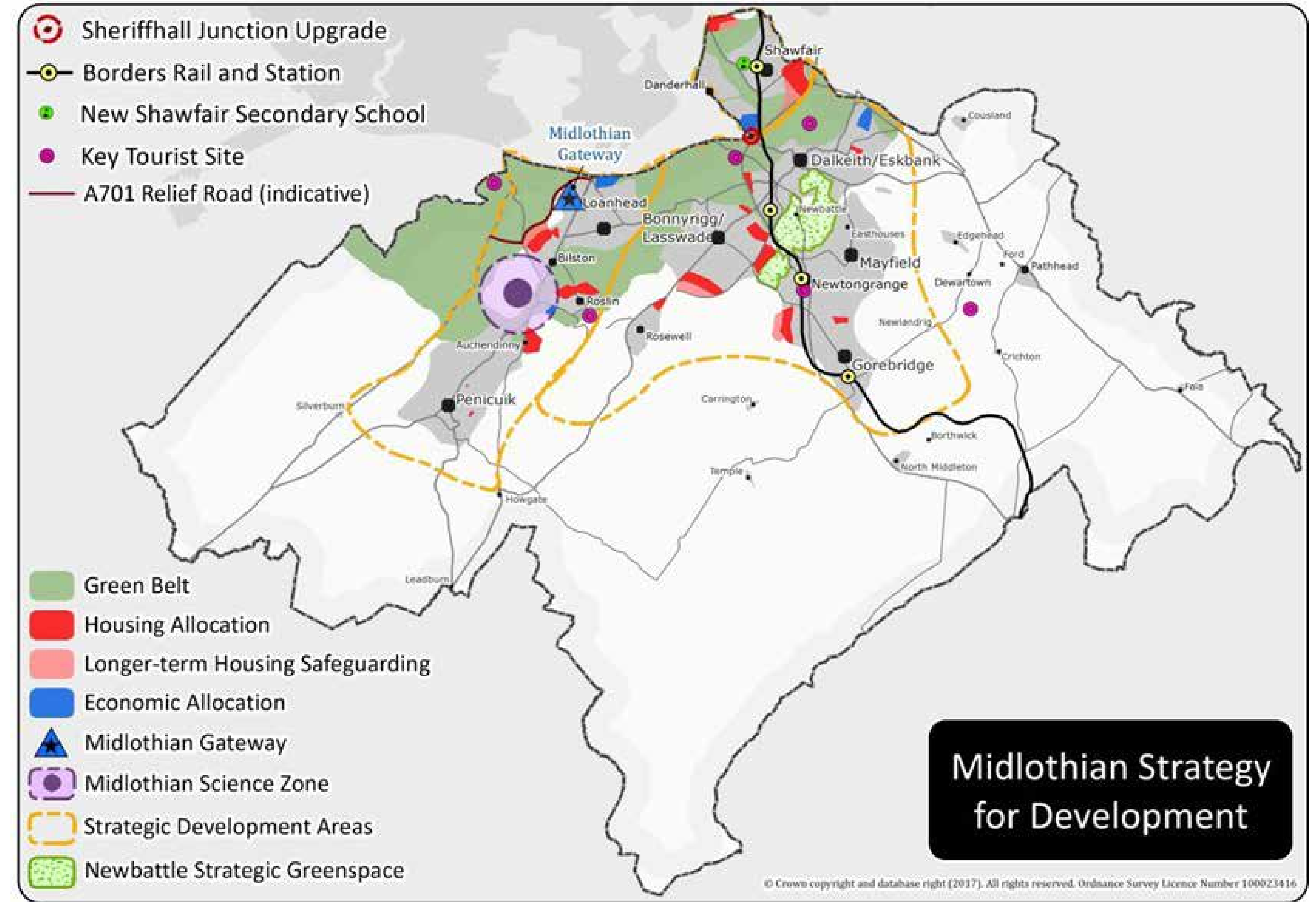


WELCOME

The adopted Midlothian Local Development Plan includes for a new road connecting Straiton with the A702. Work has been undertaken to develop the road design and undertake assessment work so that a planning application can be prepared and submitted.

