

Public Document Pack

ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: All Members of the Council

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 18 February 2011

COUNCIL MEETING

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **COUNCIL** to be held here in the Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2011 at 10.30am.**

JANE G. MACEACHRAN
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES

- 7 Development Management Sub Committee of 17th February 2011 - Danestone & Tillydrone, Junction of A90/Tillydrone Avenue (Third Don Crossing) (Pages 1 - 44)

NOTE: A complete set of the written representations received in relation to the Third Don Crossing application is available in the Members Library.

- 7(a) Development Management Sub Committee of 17th February 2011 - Danestone Market Gardens (Off Laurel Avenue), Danestone (Pages 45 - 52)

GENERAL BUSINESS

- 8(a) Land at Loirston Loch, Wellington Road - Proposal for 21,000 Capacity Sports and Leisure Stadium

Minute of Meeting of Development Management Sub Committee of 14th January 2011 (Pages 53 - 118)

BUSINESS THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO CONSIDER IN PRIVATE

- 11(d) Four Group Homes - Request to Renounce Leases - Report by Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure - referred by Finance and Resources Committee of 1st February 2011 (Pages 119 - 128)

Website Address: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Martyn Orchard, tel. (52)3097 or email morchard@aberdeencity.gov.uk

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE

17TH FEBRUARY, 2010

PLANNING APPLICATIONS WHICH ARE THE SUBJECT OF WRITTEN REPORTS

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DEPARTURE

2. DANESTONE AND TILLYDRONE, JUNCTION OF A90/TILLYDRONE AVENUE (THIRD DON CROSSING). Reference was made (one) to article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Development Management Sub Committee of 19th August, 2010, at which time there was under consideration a report by the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development on the application (100135) by Aberdeen City Council for the construction of a new 2.4 kilometre long, generally 7.5 metre wide, single carriageway wide road with associated footpaths, segregated cycleways, verges and earthworks, also clearance of some existing vegetation, trees and construction of a new bridge over the River Don, new drainage, road signs, street lighting, landscaping and accommodation; and (two) to the minute of meeting of the Development Management Sub Committee on 14th December, 2010, at which time a public hearing was held given the large number of representations received in respect of the proposal, and in accordance with Section 14 of the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. The Sub Committee now had before it the final report on the application as prepared by the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

Councillor Boulton moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Allan:-
that consideration of the proposal be deferred and not debated today as the proposal was not currently in the present Local Development Plan.

On a division, there voted:- for the procedural motion (4) - Councillors Adam, Allan, Boulton and Crockett; against the procedural motion (7) - the Convener; Vice-Convener; and Councillors Cormie, Greig, Jaffrey, Penny and Yuill.

The Sub Committee resolved:-

to consider the application this day.

The report before members again contained a detailed description of the site and the surrounding area and of the proposed development, providing detailed information on the line of the proposed new road and bridge; referred to the Environmental Statement submitted in respect of the proposal; gave an indication of the responses received from the many statutory and other consultees contacted, in particular those from the local and neighbouring Community Councils; and advised of the large number of representations received including a detailed summary of the points raised therein. The relevant planning policy issues arising in relation to the application proposal were also identified within the report.

The report provided a detailed evaluation of the proposal under consideration, highlighting that the proposal was identified in the Structure Plan as part of the strategy for strategic growth; acknowledged that whilst the proposal was contrary to some individual policies and had tensions with a number of other policies, it was also consistent with some policies; referred to Scottish Planning Policy, which emphasised sustainable economic development as an overarching purpose, with infrastructure development identified by the Government's economic strategy as being one of the five strategic priorities critical to economic growth; stated that the Third Don Crossing was one of the critical infrastructure projects required to achieving the Energetica concept towards the region's aspiration to be a global energy hub, and contributed towards making the City and Shire one of the most interesting and enjoyable locations in which to live and work; advised that the proposed Local Development Plan identified the application site for the Third Don Crossing to the north of the River Don, with a requirement for the proposed plan to identify a site for the Third Don Crossing, and it being the Council's settled view on the content of the new Adopted Local Development Plan; further stated that the proposed application would have an adverse impact on the amenity of some local residents, with a significant impact on a relatively small number of local residents, however, on a wider scale, the impacts on issues such as air quality and noise had an overall neutral impact and air quality would improve for some residents in the King Street area; further advised that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the landscape from the gateway entrances into the city and would enhance accessibility for existing residents to cross the river in both directions for employment and leisure purposes, providing the opportunity for enhanced public transport; and by way of conclusion, considered that as the wider economic benefits of the proposal outweighed the negative local impacts of the proposal and that with the attachment of conditions, including an Environmental Management Plan and other mitigation measures, the proposal was acceptable.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice-Convener:-

that the application be approved subject to the following conditions:- (1) That no development shall take place within the application site to the north of the corner of Gordon's Mills Road, until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work which shall include post-excavation and publication work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority. (2) That the development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to and approved by, the planning authority, in consultation with Transport Scotland, details of the proposed tie in arrangement of the A90 parkway / Whitestripes Avenue Roundabout and that the development shall be implemented in complete accordance with the details as so approved. (3) That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by, the planning authority, as plan showing the relocating of the goal posts to the south of Balgownie Drive, and that the development shall not be brought into use unless the goalposts have been relocated in accordance with the scheme as so agreed. (4) That no development pursuant to the planning permission hereby approved shall be carried out unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority a further detailed scheme of landscaping for the site, which scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and landscaped areas on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in

the course of development, and the proposed areas of tree / shrub planting including details of numbers, densities, locations, species, sizes and stage of maturity at planting, including details of planting in areas around the underpasses. (5) That all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a size and species similar to those originally required to be planted, or in accordance with such other scheme as may be submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority. (6) That no part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied unless a plan and report illustrating appropriate management proposals for the care and maintenance of all trees to be retained and any new areas of planting (to include timing of works and inspections) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. The proposals shall be carried out in complete accordance with such plan and report as may be so approved, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation. (7) That any tree work which appears to become necessary during the implementation of the development shall not be undertaken without the prior written consent of the planning authority; any damage caused to trees growing on the site shall be remedied in accordance with British Standard 3998: 1989 "Recommendation for Tree Works" before the building hereby approved is first occupied. (8) That no materials, supplies, plant, machinery, spoil, changes in ground levels or construction activities shall be permitted within the protected areas specified in the aforementioned scheme of tree protection without the written consent of the planning authority and no fire shall be lit in a position where the flames could extend to within 5 metres of foliage, branches or trunks. (9) That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority detailed layout plans showing: (a) a pedestrian crossing on the new road between the two junctions with Grandholm Drive; (b) a pedestrian crossing of the new road close to the junction with Hayton Road; (c) a pedestrian links by steps, or otherwise, between the riverside path on the north side of the river, and the new road close to the new bridge; and (d) details of the link between the pedestrian cycleway under the bridge on the south side of the river, and the riverside pathway. The development shall not be brought into use unless the scheme has been implemented in complete accordance with the details as so agreed, unless otherwise agreed by the planning authority. (10) That no development shall take place unless a scheme for external lighting, including lighting within the underpasses has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with said scheme. (11) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority a full site specific Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that includes all matters indicated within the Environmental Statement by AECOM dated April 2010 and incorporates detailed pollution prevention and mitigation measures for all construction elements potentially capable of giving rise to pollution during all phases of construction, reinstatement after construction and final site decommissioning. The EMP shall be submitted at least 2 months prior to commencement of works and shall include: (a) details

of an appropriately qualified and experienced designated 'appointed person' who would be responsible for enforcing the EMP and will have the authority to stop and implement work; (b) pre-construction surveys, including of otters, bats and badgers mitigation measures; (c) a construction EMP including measures for controlling dust during construction; (d) details of measures to prevent entry of pollutants into any bodies of water; (e) a full site waste management plan; (f) details of waste water drainage from temporary and permanent facilities for workers on site; The scheme shall be implemented in complete accordance with details as so approved and work shall not take place unless the measures as so agreed and those within the ES referred to above are in place and fully operational. (12) That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted and approved in writing by, the planning authority, details of noise mitigation measures. The development shall not be brought into use unless the scheme has been implemented in complete accordance with the details as so agreed. (13) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority, details of works to the listed octagonal tower in order to preserve its structural integrity. These shall take place in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed, within 6 months of the new road being brought into use. (14) That the development of the proposed embankment in the area to the south of the mill lade shall not take place unless there are in place compensatory flood storage provisions as described in the Flood Risk Assessment by AECOM dated February 2010 and letter from the applicant to SEPA, dated 7 July 2010. (15) That two months prior to the commencement of any works, a detailed water feature survey and risk assessment is undertaken, submitted and approved in writing by, the planning authority (in consultation with SEPA). No development shall take place unless the survey and assessment have been so approved. The work shall be carried out in complete accordance with the assessment as so agreed. (16) That no development shall take place unless a scheme of all drainage works designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority and thereafter no part of the development shall be brought into use unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the said scheme. (17) That no development shall take place unless a scheme detailing all external finishing materials to the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so agreed. (18) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the planning authority, details of protection measures to sports pitches. Development shall not take place unless the measures as so agreed are in place, fully in accordance with the scheme as so agreed. (19) That the proposal for the partial demolition of the Category B listed garden walls, should be implemented only as part of a wider scheme for the development of the Third Don Crossing (as approved under this application, or other permission subsequently granted). That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority a scheme showing the phasing of development.

Councillor Boulton moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Allan:-
that the application be refused on the grounds that its consideration was premature as it was not currently in the Local Development Plan and for reasons regarding concerns in respect of the displacement of traffic not being fully considered, the impact on the local community and seeking further information on the figures to support the economic benefits of the proposal.

