

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**14 December 2016****PERTH'S TRANSPORT FUTURE PROJECT: PHASE 2 CROSS TAY LINK ROAD
PREFERRED ROUTE****Report by Depute Chief Executive, Environment
(Sustainability, Strategic and Entrepreneurial Development)****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The report focuses on the proposed preferred route for Phase 2 of the Perth's Transport Future project which consists of a new link road from west of the A9 crossing the River Tay and linking with the A93 and A94. The report also provides detail on current costs and funding issues and other related matters in taking the project forward.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 It is widely acknowledged that Perth is a major strategic hub in the Scottish Transport network where the principal routes connecting the central belt to North and North East Scotland converge. Perth also has the distinct advantage of having major road connections to all of Scotland's cities with a drive time of within 2 hours. However, over the past 20 years, as a result of increasing levels of traffic and new local development, there has been increasing concern about the noticeable increase in traffic congestion and related air quality issues in, and around, Perth.
- 1.2 As a result of these traffic and air quality issues, it was clear that there were both current, and potentially exacerbated future, problems which needed to be addressed. This was required in order to ensure that congestion did not undermine the future development of the city nor impact on the wider national economy.
- 1.3 Failure to examine this congestion will continue to undermine the air quality problem and the increased congestion and delays will further constrain the day to day operation of the city centre. The need for a package of measures which address this problem has, therefore, been identified as an issue over many years. The full background of key decisions taken by the Council in the adoption of Perth's Transport Future is outlined in Appendix 1.
- 1.4 While exploring the transport related solutions to these problems, it became apparent it would be beneficial if they were also able to support sustainable economic growth opportunities for Perth and the wider Council area as a whole. As such, this approach of aligning Development and Transport Planning has now been recognised as good practice, and has become a key consideration on which the Strategic and Local Development Plans are now founded.

- 1.5 In the main the Perth's Transport Future Project is focussed on the need for major road infrastructure which will be required to address key congestion points in the road network and to provide essential linkages to growth areas set out in the Local Development Plan. It is of note that the last major infrastructure in Perth was over 35 years ago with the construction of the Perth Western Bypass.
- 1.6 The new infrastructure, however, will not or cannot serve to support unrestricted growth in traffic, particularly in the city centre. As such, the key elements of Perth's Transport Future form an integrated series of infrastructure measures to address Perth's long term transportation needs. They will ensure Perth's growth does not compromise the national trunk road network and also, importantly, allow the development of better public space with a safer, improved environment for business, retail, leisure and residents particularly in the central areas of the city.
- 1.7 As a result of the timelines required for taking various elements of the Perth's Transport Future package forward it has been broken down to a series of phases. While the individual phases all deliver direct benefits, the ability of the Perth network to accommodate the projected economic growth, including the opportunity to create thousands of jobs and deliver the Local Development Plan allocations, will only be achieved with the delivery of the full package of measures. These measures will be delivered over a number of years and are split into 4 phases:-
- Phase 1. Enhanced A9 / A85 Junction and link to Berthapark and a new secondary school (under construction)
 - Phase 2. Cross Tay Link Road (CTLR) - A9 to the A93 and A94
 - Phase 3. Berthapark north link to A9 - linking Phases 1 and 2
 - Phase 4. Associated City improvements such as traffic management measures and measures to further develop the cycling, walking and public transport networks in, and around, Perth to encourage travel by more sustainable modes.
- 1.8 There are significant benefits arising from the totality of the Perth's Transport Future Project. These can be summarised as:
- An upgraded A9/A85 junction providing for better flow of both local and through traffic in and around the busy Crieff Road area with easier connections to Inveralmond as a result of Phase 1 of the project.
 - A second major access to Inveralmond will relieve pressure on this junction at peak times
 - Improved pedestrian and cycle safety across the city and key routes as a result of better facilities and reduced levels of traffic.