As part of the road option and design process Transport Scotland “Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance” has been followed. That process was publicly shared and an online community consultation event was undertaken in 2021.

Midlothian Council propose to lodge a planning application for the construction of the new road between Straiton and the A702. We are now ready to invite public comments on the proposed road. The planning application will be supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment.

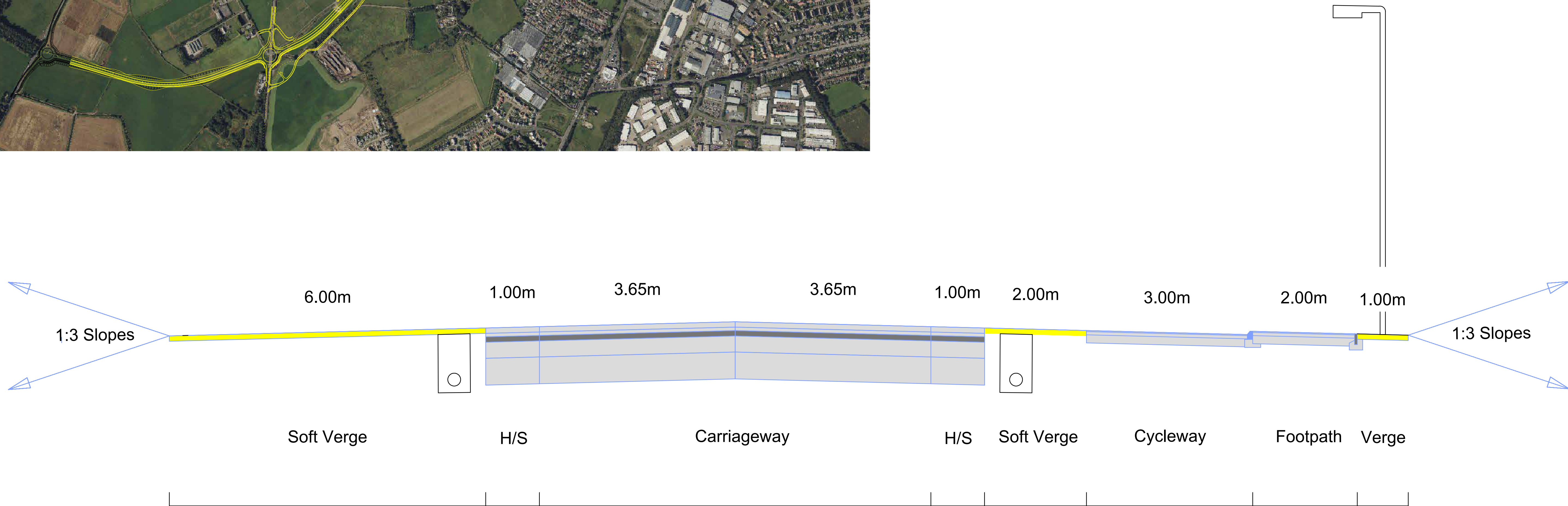
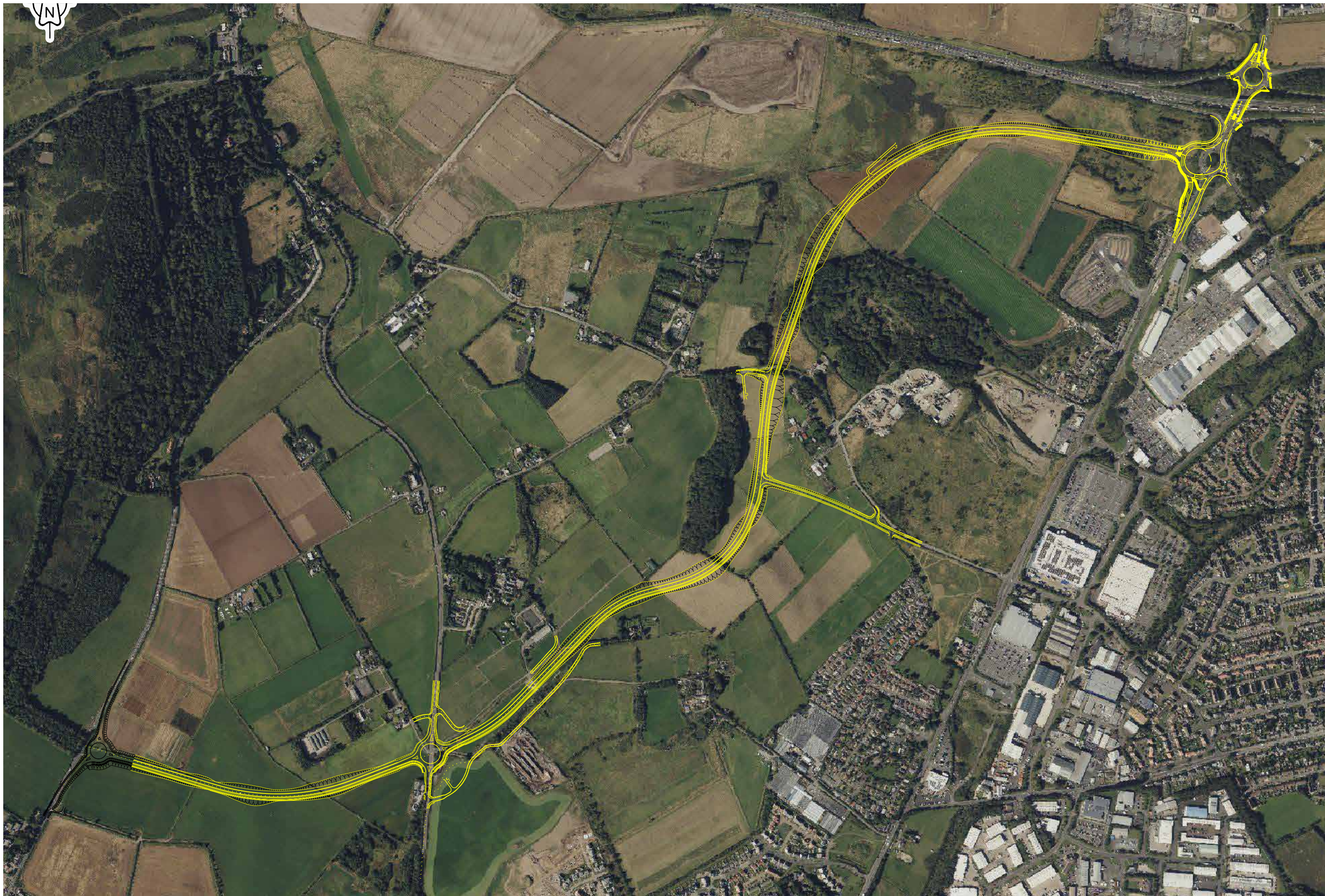


