

RESPONSE FORM

Long Distance Routes project proposal for NPF3

Name	Harry Thomson
Organisation	South West of Scotland Transport Partnership (SWestrans)
Position	Lead Officer

	Support	Any other suggestions / information
Vision		Add: Enhance the visibility of Cycling
Objectives		See attachment
Routes/links included in project proposal	<p>Signing development being undertaken by SWestrans/Dumfries & Galloway Council</p> <p>Development being undertaken by SWestrans</p> <p>Signing being undertaken by SWestrans/Dumfries & Galloway Council</p> <p>Existing route proposed for upgrade to strategic network</p>	<p>National Cycle Route 73 Newton Stewart to Cairnryan.</p> <p>Southern Upland Cycleway</p> <p>Euro Velo Route 1</p> <p>Dumfries to Moffat: Enhancing signing on route to highlight the proximity of the 7stanes Ae Forest trail centre and improve signing though Ae Forest between Ae Village and Beattock</p>

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	<p>Project being undertaken by Dumfries & Galloway Council</p> <p>Proposed for future national network – more discussion</p> <p>Proposed for future national network – more discussion</p>	<p>NCR 7: Enhanced connectivity to Dumfries town Centre and Railway Station also provides connectivity to Dumfries-Moffat and the local route from Dumfries to Mabie Forest (7Stanes mountain bike trail centre). This route when complete will allow visitors to access the trails by train from Central Scotland and Northern England. The route will also provide an alternative route via a number of tourist destinations, New Abbey, Rockcliff, Dalbeattie, etc. to NCR7 west of dumfries.</p> <p>Dumfries-Lockerbie. Part exists. Part in Regional Transport Strategy. Links Lockerbie to Dumfries and forward destinations</p> <p>Dumfries-Ayr/Kilmarnock. Part exists. Extension KM trail for connection to East Ayrshire (A76 Corridor)</p>
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Any other feedback or information:

See following

SNH/SUSTRANS/SC LONG DISTANCE ROUTES CONSULTATION

SWESTRANS RESPONSE

1. Do you agree with the vision we're proposing? If not, please explain why.

SWestrans strongly supports the inclusion of Long Distance Paths and Trails as a national development in Scotland's Third National Planning Framework. The South West of Scotland is a deeply rural area, remote from and peripheral to the economic activity of the Central Belt. The Regional Transport Strategy for the South West of Scotland is focussed on overcoming the constraints of peripherality. Transportation networks are key to achieving this.

The vision outlined is consistent with development of a regional long distance network within the South West of Scotland which has been undertaken over the last decade and longer. Locally this includes National Cycle Routes 7, 74 and 73, the National Byway, the Southern Upland Way and Southern Upland Cycleway, Euro Velo Route 1, Annandale Way, Mull of Galloway Trail, Whithorn Pilgrim Way, as well as many local routes, and an extensive network of quiet minor routes, which although not designated, provide hundreds of additional miles of attractive cycling and walking facility.

This network, together with the historical connection of the region with the invention of the pedal bicycle and Kirkpatrick McMillan, as well as more recently the 7stanes mountain biking centres, leads some of those who know the region to refer to it as a 'biking heaven'.

We would add to the Vision, 'to enhance the visibility of cycling'.

2. Do you agree with the objectives for developing and enhancing the network of long distance routes? If not, please explain why.

Yes. The objectives are consistent with our own.

In our response to the NPF3 consultation we highlight a number of relevant points:

- A national network of long distance routes should be designated as a national development. However, a greater national understanding is needed of what already exists and what is in development, possibly through an audit and mapping exercise. The map of routes (Map 11, page 33) needs to recognise routes in development, including National Cycle Route 73, Euro Velo Route 1, and the Southern Upland Cycleway in Dumfries & Galloway.

- Several developments in the South West appear to have been overlooked – most notably the Southern Upland Cycleway project – but we would also ask that consideration be given to:
 - Dumfries – Moffat
 - Dumfries – Lockerbie
 - Dumfries – Ayr/Kilmarnock
 - National Byway
 - Euro Velo 1
 - Whithorn Pilgrim Way
- Completion of NCR73 will provide an international connection to the long distance path network from Ireland via the Loch Ryan Ports. However, this is dependent on a Transport Scotland road improvement scheme at Drummuckloch to Innermessan, an outstanding element of the Port Facilities National Project. An early indication of when this project will be progressed would be welcome.
- In rural areas such as Dumfries & Galloway designated long-distance routes are enhanced by key local routes and a network of low traffic minor roads which can play a role in connecting the long distance routes into local services and places of interest.
 - Under 'Network Benefits – Economic' we would add a reference to the facilities that long distance routes connect to
- Rail connections into the long distance path network in rural areas are a valuable asset. Six of the seven existing stations in Dumfries & Galloway provide such connections: Gretna (NCR7); Annan (Annandale Way, NCR7); Dumfries (NCR7); Sanquhar (Southern Upland Way, Southern Upland Cycleway); Lockerbie (NCR74); Stranraer (Mull of Galloway Trail, Southern Upland Way, NCR73, EuroVelo 1, Southern Upland Cycleway). It is clear from Map 11 that Moffat is at the hub of many long-distance routes. However, the nearest rail-head to Moffat is at Lockerbie, some 15 miles distant. The Regional Transport Strategy for the South West of Scotland includes an aspiration for a station at Beattock to serve Moffat and the surrounding area, and there is a clear synergy of this aspiration with the proposed National Development. Other station aspirations in the Regional Transport Strategy, including Thornhill, Eastriggs, and Dunragit/Glenluce could provide additional connectivity into the rural long-distance route network. There is potential linkage of the proposed National Development with the Scottish Stations Fund.
- The recent Transform Scotland report 'The Value of Cycle Tourism: Opportunities for the Scottish Economy' makes a number of recommendations which should be considered as part of this national project.
- The recognition within the draft Framework of the tourism potential of the Southern Scotland Biosphere Reserve and the Dark Skies Park is welcome.