On a division, between the motion and the amendment, there voted:- for the motion (7) - the Convener; Vice-Convener; and Councillors Cormie, Greig, Jaffrey, Penny and Yuill; for the amendment (4) - Councillors Adam, Allan, Boulton and Crockett.

The Sub Committee resolved:-

that the application be approved in accordance with the terms of the successful motion.

Councillor Allan at this point moved, in terms of Standing Order 36(3) that the application be referred to Council. Councillor Allan was supported in this regard by Councillors Adam, Boulton, Crockett and the Vice-Convener.

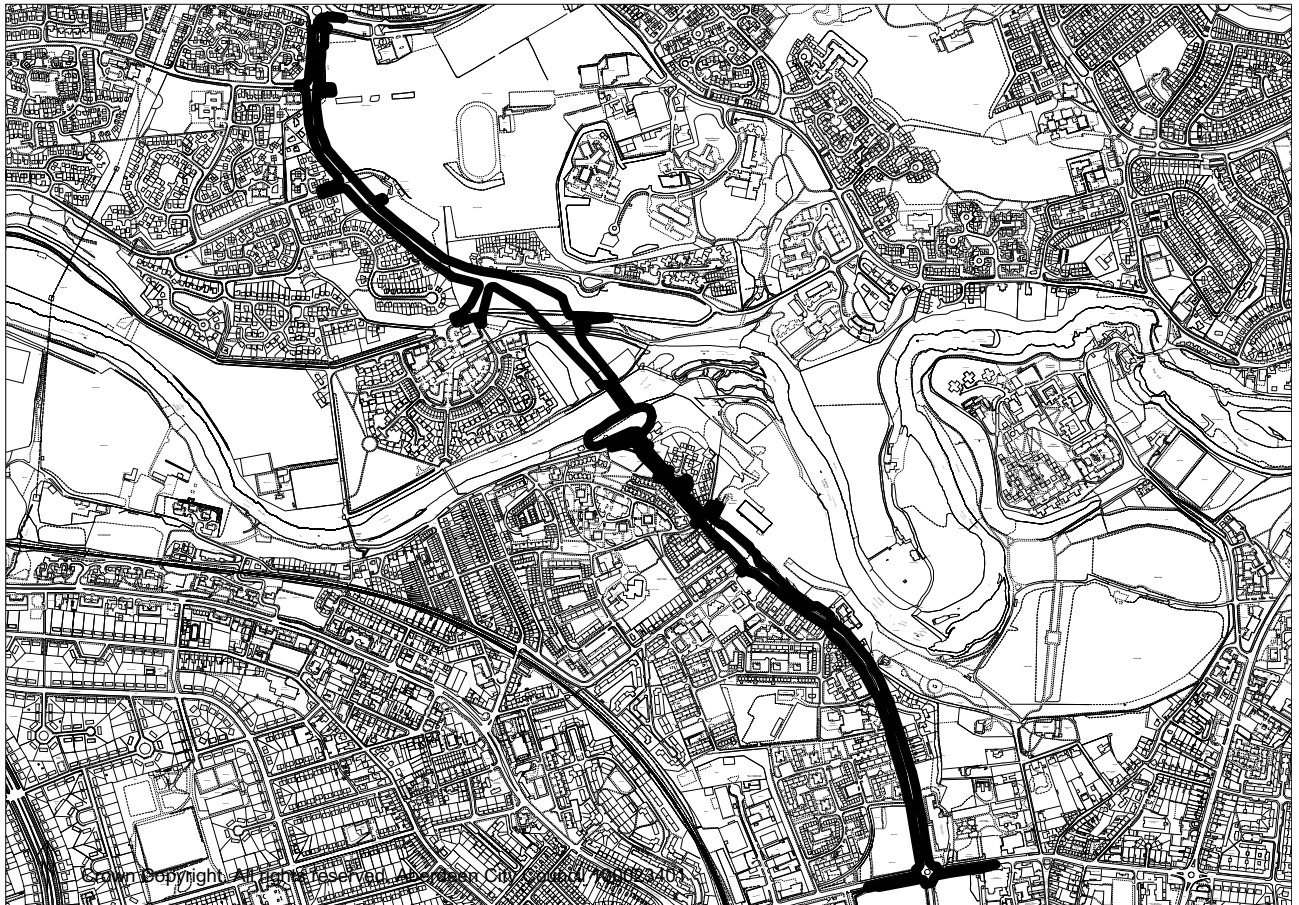
DANESTONE & TILLYDRONE, JUNCTION OF A90/TILLYDRONE AVE

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 2.4KM LONG, GENERALLY 7.3M WIDE SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY WIDE ROAD WITH ASSOCIATED FOOTWAYS, SEGREGATED CYCLEWAYS, VERGES & EARTHWORKS, ALSO CLEARANCE OF SOME EXISTING VEGETATION, TREES AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER DON, NEW PIPE DRAINAGE, ROAD SIGNS, STREET LIGHTING, LANDSCAPING AND ACCOMMODATION

For: Aberdeen City Council

Application Ref. : P100135
Application Date : 29/01/2010
Officer : Lucy Greene
Ward: Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone (R Clark/B
Crockett/M McDonald/ G Penny); Bridge of
Don (M Jaffrey/G Leslie/J Reynolds/W
Young); Tillydrone/ Seaton / Old Aberdeen (N
Collie/J Noble /R Robertson)

Advert : Dev Plan
Dept/Section 60/65
Advertised on : 17/02/2010
Committee Date : 17/02/2011
Community Council : Comments
Bridge of Don, Tillydrone, Old
Aberdeen



RECOMMENDATION: Approve conditionally

Members should note that through a number of other decisions such as those relating to the structure plan and transport strategies, the principle of the road has been accepted by the Council. The role of the Development Management Sub-Committee is to determine whether this route is acceptable in planning terms, not to decide whether the road would relieve congestion.

DESCRIPTION

The application site extends from the roundabout junction of the Parkway A90(Trunk Road) with Whitestripes Avenue and Fairview Street, southward across open space just to the east and parallel with the edge of Danestone. The site includes an approximately 27.5m wide section through the Category B listed Danestone Walled Garden and runs to the east of Grandholm.

The site crosses the River Don to join up with Gordon's Mills Road and Tillydrone Avenue in Tillydrone and includes a strip of land centred on but wider than the existing roads. The southern most extremity of the site is the roundabout at the junction of Tillydrone Avenue, St Machar Drive and Bedford Road and short lengths along St Machar Drive. The site varies in width between 25m and approximately 120m adjacent to the River and 75m to the east of Grandholm.

The site includes open space adjacent to residential areas, a Category B listed walled garden, the River Don and residential land in the form of gardens and a disused house, as well as existing roads.

The Category A listed Grandholm Mill lies approximately 85m from the edge of the application site.

From the point where Tillydrone Road meets Tillydrone Avenue, close to Benholm's Lodge, known as the Wallace Tower, the properties on the east side of Tillydrone Avenue lie within the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area.

The River Don Valley, including the Mill Lade is designated as a District Wildlife Site.

Some of the trees within the application site are protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and these include Tree Preservation Orders 78 (Danestone House), 145 (Grandholm Mill), 160 (Tower Bar) and 182 (Donside Papermills).

The site falls reasonably steeply from the north towards the River, rises slightly to the south of the River, levelling off before St Machar Drive. The levels are approximately 60m AOD at the northern most point, falling to just below 6m AOD at the River, then rising to nearly 28m AOD in Tillydrone and around 20m AOD at St Machar Drive.

PLANNING HISTORY

An application for a similar proposal was submitted in early 2006 (ref. A6/0149). There was a development plan departure hearing held for that application, but it was not determined, rather the applicant put it on hold pending the outcome of

the Public Local Inquiry into the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. The application was withdrawn shortly before the current one was submitted.

Given the length of time that had passed since the original planning application and the changes made to the scheme, a new application was submitted.

The differences between the schemes are that the proposed route now takes a slightly different line to the east of Grandholm and there are changes to the proposed cycle paths.

PROPOSAL

The application is for full planning permission to develop an additional Crossing of the River Don, together with a new stretch of road to join the new bridge to the existing road network to the north of the Don. The existing roads to the south of the River would be altered to be slightly realigned, upgraded and cycle paths added. An Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and an Environmental Statement submitted.

It should be noted that the length of the proposed road to the south of the junction with Gordon's Mills Road although included with the application, could be built without planning permission under permitted development rights granted to Roads Authorities under Class 31, Part 12 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(Scotland) Order 1992.

The proposed bridge would span the River Don between Tillydrone and land to the east of Grandholm. It is proposed that there would not be any support for the bridge within the river itself.

The bridge would be a framed box girder bridge with a reinforced concrete deck. The parapet would be steel handrail with vertical infill bars. The bridge will be painted and it is likely it will be a fairly neutral colour, such as grey.

The carriageway of the road would be 7.3m in width, with 2m wide footpaths each side and a 3m wide cycle path, with verges between the carriageway, footway and cycle way. The only exception to this would be over the bridge itself, where there would be a shared 3m cycle and footpath on the east side, with a 2m footway on the west side. The cycle path would be on the east side of the road to the north of the River and to the west, south of the River. It is proposed to plant trees between the cycleway and footway, along most of the length of the road; and at the back of the footway where this is feasible due to space.

There would be a new stretch of road which would start at the roundabout on The Parkway (A90) and Whitestripes Avenue. The new road would follow the current route of Fairview Street southward. To the south of its existing junction with Fairview Street, Laurel Lane would be stopped up and a hammer head turning area provided. A footpath would provide access onto the corner of Fairview St and the proposed new road. 38 trees would be lost along the east side of Fairview Street, these are small and immature. Replacement planting of native species would take place.

