MVA Consultancy was appointed by Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) to undertake an appraisal of the future provision of transport access to and from the island of Lismore, in Loch Linnhe. The appraisal was to be carried out in accordance with the 'refreshed' Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), which was published in May 2008.

All Scottish transport-related studies must conform to STAG, as it provides a robust and consistent methodology for assessing and appraising interventions. Its use is mandatory where any approval or finance from the Scottish Government is sought - a situation which is highly likely in the provision of Scotland’s publicly operated lifeline ferry services. While an updated version of STAG was published in May 2008, it should be noted that the fundamental approach, philosophy and processes are essentially unchanged. The approach, methodology and techniques adopted in this appraisal were consistent with the new Guidance.

STAG essentially consists of four distinct stages:

- pre-appraisal;
- initial (STAG Part 1) appraisal;
- detailed (STAG Part 2) appraisal; and
- post appraisal.

The post appraisal stage is not discussed in this paper but is considered in detail in the STAG papers.

The study provided some interesting features that are not common in STAG studies. The STAG Guidance strongly encourages consultation throughout the various stages of appraisal, as it ensures a transparent process, while also offering opportunities for users and stakeholders to participate and influence the outcomes. Given the number of people who will use, or will be affected by, the option selected for the future provision of transport services to and from the island, it was possible to carry out a comprehensive consultation involving ALL residents on the island of Lismore and Port Appin / Appin on the mainland. This captured strong views in support of a range of options and also strong feelings against the same options. These sensitive issues needed to be managed very carefully throughout the appraisal process.

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1 http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/stag/home

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The consultation was felt to play a crucial role in many of the individuals from the communities affected by the outcomes understanding the findings of the STAG Appraisal. While they may not necessarily support a particular option that may perform best against the transport objectives and government criteria, they could understand how the options were arrived at by being involved throughout the process and through following the various stages.

While future transport services will clearly impact on the economic prosperity of the island, the majority of the impacts captured in the appraisal were more of a social (and to a lesser extent environmental) nature and this needed to be assessed in the analysis and reflected in the findings.

The monetised benefits traditionally associated with improvements to transport links and services, such as the value of journey time savings, were therefore less important in this study, with the key benefits associated with improved choice, accessibility and inclusion for the island residents.

2 BACKGROUND
The island of Lismore, in Loch Linnhe, lies of the west coast of Scotland with a population of around 170. At the moment, Lismore is served by two ferry services; a **passenger and vehicle ferry service** operating between Oban and Achnacroish on the south of the island and a **passenger only service** between Port Appin and Point at the north of the island. Both of the ferries serving the island are nearing the end of their expected operational life and, over the next few years, will need to be replaced.

There has been a long-running debate regarding the nature of the ferry services required to serve the island of Lismore. There was a local referendum on the issue in 2004 which failed to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. At present, neither of the two existing services is considered adequate to meet the needs of the island community. The STAG appraisal was therefore seen as a possible means by which to inform conclusively the preferred option for the provision of future transport links between Lismore and the Scottish mainland when the ferries reach the end of their expected operational life. What was required was a comprehensive, unambiguous and objective-led analysis of the options for serving the island. Central to this were:

- **the needs of islanders** – comprehensive and definitive **consultation** was required to build a very clear picture of existing travel patterns and all the issues surrounding the ferry services, including future aspirations and preferences;
- **the finances of providing the service(s)** - operating costs, patronage, revenue and subsidy, landside infrastructure costs, vessel acquisition costs;
- the **economic benefits** brought about by any new service configuration and its associated infrastructure – a key issue here is the number of additional crossings ‘induced’ by improved services;
- the **social benefits** brought about by improved links to the mainland through better accessibility to opportunities on the mainland; and
- the **environmental impacts** of any new transport link and its associated infrastructure.
Carryings

Table 2.1 shows the key figures relating to the use of the current ferry services. The figures are for 2007.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Port Appin</th>
<th>Oban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passengers</td>
<td>Passengers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual, 2007</td>
<td>40,087</td>
<td>13,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Day, 2007</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Sailing, 2007</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Summer Day</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(July/Aug)</td>
<td>9*</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* - based on 2006 figures

Table 2.1 Lismore Ferry – Patronage

In total there were 53,500 recorded passenger crossings in 2007, or around 26,750 return journeys, and around 75% of all crossings were made at Port Appin. In contrast, only 2,264 cars and 529 commercial vehicles used the Oban ferry in 2007. Assuming an average car occupancy figure of 1.58, this means that around 92% of all travel between Lismore and the mainland is currently undertaken as a foot passenger.

On the Oban crossing, the figures equate to an average of eight passengers and one car per sailing - on a vessel with a carrying capacity of 75 passengers and five cars. These figures rise slightly to 10 passengers and two cars per sailing during the peak summer months of July and August. Utilisation is far higher at Port Appin, where there are typically six passengers per crossing, rising to nine in the summer.

The Port Appin service is currently provided by Argyll and Bute Council and the Oban service by CFL. Neither of these services operates on a commercial basis. CFL reported an estimated route loss of £314,000 for the year ending 30 September 2007. Data provided by Argyll and Bute Council showed a route loss of £180,000 for year 2007/08. The combined figure in subsidy to serve Lismore is therefore around £500,000 per annum.

3 Pre - Appraisal

In line with the STAG guidance, the appraisal began with a detailed analysis of the problems, issues, opportunities and constraints. These are summarised below.

