of traffic flows, cost, transport benefits, public consultation, environmental issues and land and property issues, which found that the Claxheugh Option scored best in terms of reducing vehicle kilometres driven, reducing total travel time and lost time on the network. The Deptford Option was the next preferred route.
- 1.5.7 A provisional economic appraisal was undertaken using TUBA to compare the stream of benefits throughout the life of the two alternatives. This concluded that the Claxheugh option derives greater benefit compared to the Deptford option as;
- more traffic is removed from the congested Queen Alexandra (QA) bridge and its approaches; and
 - more vehicle kilometres are saved, due to the location of bridge equidistant between the existing A19 Hylton and QA bridges.
- 1.5.8 By considering the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options and taking into account the views of the public, it was recommended that a new bridge crossing at Claxheugh is promoted as the Preferred Option to be developed as part of the wider Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor.
- 1.5.9 *Work Undertaken to Establish the Options*
- 1.5.10 SSTC has been a major scheme aspiration for Sunderland City Council for over 10 years. Through this period a number of options have been considered. In developing the proposals all of the historical options have been reviewed and considered across this period and taken them forward to the option sifting stage.

1.5.11 A site audit and workshop and was undertaken on the June 2016. The purpose of the workshop was to review the potential scheme options along the route and undertake a high level assessment. The site workshop considered the following:

- the scheme objectives and desired outcomes;
- the identification of known / potential site constraints and challenges; and
- the criteria to determine and validate the preferred options

1.5.12 *Work Undertaken to Establish the Preferred Option*

1.5.13 Following the site audit workshop the scheme was developed further through consideration of the site findings to establish the form of the preferred option. This work established base design guidance to be utilised and considered proposed alignments, design speeds, cross sections, speed limits, cross-fall / super-elevation and associated visibility requirements amongst other design criteria. The following deliverables were developed as part of the geometric design for the current stage of the project:

- 1:1000 General Arrangement Plan;
- Cross-Sections at selected intervals;
- Departures from Standard submission forms and Departures summary;
- Individual General Arrangement for each Structure Identified;
- Outline Plans of any options discounted; and
- Principle Quantities.

1.5.14 A detailed modelling and appraisal process was also undertaken with further details of this provided within the Economic Case of this submission.

1.6 Impact of Doing Nothing

1.6.1 Given that the development of the SSTC, made up of all the phases has been a cornerstone of Sunderland City Council's development and regeneration aspirations for over a decade the impact of doing nothing and the non-delivery of the SSTC CL package of works would be a significant blow to the economic growth of the area.

1.6.2 The development of the EZ at both IAMP and the Port of Sunderland would be jeopardised with the full potential of these developments maybe never realised given it is critical to have adequate infrastructure in place to mitigate the network impacts of these vital developments and to meet the needs of other planned growth.

1.6.3 As noted earlier congestion and unreliable journey times are accepted as deterrent factors that influence the efficient delivery of business operations and outcomes. Such factors are a key consideration for business in deciding whether to stay or relocate – and indeed the degree to which they prosper in their current location. If not delivered, the ability to provide a step change in the ability to:

- manage and reduce congestion;
- improve public transport links; and
- enhance cycle and pedestrian connectivity

will be severely damaged, resulting in the inability to deliver reduced and reliable journey times leading to a negative impact going forward.

- 1.6.4 The impact of the trips associated with new dwellings on the local impact would result in severe congestion and peak spreading, resulting in economic losses, increased emissions and social consequences from a lack of connectivity to business, leisure and community facilities.

1.7 Objectives

- 1.7.1 The overarching aim of the SSTC CL is to:

- Enable economic growth in Sunderland and the NELEP area.

1.7.2 *Key Objectives*

The key objectives of the SSTC CL scheme are:

- to enable development to be readily accessible by users of public and private transport, as well as by pedestrians and cyclists;
- to provide for a strategic public transport corridor that can easily be managed;
- to assist in the regeneration of the inner city including the port, the riverbanks and the housing regeneration either side;
- to improve the environment and safety in areas currently adversely affected by heavy traffic flows or by traffic in environmentally sensitive areas;
- enhance access to the Port from the A19 corridor and to the routes to the south;
- maximise the benefits from the already committed SSTC 1,2 and 3 schemes;
- improve the efficiency and reliability of key routes for workers, customers and suppliers to significant centres of economic activity;
- make best use of walking, cycling and public transport routes to key centres and major new developments; and
- minimise the impact of road traffic on residential areas and to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

- 1.7.3 Through the achievement of these objectives, the SSTC will facilitate the wider aims of Sunderland City Council and the NELEP in facilitating much-needed economic growth. The reduction in congestion and associated time-savings will present significant benefits to the local economy, as well as reducing associated vehicular emissions

- 1.7.4 Additionally, through the increased connectivity offered by the SSTC CL the local populace (both current and future) will ideally be able to take advantage of improved links to employment in the wider region: along the A19 corridor and further into the NE region.

1.8 Key Constraints

- 1.8.1 As with most transport projects, the key constraints to SSTC CL have generally been managed and where possible overcome during its development. The primary constraints have been identified and are listed as follows.