This consultation is intended to inform you of the proposal and work underway, to allow you to ask questions to the project team here today, and to make any comments on forms so that the project team can consider those and amend the proposal where practicable. We will hold a second community consultation event in June to feedback on any changes made and on assessments undertaken.

THE PROPOSED ROUTE



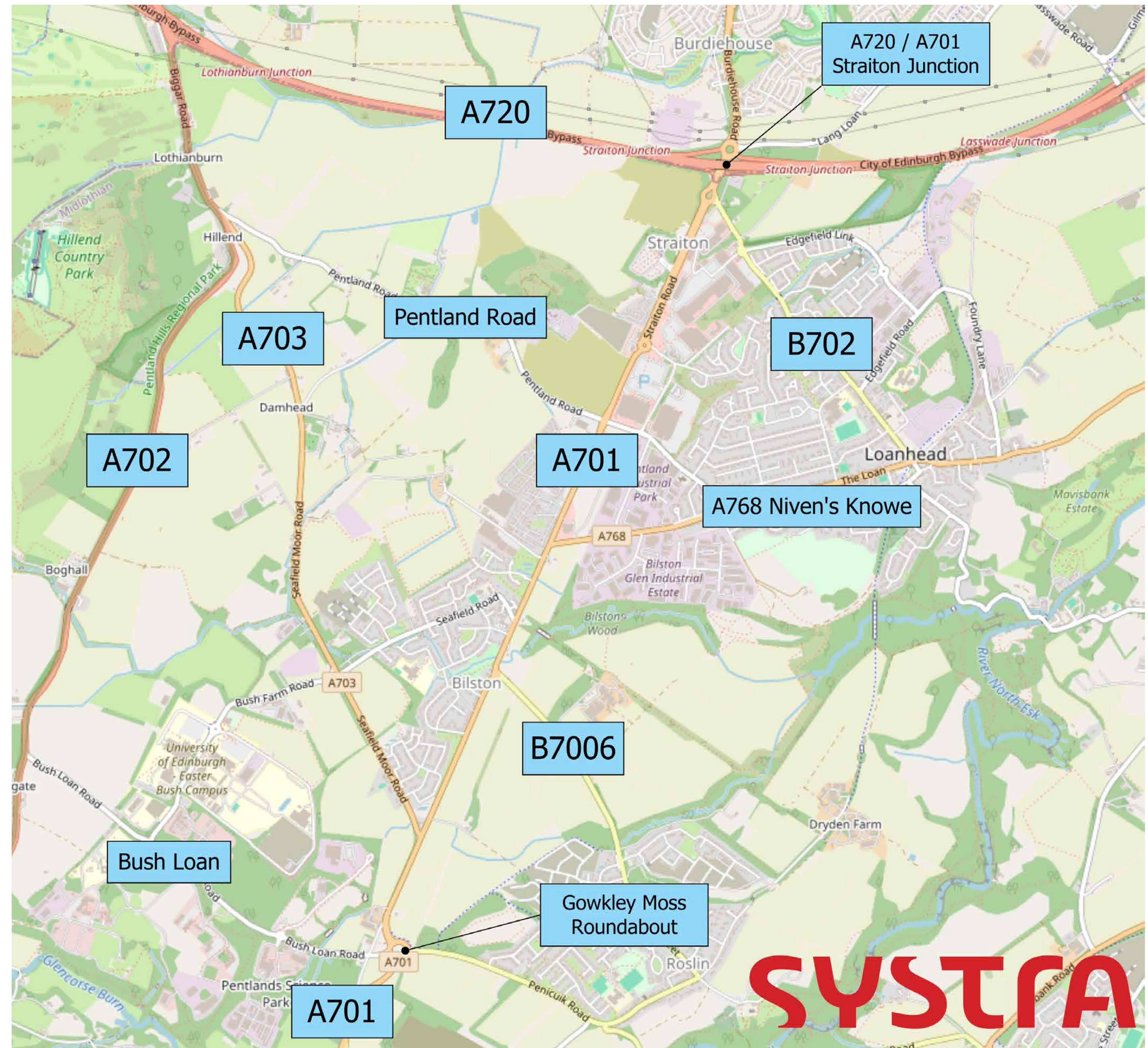
THE PROPOSED ROUTE



STUDY AREA

This board presents the assessment work to date for the traffic and transport appraisal of the scheme. This has considered general road traffic, public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.

The study area is shown in the map.



Transport Study Area

POLICY BACKGROUND

The Midlothian Local Development Plan 2017 (MLDP) identifies the A701 Corridor as one of three Strategic Development Areas (SDA). The Key Planning Objectives for the Corridor are:

- Maintain Loanhead's position as an employment hub in Midlothian and a good location for small- to medium-sized businesses, with excellent access to the strategic road network
- Promote the development of a 'Midlothian Gateway' through the development of West Straiton
- Make provision to improve access for all transport modes in the A701 Corridor.
- Deliver the A701 Relief Road and A702 Link

CURRENT TRANSPORT CONDITIONS

The A701 corridor is a very busy road and public transport corridor, that provides access between Midlothian and Edinburgh, as well as to the numerous retail, commercial and industrial areas within the Straiton, Bilston and Loanhead areas.

The road network suffers from congestion at peak times, resulting in traffic delays and inconsistent journey times for both vehicles and public transport.