---

2 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Transport-Travel/TrendCarOccupancy
3 http://www.calmac.co.uk/Route-losses/Route%20losses%20Yr%20ended%20Sep07.pdf
Demographics

According to the 2001 Census, the population of Lismore was 146, a figure which has remained broadly constant in censuses since 1961. Locally, the population is put at approximately 180, although there is no perception that population levels are growing. However, within this headline figure, there are some significant demographic issues facing the island. Figure 3.1 below shows the age profile of Lismore according to the 2001 Census, together with similar figures for a basket of broadly comparable islands, the Argyll and Bute Council area and Scotland.

![Age Profile of Lismore Residents and Comparative Areas](image)

**Figure 3.1. Age Profile of Lismore Residents and Comparative Areas**

It is immediately clear that Lismore has a much higher proportion of residents aged over 65 than any of the other areas. Particularly significant is that other islands, which might have been expected to show a similar trend, in fact reflect more closely the national picture. Similarly, in 2001, Lismore had virtually nobody in the 18-29 age bracket, and the proportion of under 18s was also low. This trend clearly has alarming longer-term consequences for the sustainability of the island, and is also reflected in the average age – on Lismore, this was 51 against a national average of 39. Although more recent data is not available, it is felt that this picture has in fact deteriorated since 2001.

It is felt locally that the nature of the island’s ferry services is a significant contributory factor to these population trends. This was a key message that emerged from both the early stakeholder workshops and the wider consultation, and is one of the key drivers of this study.

**Employment**

Figure 3.2 below shows a similar comparison for employment status.
Figure 3.2 Employment Status of Lismore Residents and Other Areas

Again, Lismore displays somewhat unique characteristics here. There is a disproportionately large percentage of people who are self-employed, with many of these people working in the agriculture sector. There is also a relatively small percentage of people whose employment status is classed as “full time employee”. The recent downturn in activity in the agriculture sector has meant that employment opportunities have become scarcer with people having to look for work elsewhere, particularly on the mainland. However, the current transport links make commuting to the mainland for a day’s work difficult, both in terms of timing and monetary cost.

Consultation

The future of the ferry services to the island has been a long-running and somewhat divisive issue locally. This was most recently evidenced in a locally organised referendum in September 2004, where options were put to a public vote. The results were evenly split and inconclusive however, and there were reservations expressed regarding the nature of the vote. In essence, this debate has centred on either (a) keeping the existing arrangements, or (b) reversing the current ferry provision, to provide a vehicle service at Port Appin and a passenger service to Oban.

Given this background, it was recognised at an early stage that extensive consultation was a vital element of this study. Following initial meetings with local stakeholders, an extensive consultation exercise was developed and undertaken, to allow all islanders and others to express their views (in confidence) regarding the current ferry services. This exercise was extended to include the Port Appin and Appin areas. It was agreed that residents of these areas are affected by the operation of the current Lismore passenger ferry and could be affected by future proposals.
‘Consultation Packs’ were sent to all households on Lismore. These packs contained questionnaires (two per household) seeking views on the current ferry services and also a Travel Diary. In the Travel Diary, residents were asked to record details relating to their use of either ferry during a two-week period in late 2008. The purpose of this was to build up a comprehensive picture of actual travel behaviour in order to effectively consider alternative options in this context. A separate consultation questionnaire was sent to residents in the Port Appin and Appin areas.

The Lismore Consultation Pack questionnaire covered the following:

- the nature of the use of the island’s ferries in general;
- an assessment of the importance and adequacy of current service attributes – eight key characteristics, graded on a scale with space for comments in each case;
- ways in which the provision of links to the mainland could be improved; and
- new opportunities arising from potential improvements.

The Lismore Travel Diary included the following:

- household characteristics – including car ownership and any mobility impairment issues;
- typical use of cars and parking arrangements accessing ferry services; and
- multiple single A4 ‘travel diary’ sheets to record journey information including: ferry used, mode of travel, origin and destination, journey purpose, ferry access and parking arrangements.

The Appin / Port Appin questionnaire covered the following:

- any use of the Port Appin ferry – frequency and purpose;
- the importance of perceived issues associated with the current ferry – parking and traffic; and
- an overall assessment of the impact of the Lismore ferry locally.

A total of 113 Consultation Packs were posted to all households and businesses on Lismore. Some 120 questionnaires (each pack contained two questionnaires) and 67 completed household travel diaries were returned and analysis shows that 60% of all households and businesses on Lismore returned at least one questionnaire. Around 260 consultation questionnaires were posted to households and businesses in Port Appin and Appin. Some 98 questionnaires were returned, which gives a 38% response rate. In both cases, this level of response was considered very good and a robust basis for analysis.
Lismore Questionnaire – Assessment of Services Key Findings

The responses suggested that around 60% of people primarily use the Port Appin ferry, 25% primarily use the Oban ferry, with the remainder using both ferries about equally. In terms of frequency of use, 70% used the ferries between 0-2 times per typical week (return trips). Only 10% of respondents said they typically used the ferries frequently, ie 5-10 times per week. This suggests that regular commuting from the island is not currently commonplace.

Table 3.1 Summary of Assessment of Current Ferry Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Port Appin ferry</th>
<th>Oban ferry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% &lt; adeq.</td>
<td>% adeq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timetables and Hours.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability and Punctuality.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Fare (pass).</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Fare (car).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality – on board.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality – terminals.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onward Travel (PT).</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal Locations – convenience.</td>
<td>12 (Point) 22(P.Appin)</td>
<td>36 (Point) 33(P.Appin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferry Capacity.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Assessment.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.1 above shows a summary of the assessment of current ferry services. It can be seen that the ferry characteristics cited most often as ‘less than adequate’ were:

- **Oban ferry**: cost of fares for cars; on-board quality of service; quality of service at the terminal; and ferry capacity; and

- **Port Appin ferry**: ease of onward travel by public transport and quality of service at the terminals.