The proposed road would then run in a south easterly direction and there would then be an entirely new length of road running through what is currently the western edge of the University Playing Fields. This would affect one existing

football pitch, however, the layout of the pitches in this area could be rearranged so that the same number of pitches are provided. There is an existing tree belt to the east of the rear gardens of houses on Laurel Lane, 18 of the 55 trees would be lost, with another 5 possibly requiring to be removed. Replacement planting of native species would take place.

There would be a junction onto the proposed road from Laurel Drive and at this point the road would be in a cutting, being at approximately 3m below existing levels around this point. 31 trees would be lost around this junction and replacement trees would again be planted.

There would be proposed toucan crossings (for cyclists and pedestrians) close to The Parkway roundabout and close to the junction with Laurel Drive.

The proposed road would cut through the Category B listed wall to the Danestone Walled Garden, with the octagonal summerhouse remaining on the west side of the road and the existing building remaining on the eastern side of the road. Access would be provided from the proposed road to the buildings to the east. Almost the entire length of the two side walls would be demolished, including the north west corner and part of the end wall. Approximately 30 trees would be lost along this length to the south of the walled garden, these would include a number of mature lime trees, that form the central portion of a line of 18 trees protected by TPO and a row of cherry trees of varying degrees of maturity. There would also be 9 larger trees lost and these include lime, poplar, sycamore, beech and an elm.

The proposed road would skirt along the edge of the rear gardens of houses in Brander Place and John Park Place. There would be approximately 6m between the ends of the gardens and the edge of the footway. The road would be within a cutting of 2 - 3m along this stretch. It is also proposed to plant trees between the road and the gardens.

The route of the proposed road would run between the rear gardens of houses on Laurel Avenue and the western most flats on Balgownie Drive. The road would be in a cutting of approximately 4-5m at this point and the edge of the cutting would be immediately adjacent to the edge of the flatted block at the end of Balgownie Drive.

The existing line of Grandholm Drive would be broken, with separate junctions being provided onto the proposed road from each side. This would not consist of a cross roads, but the junctions would be offset by approximately 100m.

At this point, although separate footway and cycle paths would be provided alongside the road, a separate shared pedestrian and cycle path would break away from the road and loop further to the east, passing under Grandholm Drive, via an underpass, and joining back onto the proposed road further south. The purpose of this is to provide a route that avoids crossing the junction of Grandholm Road with the proposed road. A second shared pedestrian and cycle path leads alongside the mill lade from Grandholm Crescent, under the proposed road via an underpass, crosses the pedestrian / cycle loop previously mentioned and joins Grandholm Drive. This route would provide access for pedestrians and cyclists between Grandholm and Grandholm Drive to the east of the proposed road, without having to cross the proposed new road.

At this point to the east of Grandholm, the proposed road would be on an embankment which would be 4.5m high at the point just before the proposed road crosses the Mill Lade. The road would remain on an embankment of between 4.5m and 5m between the Mill Lade and the River Don. The proposed road would be at approximately the same level as the existing land on the south side of the River. An area of new woodland planting on the north side of Balgownie Drive opposite Grandholm Mill would also be lost. The woodland was planted last year as part of the Council's 'Tree for Every Citizen' project and part of the Granite City Forest.

Where the existing Gordon's Mills Road sweeps round to the west, this existing section of carriageway in front of the childrens' playground would become redundant as the proposed road would run straight onto Gordon's Mills Road. The existing road would be realigned slightly, so that it would lie a little further to the east. The degree of change varies along the length. The junction of Gordon's Mills Road onto the proposed new road would be further to the north, on what is now open space. This would leave the existing corner stretch of the Gordon's Mills Road, to be landscaped and added to the open space adjacent to the play area. Approximately 24 trees would be lost on the south side of the river, on the river bank and on the area of open space. Mostly notably are several larger beech trees and a number of mature rowans. Between the Community Centre and Meadow Place, a row of lime and cherry trees would be lost, as the road would be located to the east of its existing position.

At Meadow Place, the proposed alignment of the road, would involve using part of the existing front garden of the house at no.16 Meadow Place. The edge of the footway would be approximately 4.5 m from the front of the house at the closest point. Meadow Place, would be accessible from the existing northern most access point only, with the southern access being stopped up and a turning circle incorporated. Trees adjacent to Meadow Place may also be lost to accommodate the footway and turning circle.

The proposed road and its associated footway would extend further to the east and this would involve taking an approximately 6-7m wide strip of the front gardens of the sheltered housing at nos 1 and 10 Meadow Lane. The land forming the front gardens would be required to be built up to accommodate the proposed road, which would involve a small embankment in front of the sheltered housing.

On the west side of the road, access would be maintained into Gordon's Mills Place. The cycle path next to the road, would involve removal of part of the embankment in front of the flats at nos 19 – 33 Gordon's Mills Road. The northern most access to Gort Road would be stopped up and access taken via the southern most access and Hayton Road.

As the road alignment would be slightly further east, almost all the trees along the bank on the edge of the former Donside Mills site would need to be removed. These trees are protected by Tree Preservation Order.

To the north of Gort Road, the cyclepath would be laid out through the existing lay-by. To the south of Gort Road, the edge of the cycleway would be almost in

line with the edge of the existing footway, although the edge of the garden at 3 Gordon's Mills Road would be required for the cycleway.

Adjacent to the Pennan Road flats, the proposed road itself would be no closer to the flats, however, some of the landscaped area would be proposed to be removed for the cycleway and footway. It is proposed to take the cycletrack along the existing Tillydrone Terrace, in order to try to retain the beech trees that exist between Tillydrone Road and Terrace.

Coningham Road would be stopped up, in order to avoid loss of trees for the visibility splay. In front of the former St Machar Primary School, it is proposed that the strip of landscaping would be removed for the cycleway and this would also entail the removal of 5 trees.

In front of the flats at 1 – 77 Tillydrone Avenue, some of the grassed area would be removed to accommodate the cycleway, although the edge of the road would be no closer than the existing road. All of the trees (15no silver birch) would be removed from in front of the flats at 2 -32 Wingate Road.

As the road approaches the St Machar roundabout it would widen out and this would result in the removal of strips of grassed land from the edge of St Machar Park. Similarly, along the edges of St Machar Road approaching the roundabout, strips of land would be taken to accommodate the widened road and its footways. All of the trees along the edge of pavement between 64 Tillydrone Avenue and the St Machar roundabout on both sides of the road would be lost due to the footways and cycleways associated with the road. This would involve removal of 54 trees.

A tree survey has been submitted, it shows that 480 trees would be lost for the development, with the possibility that more would be lost during construction, depending upon how this is carried out.

Of the trees protected by TPO, 158 would be removed, these include 69no in the Grandholm Mill TPO, 7no. in Danestone House TPO, 9no. in Tower Bar TPO and 73no. in Donside Papermill TPO. Some of the trees within the latter TPO area have been removed as they have been affected by the development on-going on that site, some of the trees shown to be retained on the submitted plans have recently been removed, with the agreement of the planning authority, as they have been affected by development.

A significant number of replacement trees would be planted, this would be a similar number to those removed.

The applicant has submitted a Transport Modelling Report that shows that the proposed bridge is required due to the congestion that exists and is predicted for the future in the areas around the Bridge of Don and Persley bridges. The applicant states that the need for bridge also arises from the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan, which allocates land for 21,000 homes to greenfield sites in the city, with the Proposed Plan allocating 7,610 of those to the Bridge of Don, as well as 32 hectares of employment land.

The existing bridges currently act as a 'bottle neck' through which traffic has to enter the City, the development of a further bridge would disperse traffic across

the road network. The applicant has described how the proposed new bridge would ease congestion on the strategic routes by taking local traffic.

The applicant has stated that traffic related economic benefits of the Third Don Crossing in terms of consumer and business user benefits are £55million approximately (taking into account structure plan growth), without traffic growth, the benefits are £29 million. These figures are based on an appraisal report that was carried out in March 2010 and included economic appraisal of the application scheme, and do not include deductions for the cost. The appraisal is based on a Department for Transport methodology and considers traffic related benefits to private and business users, such as time spent in congestion and the fuel and vehicle costs savings.

The applicant has described discussions with local transport operators that have identified that the scheme will provide the opportunity to extend existing bus services across the River Don, thereby providing improved direct links between Bridge of Don, Tillydrone and the Powis / Berryden area.

The applicant has additionally stated that it has been identified that the crossing will significantly increase the reliability of bus services and anticipates that the combination of these two items will assist achieving modal shift.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

An Environmental Statement (ES) has been submitted for the proposal. This follows the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment and deals with various issues.

Firstly the ES describes the scheme design background and the alternatives that were considered. These included:

- a road that followed the same route as the application proposal from Fairview Street until just south of Balgownie Drive, but then ran further to the east and crossed the river approximately where the 'Tower Bar' flats now stand, meeting Tillydrone Road, opposite Coningham Terrace;
- a road that included the Parkway to the east of Fairview Street, and ran around the east side of Bridge of Don, crossing the River Don to the east of the existing Bridge of Don and followed the Esplanade and Park Road, eventually joining the Beach Boulevard;
- the fourth option consisted of the same route as this application proposal, but the bridge was to be 'bus only'. Due to lower traffic volumes, this would not have required the improvements to the roads through Tillydrone.

The options were assessed and a public consultation carried out. The application proposal option was found likely to have the least environmental impact overall. The 'bus only' option did not meet the scheme objectives, had the lowest economic return and little public support. The application proposal option was the most westerly and the shortest, in terms of overall length and new carriageway. Taking into account economic, traffic and engineering assessment, as well as the environmental impact, the application proposal option was chosen as the preferred route.

The ES also looked at the following issues:

Ecological impact: various surveys have been carried out of bats, badgers, otters and water voles. It is proposed to carry out further surveys prior to any

construction, with mitigation measures designed depending on results and these would be dealt with via an Environmental Management Plan. The Plan would be agreed with SNH and SEPA and there would be an appointed person on site to oversee the implementation.

