



Public Consultation

Spring 2005



Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

CONSULTATION PROCESS



Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

INTRODUCTION

Tackling congestion and delivering a transport system that meets the needs of business, transport users and the environment is a priority for the Scottish Executive.

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) is a key component of the proposed Modern Transport System for the North East of Scotland. The aim of the Modern Transport Strategy is to tackle the region's growing transport problems and to get people and goods moving through an integrated package of road, rail and public transport improvements, together with measures to improve cycle and pedestrian facilities.

The existing trunk road through Aberdeen is congested for large parts of the day. Long distance traffic crossing Aberdeen has to go through 5 traffic-light controlled junctions and 13 roundabouts along the 8-mile stretch of Anderson Drive and the Parkway. At peak periods, it can take an average of an hour to cross Aberdeen with delays of up to 20 minutes occurring regularly at the busiest junctions at Haudagain and Bridge of Dee roundabouts. Heavy goods vehicles have to divert onto the local roads before Bridge of Dee because of width restrictions on the bridge, adding to congestion on the local street network.

Long distance traffic, and particularly heavy goods traffic, has to share the trunk road along Anderson Drive and the Parkway with heavy volumes of local traffic. The AWPR will get this long distance traffic onto a high standard dual carriageway providing quick, reliable and safe travel across Aberdeen and relieving congestion in the city and local road network.

By relieving congestion on the local road network, the AWPR will facilitate the introduction of complementary measures, such as the pedestrianisation of Union Street and the introduction of bus priority routes on

the key radial roads in and out of the city, such as the Great Northern Road. Removing traffic from the city centre will help reduce vehicle emissions within what is already an Air Quality Management area because of the high levels of traffic pollution.

Congestion threatens to stifle the economic competitiveness and quality of life of the region. It is vital that goods get to the markets in the south quickly and that people get to work safely and on time.

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route will:

- improve access to and travel between the industrial areas in the city and to towns to the north and west of Aberdeen
- provide traffic relief to congested trunk roads along Anderson Drive, Auchmill Road and the Parkway including Haudagain roundabout and Bridge of Dee, as well as reducing traffic on urban routes including Bridge of Don, King Street and Market Street, local rural roads such as the Netherley Road, Cults to Kingswells and routes between the A944 and A96, reducing noise and air pollution along these routes
- provide access to existing and planned Park-and-Ride and rail freight facilities around the outskirts of the city, improving opportunities to encourage people and businesses to use our rail and bus services more
- improve traffic flow through and around Aberdeen by assisting in relieving congestion, removing long distance heavy goods traffic and creating opportunities for pedestrianisation in the city centre
- increase opportunities to maximise bus lanes and other public transport priority measures on the main routes into and out of the city
- have a positive impact on road safety over a wide area through the reduction of traffic on local roads

Route Development

The development of the AWPR has been carried out in two distinct stages:

- **The Southern and Western Leg, from the A90 south of Aberdeen to the A96 Inverurie Road**
- **The Northern Leg, from the A96 Inverurie Road to the A90 north of Aberdeen**

In the early 1990s, development work concentrated on the Southern and Western Leg, between the A90 Stonehaven Road and the A96 Inverurie Road, in order to select a 'preferred corridor'. This involved the design and assessment of route options and extensive public consultation. In 1996, Grampian Regional Council (Grampian Regional Council Transportation and Roads Committee 20 February 1996) recommended to the successor authorities, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, a 'preferred corridor' for the Southern and Western Leg. Both Local Authorities subsequently endorsed the Regional Council's recommendation. (Aberdeen City Council Planning and Strategic Development Committee 21 November 1996. Aberdeenshire Council Infrastructure Services Committee 29 November 2001.)

In 2001, both Councils started designing and assessing options for the Northern Leg, between the A96 Inverurie Road and the A90 Ellon Road. This assessment was the subject of public consultation in 2002, following which the Councils selected a 'preferred corridor' for the Northern Leg in 2002.

The AWPR has strong support across the region. In 2002 Aberdeen City Council presented a 15,000-signature petition from local residents in support of the provision of an AWPR to the Scottish Parliament. The project is backed by the North East Scotland Transport Partnership (NESTRANS), which is a partnership between the Councils, Scottish Enterprise Grampian and Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce. The Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) also support the project as necessary to protect existing, and create new, jobs.

In March 2003 the Scottish Executive, in recognition of the strategic importance of the AWPR to the economy of the North East, announced that it would be promoted as a trunk road in partnership with Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils. The Scottish Executive agreed to meet most of the cost – over 80% – reflecting the strategic role of the road to Scotland as a whole. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils are funding the remainder of the cost split equally between them, reflecting the importance to the AWPR to the local area.

The AWPR Project

Aberdeen City Council, acting on behalf of the City Council and Aberdeenshire Council, is the Managing Agent for the AWPR. It procures the necessary design and construction services and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the project on behalf of the Scottish Executive and Aberdeenshire Council.