- Reduction of journey times on the local transport network and increased network capacity for more sustainable modes of travel.
- Completion of the 3rd Tay Crossing, so further enhancing and providing the required step change in the transport network in, and around, Perth.
- Expansion of Perth as envisaged in the Local Development Plan.
- Improved amenity for residents and businesses in the Crieff Road corridor, Scone, Bridgend and the city centre generally.
- A positive contribution towards meeting the objectives of the Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQMA) within both the Crieff Road Corridor and wider Perth
- Potential for the creation of between 3,000 – 5,000 jobs through the opening up of development land

1.9 Members will be aware that Phase 1 of Perth's Transport Future has recently started on site. This will provide a new link road from Crieff Road across the A.9 and River Almond into Bertha Park. The link will also provide the required access to the new secondary school and provide some immediate benefits to the industrial Estate and Inveralmond Roundabout. A layout plan showing the Phases 2 and 3 of the project is outlined in Appendix 2. (Sections 2, 3 and 4 in the layout plan equate to Phase 2 of the CTRL).

THE PREFERRED ROUTE FOR THE CROSS TAY LINK ROAD - TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT:

- 1.10 All major transport projects that have an interface with the Trunk Road Network have a set procedure to follow to ascertain on balance the most efficient and cost effective solution. This technical process, which followed on from a comprehensive review of all the relevant transport related issues in and around Perth, completed in 2010, is referred to as the 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, (hereafter in the report referenced as DMRB).
- 1.11 The first phase of this work (DMRB Stage 1), was completed in November 2011 and examined three corridor options for a potential Cross Tay Link Road (CTRL); two to the north of Perth and one to the south of Inveralmond. The conclusion from this Stage1 assessment recommended that one of the corridors to the north of Perth be taken forward. Consequently at its meeting of 10 January 2012 (Report No. 12/5 refers) the Council agreed that one of the northern routes for the Cross Tay Link Road within the corridor be taken forward.

- 1.12 In summary, this corridor followed an approximate route through Bertha Park crossing the A.9 midway between Inveralmond and Luncarty and then progressing over the existing A9, the Perth to Inverness rail line, the River Tay and linking up to the A93 and A94 north of Scone. The corridor breadth at this early stage was still relatively wide with the subsequent more detailed DMRB Stage 2 tasked with considering various route alignment options within this corridor and proposing a final preferred route. This work has recently completed and is the subject of this report.
- 1.13 A full copy of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Stage 2 Report for the Cross Tay link Road is available for inspection in the members lounge. Given the volume of technical material within this document, a more condensed Non Technical summary of the Stage 2 study is also available.
- 1.14 As part of the DMRB Stage 2 assessment the corridor has been assessed as 4 separate sections between the River Almond in the west and a new junction with the A94 north east of Scone. This has been done to make the assessment process more manageable. In each of the sections, two route options (A-red and B-blue), shown in Appendix 2, have been considered with respect to the overall impact on any engineering factors and importantly any environmental considerations. The final proposed route is then a balanced view on the 'preferred' or best performing option in each of the sections, with the 'preferred' option from each section forming the final preferred route for the project.
- 1.15 Due to the very sensitive nature of the area under consideration in terms of the natural landscape, impacts on Scone Palace and the multitude of protected or listed sites of special interest, the environmental assessment for the CTRLR has been comprehensive. While the full DMRB Stage 2 report highlights all environmental considerations in detail, as an indication of the types of considerations undertaken, typically the following issues were assessed: earthworks requirements, flooding, air quality, ecology, landscape impacts, geology and noise impacts.
- 1.16 An important element of the final route will be the functionality of the road itself. In summary the route will consist of a 7.3m wide main carriageway with two 1m wide hard strips marked by a solid white road edge line. This is consistent for a road with this level of predicted traffic and is similar to the route dimensions in Phase 1 of the project. The northerly verge will be a minimum of 2.5m wide depending on any visibility requirements. The southern verge will consist of a 1.5m verge with a shared footway/cycleway of 3m along the length of the route. It will be possible, when completed, to be able to cycle or walk on a dedicated path from the north end of Scone to Crieff Road with connections to existing links into various locations within the city.