Air quality, noise and vibration: the ES describes how air quality would be degraded and noise levels and vibration would increase within the area local to the application site, particularly within Tillydrone and in the housing on the east side of Danestone. At the same time the ES predicts that due to the reduction of traffic on routes currently leading to the crossings of the Don, air quality, noise levels and vibration would improve on other routes within the City, including those where current levels are high. The ES therefore concludes that the overall impact on residents of the city would be neutral. In addition, as the air quality, noise and vibration levels in areas local to the application site are currently well within acceptable limits, although they would be affected adversely, unacceptable levels would not be reached. However, the proposal would necessitate the provision of acoustic measures to windows to some residences close to the proposed road. The ES states that other mitigation measures would be proposed in respect of noise. These issues are described further in the comments from the Environmental Health Officers below.

Cultural heritage: includes looking at the impact on listed buildings, a scheduled monument, archaeology and Old Aberdeen Conservation Area. Most notably of these is the Category B listed Danestone walled garden, most of which would be removed if the proposal were to be implemented. The ES suggests that archaeological impact be dealt with by a condition requiring digs in relevant areas.

Landscape and visual impact: the ES considers the impact on townscape and landscape, and concludes that the townscape of Danestone and the University playing fields, Grandholm Village and the River Don corridor would experience moderate adverse long term impacts. During the construction period there would be significant adverse impacts on all properties facing the site or with a view of it. There would be a major to moderate and adverse long term visual impact, considered to be significant, on some properties on: Laurel Lane and Laurel Grove, Danestone Cottage, Laurel Avenue, Laurel Gardens, Brander Place and John Park Place, Balgownie place and Balgownie Drive, Grandholm Village, Gordon's Mills Road to Gort Road, Meadow Place and Meadow Lane, Gort Road, Hayton Road, Pennan Road and Tillydrone Road. The ES proposes that mitigation measures will help reduce visual and landscape impact with tree and shrub planting. The ES concludes that the landscape and visual impact within the wider area will not deteriorate to a significant degree, with the moderate impact being restricted to those areas within close proximity.

Geology and soils: there is some made up ground and some infill sites within the application site. Possible issues of contamination and preventing this reaching ground water, along with other matters of waste management are proposed by the ES, to be dealt with via a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Community and private assets: this section relates to loss of amenity and recreational space and mitigation measures. The ES states that in relation to the University playing fields, discussions had taken place with the University. The applicant has subsequently submitted a plan showing how the same number of

pitches could be provided by reconfiguring the layout of the pitches in the area to the east of the application site.

Effects on all travellers: this considers issues such as amenity and severance. Mitigation measures would include the provision of pedestrian and cycle crossings.

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted with the application. This shows that the north bridge embankment lies within the existing floodplain of the 1 in 200 year flood event and would cause displacement of 3332m³ of flood storage. The FRA identifies two possible flood storage areas to mitigate the effects of the new raised embankment.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE

The application has been the subject of more than 5 objections, has been advertised as a departure from the development plan and is a Council development.

A departure hearing was held on 14th December 2010 and minutes to this meeting are included within the agenda for this meeting.

CONSULTATIONS

ROADS SECTION – satisfied that the proposal has been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – Raises issues of amenity of local residents in terms of noise, vibration and air quality.

Air quality - the scheme is predicted to have an overall neutral impact upon local air quality based on the balance between beneficial and adverse impacts. Any increases are perceived to be within acceptable limits. Receptors adjacent to the proposed crossing would be expected to experience the greatest increase in concentrations as well as close to Gordon's Mills Road, Tillydrone Road and Tillydrone Avenue. The impact is described in the Environmental Statement as predicted to be medium to large, however, background levels are low and the proposal would not result in an exceedance of national air quality objectives. It is also predicted that air quality on King Street, south of St Machar Drive, would worsen, nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels here are already close to the national air quality objective. Any deterioration in this area may result in the need to extend the City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Beneficial impacts were predicted on King Street, north of St Machar Drive, as well as on Bedford Road, Ellon Road, Balgownie Road and Great Northern Road. The existing annual mean NO₂ concentration on Ellon Road near to the Balgownie Road junction is close to the national air quality objective value, therefore a reduction in pollution levels at this location would be particularly beneficial. There is a high risk of exposure to construction dust for properties within 100m of the proposed road.

Noise – A large number of residents would be exposed to significant noise and vibration impact. The Environmental Statement contends that these can be addressed through mitigation measures, but until such time as a robust scheme has been submitted and accepted, concerns remain regarding noise and vibration impact. The areas particularly affected would be along Tillydrone Road and the eastern edge of Danestone. Although it is predicted that there would be

fewer properties in total affected by noise in 2030 if the proposal were to be implemented, there would be more properties (1200 predicted) that would be largely or very largely affected, compared to no properties being affected to this extent if the proposal is not implemented. It is estimated that there would be around 4000 properties experiencing a decrease in noise as a result of the proposal. It is estimated that 243 properties would qualify for acoustic insulation amongst those most affected. The Environmental Statement states that earthworks or acoustic barriers could provide noise mitigation, however, no detailed assessment has been made as to potential reductions.

Vibration – there would be 500 more properties affected if the scheme were to be implemented, but with around 250 others experiencing a decrease.

SEPA – As there is a 500m cutting proposed, this may intercept groundwater. This may require licence from SEPA. SEPA request that a condition be attached to any consent, requiring a detailed survey and risk assessment to take place.

Regarding flooding, the attachment of conditions is required, relating to compensatory flood storage provision and requiring an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to be submitted in advance of work commencing on site. SEPA find the mitigation measures in respect of surface water to be acceptable, these incorporate the Pollution Prevention Guidelines. In terms of Environmental Management, the proposal for an EMP with an appointed person to oversee mitigation measures, is welcomed. Some of these measures would also be regulated by SEPA. SEPA request condition requiring a full site specific EMP. Details of foul drainage from facilities on site for workers should also be included in the EMP. SEPA also request that a full site waste management plan be incorporated into the EMP, in order to minimise waste at source.

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE – Content with the scope of surveys carried out to inform the Ecological report. Otters: support the need for pre-construction surveys and suggest that work should not take place in areas near otters for two hours either side of sunset.

Badgers: support need for pre-construction surveys. If any new setts are found, then a licence would be likely to be required.

Bats: lighting could disrupt bats commuting and foraging. If permanent lighting is shown to disrupt bats and otters, then it may require a licence. However, it should be possible to mitigate this by lighting under the bridge to one side only and by the type of lighting.

Breeding birds: site clearance and felling trees should be carried out during winter months to avoid disturbance during the bird breeding season.

ARCHAEOLOGY – Request attachment of a non-standard investigation condition, that would only include part of the site area.

GRAMPIAN POLICE ARCHITECTURAL LIAISON – welcome the proposal, though concern is expressed over the potential volumes of traffic on Bedford Road / St Machar Drive / King Street area. However, they are aware that other traffic management plans are proposed to complement the bridge proposal and these should help to address any issues.

The police comment that consideration should be given to the design, lighting and landscaping proposals around the underpasses to avoid these becoming crime generators; it is suggested that a CCTV/Automatic Number Plate Recognition camera with infra red capability is installed on the bridge as the crossing would provide an opportunity for criminals;

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND – advises that a condition should be attached relating to details of the roundabout junction with the A90 Trunk Road.

In considering the proposal in relation to issues affecting the trunk road network it is noted that although a number of receptors will experience an increase in noise levels, any increase associated with the A90 (T) will be negligible. With regard to air quality, expected concentrations of pollutants are noted, however, it is also noted that local air quality assessments indicate that the proposed scheme would result in an overall neutral impact on air quality based upon the balance between beneficial and adverse impacts predicted (in different locations).

SPORTSCOTLAND – Do not object to the application on the basis that the pitches in the area to the east of the application site could be laid out in the different configuration in order to provide the same number of pitches. In addition, the University has contributed considerable sums to the Aberdeen Sports Village where indoor and outdoor pitches have been provided. It is requested that a condition is attached to consent granted, relating to protection measures for the pitches during the construction period.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AUTHORITY – the Third Don Crossing is one of the proposals set out in the structure plan and is also in the key diagram. Proposals identified in the plan were selected on the basis of their importance in helping achieve the vision for the North-East, and the proposal is seen as a key project. The plan recognises the importance of investing in infrastructure to allow growth and deal with congestion.

The Third Don Crossing is part of a wider package of measures, including the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and Haudagain improvements that will help deal with congestion.

This proposal is also an example of new infrastructure which could be expected to receive financial contributions from development sites in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, as well as the Council itself. The principle of the development is consistent with the structure plan.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION – Advised that they have no comments on the Environmental Statement in terms of air quality, noise and nuisance.

HISTORIC SCOTLAND – Broadly content with the assessment of the impacts contained in the ES for historic environment assets and do not object. Raise the issue of the impact of the proposal on the setting of the Category A listed Grandholm Mill complex and recommend that the road embankment is kept to the minimum height possible. Confirm that they are content with the principle of the partial demolition of the Category B listed Danestone Walled Garden, which is accepted on the grounds of public benefit.