Overall satisfaction levels were possibly rather better than anticipated, with 80% stating that the Port Appin ferry was adequate or better and an equivalent figure of 69% for the Oban ferry. Nevertheless, a large number of issues were raised in the survey in connection with the services. The main issues associated with each of these ferry characteristics were as follows:

- **Timetables – hours of operation, frequency etc**: new (October 08) timetable is of benefit to most, but less convenient for some; lack of late and early services on both services, especially in winter (impacting on evening activities, can require an overnight stay in Oban). Even with the new timetable, the last sailing from Oban is at 1700, limiting the scope for daily commuting;

- **Cost of fare**: the cost of car fares on the Oban route was routinely seen as too high to make regular commuting or indeed general use by car feasible. In contrast, passenger fares were generally seen as reasonable; The cost of taking a goods vehicle on the ferry was also seen as a significant issue in terms of eg moving livestock;

- **Quality of service – on board the ferry, physical access etc**: the main concern here related to the lack of any disabled or medical emergency access on both routes. Neither boat is capable of accommodating a wheelchair, and so with the high average age on Lismore, this is of great concern. The Lismore GP is based in Port Appin and, in the case of emergencies, patients are collected at Point by the Port Appin ferry. The Port Appin ferry is unable to fit wheelchairs or stretchers into the cabin, therefore stretchers are placed on the open deck, exposed to the elements. To a lesser extent, the design of the Appin boat also makes it difficult to access when traveling with young children, prams, shopping and luggage - any baggage has to be relayed from parked cars down the open and exposed pier prior to boarding, and the cabin itself is quite confined. 60% felt that the on-board quality of service on the Oban route was inadequate. This reflects the age of the MV Eigg, its poor levels of accessibility, and its rudimentary and uncomfortable on-board passenger accommodation. Around one third also felt the MV Lismore was inadequate in this regard;

- **Quality of service – at the ferry terminals (eg parking, waiting environment)**: 71% indicated that terminal facilities on the Port Appin route were inadequate. Waiting facilities at all terminals except Oban are very basic indeed and of poor quality, but of greater concern is the issue of parking at both Point and Port Appin. As previously mentioned, many households keep at least one vehicle on the island and another vehicle at Port Appin, resulting in a high number of parked cars at Port Appin. This problem was partially
alleviated by the construction of a car park at Port Appin, but there are still capacity issues and the lack of parking spaces, especially in the summer, was frequently cited as an issue that needs to be addressed;

- **Ease of changing to onward travel (ie public transport):** 80% stated that the opportunities for onward travel were poor at Port Appin. This means that to use the Port Appin ferry, a car on the mainland is required for any onward travel. This has a significant impact on the elderly or children who do not or cannot drive and the Oban ferry service is seen as an essential service which gives this section of the community direct access to shops, banks, post office, schools and the hospital;

- **Ferry capacity – can you always get on the ferry?:** the vehicle capacity of the MV Eigg was cited as impacting directly on islanders’ lives and as being a restriction to businesses on Lismore – this applied mainly to the movement of agricultural material and livestock, and can be a particular problem at certain times of the year when eg livestock is being taken off the island to market in Stirling. It was noted that cars require to be booked in advance which can prove difficult, especially during the summer months, when there are block bookings or when there is a market on; and

- **Overall assessment of service:** in overview, of greatest concern here was the age and condition of the vessels on both routes.

The issue of healthcare provision was a consistent theme during the consultation, particularly with regards to access to out-of-hours medical cover. There is no out-of-hours cover on the island at present; the resident nursing practitioner works until 5pm (but is only on the island a few days a week) and the GP is based on the mainland. If an ambulance is ordered, it will only come as far as Appin, meaning residents have to get across to the mainland on the ferry. This is clearly undesirable, particularly as the island has a high proportion of elderly residents.

**Port Appin / Appin Consultation**

The residents of Port Appin, and to a lesser extent Appin, are affected in one way or another by the operation of the current ferry. The pier at Port Appin is situated at the end of the road from Appin. The road is single-track with passing places from Appin, and there is a tight, blind bend, leading to the pier. There is a small car park and a hotel car park situated on the foreshore. This location is generally regarded and recognised as being one of the most scenic parts of Argyll.

In terms of their **use of the ferry**, the results show that a large proportion (75%) of Port Appin / Appin respondents use the Port Appin – Lismore service, although the majority of those who use the service only do so rarely, with only 10% of respondents using it regularly. The large majority of the use of the ferry is for leisure purposes, with very little commuting to the island.

Residents were asked how important they felt the issue of car parking at Port Appin was. Nearly 75% stated that they felt it was a ‘major’ or ‘serious’ problem. There is limited formal parking available at Port Appin which results in cars being parked inappropriately, sometimes on verges or blocking access
to homes, businesses, passing places and also causing a problem for emergency access. The problem is significantly worse in the summer, with Lismore day-tripper parking in Port Appin.

Residents believe that problems associated with the parking are having a negative impact on the local businesses and tourism in the area. Parking issues in the summer in particular could discourage visitors from stopping, and could also discourage potential visitors to Lismore.

Around half of respondents thought that the presence of Lismore ferry traffic on the minor Appin to Port Appin access road was a ‘major’ or ‘serious’ problem, although nearly all thought it was an issue of some significance. The road itself is a narrow single-track road with poor visibility, blind spots and difficult corners, which often causes problems for larger vehicles. Related to this, it was stated by some that the road is unsuitable for an increase in traffic and the road would have to be upgraded if a vehicle ferry was introduced, although there were mixed views on this topic. A further issue concerning the access road is the lack of footways. Pedestrians must walk on the carriageway, mixing with the traffic.