INTERFACE WITH EXISTING MAJOR ROADS

- 1.17 The interaction between the new road with other roads has been a key element of the work so far. At most major locations, it is planned to provide at-grade roundabouts to the junctions on the A93 and A94 and a major new roundabout junction at Stormontfield Road. In discussions with Scone Estates this will allow the potential for providing a dedicated new access to the Palace and the racecourse. Members will be aware of the difficulties that are experienced in the city centre when any major events or activities take place within the Estate grounds. The new CTRLR will alleviate these problems significantly with a much more attractive, direct route to events. In the past, accessibility to the Estate may have been seen as a deterrent with traffic having to negotiate the busy city centre. The new access provided by the CTRLR will, however, potentially enable or encourage other major regional or national events to consider Perth as a location.
- 1.18 The main junction, however, and the most complex element of the entire route has been the design and structural requirements of crossing the existing A9, the railway and the river Tay. This will be achieved with a new grade separated junction over a realigned A9 with the crossing of the river providing an opportunity for a significant gateway feature entry into Perth. While a relatively simple low level crossing of the River will be the cost effective solution, more iconic structural designs have been considered. However, final decisions on the type of structure can be taken at a later stage in the process.

PREFERRED ROUTE:

- 1.19 The preferred route for Phase 2 of the Perth's Transport Future project is outlined in Appendix 3. This has been based on the assessment of compliant technical standards, a range of environmental and engineering factors and dialogue in particular with Historic Environment Scotland and Scone Estates. While Appendix 3 outlines 4 separate sections, as referred to in Para 1.9, of this Report, Phase 2 of Perth's Transport Future (i.e the Cross Tay Link Road) considers sections 2, 3 and 4 on the plan. Section 1 of the plan which will encompass Phase 3 of Perth's Transport Future, and is the link through Bertha Park. This will connect Phase 1, which is the A9/A85 link currently under construction, and Phase 2, the Cross Tay Link. At this time, it is the intention that Phase 3 will be delivered by the developer of Bertha Park.

PROJECT COST ESTIMATES:

- 1.20 In tandem with the development of the preferred route, the costings for the project have been assessed. At this stage in the process, the indicative costs for Phase 2 of the project are £113m, comprising all related costs for construction only and excludes land acquisition. This includes an appropriate value for optimism bias as per industry standards. The costs will be refined as the project progresses through the various design stages. It is envisaged dialogue with landowners will be taken forward as the project moves to the next stages with respect to land costs. The Council has allocated £78m over the financial period 2019/20 to 2021/22 in its Capital Budget, leaving a funding shortfall of approximately £35m. The balance of funding is currently being progressed as a bid to the Tay Cities Deal project.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

- 1.21 The business case for the project has also been developed as part of the overall assessment of the route. There are two separate types of benefits that a scheme of this nature provides. Firstly, there are the transport benefits to road users as a result of travel time savings that accrue over the period of assessment. It has been found that the construction of the CTRLR greatly improves the operation of the entire transport network providing benefits, in particular, for strategic or 'through' traffic currently having to negotiate the busy city centre heading northwards. As a direct consequence, this opens up capacity for more local traffic and other sustainable modes of travel as well as providing a range of safety and environmental benefits.
- 1.22 While the final value of the benefits will be refined as the project progresses towards implementation, indications are that over the standard 60 year appraisal period, benefits outweigh costs of the scheme by a ratio of over 6 to 1. It is rare a major road infrastructure project performs so well but this is not unexpected given the current level of delays at peak times of the day in and around Perth Bridges, Crieff Road and the major junctions at Broxden and Inveralmond.
- 1.23 Secondly, as an additional exercise to help inform the proposed bid for City Deal funding, the Council has commissioned work on the potential benefits of the project in terms of increased economic activity which may materialise as a result of the new road. While this work will support the full Strategic Business Case to be taken forward for City Deal funding, the emerging findings are significant. It is estimated the CTRLR contributes directly to economic outcomes by virtue of providing significant uplift in Gross Value Added (GVA), net additional employment, private sector investment and net additional tax revenues. A draft version of this Report (Cross Tay Link Road: Business Case) carried out by Consultants Peter Brett Associates on behalf of the Council is available for members to view in the Members Lounge. Headline figures from the report include:
- 9200 housing units of which 91% are as a direct consequence of the project

- £966m of private sector investment via new housing and employment sites
- £10.6m additional tax revenue once fully developed and occupied at 2033
- 5359 net additional full time equivalent jobs once fully developed and occupied in 2033
- In summary terms, for every £1 of capital invested in the CTRL it will generate £4.30 of revenue

1.24 These benefits are in addition to the transport benefits outlined in Para 1.23.

COMPULSORY PURCHASE:

1.25 The extent of the necessary land needed to construct the CTRL is currently being refined and a future report will ask the Council to formally agree to any necessary purchase of land. At this point, the Council's Head of Legal and Governance will be able to initiate the required statutory procedures to acquire the land by Compulsory Purchase.