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE – no comments

COMMUNITY COUNCILS – The site falls within the area of 3 community councils – Tillydrone Community Council and Old Aberdeen Community Council sent letters of objection. The Bridge of Don Community Council sent comments and observations:

Tillydrone Community Council objects on the following basis:

- The proposal does not conform with the development plan – it is not included within the adopted local plan.
- It is not legally competent to found the location of the proposal on the key diagram in the structure plan, nor on a non-statutory plan (Access from the North) which was prepared to complement the former local plan – this supplementary planning document was approved by the Council in June 2004 and has very little materiality;
- Access from the North is fundamentally flawed as it did not consider other options, including the dualling the existing Persley Bridge;
- The application is premature to finalisation of the emerging local plan. As a major piece of infrastructure, the location of the bridge should be determined within the context of a strategic review within the local plan preparation process, which includes an examination of site specific proposals including cross examination.
- The traffic impact has not been properly considered as the congestion models are out of date. The result would be unacceptably high traffic rates along the proposed route and surrounding communities;
- The reporters' report on the local plan in 2007 recommended excluding the Third Don crossing on 14 grounds. The real issues affecting the community have not been addressed.
- The proposal would not reduce traffic congestion but would displace it further towards the centre of the City;
- Air and noise pollution would increase and are a grave concern. The Environmental Statement has understated the increase in air pollution. When looking at the details of the concentrations in the Appendices the significance of the increase is conveyed and the report is inconsistent;
- Tillydrone is a regeneration area and there are numerous social and economic disadvantages, including poor life expectancy. The proposal would widen the gap between rich and poor, it would not enhance quality of life or offer opportunity. Tillydrone is identified as within the top 100 most deprived areas in Scotland, in the NHS 'Traffic Lights' report, where life expectancy is significantly lower than more affluent areas. The road traffic figures are also worse than average.
- Impact on archaeology and built heritage;
- The River Don valley is Tillydrone's greatest asset. There would be an adverse impact on landscape and ecology and fragmentation of wildlife corridors. Mitigation attempts are unconvincing and will not deliver the same quality of habitat;
- The proposal would cause disturbance to bats and would be required to pass the strict tests set out in the relevant Directive;
- The proposed Third Don Crossing has been opposed consistently and strongly by a very large number of residents from the immediate adjacent areas of Grandholm, Tillydrone, as well as Old Aberdeen, Seaton, George Street and Rosemount and Mile-End.

Old Aberdeen Community Council stated that: although there are traffic delays, these should be dealt with by public transport improvements, as there is an existing chronic lack of joined up transportation strategy for the region; unless there is a modal shift the new Bridge would only encourage more car use and deliver only temporary relief; the south exit of the new road would decant people onto a unsuitable road infrastructure. If the Berryden dualling takes place, the primary route for traffic would be westwards past St Machar Academy, this is unsuitable for commuter traffic and even worse if it were to be used by heavy

goods vehicles. Routing traffic into traffic lights at St Machar Drive would lock up this section of road, already gridlocked with east-west traffic. A more comprehensive upgrade of Haudagain would have been a much better solution.

The Third Don Crossing as proposed would have a significant negative impact on the life and health of the residents of Old Aberdeen, Tillydrone, Hayton and beyond with little improvement for the city traffic.

The Community Council has battled against the proposal, when it was to be included in the local plan in 2005 (rejected by the Scottish Government Reporter), again when it was included in the small print of the Haudagain consultation as being part of the solution, against its inclusion in the Structure Plan in April 2009 and in the Access from the North consultation in June 2009. It is acknowledged that mention is made in the Structure Plan and in the Main Issues Report to the local plan. However, these are not site specific. It is therefore considered that the application is premature and should be consequent on approval of the new local development plan.

The Community Council feels that the Council is failing to address the traffic congestion concerns and have written to the Minister for Transport requesting that the application be called-in.

Bridge of Don Community Council stated that: the Bridge should maybe be further northwards; the Haudagain Roundabout also needs to be dealt with; although many in their area are in favour, many are not; that the pinch point for congestion would just be moved to St Machar Drive; that the crossing is being built primarily to allow the expansion of Bridge of Don; that infrastructure in the area already cannot cope with the level of traffic; plans show that the road would be very close to some residents and questions whether they were notified individually; questions how the Fairview Street junction would be laid out; questions where and what type of pedestrian crossings would be provided.

George Street Community Council's comments have been included with the representations, as the site does not fall within its area and as such for this application it is not a statutory consultee.

REPRESENTATIONS

In response to neighbour notification and advertisement of the application and the ES, 714 representations were received from individuals, households and organisations; 2no. petitions were also received. The representations can be broken down as follows:

- 377 standard postcards;
- 283 letters

These included one petition with 27 no. signatures from Tillydrone Community Centre and one petition with 103 signatures from Don Crossing Communities Alliance.

There were 54 letters of support.

The letters included objections from the following bodies: Riverbank Parents Council, Aberdeen Civic Forum and Don Crossing Communities Alliance and representations from the Aberdeen and District Angling Association.

A letter of support was received from Malcolm Bruce MP and a letter of objection from Lewis MacDonald MSP.

In summary, the main points made in the standard postcard objections, as well as by many others, are that the proposal:

- (1) is contrary to the adopted Aberdeen Local Plan;
- (2) will lead to unacceptable increases in traffic volumes in Tillydrone and surrounding area causing loss of amenity and endangering local residents;
- (3) will lead to severe increases in levels of CO₂ in the area, endangering the health of local residents;
- (4) will irreversibly damage the River Don and the extensive range of wildlife that live along it.

The following is a summary of other points made in the letters:

- Many people would be badly affected in terms of residential amenity. A number of objectors describe individual circumstances. These include residents in Bridge of Don and Tillydrone, where the proposed road would be located close to existing houses and in some cases within existing gardens;
- That there would be an increased level of pollution from the additional traffic (estimated at 9,500 per day) on the new road / bridge;
- That there would be an increase in the noise levels from the additional traffic, for example, one resident described how the proposal would create terrible noise for someone who lives 7m from the road;
- That Tillydrone is a deprived area and one identified for regeneration, however, a lot of people work and look after their properties. The road would destroy the area – a lovely part of Tillydrone;
- Loss of local environment, natural habitat, green space and mature trees, including on Gordon Mills Road, that it would also cause damage to air and water quality and the environment of otters;
- The proposal would cause disturbance to bats (and would be required to pass the strict tests set out in the relevant Directive);
- The issue is raised of artificial lighting from the bridge falling on the River Don and adversely affecting fish behaviour;
- Impact on archaeology and built heritage.

There were a number of comments relating to the transport network and how the proposal would fit within the existing road network. These include:

- Traffic should be kept out of the City Centre not brought in;
- That rat running would take place through local areas;
- That the Bridge would cause big traffic jams with traffic only being able to go onto King Street or up St Machar Drive;
- That the level of traffic is horrendous already and this would make it worse for residents on both sides of the Don. The area could not cope with the volume of traffic the bridge would bring;
- That the volume of traffic would be dangerous in an area where families live and where children are not used to traffic. Children may be knocked down, including because they need to cross roads to get to school. Traffic would also increase on the residential roads within Tillydrone, causing vehicles to speed through the neighbourhood;
- That the road would pass sheltered housing complexes which would be dangerous for the residents, also as they need to cross the road to catch a bus;

- Safety issues for school children in Grandholm and going to St Machar Academy;
- That the existing traffic problems, including at Haudagain, require to be resolved without creating more problems by building the Third Don Crossing;
- That the St Machar Roundabout would become like the Haudagain roundabout as a result of the proposal;
- That the Parkway, Persley Bridge and Mugiemooss Road all need to be dualled and there should be a flyover at the Haudagain.
- The Western Peripheral Route may well sort out many of the problems, with the bridge not being required;
- The site for the bridge should be further northwards along the River;
- Four pedestrian crossings would reduce traffic flow and add to driver stress, perhaps contributing to accidents;
- There needs to be more commitment to public transport including rail, cycling and most importantly, bus travel;
- The traffic impact has not been properly considered as the congestion models are out of date. The result would be unacceptably high traffic rates along the proposed route and surrounding communities;
- That any easing in traffic levels would encourage more people to travel by car and / or to revert to travelling at peak hours.

There were also objections on the following grounds:

- It is not legally competent to found the location of the proposal on the key diagram in the structure plan, nor on a non-statutory plan (Access from the North) which was prepared to complement the former local plan – this supplementary planning document was approved by the Council in June 2004 and has very little materiality;
- Access from the North is fundamentally flawed as it did not consider the option of dualling the existing Persley Bridge;
- The application is premature to finalisation of the emerging local plan. As a major piece of infrastructure, the location of the bridge should be determined within the context of a strategic review within the local plan preparation process, which includes an examination of site specific proposals including cross examination.
- That note should be taken of the views of the Local Plan Reporters in 2007. They said that the Third Don Crossing would make little difference to traffic congestion in the City, but would have a major impact on the people of Tillydrone;
- In this climate of cut-backs the money for the bridge would be better spent elsewhere. The Haudagain is mentioned in this context a number of times;
- One of the purposes of the modernisation of planning was to prevent pernicious repeat applications making repeated and almost identical application until objectors are beaten;
- That it should be taken into account that many people are against this Bridge;
- The proposal would widen the gap between rich and poor, it would not enhance quality of life or offer opportunity.

54 letters of support were received, mostly from residents of Bridge of Don who commute into the City and state that the proposal would improve existing traffic problems for people travelling into the City from north of the Don.

PLANNING POLICY

The current development plan comprises the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan, approved in August 2009, and the Aberdeen Local Plan, adopted in 2008. Material Considerations include the local and regional transport strategies, the Proposed Local Development Plan and Scottish Planning Policy, as well as issues raised by consultees and objectors.

Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan August 2009

The structure plan which forms part of the Development Plan and was approved by Scottish Ministers, supports the principle of a Third Don Crossing, including it in the Spatial Strategy, where the proposal is mentioned in the context of improvements needed to serve new development in the city.

A Third Don Crossing is listed amongst a range of projects that will help to achieve the vision for the North-East, by dealing with congestion and allowing growth in and to the north of the City.

A Third Don Crossing is also indicated in symbol form on the Key Diagram in the vicinity of this proposal. No specific site is identified for the bridge.