3. Do you support the routes/gaps in your area listed in Annex 3 as 'proposed for inclusion' in the NPF3 project?

It is notable that only one project from Dumfries & Galloway is proposed for inclusion, 'Dumfries & Galloway Coast Path'. We support its inclusion, but consider the proposal less developed than others (see question 4) which should be included.

4. Are there any other routes/gaps in your area, either those listed in Annex 3 as 'more discussion required' or any others not listed, that you consider justify inclusion in this project proposal? If so, please provide details and justification.

Route 73 Newton Stewart to Cairnryan should be promoted to 'proposed for inclusion'. The route is anticipated to be complete apart from Drummuckloch to Innermessan by April 2014. Completion of this road improvement scheme is an outstanding element of the Transport Links to Loch Ryan Ports national project in NPF2. More discussion is not required.

We would propose the inclusion of other routes in Dumfries & Galloway which are either complete or in development:

- Southern Upland Cycleway (Portpatrick to Moffat): mostly developed – proposed for inclusion;
- Euro Velo Route 1: coincides with NCR73/7 – proposed for inclusion;
- Dumfries – Moffat: route exists, potential upgrade to national network – proposed for inclusion;
- Dumfries – Lockerbie: Dumfries-Locharbriggs exists, Lockerbie-Lochmaben in Regional Transport Strategy – more discussion required;
- Dumfries – Ayr/Kilmarnock: Dumfries-Sanquhar exists – more discussion required;

We would also draw attention to the National Byway, and the Whithorn Pilgrim Way, both existing routes which appear to have been overlooked, but should be included in any national mapping exercise.

5. Do you have any cost estimates or other relevant information on implementation of routes/links in your area that you could provide to us?

Two key outstanding links are completion of the Southern Upland Cycleway from Stranraer to Portpatrick, and Lockerbie to Lochmaben Cycle Route (ultimately Lockerbie to Dumfries). SWestrans and Dumfries and Galloway Council have undertaken design and development work on both these links.

In respect of Stranraer to Portpatrick, it is proposed to make use of a minor road (Old Military Road) for most of the route. However, there is a hiatus on the outskirts of Portpatrick. Three potential routes have been identified and are being investigated further. The estimated cost of completion is £350,000.

In respect of Lockerbie-Lochmaben, the major cost is associated with forming a bridge over the River Annan (making use of remaining bridge piers from former viaduct). The estimated cost is in the vicinity of £1 million.

The following table sets out the routes we think should be considered as part of a national network of long distance routes, together with commentary on their current status.

Route	Commentary
National Cycle Route 7	Exists in D&G. We support inclusion of this route
National Cycle Route 74	Exists in D&G. We support inclusion of this route
National Cycle Route 73 (Completion)	<p>NCR73 Newton Stewart to Cairnryan Ferry Ports was conceived as part of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. The route is signed from Newton Stewart to Glenluce, and will be completed from Glenluce to Stranraer in parallel with development of the Southern Upland Cycleway project (depends on facilities being provided as part of the Transport Scotland Dunragit Bypass scheme, scheduled to open in April 2014). Completion of the route to the Cairnryan Ferry Ports is essential to provide international connectivity of the long distance network to Ireland. The link from Stranraer exists partially, but completion depends on a Transport Scotland upgrade scheme at Innermessan to Drummuckloch. This scheme is an outstanding element of the National Project for Links to the Loch Ryan Ports included in NPF2, and early indication of scheduling is desirable.</p> <p>Signing of the route is being undertaken by Dumfries & Galloway Council in partnership with SWestrans and in parallel with development of the Southern Upland Cycleway project.</p>
Southern Upland Cycleway	<p>The Southern Upland Way was conceived as a long distance walking route. Whilst most of it is accessible for mountain biking, and guidance on cycling the routes is available, many sections would be unsuitable for tour cycling, would not sustain heavy cycling use, and such use would conflict with its primary use for walking.</p> <p>Vision</p> <p>The Regional Transport Strategy for the South West of Scotland includes a priority intervention for an 'East-West Cycle Route along Southern Upland Way Corridor'. This concept is being developed by SWestrans as the 'Southern Upland Cycleway', on surfaced routes suitable for tour cycling.</p> <p>Status</p> <p>Completion of the route from Stranraer (a key regional railhead) to Moffat (a hub for long distance routes in the</p>

