

Part 1 Appraisal Summary Tables

Proposal Details			
Name and address of authority or organisation promoting the proposal: (Also provide name of any subsidiary organisations also involved in promoting the proposal)		Mr Michael Craigie, 01595 744 160, michael.craigie@shetland.gov.uk Shetland Islands Council, Development Service, Transport Planning Service, 6 North Ness, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0LZ	
Proposal Name:	Option RO1: Do Minimum – continue with the current level of timetabled service.	Name of Planner:	Stephen Canning, Peter Brett Associates
Proposal Description:	Continue with the current level of timetabled service. It should be noted that the Do Minimum in this instance includes the reinstatement of the air service to a level prior to the Rescue & Fire Fighting Service reductions. However, this is dependent on a scenario where sufficient resources are available in the island to provide this function. The air service would operate on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.	Estimated Total Public Sector Funding Requirement:	<i>Capital costs/grant</i> £0.00, although investment will be required in airfield licensing and RFFS services if the Do Minimum is to be delivered.
			<i>Current revenue support</i> £924k (rounded) per annum (exclusive of air service as costs are not disaggregated by route).
			<i>Annual revenue support</i> Assumed to be as per current revenue support.
Funding Sought From: (if applicable)	Transport Scotland	Amount of Application:	<i>Present Value of Cost to Govt.</i> Costs in this study are all reported in 2016 prices only. The costs would reflect those set out above.
Background Information			
Geographic Context:	The Skerries are an outlying archipelago in the north-east of the Shetland Islands. The island group is the easternmost of the Shetland archipelago. In terms of transport, Skerries is connected to the Shetland mainland by a Ro-Ro ferry service. There are connections to Vidlin on a Monday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday and one return connection per week to Lerwick on a Wednesday. All services are on-request.		

	<p>The Skerries air service was suspended on 23rd November 2015 due to a lack of sufficient Rescue & Fire Fighting Services (RFFS).</p>
Social Context:	<p>The Skerries population has been in steady decline since 1981 and is now believed to number less than 60.</p> <p>There are limited data available on housing in Skerries, although house prices are believed to be low and the property market slow.</p> <p>Medical cover for Skerries is provided by the Whalsay Health Centre.</p> <p>There has been a gradual decline in numbers at both primary and secondary school level, with just 2 children enrolled at the Primary School in 2014. The declining school rolls, closure of the high school and general population decline present a serious threat to the future sustainability of the island chain.</p>
Economic Context:	<p>Skerries has a relatively low economic activity rate (although perhaps underestimated by the official figures). Skerries has typically had a dependence on fishing and aquaculture for its livelihood. There was a community salmon farm in the islands employing six people, which was bought over and subsequently closed in early 2015, at a cost of six jobs. The loss of this farm led in turn to the closure of the small processing factory on the islands. There remain a couple of whitefish and shellfish boats resident to the islands, but the loss of the salmon industry was a significant blow to the community.</p> <p>There is very little formal economy outwith fishing. The land is not particularly fertile, although there is some small scale agriculture. Commuting has now become important to the island chain, with many residents leaving on a Monday and returning on a Friday, putting further pressure on local services.</p> <p>There has been a substantial increase in the number of people working from home in Skerries, which suggests that daily commuting options and on-island work is limited.</p>
Planning Objectives	
Objective:	Performance against planning objective:
<p><i>TPO1: The capacity of the services should not act as a constraint to regular and essential personal, vehicular and freight travel between the island(s) and Shetland Mainland</i></p>	<p>Performance against Transport Planning Objective: Minor Positive</p> <p>Whilst this option is effectively the continuation of the Do Minimum, it provides a minor positive in terms of capacity as it would lead to the reinstatement of the air service, which is not currently operational. The air only provides very little additional capacity in absolute terms, but any given flight could accommodate around 10% of the permanent resident population of Skerries.</p>