- **Affordability** - delays to gaining funding approval.
Any delays to the release of funding will delay the realisation of the economic benefits to the corridor.

- **Affordability** - Inaccuracy in cost estimates.
This has been mitigated through the application of appropriate risk and optimism bias levels for the purposes of the economic assessment.
- **Approvals and Consents**
Access to land for new sections of highway and the delivery of the relevant permissions.
- **Programme**
Delivery of schemes within the allocated timeframe however this has been mitigated through the development of a strong Management and Commercial case, presented within this document.

1.8.2 *Inter-dependencies*

- 1.8.3 Whilst the SSTC CL project is designed to stand alone, and as such has no inter-dependent projects or aspects that would prevent its delivery, the Project is fundamental to maximising the development opportunity in the area and in particular at the EZ locations.
- 1.8.4 The Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (SSTC) has been identified and developed by Sunderland City Council (SCC) over a number of years. The current delivery of the new Wear Crossing and the detailed development of SSTC 3 - linking the bridge to the already completed initial City Centre section - will provide the central core section of SSTC.
- 1.8.5 The SSTC CL project will complete the defining and critical final sections that will provide the necessary infrastructure to fully improve transport links from the A19 through Sunderland City Centre to the Port of Sunderland and the link to the south from the A1018 link and ultimately maximise the full benefits from all elements, be they committed or delivered, of the full SSTC.
- 1.8.6 As such, SSTC CL is critical in order to open up access between the Enterprise Zones at the Port of Sunderland and the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) and the Low Carbon Enterprise Zone (LCEZ).
- 1.8.7 The LCEZ is the UK's first designated area for Ultra Low Carbon Vehicles, this site is close to the UK home of Nissan. The sites located here focus on low carbon vehicles and are closely linked to the adjacent IAMP site. The sites require high quality links to the global automotive supply chain and the skills expertise located at the University of Sunderland's Institute for Automotive and Manufacturing Advanced Practice (AMAP) and Gateshead College's Skills Academy for Sustainable Manufacturing and Innovation (SASMI). The Nissan, IAMP, LCEZ and sites AMAP are all accessible from SSTC with SSTC CL enhancing these links further. The need for improved links for access to technical jobs at these locations as the site grows is clear.
- 1.8.8 The improved links from the southern housing areas of the City via SSTC are critical to the development and sustainability of these sites. The link to the Port of Sunderland provided by SSTC CL opens up the accessibility to provide a catalyst to redevelopment. Access has inhibited the Port's ability to compete, in particular with reference to the usage of its rail head.
- 1.8.9 The level of traffic growth associated with Sunderland's regeneration aspirations and emerging Local Plan will see significant increases in travel demand to cross the Wear. SSTC CL represents a key enabler to assist in the large regeneration areas on the South bank of the Wear around the former Vaux site and Pallion shipyard.

- 1.8.10 Unless delivered at the same time the congestion levels contributed to the remaining pinch points will provide a barrier that will inevitably provide a negative impact on the development of the sites. This will be seen as a throttle to access and regeneration aspirations to the city.

1.9 Stakeholders

- 1.9.1 The main stakeholder groups affected by the scheme are described here.

1.9.2 *Sunderland City Council*

- 1.9.3 All of interventions are located within Sunderland and should significantly improve traffic movements in the North and east of the city. Sunderland City Council officers have long been in support of the scheme and have been actively involved in the stakeholder consultation for the SSTC Strategy, contributing to the development of the scheme over many years. A letter of their support of the scheme is included in **Appendix X**.

1.9.4 *Port Of Sunderland*

- 1.9.5 The Port of Sunderland states that their ability to develop will improve, as overall transport costs decrease. The ability to access labour markets will grow, hence reducing the costs of employment. A letter of their support of the scheme is included in **Appendix X**.

1.9.6 *North East LEP*

The LEP support the package of measures and welcome the improved transport options that will allow all members of the community to contribute to the wider economy and, more broadly, to society in general. They will work with us during implementation to ensure the outcomes are achieved. A letter of their support of the scheme is included in **Appendix X**.

1.9.7 *Local Businesses and Residents*

- 1.9.8 Construction works to the junctions may result in disruption to local businesses and residents due to delays and re-routing, however, stakeholders are likely to approve of the scheme. Major business locations and developers agree that Sunderland's attractiveness as a place to do business will improve, as overall transport costs to business will decrease and accessible labour markets will grow, hence reducing the costs of employment.

1.9.9 *Stakeholder Considerations*

The Council has undertaken stakeholder engagement to date with some key stakeholders such as the Port of Sunderland. This will continue across a wide spectrum of stakeholders as the project develops further and the Council will dedicate further resources to communications and continued engagement throughout the life of the Project.

1.10 The Options - Requires input from economic case not available at this time

1.10.1 *Option 1:*

1.10.2 *Evaluation of the Options against Scheme Objectives*

1.10.2.1 *Objective 1:...*

1.10.3 Key Risks



DRAFT

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