	<p>South of Scotland) depends on facilities being provided as part of the Transport Scotland Dunragit Bypass scheme, scheduled to open in April 2014. The route includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenluce • Glentool and Clatteringshaws • (Alternative route Newton Stewart) • Glenkens • Keir Mill where Kirkpatrick McMillan built the first pedal driven bicycle • Drumlanrig (Cycling Museum) • Sanquhar • Wanlockhead <p>Further Development</p> <p>Designers have identified three possible routes to complete the SUC from Stranraer to Portpatrick. This link will provide local connectivity from the Rhinns of Galloway into the Stranraer service centre, as well as a route for tourists from the Stranraer railhead into the rural hinterland. The estimated cost for this section is £350,000. Design and consultation work is ongoing by SWestrans.</p> <p>From Moffat there is potential to develop the route further eastwards through Scottish Borders towards the North Sea coast. However, no development work has yet been undertaken.</p>
EuroVelo Route 1	<p>In the south west of Scotland this route coincides with NCR73 from the Loch Ryan Ferry Ports to Newton Stewart, and then NCR7 northwards towards Glasgow. Signing of the route is being progressed by SWestrans as part of its Southern Upland Cycleway project. However, as with parallel projects, completion depends on Dunragit Bypass (due April 2014) and Innermessan to Drummuckloch (not yet scheduled). Completion and signing of this route will provide international connectivity, and add the international context of the Euro Velo network to the proposed national network.</p>
National Byway	<p>National Byway is an existing long distance cycle network of signed routes. SWestrans has been undertaking a signing refresh of the route in its area as part of development of the Southern Upland Cycleway.</p>
Dumfries-Moffat	<p>This is an existing route within the South West of Scotland cycle route network (designated local route 10). The route has been signed, and includes Ae Forest (an important mountain biking attraction), and Beattock.</p> <p>Moffat is at the hub of numerous long distance routes. Dumfries-Moffat could provide important strategic connectivity with the proposed national network</p>

	<p>between the Moffat Hub and the regional capital of Dumfries.</p> <p>The Regional Transport Strategy includes a priority intervention for re-opening of a railway station at Beattock to serve Moffat and the area nearby. This aspiration would provide rail access to the numerous long distance routes serving Moffat.</p> <p>There is potential for low cost improvements to the route, including revised route designation and upgraded signing.</p>
Dumfries-Lockerbie	<p>The Caledonian Cycleway in Dumfries makes use of the former Dumfries-Lockerbie railway line to connect the town centre with peripheral areas as far as Locharbriggs.</p> <p>The Regional Transport Strategy includes a priority intervention for a link between Lockerbie and Lochmaben making use of the other end of the same former railway. This will provide local connectivity for residents to key services.</p> <p>The two ends of this route could be connected with a low cost on-highway signing project making use of minor roads parallel to the former railway. This would provide a strategic link from the regional capital to its only main line railway station at Lockerbie.</p> <p>The major cost with Lockerbie-Lochmaben is associated with forming a bridge over the River Annan (making use of remaining bridge piers from former viaduct). The estimated cost is in the vicinity of £1 million. Preliminary design work has been undertaken. However, further feasibility study is needed.</p>
Dumfries – Ayr/Kilmarnock	<p>There is existing signed route (KM Trail/SUC) making use of minor roads in the A76 (Nith Valley Corridor) from Dumfries as far as Sanquhar.</p> <p>Dumfries & Galloway Council and East Ayrshire Council are jointly investigating connectivity improvements on this corridor.</p> <p>There is potential to create a long distance route on this corridor, connecting the key population centres of Dumfries with Ayr and Kilmarnock.</p>
Annandale Way	Exists in D&G. We support inclusion of this route.
Mull of Galloway Trail	Exists in D&G. We support inclusion of this route.
Whithorn Pilgrim Way	<p>This 34 mile walking/cycling route, from Glenluce Abbey to the Cradle of Scottish Christianity at Whithorn Priory via Glenluce, was developed by the Whithorn Trust, including signing. It connects with the Southern Upland Way, and includes the important local long distance route hub at Glenluce (NCR73, Southern Upland Cyclway, EuroVelo1).</p> <p>The Regional Transport Strategy includes a priority intervention to re-open a station for Dunragit/Glenluce.</p>

	<p>This would provide important access to long distance routes at the Glenluce hub, as well as access to and from the deep Machars of Wigtownshire. Opportunities for rail development are being investigated through the Scottish Stations Fund, and the potential for a Community Rail Partnership for the Stranraer Line.</p>
<p>Dumfries & Galloway Coastal Path</p>	<p>We support inclusion of this route.</p>