

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal – summary of areas for consideration

	ISA Advice	What the Transport Strategy currently says	Recommended Approach
1	<p>Noise and vibration Sustainability objectives set the framework on which the Transport Strategy is assessed. There are 13 sustainability objectives for the ISA; including noise and vibration</p> <p>The following issue related to noise have been identified as part of the ISA assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive noise exposure from transport can cause stress to residents • Sensitive receptors may be adversely affected from increased transport development • Noise can affect tranquillity, particularly the disruption of peace in nature and green space • Noise can adversely affect biodiversity <p>The ISA assessment identified high level opportunities for reduction of noise impact, for example, through the provision of public transport, active travel or digital connectivity, integration of transport modes and increase in rail freight.</p>	<p>At present, the Transport Strategy already has a number of policies which will bring additional benefits for noise pollution and vibration (and address opportunities highlighted in the ISA). These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting public transport and active travel options, which can reduce noise levels - Reducing the impact of freight either through increases in provision for rail freight or through our commitment to reduce the impact of road freight on local environments. <p>However, the Strategy does not explicitly have a policy or narrative on our commitments to the reduction of noise and vibration.</p>	<p>While the Forum will be universally committed to reducing the impact of noise on local communities, the draft Transport Strategy is strategic in nature.</p> <p>As a Sub- National Transport Body EEH is not responsible for the planning or delivery of schemes. It is at this point in the delivery process that noise reduction would need to be planned and delivered.</p>
2	<p>Habitats Regulation Assessments assess potential adverse impact on vulnerable sites, plants, habitats.</p> <p>There are a series of 'screening' proposals during the process of scheme development.</p>	<p>At present, the draft Transport Strategy has included a commitment to protect and improve the quality of habitats alongside our wider commitments to Environmental Net Gain.</p>	<p>While the Forum will be universally committed to the protection and improvement of habitats, in line with the requirements of the Habitats Regulation Assessment, the draft Transport Strategy is strategic in</p>

	<p>As a regional transport strategy the EEH Transport Strategy cannot be assessed in detail and therefore it has not been possible to demonstrate the strategy will have no impact on European sites included for assessment purposes.</p> <p>The ISA includes specific recommendations for adoption.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development will not be located within any European site so that no direct habitat loss will occur. • Wherever possible works will be avoided where there is a direct transmission pathway to European sites (such as a European site downstream of a new road). • Buffer zones will be provided between construction/improvement works and European sites (the size and extent of which should be dependent upon the nature of impact and the sensitivity of receptors). • There would be a general presumption against the permitting of construction/improvement works which generate adverse effects in proximity to European sites, which are sensitive to those effects e.g. where adverse impacts on the water environment are identified, and that improved access to European sites will be closely monitored and managed to ensure the integrity of the sites is not compromised. 	<p>By including the specific requirements for habitats protection and improvement at this strategic level, we are setting an expectation that individual schemes will each define their more detailed approach to habitats protection and improvement.</p>	<p>nature.</p> <p>As a Sub- National Transport Body, EEH is not responsible for the planning or delivery of schemes and it would be at the point of planning schemes that EEH would expect scheme promoters, in line with our commitments to Environmental Net Gain, to ensure the preservation and improvement of habitats.</p>
3	<p>The ISA has identified opportunities to introduce Low Emission Zones (LEZs) within the urban areas in the EEH region.</p> <p>The ISA assessment of health impacts suggest that</p>	<p>A number of EEH partners are already considering Low Emission Zones in their urban areas.</p> <p>The principle of a low emission zone is</p>	<p>The draft Transport Strategy could set out its support for the Low Emission Zones. However, decisions on these matters will remain the discretion of local partners.</p>

	LEZs could lead to an improvement in air quality and therefore a positive effect on respiratory health.	entirely in line with the ethos of the Transport Strategy however, as this is a locally-determined issue, the Strategy does not currently set its support or ambitions for Low Emission Zones.	
4	<p>Green Space</p> <p>The ISA has identified the health and wellbeing benefits of providing access to green space. It has highlighted the opportunities to improve access by sustainable modes to rural areas, to promote sustainable tourism and awareness of the region's AONBs and designated areas.</p> <p>Conversely, ISA has also identified the need to protect Green Spaces through "<i>encouraging the redevelopment of existing assets as well as, where new infrastructure is required, focusing development away from areas of high biodiversity and ecosystem service provision, and to enhance the quality of the transport 'soft estate' alongside transport corridors in order to improve habitat connectivity.</i>"</p>	<p>At present the Transport Strategy does not set out any ambitions to either improve, reduce or limit access to specific green spaces (such as AONB areas).</p> <p>Throughout the strategy, and in response to feedback from the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, there are references to supporting access to green space and the significant benefit of enhancing Greenways and the transport soft estate.</p>	<p>Access to green space provides both opportunities for access to nature, with links to improved health and wellbeing. However, there are considerations in relation to mode of access and the protection green space.</p> <p>The issue of protecting green spaces, such as AONBs by limiting access to them, has also been an issue raised through the EEH Influencers Group.</p> <p>To date, the EEH Business Unit has not tested options for a policy or approach that would limit or reduce access to protected areas of green space, such as AONBs.</p>
5	<p>Heritage Assets</p> <p>The ISA assessment has identified that the Transport Strategy could present opportunities to enhance access to heritage assets, including through walking and cycling routes and encouraging the use of non-motorised forms of transport, particularly between urban and countryside destinations.</p> <p>It is also acknowledged in the ISA that new or upgraded infrastructure must not negatively impact cultural heritage assets.</p>	<p>At present the Transport Strategy refers to particular challenge around connecting to recreational opportunities (such as heritage assets) in small market towns and their rural hinterlands.</p> <p>There is currently no specific policy relating to consideration of the impact of new or upgraded infrastructure to affect cultural heritage assets.</p>	<p>The draft Transport Strategy sets the framework for a network of sustainable and public transport connectivity solutions across the region, including to the region's priority locations, which may include locations with cultural heritage assets. The draft Transport Strategy is strategic in approach and is unlikely to be recommending access options to specific assets, such as a heritage site.</p>