1.26 In the meantime, however, it is the intention for officers to commence dialogue with affected landowners, with a view to acquiring any land required by agreement. As there are relatively few landowners within the limits of the CTRL, who may also have a direct interest in the completion of the road, it is hoped the majority of land required can be obtained in this manner. However, given the extent of the scheme and the need to offset any potential future delays, it is recommended that a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is promoted in the event that negotiations for a voluntary sale cannot be completed in time.

1.27 In acquiring the entire site by means of CPO, this will also ensure there are no gaps in title affecting the Council's ownership of the land required. However, in taking forward the detailed design phases of the project, the land take required to construct the CTRL will be minimised and, where appropriate, the Council will enter into discussions regarding reasonable accommodation works.

1.28 As an extension of Phase 1 of the Perth's Transport Future project, it is proposed the District Valuer Service is instructed by the Council to act as agent in the negotiation of the required land purchase and Brodies solicitors instructed to handle the legal work associated with the project.

PROGRAMME:

1.29 It is the intention that the CTRL is to commence construction in 2019 and be open to general traffic by 2022. The Council, in assuming a build programme of 3 years, has allocated within its composite capital budget allocations of £23m in financial years 2019/20, £25m in 2020/21 and £30m in 2021/22.

- 1.30 There are, however, significant tranches of work that will need to be completed prior to 2019/20, which would require acceleration of these budgets. These include vesting of the land, full planning consent, any statutory consents required and a full Procurement strategy potentially involving an Early Contractor Involvement approach, as was utilised on Phase 1 of the project. A more comprehensive programme is being developed at this time to meet required timescales. While this is being developed, there are urgent areas of work involving further geotechnical investigation and commencing environmental surveys as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment requirements. In order to meet timescales, this will be taken forward as a matter of urgency.

RELATED PLANNING MATTERS:

- 1.31 As part of the consideration of the current adopted Local Development Plan the Scottish Ministers, so as to minimise any future congestion impacts on the Bridgend area of Perth, confirmed an embargo on further housing sites of 10 units or more in and around the Scone area. The Reporter also as part of his deliberations in considering the strategic housing site at Scone North placed a limit of 100 houses that could be built in advance of the CTRLR becoming a committed project. At the time there was no clear definition of what a 'committed project' actually meant, having potentially numerous interpretations.
- 1.32 While the Scone North proposals are currently being taken forward by the developer involved, there has been a significant degree of interest with the relationship between this proposed housing site and the CTRLR. It is the view that irrespective of whether the housing proposals come forward for Scone North, the case for the road is completely separate. This is because its impacts and advantages are more at the city or regional level scale rather than related to any particular development. However, the term 'committed project' has been the subject of much interest recently, with the obvious connection of the housing site and the new road.
- 1.33 To clarify matters, it is proposed that a definitive position is taken which not only will protect the Council should any delays to the project occur, but also give appropriate assurances to the local communities in the A93 and A94 corridors. It will also provide the development industry with confidence and a clear timetable which is not unduly restrictive. There are a number of key stages to complete prior to a contractor starting work on the construction of the CTRLR, including planning approval, necessary statutory consents, ground investigations, site survey and the process to acquire the required land through negotiation or compulsory purchase.

- 1.34 In the normal course of events, it would be prudent for the Council to define 'committed' as:

"It is the view of the Council that the CTRL becomes a committed project when all funding, statutory approvals, trunk road orders and consents are in place and an appropriate contractor appointed, as a result of a proper tendering process".

- 1.35 In this case, however, it is likely that the CTRL works will be awarded as a "Design and Build" contract. These contracts include a considerable period between the award date and the site start. During this period, the detailed design is undertaken and the necessary design certifications obtained. Accordingly, it is considered appropriate for the CTRL that the final and critical criteria required to release the embargo is a start on site.

- 1.36 Consequently it is proposed that the Council agree that the embargo on development on the A93 and A94 corridors on sites of 10 or more houses as set out in Paragraph 5.1.17 (1) of the Adopted Local Development Plan is lifted when the following criteria have been met.