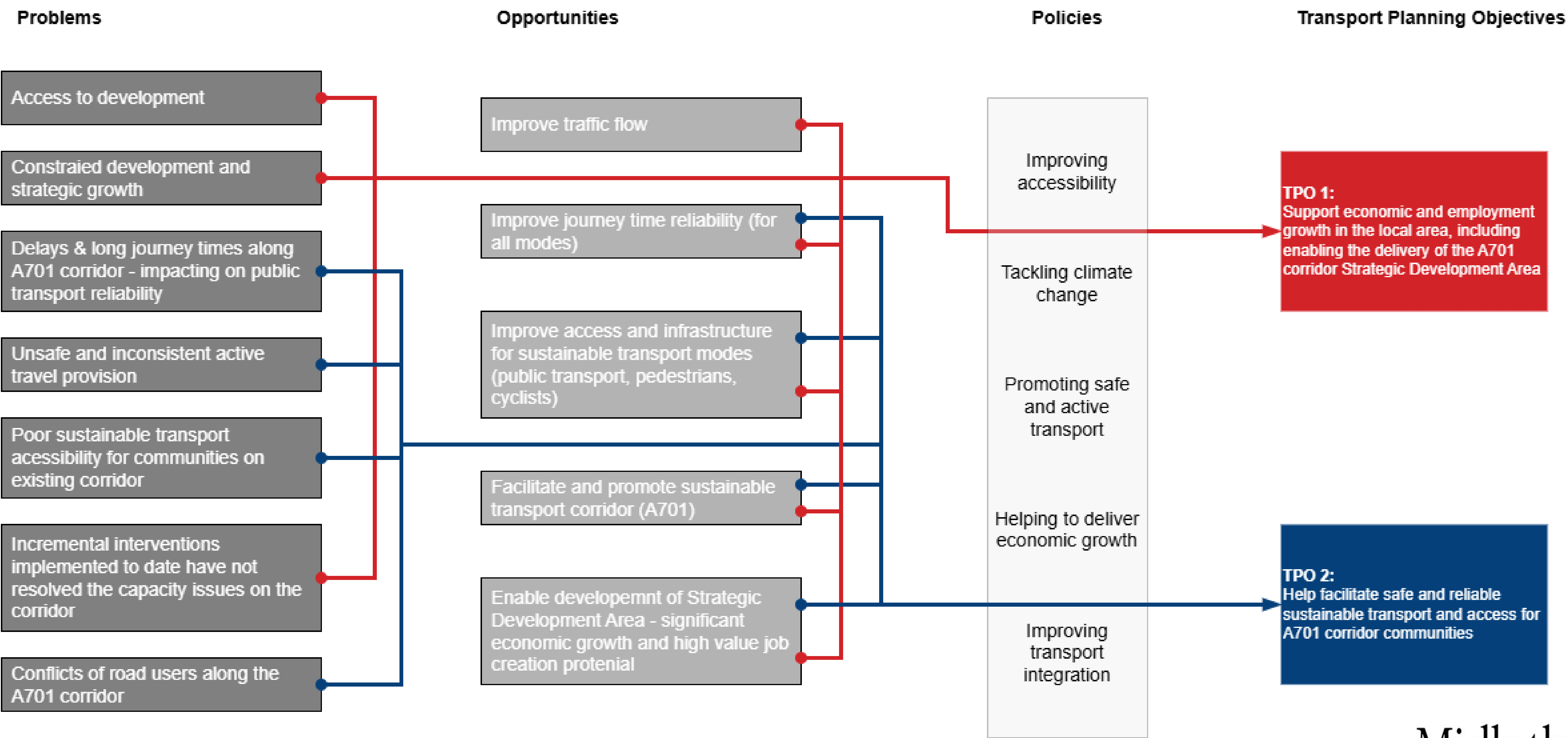
The A701 acts as a barrier between communities in Bilston and Loanhead, whilst busy side roads also create a constraint along the corridor. Existing active travel routes are of poor quality, and safety issues have been identified for cyclists and pedestrians at numerous locations along the corridor.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RELIEF ROAD SCHEME

The Transport Planning-related objectives of the A701 Relief Road Scheme are to:

- **TP01:** Support economic and employment growth in the local area, including enabling the delivery of the A701 corridor Strategic Development Area.
- **TP02:** Help facilitate safe and reliable sustainable transport and access for the A701 corridor communities.