Local residents were asked if they felt that on balance, the presence of the Lismore ferry was a benefit or otherwise to the local community. Some 65% of respondents stated that the ferry link is an overall benefit for the Port Appin and Appin area. The main reason cited was that the ferry allows for greater interaction between the communities. Currently, Port Appin and Lismore share the same Minister and GP and the schools often work together. There are also important social and family connections between the two communities.

Port Appin/Appin residents were asked if they felt that improved access would be of benefit to the residents or local businesses. Although there was a low response rate of 59%, of those who responded, opinion was fairly evenly split between those who believed they would benefit or not. This again reflects the balance of increased tourism with fears of additional traffic and perhaps construction activity.

**Opportunities**

**Overview**

This STAG Appraisal comes at an opportune time for Lismore, as a number of parallel developments and trends provide opportunities for the realisation of this study’s objectives. The remainder of this section outlines these opportunities. The main ‘opportunity’ in a sense here is also one of the main problems, namely the age of the vessels serving the island. The requirement to replace these vessels provides the opportunity to look at the wider picture, in terms of transport links to Lismore.
The Scottish Government Ferry Review

At the time of writing, the Scottish Government was in the process of undertaking an overarching review of the entire Scottish ferry network. This presents a clear opportunity for the findings of this study to contribute to the wider debate on ferry services and put forward recommendations for improvements on the route.

Global Economic Slowdown

During an economic slowdown, the demand for new and existing vessels declines. In the current climate, there is an increasing opportunity for CMAL to procure (buy or charter) either a suitable vessel from the open market to replace the MV Eigg, or a new vessel at a discounted price. Indeed, the Lloyd’s List recently recorded the first drop in shipping prices for a number of years, whilst the price of steel has also fallen considerably.

Objective Setting

Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) are set within STAG to provide ‘study specific’ objectives against which potential options can be appraised. The consultation exercise here provided a comprehensive picture of the issues associated with the current ferry services. The transport planning objectives developed therefore closely reflect the findings of the consultation, along with the needs of the local population. In addition, they are based on a thorough understanding and knowledge of the characteristics and use of the current ferry services.

Transport Planning Objectives

Most of the TPOs could be regarded as sitting within the categories of ‘Accessibility and Social Inclusion’ and ‘Economy’. This reflects the lifeline nature of the links between Lismore and the mainland.

The overarching objective of the study was perhaps as follows:

- “To specify a service which provides the Isle of Lismore residents with a sustainable level of connectivity with the mainland, which supports the island economy and population, and wider economic aims, without eroding the essential qualities which characterise island life.”

Other objectives were:

- to allow islanders to commute to the mainland on a daily basis (in terms of timetable and affordability);
- to provide continuing access to mainland-based retail and other services for those islanders without access to a car;
- to improve islanders’ access to routine and emergency health services;
- to improve the quality (and safety) of crossing facilities – on-board and at the terminal / termini, making them accessible to all, including the mobility impaired;
to maintain and develop community and economic links between Lismore and Port Appin / Appin;

- to tackle parking and traffic issues associated with current ferry services at Port Appin; and

- to maintain or improve integration between access to Lismore and onward public transport services on the mainland.

It is recognised that this is a rather larger number of Transport Planning Objectives than is generally recommended in STAG. However, it was felt that this was required to ensure all the significant issues raised by consultees were being taken into account in appraising the options.

Options Generation, Sifting and Development

As outlined in Section 1, the nature of Lismore’s ferry services has been a long-running local issue. As such, the most ‘obvious’ options to change the existing services were fairly well established at the outset. In addition, the Lismore consultation questionnaire had invited (open response) suggestions for improvements to the transport links between Lismore and the mainland. Nevertheless, a systematic approach was adopted to ensure all potential permutations were given due consideration. This is outlined below.

Do Minimum / Reference Case

It is customary to define a Do Minimum⁴ (and sometimes Reference Case) against which the options to be assessed can be compared.

In the ferry context, a Do Minimum will generally entail a situation where existing vessels, despite their age, are patched up to continue in service beyond what would normally be thought of as their operational life. As time goes by, this process becomes ever more costly due to the difficulty of obtaining parts and general wear and tear on the major components of the vessel. Ultimately, repair costs will become so high as to make the vessel an effective ‘write off’.

Consultation Responses

In the Lismore consultation questionnaire, following the section on rating the current services, respondents were asked: ‘Given your responses above, what, if any, are the main ways you feel the current links to the mainland could be improved to better meet your needs?’ This question allowed a free text answer and so did not pre-empt responses in any way.

⁴ Do Minimum is an option where government takes the minimum amount of action necessary.
A selection of the key responses are summarised in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2 Suggestions for Service Improvements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
<th>No of times cited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade Port Appin ferry to a vehicle service.</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade vessels on existing route to be faster / more reliable / more comfortable.</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swap services – passenger service to Oban and vehicle service at Port Appin.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce fares (presumably referring to car fares).</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New vessel on Oban route.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more / better out-of-hours services.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better disabled access and emergency access.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed link.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New route.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Travel Diary Findings**

The Travel Diary information provided by residents of Lismore provided invaluable information regarding the typical journeys made by islanders using the ferries. This information also fed into the options development process. A total of 67 household travel diaries were returned containing information relating to 372 crossings at Port Appin and 124 at Oban.

