

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE	Subject: CENTRAL CORRIDOR STRATEGIC TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT	
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 26 July 2005	Ref: C/TT/03/02/JMcD	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain Committee approval to approach SIAS Limited of Edinburgh for a quote to develop a traffic microsimulation model for the road network of the Airdrie and Coatbridge area.

2. Background

- 2.1 As members will be aware, there have been a number of major industrial and commercial closures and relocations in recent times in the Airdrie and Coatbridge area. This has resulted in a number of large sites becoming vacant or about to become vacant. These sites include Boots, the Imperial Works, the former B&Q warehouse and Lawsons Distillers at Coatdyke. At the same time, there have been a number of successful investments in the area and there are pressures to identify further investment opportunities.
- 2.2 The towns of Airdrie and Coatbridge have both seen the effects, physical and economic, of these recent changes and will continue to be affected by changes in the economy and the requirement to attract, direct and control new investment which can benefit the area and its population.
- 2.3 Although the land use pressures are not uncommon, there is a particular concentration of competing pressures in Airdrie and Coatbridge and most notably in the Coatdyke and Rochsolloch area where the two towns meet. In order to ensure that the Airdrie/Coatbridge area develops economically and physically in the most beneficial way, Action Plans have been developed for both towns.
- 2.4 The requirement to undertake a strategic transport assessment of the Airdrie-Coatbridge corridor is an important element of the Action Plan of the North Lanarkshire Council Economic Regeneration Framework. The Airdrie and Coatbridge Action Plans arising from this Framework identify the necessity to implement a study to identify and model patterns of vehicle movement into and between Airdrie and Coatbridge, with a view to developing a range of measures to alleviate identified areas of stress within the road network and encourage alternative modes of transport.

3. Development of a Traffic Model

- 3.1 The Department requires a dynamic modelling tool to predict the potential impacts of various development scenarios across the Airdrie-Coatbridge transport corridor that may arise from the emerging land use strategies. This will allow the Department to assess cumulative development impacts and aid masterplanning for development areas.
- 3.2 One of the major influences on transport across the central corridor is the A8 trunk road. The Scottish Executive is currently finalising proposals for the upgrade of the A8 between Baillieston and Newhouse to motorway standards. SIAS was commissioned to undertake traffic and transportation modelling and forecasting for this commission. A "Paramics" traffic microsimulation model covering the main strategic routes within the immediate sphere of influence of the A8 has been developed. This model includes elements of the main southern routes in and out of the Airdrie/Coatbridge area.
- 3.3 The importance and influence of the A8 corridor on transportation within Airdrie and Coatbridge and the availability of an already existing model of parts of the local network that would give a "head start" to the development of a local model. This led the Department to consider inviting SIAS to submit a

proposal to develop a Paramics microsimulation model covering Airdrie and Coatbridge. The proposed model area is attached as an appendix to this report.

- 3.4 Whilst Paramics is a sophisticated transport planning design tool, one of its advantages is that, by modelling individual vehicle trips and using powerful graphics, its output is visual and can be readily appreciated by the layman. Comparison of the representation of existing road conditions and design scenarios can be easily accomplished.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 SIAS proposes to use the existing strategic traffic information from the Scottish Executive model and supplement this data with information on local traffic movement from a series of some 20 junction turning counts, several key journey time surveys and a survey of the major car parks. Key data on local trip movements will be sourced from the 2001 Census detailed travel statistics.
- 4.2 The physical layout of the road network will be replicated within the model and existing conditions will be able to be represented by a validated base model.

5. Potential Applications of the Model

- 5.1 As noted in 3.1 above, the development of a model has several potential applications including:
- Assessment of area-wide impacts of several development proposals;
 - An aid to masterplanning for development areas;
 - Structure Plan review – reviewing the transport requirements to accommodate the long-term proposed development and transport strategy for the local area;
 - Transport assessments
 - Town centre action plans – assessing proposed traffic management measures;
 - Economic assessment of new road proposals.