The figure below shows how the identified problems and opportunities relate to the two Objectives.



MODELLING APPRAISAL

A701 RELIEF ROAD A702 LINK ROAD SCHEME APPRAISAL

The appraisal of the Relief Road project has used local and regional transport modelling to identify the impacts and benefits of the scheme proposals, comprising:

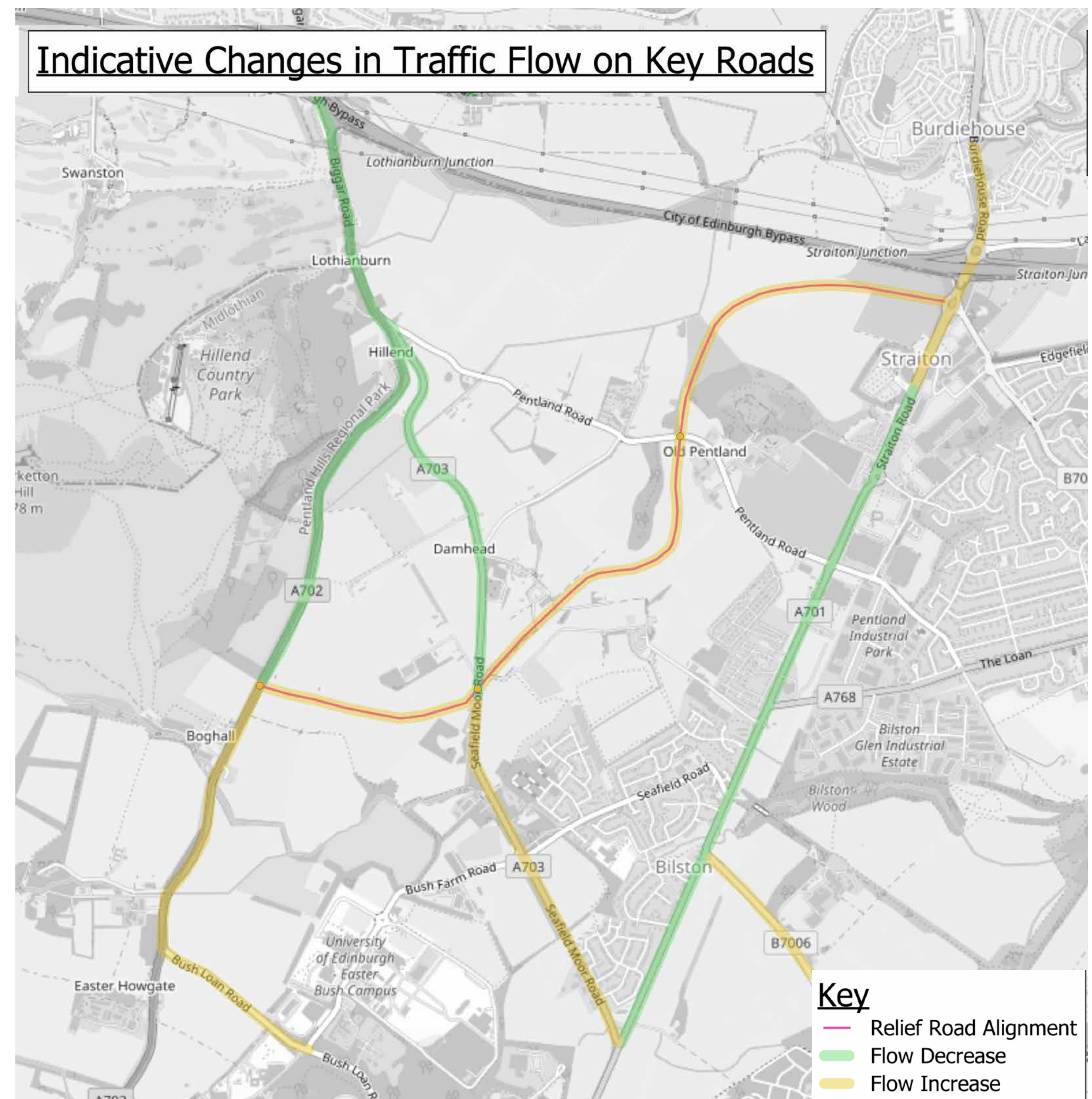
- **Strategic Modelling using the SEStrans Regional Model:** This is a multi-modal model that brings together land-use, demographic and economic data to forecast transport demands. This was used to predict changes in traffic flows across the region (and on key roads), both with and without the scheme in place.
- **Local Modelling using a Paramics microsimulation model:** A detailed model of the A701 corridor was developed that shows individual vehicles travelling through the network. The Paramics model was used to model traffic operation and journey times at a more detailed level along the corridor.