Some of the key relevant findings here were:

- the Oban service is used overwhelmingly to access the Oban area only – and around 80% of trips were made as foot passengers;
- this is reflected in the journey purposes, with a high proportion of shopping trips;
- the Port Appin service is used to access Oban, as well as a wide range of other dispersed locations (see Figure 3.3 below); and
- virtually all trips on the Port Appin ferry involve two cars – one being parked and one being picked up.
Figure 3.3 Travel Destinations from Lismore

In general, this suggests that the Oban service is primarily used as a public transport link to Oban. The Port Appin service is essentially used as a car ferry – except of course a car at either end is required.

Options Generation, Development and Sifting

As the thinking evolved concerning the development of options, it became clear that the large majority of options could be covered by using a ‘matrix-based’ approach.
The main options on the Oban route were considered to be:

- withdraw the current service;
- replace MV *Eigg* with a similar vessel;
- replace MV *Eigg* with a better quality RoRo (Roll-On-Roll-Off ferry) vessel, offering a more comfortable and reliable service;
- replace MV *Eigg* with a faster and larger RoRo vessel, offering a more comfortable and reliable service, together with higher frequency crossings;
- replace MV *Eigg* with a conventional Pax (passenger) ferry; or
- replace MV *Eigg* with a fast / frequent Pax ferry.

The main options on the Port Appin route were considered to be:

- withdraw the current service;
- replace MV *Lismore* with a similar vessel;
- replace MV *Lismore* with a better quality Pax vessel, offering a more comfortable and reliable service;
- replace MV *Lismore* with a faster and larger Pax vessel, offering a more comfortable and reliable service, together with higher frequency crossings;
- replace MV *Lismore* with a RoRo service;
- replace MV *Lismore* with a RoRo service, together with a scheduled bus service to Oban; or
- construct a fixed link at the narrowest crossing point.

These options were combined into an options matrix as shown below in Table 3.3. Each combination was sifted to determine whether it was a realistic or ‘viable’ option. The remaining ‘viable’ options are shown in yellow below, whilst those rejected at this stage are marked with a cross and colour coded to show the primary reason for their rejection. This approach ensured that all plausible options on existing routes were considered.
Table 3.3 Initial Options ‘Matrix’ and Sifting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point - Port Appin Crossing</th>
<th>(a) No service</th>
<th>(b) Like for like Pax</th>
<th>(c) Better quality Pax</th>
<th>(d) Faster/Bigger Pax</th>
<th>(e) RoPax</th>
<th>(f) RoPax plus Oban Bus / DRT</th>
<th>(g) Fixed Link</th>
<th>(h) Fixed Link plus Oban Bus / DRT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) No service</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Like for like RoPax</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Better quality RoPax</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Faster / Bigger RoPax</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Pax / Conventional</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Pax Fast / Frequent</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where:

✓ ‘Viable’ option
✗ Does not provide vehicle service
✗ Does not provide public transport link or provides a double link (x<sup>1</sup>)
✗ Double RoPax provision – not realistic, affordability
✗ Not necessary or realistic with fixed link, affordability

Those combinations of options shown in yellow are defined as ‘viable’. Options marked red do not provide any vehicle service at all and are discounted. Light purple options do not provide any public transport link or provide a specific public transport service on both crossings, so are therefore also discounted. Those shaded in orange would involve Ro-Ro vessels on both routes which is regarded as unnecessary. Finally, those combinations shaded light blue are not realistic in the event of a fixed link being constructed. This matrix-based approach was discussed and accepted at a Stakeholder Workshop.
The still large remaining number of ‘viable’ combinations meant a process of sifting was necessary. Each combination in the matrix was assessed qualitatively against the TPOs using a -5 to +5 scale relative to today’s level of provision. Table 3.4 below shows the outcome of this analysis.

Table 3.4 Options Matrix – Scoring Against Transport Planning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achnacroish – Oban Crossing</th>
<th>Point - Port Appin Crossing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) No service</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Like for like RoPax</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Better quality RoPax</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Faster/Bigger RoPax</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Pax / Conventional</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Pax Fast / Frequent</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The options which score highest in this analysis are all fixed link-based. Clearly, any ferry service will always be inferior to a road in pure user ‘benefits’ terms, when construction costs and environmental impacts are not included. On this basis, the top rated options are:

- Port Appin RoRo plus Oban Passenger (fast, or conventional);
- Port Appin RoRo plus Oban bus, no ferry service to Oban; and
- Current routes with new vessels.
It was then concluded that on the basis of the analysis at the options generation and sifting stage, that the options including a fixed link, the introduction of a RoRo vessel at Port Appin and the current configuration would therefore be identified as option themes to be taken forward to the Part 1 Appraisal. The option themes, together with the key underlying assumptions, are summarised below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option Theme</th>
<th>Oban Route</th>
<th>Port Appin Route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>Fixed Link plus Oban Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Passenger Service</td>
<td>Fixed Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>RoPax plus Oban Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Passenger Service</td>
<td>RoPax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New RoPax</td>
<td>New Pax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Option 1a:** It is assumed that the Oban bus service would run with at least the same frequency as the current Oban ferry service to give people without access to a car at least the same service as that currently provided. It is assumed that the bus would serve the ‘spine’ route on Lismore, before crossing at Port Appin on the ferry. It would then also provide a new service for residents of Port Appin and an improved frequency service for Appin residents. The size of the bus used could be flexible to meet demand, but would have to be appropriate to the current Port Appin access road. It would also meet all necessary DDA\(^5\) requirements. This service could also be attractive to tourists visiting Oban if promoted in the town.