The structure plan states that local development plans will identify land for proposals mentioned in the local and regional transport strategies; and that contributions would be expected from developers on a range of sites in both council areas.

It emphasises the vital role of the green belt and states that its boundaries will need to change to accommodate growth sought by the Structure Plan.

Economic growth is one of the six objectives of the structure plan. The objective is described as providing “opportunities which encourage economic development ...while at the same time improving the essential strategic infrastructure necessary to allow the economy to grow over the long term”.

The structure plan identifies the ‘Energetica’ initiative as helping to deliver this in the Aberdeen to Peterhead strategic growth corridor.

Aberdeen Local Plan June 2008

There is no site identified in the adopted local plan for a Third Don Crossing. The application site is zoned under several policies in the local plan:

Policy 28 ‘Green Belt’ – the area immediately adjacent to the River Don, where the proposed bridge would be located, lies within the green belt. There is a general presumption against development in the green belt with certain exceptions. One of these is for infrastructure development that cannot be accommodated other than in the greenbelt, and is also identified in, and wholly compatible with the development plan. The policy also states that all development in the green belt should be of highest quality in terms of siting, scale, design and materials; and should have regard to other policies – in terms of landscape, trees & natural heritage.

Policy 36 'Urban Green Space' – the application site runs through the edge of the playing fields, and these are zoned urban green space. The open space north of the mill lade is zoned urban green space. In addition, the policy relates to smaller areas of green open space, not specifically shown on the local plan maps (due to their size). This policy states that permission will not be granted to use or redevelop any playing fields or other areas of urban green space, unless an equivalent area is made available in the locality. There are various criteria relating to:

1. there being no significant loss to landscape character and amenity of the site and adjoining areas;
2. access being either maintained or enhanced;
3. the site being of no significant wildlife or heritage value; and,
4. there being no loss of established or mature trees.

Policy 29 'Green Space Network' (GSN) – Areas zoned as green belt and urban green space may also be zoned as GSN, as is the case here. The policy aims to protect the recreation, public access, wildlife and landscape value of such areas; these values should be protected and enhanced and proposals likely to erode the character will not be permitted. Where major infrastructure necessitates crossing GSN, access routes for wildlife and outdoor recreation should be provided

Policy 40 'Residential Areas' – the application site includes areas within Tillydrone zoned as residential and the Donside site is zoned mixed use. In residential areas the character and amenity should be retained. Other uses should be complementary to residential use or create no conflict or nuisance to enjoyment of residential use.

Policy 41 'Mixed Use areas' – development in these areas must take into account existing uses and character and not create undue conflict.

The site also includes parts of Opportunity Site OP40 and OP49. Opportunity Site 40 is on the west side of the University playing fields to the south of Laurel Lane. It is identified as a site suitable for a major leisure and recreational development with proposed facilities being available for use by the local community and University. There has not been a planning application for this development.

Opportunity Site 49 is the Donside Paper Mill site. This has planning permission for a mixed use development of housing and flats, together with small areas of office, employment, local retail and café uses.

Subject policies that are relevant are as follows:

Policy 35 'Access and Recreation Areas' – Recreational footpaths along the River Don shall be protected and enhanced. Core paths will be designated and protection given to these and other informal routes from development. Development should not compromise the integrity of these and opportunities should be taken to improve access.

Policy 27: Air Quality – air quality assessment is required where there is a significant effect on local air quality. Presumption against development where breach of National Air Quality Quality Standards. Where there is significant

deterioration in local air quality, even where standards are not breached, this will be a material consideration.

Policy 1 'Design' – factors such as scale, massing, materials, details and landscaping will be taken into account.

Policy 2 'Landscape Design' – details of a landscape design scheme should be submitted as part of the application.

Policy 4 'Protection of Urban Green Space' – existing areas of amenity space, recreation grounds, wildlife sites and woodlands are not brownfield sites for new development.

Policy 7 'Crime Prevention and Community Safety' – all development shall include measures to design out crime.

Policy 24 'Planning and Flooding' – development shall not be permitted if it would increase the risk of flooding, or flood itself; surface water must be disposed of through Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), and in manner to avoid flooding and pollution during and after construction.

Policy 31 'Landscape Protection' – development must not adversely affect landscape character or elements that contribute to sense of place around the city; disturb recognised recreation, wildlife or woodland resources; or sprawl into green spaces between places. Development shall respect landscape character and be capable of being absorbed into sites without adverse impact on landscape elements and linear features.

Policy 33 'Protecting Trees and Woodland' – contains a presumption against loss of trees and woodlands with natural heritage value that contribute to the character of the locality. Where trees are unavoidably lost, replacements of appropriate species and numbers, including providing new street trees and community woodland. Tree protection should be in place during development.

Policy 34 'Natural Heritage' – development with significant adverse impact on local designation shall not be permitted unless public interest at a regional level outweighs ecological value of the area and there is no alternative site. Satisfactory mitigation measures must be taken.

Scottish Planning Policy

In terms of Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), there are various sections relevant to the application, including:

Sustainable Economic Growth – The SPP states that the planning system should proactively support development that will contribute to sustainable economic growth.

Climate Change – the need to help to mitigate the causes of climate change and the need to adapt to its short and long term impacts should be taken into account in all decisions throughout the planning system.

Greenbelt – local development plans should establish boundaries and identify types of development that are appropriate in the green belt; the SPP goes on to state that certain types of development may be appropriate, including essential infrastructure.

Playing Fields – Paragraph 156 specifically includes playing fields within educational establishments and states that playing fields and sports pitches should not be redeveloped except where, inter alia, there would be a replacement, or upgrade of an existing facility and these should be equally convenient; or, a playing field strategy shows that there is a clear excess to meet current and future demand.

Landscape and natural heritage – policy includes a presumption in favour of protecting woodland resources, removal would only be considered where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits; compensatory planting may form part of the balance. Planning authorities should seek to prevent further fragmentation of habitats, and identify opportunities to restore links that have been broken

Transport - States the need for a local transport strategy and development to be complementary and consistent with Regional Transport Strategy. Improvements to active transport networks, such as paths and cycle routes will support more sustainable travel choices.

Designing Streets is a scottish planning policy document that defines streets as having two functions: place and movement. The passage of people on foot and cycle is recognised as making a positive contribution to the overall character of a place. Elements of the policy and design guidance, such as junctions and connections are relevant to consideration of the design of the proposed road.

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan

According to Circular 1/2009 on Development Planning, the proposed plan represents the planning authority's settled view as to what the final adopted content of the plan should be.

The consultation period for the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan has now expired and representations have been received. In the case of the Third Don Crossing, objections number 169, whilst there have been 2 letters of support.

The Proposals Map in the Proposed Plan shows the Third Don Crossing and associated works to the road between the St Machar roundabout and the Parkway roundabout.

Policy T1 lists land safeguarded for various transport projects and these include the Third Don Crossing, as well as the Berryden Corridor and Haudagain roundabout improvements. The Proposed Plan states that these schemes are included in order to meet the objectives of the Local and Regional Transport Strategies.

In the Proposed Plan sites have been allocated to meet the housing and employment land requirements of the Structure Plan and for the Bridge of Don

and Grandhome area, these include land for a total of 7,610 housing units up to 2030, split into three stages, including 3210 units in the first phase up to 2016. There is also a total of 32 hectares of employment land allocated for within the Bridge of Don / Grandhome area up to 2030. The 'Directions for Growth' section of the Proposed Plan dealing with the Bridge of Don / Grandhome area to the north of the River Don lists the Third Don Crossing, as well as Haudagain and the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, as proposed road schemes that will provide benefits to the area.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

The Planning Authority has a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, and to preserve or enhance the character of Conservation Areas.

Transport Strategies

The Regional and Local Transport Strategies are material considerations. NESTRANS Regional Transport Strategy 2021 (RTS) considers parts of the road network to be priorities for action and these include upgrading the A90/A96 junction at Haudagain, including a third Don Crossing. The Economy is one of the strategic objectives in the RTS. The aims, in respect of the economy, are defined as:

- making the movement of goods and people within the north east and to / from the area more efficient and reliable;
- improving the range and quality of transport to / from the north east to key business destinations;
- improving connectivity within the north east, particularly between residential and employment areas.

Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy 2008 to 2012 includes the Third Don Crossing in its Strategy to improve the City's transport system by adding to our transport infrastructure. The Third Don Crossing is listed in the Implementation Plan.

Energetica Delivery Plan December 2010

Energetica is a concept that aspires to position the region as a global energy hub. Physically, it consists of a coastal development extending from north Aberdeen to Peterhead, linking together key energy assets and providing opportunities for new investment in infrastructure, leisure and housing. A number of projects and initiatives are underway and these are captured in the delivery Plan. In terms of critical physical infrastructure there are several key actions proposed. The Third Don Crossing is listed amongst these actions, as having benefits for the Bridge of Don / Grandholme Residential Development Zone.

Regeneration Masterplan

Tillydrone is a regeneration area and is the subject of a regeneration Masterplan. The masterplan approved by the Council in 2007, takes into account the possibility of a Third Don Crossing

EVALUATION

The application shall be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan consists of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. Scottish Planning Policy, the Regional Transport Strategy 2021, Local Transport Strategy 2008 - 2012 and the Proposed Local Development Plan, as well as other matters, including those raised by objectors, are material considerations to be taken into account in development management decisions.

Structure Plan

The structure plan supports the principle of a Third Don Crossing, whilst leaving the identification of a specific site to the local plan.

The structure plan in its spatial strategy supports the Third Don as being required in order to ensure that infrastructure is in place to support planned new development within the City.

In Chapter 5 – Putting the Plan into Practice, the Third Don Crossing is mentioned in relation to dealing with congestion as well as allowing growth in and to the north of the City.