6. Corporate Considerations

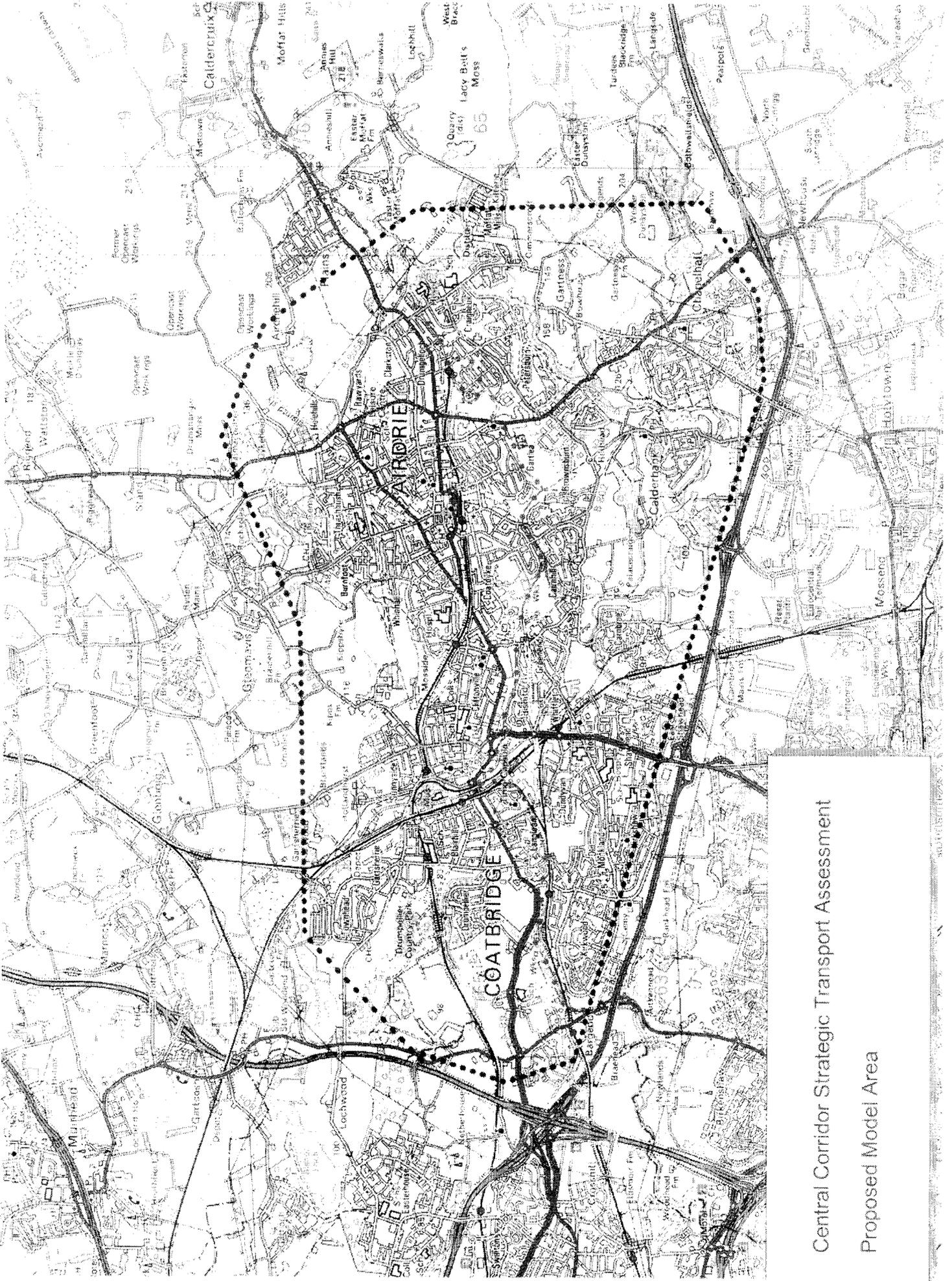
- 6.1 SIAS have indicated that they can begin development of the model almost immediately and undertake the necessary survey work in September. Completion is anticipated by January 2006.
- 6.2 The development of a robust traffic model is considered as an integral requirement to deliver the Action Plan of the North Lanarkshire Council Economic Regeneration Framework within the Airdrie/Coatbridge area. Whilst the Council will take the lead role in this initial phase of development modelling, Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire has been identified as a partner and additional funding source.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- a) notes the importance of the development of a traffic model to the delivery of the regeneration priorities of the Council; and
 - b) approves the proposal to approach SIAS Ltd for a quotation to provide a Paramics microsimulation model covering Airdrie and Coatbridge.



David M. Porch
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
21 July 2005



Central Corridor Strategic Transport Assessment

Proposed Model Area