The fixed link is assumed to span the crossing at its narrowest point, potentially using Inn Island to allow a bridge / causeway combination. It is assumed that a navigable channel would be retained. It is assumed that the bridge would be toll-free in line with recent Scottish Government approaches to tolling.

**Option 1b:** As per Theme 1a, but with a passenger ferry service running between Oban and Achnacroish, rather than a bus.

**Option 2a:** The Oban bus in this case would be similar to that described in Option 1a. It would serve the island, before boarding the ferry and continuing to Oban. The RoRo ferry service would operate from new slipways at Port Appin and Point.

**Option 2b:** As per Theme 2a, but with a passenger ferry service running between Oban and Achnacroish, rather than a bus.

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**Option 3:** Under this option it is assumed the existing routes are retained and the vessels are upgraded. On the Oban route, it would be slightly faster than the MV *Eigg*, but would offer significantly higher quality and better access. It would have a larger vehicle capacity to cope with the transporting of goods vehicles. Terminal facilities would be upgraded to offer comfortable waiting areas. The MV *Lismore* would be replaced by a modern passenger vessel, able to carry rather more passengers than at present.

### 4 Part 1 Appraisal

This section summarises the Part 1 Appraisal. The Part 1 Appraisal, in line with the STAG guidance, involved:

- an initial appraisal of the likely impacts of options against Transport Planning Objectives;
- an initial appraisal of the likely impacts of options against the STAG criteria;
- an initial appraisal of how the options fit with established policy directives; and
- an initial appraisal of the feasibility, affordability and likely public acceptability of options.

**Rationale for Selection or Rejection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option Theme</th>
<th>Oban Route</th>
<th>Port Appin Route</th>
<th>Accept / Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>No service</td>
<td>Fixed Link plus Oban Bus</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Passenger Service</td>
<td>Fixed Link</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>RoPax plus Oban Bus</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Passenger Service</td>
<td>RoPax</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New RoPax</td>
<td>New Pax</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, at the Part 1 Appraisal stage, the fixed link options were rejected. Although a fixed link would clearly bring a range of benefits, the grounds for this rejection are laid out below.

A fixed link to Lismore has never been considered, so there is no previous evidence regarding **technical feasibility** to draw on. From this perspective, although such a construction project might not require any new or untried construction techniques, this aspect would carry significant risk, as there are no previous studies to refer to. Also, given the local geography, the project

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would require not only the causeway / bridge structures, but also new approach roads to the crossing.

In terms of **affordability**, such a construction project would undoubtedly be very expensive. In the long run, although the cost would be offset to some extent by eliminating ferry subsidy, a large up-front investment would be required; obviously, the timing of the availability of such funding would also be a significant risk. Benchmarking against the cost of similar projects elsewhere, outline construction costs have been estimated at upwards of £30m. In appraisal, an ‘optimism bias’ adjustment of 66%6 would be added to reflect the level of risk and would result in a figure of around £52m. There would of course be user benefits associated with this, but serving an island with such a small population, these are unlikely to be substantial. In general, the cost and scale of this option would also appear to be disproportionate in terms of the communities served, the problems and issues faced and the other options available.

In establishing the background for the Lismore study, it was notable that, unlike some other island communities, there was no evidence of any pressure for a fixed link to the mainland. This was also reflected in the consultation, where only a very small number of respondents offered ‘fixed link’ as the solution to the island’s transport problems. This issue was further explored at a Public Meeting on the island in January 2009, where again, only very limited support was offered. The main reason against this option was that while a fixed link would provide an opportunity for residents to travel to and from the island at their own convenience (and deliver benefits for business and access to healthcare and other facilities), it would deliver a means of unfettered access to the island and possibly destroy the very qualities which characterise island life and the main reason why a large percentage of the island population live there. So, from the evidence gathered in the consultation, there is little to suggest the existence of much public appetite for a fixed link to the mainland. Therefore, from a **public acceptability** perspective, there are significant doubts concerning this option. There would also likely be significant public opposition to a fixed link among the Port Appin and Appin communities, due to the scale of construction activity and the potential for additional traffic. Allied to this, the consultation raised concerns that the island itself does not have the infrastructure to accommodate the additional traffic which would, in all probability, result from a fixed link. The roads on Lismore are very narrow and winding, and would probably require upgrading in the event of a fixed link being constructed. There is also a fear that island-based services, such as the shop / post office and the school, would be compromised under this scenario, as more people would shop elsewhere.

Under the **environment** criterion, the fixed link options would have a significant adverse impact on a number of local protected sites, as well as a National Scenic Area.

While further analysis would be required to assess the impact of a larger ferry on the north route between Port Appin and Point, it was clear, even at the

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6 http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/stag/td/Part2/Risk_and_Uncertainty/13.3.3.3

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early stage, that the fixed link would have a significant adverse environmental impact which would be very costly to mitigate and would be unacceptable to the local and wider communities.

Options 2a, 2b and 3, on the other hand, performed better against the transport planning objectives and the STAG criteria. It was also apparent from the analysis that these options were much more acceptable to the local communities, as well as being more affordable and having less technical problems in their construction.

In conclusion of the Part 1 Appraisal stage, the following three options were taken forward to the more detailed Part 2 Appraisal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Oban Route</th>
<th>Port Appin Route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>RoPax plus Oban Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Passenger Service</td>
<td>RoPax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New RoPax</td>
<td>New Pax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Part 2 Appraisal

This section summarises the Part 2 Appraisal, which involved a more detailed investigation of the impact of the three remaining options against the Scottish Government’s five criteria (environment, safety, economy, integration and accessibility/social inclusion as well as the cost to government. While it is not covered here, the Part 2 Appraisal also included a summary of the analysis of the risk and uncertainty associated with each of the options.