<p>TPO2a: Where an island has a 'commutable' combined ferry or drive / public transport / walk time to a main employment centre (e.g. 80 minutes), the connections provided should reliably facilitate commuting</p>	<p>Performance against Transport Planning Objective: Neutral</p> <p>This objective is not relevant for Skerries.</p>
<p>TPO2b: Where an island does not have a 'commutable' combined ferry or air / drive / public transport / walk time to a main employment centre (e.g. 80 minutes), the connections provided should reliably permit at least a half day (e.g. 4 hours) in Lerwick 7 days a week, all year round.</p>	<p>Performance against Transport Planning Objective: Minor Positive</p> <p>The reinstatement of the air timetable to the pre-RFFS timetable would address the Thursday gap in the timetable, leaving Tuesday as the only day where a connection is not available to / from Skerries.</p>
<p>TPO3: The scheduled time between connections should be minimised to increase flexibility for passengers and freight by maximising the number of island connections across the operating day.</p>	<p>Performance against Transport Planning Objective: Moderate Positive</p> <p>The reinstated air service would fill the current Thursday gap in the timetable and provide additional connections to / from Skerries on a Monday & Wednesday.</p>
<p>TPO4: The level of connectivity provided should minimise the variation within and between weekdays, evenings, Saturdays and Sundays.</p>	<p>Performance against Transport Planning Objective: Minor Positive</p> <p>This reinstated air service would fill the current Thursday gap in the timetable, leaving Tuesday as the only day where a connection is not available to / from Skerries.</p>
<p>TPO5: Where practicable, islanders should be provided with links to strategic onward transport connections without the need for an overnight stay on Shetland mainland.</p>	<p>Performance against Transport Planning Objective: Minor Positive</p> <p>The reinstatement of the air service would allow for onward connections from Skerries to the Scottish mainland on a Thursday and would provide additional connections on a Monday and Wednesday.</p>
<p>Rationale for Selection or Rejection of Proposal:</p>	<p>This option will be retained for further consideration. All means to restore the air service should be considered. Should the air service be reinstated on a sustainable basis, the option to increase the number of flights serving Skerries beyond three days per week should be considered.</p>
<p>Implementability Appraisal</p>	
<p>Technical:</p>	<p>There would be no technical issues associated with this option.</p>

Operational:	The community cannot currently provide the level of resource required for RFFS, although if the ferry was based on Skerries, the island-based crew could provide cover if scheduling allows but not when both air and ferry services are operating. There may also be a need for airfield licensing if the air service was to be reinstated.	
Financial:	Potential costs associated with licensing (network wide) and RFFS equipment and training.	
Public:	The community consultation found that this option is not acceptable. There is a view amongst the community that the level of service has be extended beyond that offered by the Do Minimum if Skerries is to be sustainable in the long-term.	
STAG Criteria		
Criterion	Assessment Summary	Supporting Information
Environment:	Neutral	The reinstatement of the air service would lead to an increase in emissions associated with the air service, but this would be extremely minor. In addition, emissions would only return to their pre-RFFS service reductions level.
Safety:	xx	This option would have a moderate negative impact in terms of safety. As well as increasing the overall number of connections, the reinstatement of the air service (included as part of the Do Minimum) would involve flying into a very short and unlicensed airfield (although the airfield could be licensed as part of this option).
Economy:	✓	The reinstatement of the air service as part of the Do Minimum would support the economy of Skerries through enhancing connectivity, particularly for those seeking to make short duration trips to / from the island. There would be TEE benefits associated with the additional connections, with a particular benefit on a Thursday where there are currently no ferry connections to/from Skerries.
Integration:	✓	As well as improving strategic integration (see TPO5), this option would contribute towards a wide range of policies aimed at sustaining and developing Shetland's island communities.
Accessibility and Social Inclusion:	✓	This option would generate a minor positive in terms of accessibility & social inclusion through offering scope for increased connections across the week. This would particularly be the case on a Thursday where there are not currently ferry connections to/from Skerries.