"It is the view of the Council that the CTRL becomes a committed project when all funding, land required for the scheme, statutory approvals, trunk road orders and consents are in place, a contractor appointed and construction on site has commenced".

- 1.37 As referred to in Para 1.30, it is the intention that the CTRL commences on site 2019. To achieve this, the current work programme envisages that the criteria required to fulfil the definition of a "committed project" will be achieved by early 2020. It is reasonable to assume given current 'build-out' levels in housing, that this will not unduly delay the development industry in moving proposals forward.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 A Project Board has already been established for Phase 1 of the Perth's Transport Future project and led on the design, land acquisition, procurement and delivery of Phase 1 of the project. It is planned that this Board is continued and tasked to take the various workstreams forward, leading to the award of a successful tender exercise and appointment of a suitable contractor.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Perth's Transport Future project plays a key role in the improvement of air quality, reductions in congestion and is crucial to sustainable development and the economic growth of the area. This report outlines the breadth of work undertaken as part of the DMRB Stage 2 process and the resultant recommendation of a final preferred route for the CTRL.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Council:
1. Agrees that the route identified in Appendix 3 of this report is adopted as the preferred route for Phase 2 of the CTRL
 2. Agrees that the wording as set out in Para 1.36 is the accepted definition of the phrase 'committed project' as referred to in the Local Development Plan
 3. Authorises the Depute Chief Executive Environment (Sustainability, Strategic and Entrepreneurial Development) to progress discussions with key statutory agencies including Transport Scotland in relation to future City Deal funding
 4. Requests a future report with an update on developments and the necessary Compulsory Purchase Order.

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The project supports the Community Plan vision. Specifically the project encourages sustainable economic growth, improves and creates a safer environment and healthier choices for sustainable travel. The project supports the following outcomes:

- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 lays out five outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

1.3 The project's benefits in respect of the wider objectives of the Corporate Plan are outlined below

- Giving every child the best start in life – provides access to the proposed new school campus.
- Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy – assist the delivery of sustainable economic growth of the Perth Area, in particular opening up of economic development land to the north and north west of Perth.
- Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives – The project will reduce congestion and therefore reduce traffic emissions, thereby contributing positively to air quality in the corridor and surrounding area. This will have a positive benefit for the health of residents in this area. The project also includes enhanced provision for pedestrian and cyclists providing a more positive environment and could encourage more people within the area to walk and cycle.
- Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generation – The project will facilitate the delivery of the Local Development Plan strategy to support the sustainable economic growth of the area. In addition, by facilitating the Cross Tay Link Road and delivering the “Shaping Perth’s Transport Future” transport strategy, this project can contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of the area and promoting sustainable travel modes. The project will lead to lower journey times and reduce congestion, while providing more travel connections and alleviating the conflict between local and through traffic movements. This will provide for a better environment for this area.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 The approved capital budget has a total project budget for Phase 2 of £78m (2019/20 £23m, 2020/21 £25m, 2021/22 £30m). Funding options for the estimated project shortfall of £35m will be explored.

Workforce

2.2 As above

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 Land issues are identified within the body of the report. Future maintenance will be addressed through existing budgets,

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process using the Integrated Appraisal and have been assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. However an assessment was undertaken for the plan 'Shaping Perth's Transport Future' in 2014. The proposal was also considered through the environmental assessment of the Local Development Plan

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions. The assessment of the proposal was undertaken as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment where it was demonstrated that it would have both positive and negative environmental effects, for example by improving air quality, reducing congestion, improving journey times and community benefits in terms of removing traffic from the city centre.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 The Perth's Transport Future project has been under development for a number of years. Appendix 1 outlines the approvals undertaken by the Council, and its Committees over that time period.

Risk

- 3.5 A Project board will be extended to oversee the delivery of Phase 2 of the project. Membership includes the Heads of Legal and Governance Services and Finance. The Board examines all issues in relation to risk through the risk matrix

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Executive Officer Team, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Governance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 None

5. Communication

5.1 This is a significant infrastructure project which will require a detailed communications plan. Extensive consultation will be carried out with key agencies and the general public as part of the forthcoming planning process.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Timeline for Decisions taken previously

Appendix 2: Layout Plan illustrating Phase 1 and 2 of the CTRLR project

Appendix 3: Preferred Route for approval