Economy

The main focus of the Economy section was on the monetised user benefits captured in the Transport Economic Efficiency element of the appraisal. It was concluded, in line with STAG, that the Economic Activity and Location Impact (EALI) and Wider Economic Benefits (WEBs) would not be significant as the net impacts at the Scottish level would be negligible.

The user benefits for option 2a (Port Appin Ropax / Oban Bus) are set out in Table 5.1 below.
Table 5.1 User Benefits Summary Table, Annual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non Work</th>
<th>In Work</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Port Appin</td>
<td>£52k</td>
<td>£33k</td>
<td>£88k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Oban Car</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>£29k</td>
<td>£31k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Oban foot</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Passengers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£31k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£150k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Option 2b: Port Appin RoPax / Oban Passenger Ferry, User Benefits

In User Benefits terms, this option is identical to Option 2a since, from the user’s perspective, it is assumed that the bus and ferry offer broadly the same level of service in terms of quality, cost and journey times.

Option 3: Oban New RoPax, Port Appin New Passenger

In Option 3, the ferry services, in terms of costs and timetable, are assumed to be similar to the present day. The only ‘user benefits’ accruing are therefore associated with the increased comfort levels on the new vessels. This amounts to a nominal benefit of £5k per annum.

Environment

A detailed environmental assessment was carried out for the three options. This showed that overall, the proposals broadly comply with national planning policy and guidance.

Option 3, which involved introducing new vessels on the current services, had the least environmental impact, as the option is very similar to the current service provision. There is the possibility of minor improvements to noise and vibration and air quality impacts as more modern vessels are likely to be quieter and more carbon efficient. However, these impacts are likely to be small.

There are likely to be greater environmental impacts associated with Options 2a and 2b which provide a vehicle and passenger service between Point and Port Appin. However, again, these are likely to be minimal. For example, the construction of new harbour facilities at both ends of the route could cause disruption to residents and visitors accessing Port Appin and Lismore, although this is likely to be over a fairly short period and managed through the
implementation of mitigation measures to reduce the magnitude of any impacts.

The introduction of a vehicle ferry is also likely to cause an increase in the number of vehicles travelling to and within Port Appin which would have a noise impact on local residents although again, this is not considered to be significant. In addition, the options would result in the reduction in the number of cars parked at Port Appin, which is a key concern of the local community residents.

There may be some disruption to wildlife during construction of the jetties and there may also be a negative impact on marine life due to the introduction of a larger vessel operating between Lismore and Port Appin. These impacts would need to be considered and monitored in more detail nearer the time with mitigation measures in place to minimise any adverse affects.

The key difference between Options 2a and 2b is the inclusion of a passenger service between Oban and Achnacroish on the latter and a bus operating between Achnacroish and Oban, via Port Appin and Appin, in the former. The key impact of this is that, in terms of carbon efficiency, the bus option would have greater benefits over the existing option, as the introduction of a bus service would generate fewer pollutants than a more fuel efficient passenger ferry service.

Integration

Transport Integration

The Options Sifting and Part 1 Appraisal sifted out any options which did not at least maintain existing levels of integration. The key location for integration here is Oban. Oban offers onward travel by coach, train and indeed onward ferry travel. All three options maintain public transport links to Oban. The Oban bus service offered in Option 2a would provide a more frequent link to Oban than is currently available from the Oban ferry.

In addition, each of the options fit in general with established policy. However, recent policy sets out a vision for rural Scotland in which rural communities strengthen, or remain strong through retention of population and access to essential services. Options 2a and 2b offer a significant improvement in the cost and quality of connections to and from Lismore. It would therefore be anticipated that these options would be more successful in terms of addressing the demographic and employment issues currently observed on the island.
Safety

The STAG criterion of Safety covers two main themes: Accidents and Security. It was concluded that there were no security issues associated with any of the options and the focus was therefore on the impact on accidents.

The main issue here concerns Options 2a and 2b, as Option 3 would essentially see levels and patterns of road traffic remain unchanged. Options 2a and 2b however would lead to increased traffic levels on the Appin to Port Appin access road, including the bus service in Option 2b. This route is a single-track road with passing places and there are a number of tight bends on the approach to Port Appin itself. There are no footways on the route around Port Appin. However, under this option, many of the parked cars belonging to Lismore residents would disappear which would be a positive impact. The number of additional vehicles is likely to be small however, as summarised in Table 5. below.

Table 5.2 Port Appin Access Road – Ferry Traffic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cars / day</th>
<th>Present Day</th>
<th>Plus Ferry</th>
<th>Plus 'Induced' traffic</th>
<th>Illustrative High Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Average</td>
<td>64 (5)</td>
<td>71 (6)</td>
<td>89 (7)</td>
<td>142 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer day</td>
<td>106 (9)</td>
<td>116 (10)</td>
<td>146 (10)</td>
<td>232 (19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At present, there are around 110 passengers per day on the Port Appin ferry. Assuming all pick up a car at Port Appin, and there is an average vehicle occupancy rate of 1.72, this equates to around 64 car trips per day (or 32 return trips), or five per hour (the figures in brackets above). This figure rises to around 106 per day in the summer. Across a rough 12-hour day, this equates to around five or nine vehicles per hour. At present, around seven cars and two goods vehicles per day use the Oban ferry, with 10 cars and one goods vehicle in the summer. If all cars which currently use the Oban ferry transferred to the new Port Appin Ro-Ro, ferry-related car traffic would increase by around 10% over the present day and there would be an additional two goods vehicles per day on the road (ie one return trip). It has been estimated that the new ferry service could increase total passenger crossing by around 25%, and this level of induced traffic is also shown above.