The transport modelling has been informed by local traffic surveys that were undertaken along the A701 corridor in August 2022, and refreshed in November 2024.

KEY FINDINGS

The main findings to date from the scheme assessment and modelling assessment are:

- The Relief Road provides an attractive route for vehicles to bypass the existing A701 corridor, and provides an alternative route between the A702, A701 and A720;
- The Relief Road reduces traffic flows on sections of the A701 by around 9,000 vehicles per day, a reduction of between 30% and 40%;
- Around 15,000 vehicle per day are predicted to use the Relief Road between Seafield Moor Road and the Straiton junction;
- Around 5,000 vehicles per day are predicted to use the Relief Road between the A702 and Seafield Moor Road;
- The Relief Road provides a ~3-minute journey time saving between Penicuik and A701 at Burdiehouse Road;
- Traffic flows on A703 Seafield Moor Road and on Bush Loan are predicted to increase, as motorists use these routes to access the Relief Road.



The modelling is highlighting increased traffic through the A720 / A701 Straiton junction area with the scheme in place, which is currently being assessed in more detail as part of the design process.

A701 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL CORRIDOR

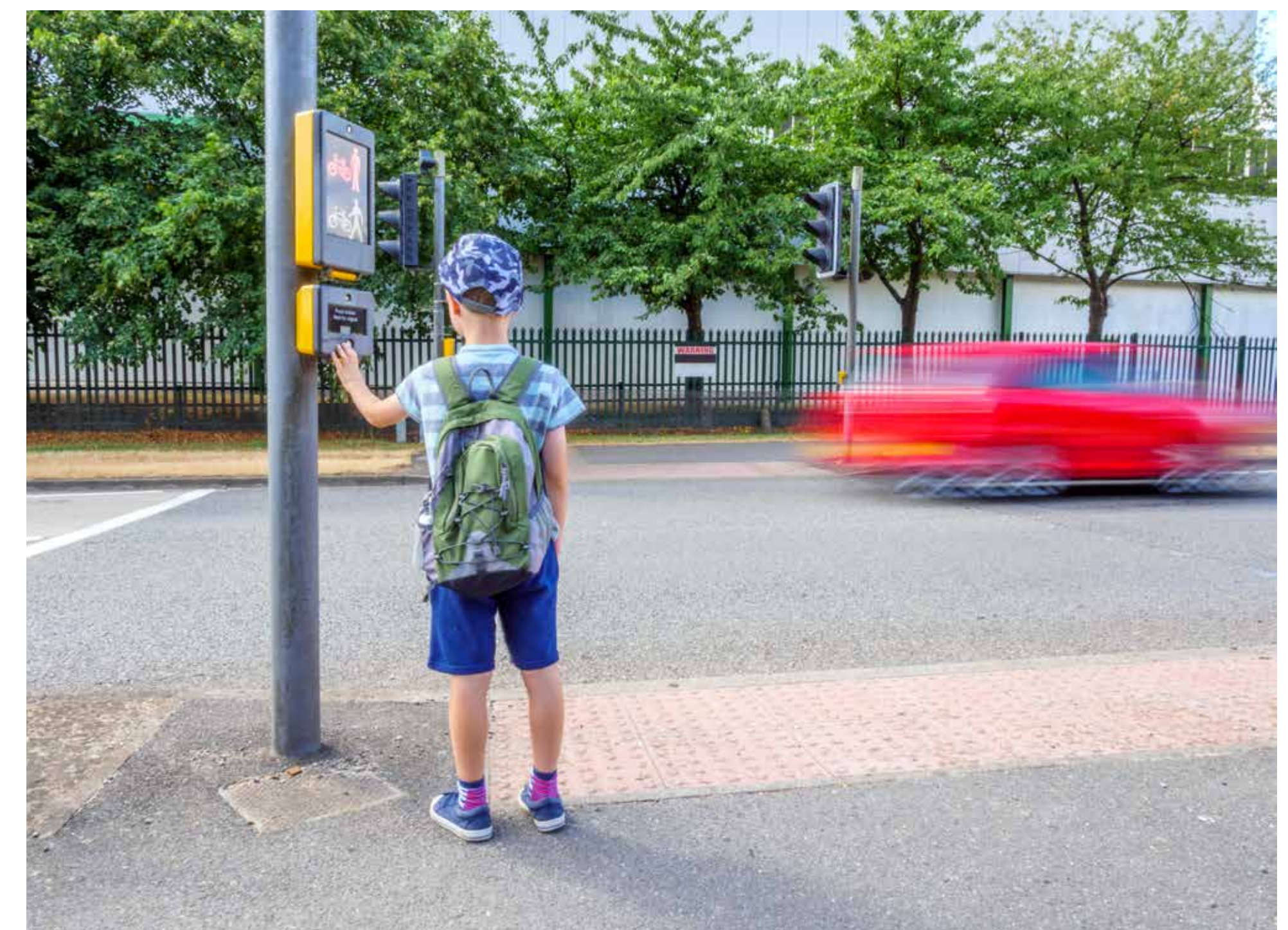
The A701 Sustainable Travel corridor will not form part of the forthcoming planning application. This is because much of that work will not require planning permission. We do however want to make you aware of the intentions for the active travel corridor so you have an understanding of the wider benefits the link road will help deliver. SYSTRA has developed initial designs for the A701 Sustainable Travel Corridor, which covers the area between the Gowkley Moss Roundabout and the A720 / A701 Straiton junction.

The design process has been informed by pedestrian and cycle surveys that were undertaken along the A701 corridor

The proposals aim to provide:

- A continuous active travel route along the corridor, suitable for both pedestrians and cyclists;