The ‘Accessibility’ objective of the structure plan is to make sure that all new developments contribute towards reducing the need to travel and to encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport by making these choices attractive. In this context local development plans will identify and protect land for the transport proposals mentioned in the local and regional transport strategies.

The structure plan Key Diagram indicates the proposal for a Third Don Crossing by way of a symbol in approximately the area of the application site, however, this is not intended to identify a particular site.

It is considered that the application proposal is supported by the structure plan and it is clear that it should be located where it would provide access for those sites allocated for new development within the north of the city. The structure plan also supports developer contributions being made by developers within the city and shire.

Adopted Local Plan

The application site is zoned under several policies within the Aberdeen Local Plan.

Urban green Space – Policy 36 and Policy 4

The southern and northernmost lengths of the application site are zoned under this policy. In addition, some small areas of open space, not shown on the local plan zoning maps, are covered by this policy.

Within Tillydrone, the areas to the sides of the existing roads that are required for the proposal would be specifically required to accommodate the 3m wide cyclepath and part of the footway. Along this stretch, to the south of Wingate

Road, the proposed road would be wider than the existing carriageway as there are improvements required to convert the existing roundabout to a signalised junction. This would include the provision of an additional lane on the approach to the junction and a pedestrian island at the junction itself. This would involve a strip of the existing open space, of maximum width approximately 8.5m extending back from back edge of the landscaped / planted verge that runs along the heel of the existing pavement.

In terms of the criteria in the policy:

1. The St Machar open space / playing field consists of an expanse of open mown grass, the removal of the strip along the eastern edge would not impact upon the landscape character or amenity of the site. It is proposed to plant replacement trees between the cycle and footways and these would, in time, provide a benefit to amenity to compensate for the loss of the trees within the verge;
2. There would be no impact on access to the open space;
3. The site is mown grass adjacent to the road and as the expanse of the open space would remain, there would be no significant impact on wildlife or heritage value;
4. There would be no loss of trees on the area zoned urban green space. There would be compensatory planting for the loss of trees on the adjacent verge, which have a positive impact in terms of amenity.

The northern stretch of the site zoned under Urban Green Space policy includes the Balgownie playing field, the Danestone Walled Garden, and the open space down to the mill lade south of Grandholm Drive.

The proposal would involve widening the existing length of Fairview Street, between the roundabout and the sharp turn to the west, requiring a strip of land for a cycleway and embankment. This strip, which would be approximately 11m at its widest point, is an existing tree planted embankment. It is proposed that the embankment and remaining area between the proposed widened Fairview Street and Laurel Lane, to the east, would be planted with new trees. In terms of the policy the principle role of this strip of land is as a landscaped / tree planted edge to the road. If the application proposal were to be implemented, this role within the landscape would continue, albeit with a narrower strip of land. The existing trees are relatively small and immature. The proposal complies with the criteria within the policy.

The stretch of proposed road to the south of Fairview Street would require a strip of land of at least 17.3m in width, with embankments and cuttings being additional to this. The length of road within land zoned as Urban Green Space would be approximately 770m. In addition, there would be land required for the realignment of Grandholm Drive and for the separate pedestrian and cycleways around the junction of the proposed road with Grandholm Drive. In addition to the land take, the proposed road would affect one of the pitches at the University's Balgownie playing fields. These pitches are available to be hired by the public. However, the applicant has submitted a plan showing how the pitches could be reconfigured in order to provide the same number and size of pitches if the application proposal were implemented. As the University has contributed to the development of the Aberdeen Sports Village, it is considered that the impact on one pitch at Balgownie is acceptable. There is no objection from SportScotland to this or any other part of the proposal, subject to the pitches being protected during construction. Adjacent to Balgownie Drive there are goal posts with no pitch marked out. The applicant has submitted a plan showing the goals in a

relocated position, in order that the playing area is not affected by the application proposal. As this land near Balgownie Drive is Council owned, a suitable condition could be attached to any permission granted.

In terms of the criteria in Policy 36:

1. The application site slopes down towards the River Don, being visible from locations to the north and from the south side of the River. The proposed road would be highly visible from many locations within the immediate locality and would have a significant impact on landscape character and general amenity within the local area. In longer distance views, this would be mitigated to some extent by tree planting. However, within localised areas, such as the area between Balgownie Drive and Grandholm, the road would completely change the character of the open space and landscape. The open space remaining would be severed, in particular, as the road is within a deep cutting adjacent to Balgownie Drive, and on a significant embankment as it passes Grandholm.
2. Whilst access would be maintained to the areas of open space remaining, access across the wider open space would be degraded to a significant degree.
3. and 4. The site is of value to wildlife and heritage. It contains the Category B listed Danestone Walled Garden, as well as a large number of mature trees, including Wych Elm. This is an important species locally due to it being the only tree species on the North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan species list.

Urban Green Space policy also applies to areas of green space (other than private gardens) not separately zoned on the local plan maps. The proposal for a separate cycle way would result in much of the land take that is required in Tillydrone. The benefits of encouraging cycling by providing the separate cycleway, need to be balanced against the impact on amenity due to loss of gardens and open space. The proposal also results in the removal of large areas currently used for informal recreation in the area to the north of the river.

The proposal is therefore, clearly contrary to Policy 36 in the adopted local plan.

Green Belt – Policy 28

In terms of green belt policy the issue is whether the application proposal falls within the policy exception covering infrastructure development. A crossing of the River Don within the City, must cross the green belt as the entire length of the Don corridor is zoned as greenbelt. The approved structure plan requires that a site for the Third Don Crossing is identified in the local plan. Although the local plan has not yet 'caught up' with this structure plan requirement, it is clear that a site must be identified and that will have to include green belt land. Indeed, the Proposed Local Development Plan does this on a site currently allocated as green belt – a green belt location is inevitable. It is therefore considered that the application proposal consists of infrastructure development that cannot be accommodated other than in the green belt. The proposal has also been identified in the development plan, by virtue of its inclusion within the structure plan. This policy exception for infrastructure development is included in the green belt policy, thus there is the assumption that infrastructure may not be separately zoned in the development plan, but may fall within green belt zoning and be acceptable in terms of the policy. The issue is, therefore, whether the proposal is compatible with the development plan as a whole and its aims. It could be argued

that this is the case, following the logic that the structure plan requires a site to be identified, that the site would have to be in the green belt, and that any crossing of the Don Valley would be likely to have an adverse impact in terms of landscape, trees and natural heritage.

Green Space Network – Policy 29

The areas zoned as Urban Green Space and Green Belt are mostly also zoned Green Space Network (GSN). The policy contains allowance for infrastructure projects that necessitate crossing the GSN, this proposal is such a project. The policy then requires that account be taken of the coherence of the network, particularly in terms of access across roads for wildlife and outdoor recreation. The River Don corridor is the most significant wildlife corridor that is affected by the application. There would be access for both wildlife and people under the bridge alongside the river. From the point of view of security for walkers, this route would be enclosed only to the minimal degree required and it is not considered that access for recreation would be affected by safety concerns. Should the proposal be approved it is also recommended that a condition be attached relating to details of steps, or other access, between the riverbank level and the bridge itself, in order to maximise ease of access across the bridge and also for recreational purposes.

Around the junction with Grandholm Drive there would also be level access under the road (which would be on an embankment at this point). The foot and cycle path would run alongside the Mill Lade and this would provide access between the west and east sides of the road for wildlife as well. Elsewhere along the stretch of proposed new road, access would not be provided other than by crossing the carriageway. However, the road to the north of Grandholm is largely at the western extremity of the open space, so that crossing by wildlife is less likely to be a significant issue. The area of trees to the east of properties on Laurel Lane, the area of the walled garden to the west of the proposed road and the area to the north west of the proposed junction into Grandholm would all be isolated, from the point of view of wildlife, between garden fences and the proposed road.

Residential Areas - Policy 40

The housing area within Tillydrone is zoned under this policy, which seeks to protect residential character and amenity. It should be noted that the length of the proposed road to the south of the junction with Gordon's Mills Road although included with the application, could be built without planning permission under permitted development rights granted to Roads Authorities under Class 31, Part 12 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(Scotland) Order 1992.

The tensions with residential policy exist where the proposal would involve loss of gardens, amenity space, wider areas of open space and trees, severance, noise and vibration and loss of amenity due to the perception of the oppressive presence of a road, or busier road, in the proximity of dwellinghouses.

The proposal would involve cycle and footways associated with the road being located on areas that are existing garden ground and on areas of open space in front of flats; and, where there would be areas of trees and open space affected

by the proposals. The removal of areas of garden and the implementation of the application proposal would have a significant impact on the amenity of the occupiers of those houses directly affected and impacts of varying degrees on all the residents along the length of the road and those passing through the area.

Properties in Danestone, to the east of the application site, are also within an area zoned as residential and the proposal would have an adverse impact on residential amenity, mainly due to noise, but also due to the other factors listed above.

As stated above, the proposal for a separate cycle way would result in much of the land take that is required in Tillydrone. The benefits of encouraging cycling by providing the separate cycleway, need to be balanced against the impact on amenity due to loss of gardens and open space.

There would be an adverse impact in terms of the additional noise, vibration and degraded air quality. Air quality will also be discussed further in terms of Policy 27: Air Quality. With all three of these factors there would be an adverse impact on the residents closest to the proposed road, whilst others near roads currently feeding routes to the existing river crossings are predicted to experience improvements in noise, air quality and vibration. To some extent, this is dependent on traffic volumes being influenced by other factors that cannot be foreseen at present. However, although air quality levels would worsen, levels of pollutants are relatively low compared to other areas, and the impact of the proposal would be acceptable in terms of air quality levels.

With regard to vibration, there would be an adverse impact on residents, especially within Tillydrone. There are no measures proposed to mitigate for vibration and Environmental Health Officers do not request these in their comments.