An illustrative ‘high growth’ scenario, where the number of crossings between Lismore and the mainland doubles relative to today’s levels is also shown. The total capacity of the ferry crossing would ultimately limit numbers – an assumed 13 core crossings per day could accommodate the equivalent of around 260 cars. However, given the limited population of the island, and likely visitor numbers, traffic levels of this magnitude are highly unlikely to occur.
There are no traffic count records for the Port Appin access route, but the traffic levels described above are low by general standards. However, an allowance of £100k has been included in the infrastructure costs for Port Appin RoPax options to allow for some modest upgrading of the road, including the expansion of some passing places, bend widening and a new footway in the Port Appin village area.

**Accessibility and Social Inclusion**

Perhaps the key impacts associated with future options are those under the ‘accessibility’ criterion. The pre-appraisal exercise identified a number of concerns with the poor level of accessibility to key services. This was affecting a number of groups on the island and there was a general feeling that many of the issues could be alleviated by improved transport links.

There is clear evidence of an ageing population on the island, with a growing need for access to health facilities on a regular basis. The current set-up restricts access to the local GP and can be prohibitively expensive for those on relatively low incomes.

The 2001 Census revealed a very small number of people between the ages of 18 and 34. One of the main reasons for this is that the current ferry services, particularly the timetable, does not allow people to access services and return to the island at acceptable times. This applies to both access to social activities and to the employment market. With the downturn in the agriculture sector making employment opportunities scarce on the island, the ability to travel to the island and do a day’s work and then return is essential if people are to remain on the island and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the island community.

In STAG, Community Accessibility recognises the need for all groups in society to have the option to travel using public transport, ie public transport network coverage. At present, the Oban ferry provides a direct link from Lismore into Oban and the various essential services which are based there.

Option 2a maintains this public transport link into Oban, but adds new public transport network coverage, with a higher frequency, to the residents of Port Appin, and improved services to the residents of Appin. This would improve access to employment, services, health etc for residents of Port Appin who do not have permanent access to a car.

**6 Cost to Government**

**Introduction**

In this section, we cover all the costs associated with the options. In the ferry sector, virtually all services are provided by the public sector or the pseudo-public sector. It was therefore felt appropriate to cover all cost issues in this chapter.

For this study, the costs and revenues involved are concerned with:
- **capital** costs for the provision of any new infrastructure;
- costs associated with the acquisition of any new **vessels** required;
- the **operation** costs associated with running the ferry services; and
- the **revenue** raised through fares.

Both the Port Appin and Lismore services currently run at a loss and the combined figure was around £500,000 in 2007/08.

Table 6.1 below provides a summary of the main costs to government associated with each option, and also the user benefits described in Chapter 6.

**Table 6.1 Summary of 30 Year Costs to Government (£m, 2002 prices)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Minimum</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b - Port Appin RoPax &amp; Oban Passenger</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a - Port Appin RoPax &amp; Oban Bus</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - New Vessels on Existing</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Option 3 and Option 2a incur a very similar level of overall cost, with Option 2b costing substantially more. The difference between 2b and 2a is the additional expense of the passenger ferry service to Oban, versus the cost of an equivalent bus service.

The costs incurred by Options 2a and 3 are really the balance of the initial infrastructure costs of 2a, offset by the reduced vessel costs (only one is required) and the reduced operating costs of only running one vessel. Revenues are also higher in 2a, so in the longer-term, the costs would be less than Option 3. Higher revenues could also be anticipated with Option 2a if a less conservative assumption was made on the likely scale of uplift in terms of people crossing between Lismore and the mainland.

Operating costs for Option 2b are slightly less than Option 3 because the larger ferry is on the shorter route at Port Appin, which means it is travelling less far overall.
Overall, the options that perform best in this section are options 2a and 3, with similar levels of net costs. Under Option 2a however, the user benefits captured under the economic analysis are greater than those generated by Option 3. In addition, under Option 2a there are further benefits that have not been quantified and monetised that are not generated under Option 3.

The results of the appraisal were revealed to the local communities of Lismore and Port Appin/Appin at two public meetings. While not everyone was supportive of the results and what they might lead to, the majority of those who attended were appreciative of the STAG process, in that it was objective rather than solution-led, and accepted how the results were arrived at. They found it much more transparent than the previous exercise and the opportunity to participate in the process was very helpful.

Conclusions

The final STAG Report will be submitted to Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL). They will then consider the outputs of the appraisal and the impacts associated with the various options before making a recommendation on a proposed way forward, which the Scottish Government will the consider.

The paper has shown how the STAG process can be applied to a difficult local transport problem to help arrive at a value for money solution. By following the STAG process, it has helped to identify the various impacts of options that can be introduced to solve the problem of delivering links to and from the island of Lismore.

The paper has shown the importance that the consultation process can play in the appraisal. A detailed consultation exercise encouraged users and stakeholders to participate at each stage of the appraisal process. By doing this, it allowed those involved to feed-in and influence the outcomes of the appraisal and, more importantly, understand how the conclusions were arrived at. Those involved in the consultation events and public meetings were very complementary about the whole exercise, which they explained was much more transparent than the previous exercise.

The appraisal shows that the STAG process can work equally well when the impacts cannot necessarily be valued and monetised and that options with impacts which are more social than the traditional economic benefits and costs associated with transport appraisal, can be considered equally.