The AWPR is being developed and assessed in accordance with the Government's key transport objectives:

- **Environment**
- **Safety**
- **Economy**
- **Integration**
- **Accessibility**

Current Position

Since March 2003, the Managing Agent and its project consultants, in consultation with statutory bodies and landowners, have been taking forward the design and assessment of the current preferred corridor, inherited by the Scottish Executive from the Local Authorities. This work has taken into account the impacts on the environment, communities and people living in the vicinity of the route, as well as engineering issues, traffic and economic influences. The work has been used to identify an optimum alignment within the current preferred corridor, minimising the impact as far as possible. At Countesswells Woods, for example, the route alignment has been changed to avoid going through this important recreational woodland area.

Benefits

The new road will provide substantial benefits across the whole of the North East of Scotland although the extent of the benefits will depend on the actual route chosen.

Economy

The North East is a major contributor to the Scottish and UK economy. The AWPR will help to retain and improve the competitiveness of the area, reduce its peripherality by improving connections and providing quick reliable road links to the markets in the South, and help attract new business by improving access and journey times.

Congestion

It will provide a major boost for business and people and could reduce journey times across Aberdeen by 30 minutes at the busiest periods. It will reduce traffic on the radial routes from Aberdeenshire towns into and out of the city centre allowing opportunities to improve access to the city centre by providing more signal time for traffic coming into the city from the west crossing Anderson Drive.

Employment

The work done on the economic benefits for the Modern Transport System estimated that the AWPR, would safeguard 2,500 jobs in the North East's economy. It will also provide opportunities for new businesses by improving connectivity between businesses and their markets. Construction of the road will create an estimated additional 600 jobs over the three-year construction period.

Safety

Construction of a high standard dual carriageway road with grade-separated junctions will reduce traffic on the minor road network, leading to an improvement in safety. It is expected that this will result in a reduction of approximately 40 accidents each year in Aberdeen and the surrounding area.

Accessibility

The new route will also provide a fast and reliable access from the rural towns of

Aberdeenshire such as Peterhead, Ellon, Inverurie, Banchory and Stonehaven to the key industrial and commercial locations around the city. It could save 20 minutes at the busiest times for journeys to and from the strategically important international airport at Dyce to the main routes South.

Integration

As a component in an integrated system, the AWPR will link Park-and-Ride sites, making it easier for drivers and passengers to choose the bus going to their destination, improving choice by providing an alternative mode of transport in the city. By diverting through traffic from the city centre, access to the railway and harbour will be less congested. The AWPR will remove 1100 vehicles per day from Market Street

Alternative Route Options

Any project of this nature will have an impact on the people living and working in the vicinity and on the environment in which it will be situated, including the history and heritage of the surrounding area. These impacts need to be fully assessed and understood. A preferred corridor will be the one which provides the best balance between the benefits which can be achieved and the impacts that will be generated.

The development of the route has involved extensive discussions with a wide range of bodies and organisations, including Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Discussions have also taken place with landowners and communities affected by the proposals for the current preferred corridor.

A significant amount of work has been done with the Camphill School and Newton Dee communities and an independent report has been commissioned from Professor James Hogg, of University of Dundee, into the possible impact of the road on these sensitive communities. All of these discussions have identified the River Dee Valley area as a very sensitive location in all aspects of the assessment, including impacts on the

environment, culture and people.

This assessment, including the Hogg report, has sought to identify, and assess the impacts which will be generated. Having identified the impacts, measures need to be incorporated to mitigate these impacts as far as possible.

Given the scale of the sensitivity of the River Dee crossing area, as described in the consultation process, Minister for Transport, Nicol Stephen instructed in 2004 that the work undertaken in the 1990s should be reviewed and the decision at that time by the Local Authorities to proceed with the current preferred route be reviewed. This review involved looking at the process followed then; the decision reached with the information then available; identifying changes, both physical and legislative, and assessing 4 alternative route options in addition to the current preferred corridor.

The alternative route options and the current preferred corridor are shown on Map 1 included in brochure pack.

The routes are:

- The Pitfodels Route,
- The Milltimber Brae Route,
- The Peterculter/Charleston Route
- The Peterculter/Stonehaven Route
- The Murtle Route – the current preferred corridor.

A comparison of each of the 4 alternative routes and current preferred corridor is set out in Table 1 of this brochure pack.

This Table sets out the cost, length, traffic volumes, economic returns and key impacts on the environment and communities of each of the alternative routes and for the current preferred route.

Map 2 included in this brochure pack shows the location of schools and special needs communities along the River Dee Valley area.

Public Exhibitions and Consultations

This brochure has been produced to complement the public information and consultation exercise being carried out on the route proposals. A series of exhibitions are being held as part of the consultation to give the public an opportunity to comment on the AWPR and the route options.

Details of the time and venues for the exhibitions and a comment sheet are included in this brochure pack.

Comments should be returned to:
 Mrs Catherine Swanney
 Scottish Executive
 2-D, Victoria Quay
 Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
 by 29 April 2005.

Timescale for Completion

Murtle Route	Other routes	
March 2005	March 2005	Public information exercise. An opportunity for the public to view early plans
Autumn 2005	Autumn 2006	Publication of Roads Orders, confirming the proposed line for the AWPR and statutory consultation on the Orders
Summer 2006	Summer 2007	Possible Public Local Inquiry
Summer 2007	Summer 2008	Invitation for tenders
2010	2011	Completion