- New and upgraded pedestrian and cycling crossing points at key junctions along the route;
- Improved access to, from and between residential areas and key destinations along the route, such as Straiton Retail Park;
- Integration with the Safe Routes to School that are being introduced as part of the new Community High School;
- Measures to reduce the speed of vehicles at side-road junctions – raised table crossings and tighter corners; and
- High-quality infrastructure, with level, surfaced paths supported by new signing and lining.

A701 Relief Road – Traffic and Transport



ASSESSMENTS

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is being prepared for this planning application. The EIA will cover the following topics:

- Introduction
- Project Description
- Alternatives
- Scoping and Consultations
- Landscape and Visual
- Cultural Heritage
- Biodiversity
- Road Drainage & the Water Environment
- Soils and Geology
- Ground Conditions & Mining
- Climate
- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration
- Population & Human Health
- Material Assets & Waste
- Schedule of Environmental Commitments

In addition a DMRB Stage 3 Appraisal Report will be provided which will include a traffic appraisal and an Economic Appraisal of the proposed road.

NEXT STEPS

We hope you found this information helpful.

There are comment sheets provided for you to provide feedback and suggestions. We will take all comments received today and via email and feed that back into the project design where practical.

We will then hold a further community consultation to advise on any changes made and on the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment. A final design will be submitted to Midlothian Council in August.

We welcome your thoughts and comments!

If you would like to email comments or questions to the project team please email A701@wardell-armstrong.com by Friday 30th May 2025.

Any comments made to the project team are not representations to the Midlothian Council Planning Authority. When the application has been registered formal representations can be made to Planning Authority at that time.