With regard to noise, Environmental Health Officers have requested that details of mitigation measures be submitted prior to determination of the application. The road would be within a cutting close to the houses in Danestone and it is considered that the land would form a buffer helping to reduce traffic noise. With Tillydrone it is more difficult to identify measures that would be acceptable from a visual and security point of view. One possibility is the use of willow panels. It is considered that this matter could be adequately dealt with via the attachment of appropriate conditions to any consent granted.

There would be tensions with Policy 40, including in terms of the localised impact of the proposal on air quality, noise levels and vibration. These negative impacts on the application site area may be balanced by positive impacts elsewhere. The loss of gardens and amenity open space and areas of trees would be contrary to Policy 40.

Mixed Use Area – Policy 41

The former Donside Papermill Site is zoned as mixed use. Planning permission has been granted for an urban village on this site and construction has started on site. In the areas closest to the road, that is the subject of this application, there would be flats in blocks, with houses slightly further from the road. The existing line of the road would be straightened out, and in doing so would take the edge

off the former papermill site. The area in question is a tree planted bank, protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The impact on residential amenity on the future occupiers of the site would be in terms of a lower air quality, increased noise, the loss of trees and severance from the facilities in Tillydrone. However, none of these factors would result in an unacceptable level of amenity for residents. Due to the fact that the Donside residents would be further from the road than many existing Tillydrone residents, and that with the possible timescales of the Donside development and the road proposal, it is likely that occupiers of the flats would move in either with knowledge of the likelihood of the Third Don road proposal being implemented (if planning permission is approved) or it having been implemented. In either case it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in term of the impact on amenity of future residents.

Policy 41 also states that proposals on sites zoned mixed use must accord with all other relevant local plan policies. In relation to this area of the application site, the main issue of policy tension would be with Policy 33 'Protecting trees and woodlands'. This policy will be dealt with below.

It is considered that the proposal is not contrary to Mixed Use Areas Policy 41.

Opportunity Site OP40:

There has been no planning permission for a recreational development on this site at Balgownie playing fields. The application proposal would not prevent this taking place, as access could be provided off any new road.

Opportunity Site OP49:

As mentioned above, development is underway at the former Donside Papermill site. The impact on the site has been dealt with above.

Access and Recreation Areas – Policy 35

Core paths exist alongside the River Don and access would not be prevented by the proposed bridge, which would allow access underneath. Due to the impact of the proposed road and bridge on the character of the riverside area, the proposal would not improve the environmental and recreational quality of the riverside paths. The provision of access over the bridge would improve access to both sides of the river for those using the paths and would provide the opportunity for views over the river. It is recommended that a condition should be attached to any permission granted, requiring the provision of access from the riverside path onto the bridge and road side footway. However, it is considered that the overall impact of the proposal would be detrimental to the environmental quality of the riverside paths, this needs to be balanced against the benefit of increased accessibility and improvements to the network of paths (ie. including those alongside roads).

Air Quality – Policy 27

An air quality assessment has been carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The application proposal would result in additional vehicle traffic passing through the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Figures in the Environmental Statement show that overall impact on the City Centre AQMA would be a marginal benefit or no change, although for some receptors on King Street (within the AQMA) there would be a slight adverse impact. Environmental

Health comments confirm that any increases in levels of pollutants would be within acceptable limits and that the overall impact would be neutral, due to the balance between beneficial and adverse impacts. It is, therefore, considered that the proposal accords with Policy 27.

Design and Landscape Design – Policy 1 and 2:

Policy 1 relates to the design of developments taking into account the context, rather than the principle of development itself. Given that the application is for a bridge and associated new road and road widening and the bridge itself would be a fairly simple structure, then this would minimise the inevitable impact on the river corridor. The parapet would consist of open railings and the sides of the bridge on the river bank would be open, rather than enclosed, helping to lighten the visual impact.

In terms of Policy 2, the submitted plans indicate the locations of tree planting and that these would be native species. It is considered that this matter is capable of being satisfactorily dealt with via the attachment of appropriate conditions to any consent granted.

Crime Prevention and Community Safety – Policy 7

In terms of this policy, the main issues are safety of pedestrians and cyclists when using the underpasses at Grandholm - there would be an underpass under the proposed new road, this would be where the foot and cycleway runs alongside the Mill Lade; and there would be a second underpass where the foot and cycleway runs under Grandholm Drive. Grampian Police Architectural Liaison Officer was consulted and also suggested that Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras be installed on the bridge, as it would provide a route for criminals. In relation to ANPR cameras, as the Council would control the road it would be able to install cameras if the problem raised by the Police became an issue.

With regard to safety within underpasses, it is proposed that lighting would be provided along the routes in question. It is recommended that a condition be attached to any permission granted, relating to the provision of lighting. Landscaping could also be covered by condition, whereby the issues of safety and security could be assessed. The route from Grandholm along Grandholm Drive would be taken by children and parents on their way to Braehead Primary School and Bridge of Don Academy, as Grandholm is within the catchment areas for these schools. Although there would be likely to be numbers of people using the underpasses at school times, thus reducing the perception of danger in the underpass, it is also recommended that a condition be attached relating to the provision of a pedestrian crossing on the proposed new road. This would provide a choice of routes for those travelling on foot from Grandholm eastward.

Planning and Flooding – Policy 24

A flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application and SEPA is satisfied that with the attachment of a condition relating to the implementation of the compensatory flood storage provisions the proposal would be acceptable in this respect.

Landscape Protection - Policy 31

The Environmental Statement finds that there would be significant impacts on the townscape / landscape around Danestone and the Balgownie playing fields, Grandholm Village and on the River Don corridor. Along the corridor to the south of the river it finds that there would be minor adverse or insignificant impacts. It is considered that this is an accurate assessment of the proposal; the impact would be less where the road follows the line of the existing roads in Tillydrone and the impact on the Conservation Area would be insignificant, other than the increase in traffic around the periphery.

The River Don, in particular, provides a strong sense of place, Grandholm Village, due to its particular character, including the presence of the Category A listed Mill building, is also a distinctive place in terms of Policy 31. The road to the north of the river, would cross the playing fields and areas of open space, including the Category B listed Danestone Walled Garden. It would therefore create disturbance, loss and damage to recreation resources. The proposed road would be mainly in cutting to the north of Grandholm and on an embankment between Grandholm and bridge. The traffic itself and lighting columns would also have a visual impact within these areas. Tree planting along the road corridor and in open spaces between the road and residential areas would help mitigate the landscape impact of the proposal. The design of the bridge itself minimises the impact within the river corridor. The laying out of a cycle and footway between the river edge and Gordon's Mills Road, on the south side of the river, would involve the loss of approximately 20 trees, in addition to those lost for the road itself. This has been provided to allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross from one side of the road to the other without crossing the carriageway, although a 'toucan' crossing is also provided close to this point. The laying out of this ramped cycle and footway, which would be within cuttings would have a significant impact on the river landscape, however, tree planting is proposed and this would greatly reduce the impact over time.

There is a stone wall along the heel of the pavement near to the Wallace Monument, this forms the edge of the Conservation Area, and conditions attached to any consent granted could ensure that this to is retained, together with the stone wall on the west side of the road, alongside Tillydrone Avenue.

Although, it is proposed to plant a large number of trees, it is inevitable that the proposed road would have a significant impact on the landscape, especially around the river and to the north of the river. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy 31.

Protecting Trees and Woodland - Policy 33

There would be approximately 480 trees lost for the proposed road and bridge. These would include 158 no. trees protected by TPO

One of the most dominant tree species of those trees to be removed is Wych Elm, this is the only tree species on the North East Scotland Biodiversity Action Plan species list. A total of no 44 Wych Elms of good health and form would be removed. In addition, a further 13 no. trees may be required to be removed as part of the remediation process.

It is proposed to plant replacement trees, these would be on the sides of cuttings and embankments, within larger areas between the proposed road and residential areas, between the road and separate cycle and footways; and street trees within verges between the foot and cycle way.

Whilst the extent of tree loss would significantly undermine the aim of the policy (to protect the City's tree cover) the proposal does comply with paragraph 2. of the policy, as it is proposed to plant an appropriate number of replacement trees, including street trees and areas of woodland. This would be controlled by the attachment of a suitable condition to any consent granted.

Natural Heritage - Policy 34

The application proposal would adversely affect the District Wildlife Sites (DWS) at the River Don and the Mill Lade. The impact on protected species, and other species and habitats would be dealt with via Environmental Management Plan as described above.

The principle of the Don crossing is identified in the Structure Plan and local and regional transport strategies. The economic benefits for the public, at a regional level, emanate from the development within the Energetica corridor, as well as the proposed Third Don Crossing being required to ease existing and future congestion. These benefits outweigh any adverse impact on the natural heritage designations. In addition, mitigation measures would be required as part of a Environmental Management Plan that would be a condition of any consent granted. Any alternative site would still involve crossing the river corridor, all of which is designated as a DWS.

It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the terms of this policy, as the policy allows for adverse impact on a non-statutorily designated site, if there is public interest at regional level.

Scottish Planning Policy

SPP states that increasing sustainable economic growth is the overarching purpose of the Scottish Government and that planning should facilitate this purpose. The proposal has clear benefits for the economy of the City and wider region, as described above in relation to the economic appraisal of the application scheme. The appraisal found that, taking structure plan growth into account, there would be £55 million of traffic related benefits, with further benefits if public transport is provided. Economic objectives in terms of transport are identified in the Regional Transport Strategy and part of the proposal to achieve these is the Third Don Crossing.

In terms of climate change, the land allocations for housing and employment land in the area to the north of the river were identified after careful consideration of environmental, topographical and accessibility issues. The sites were also subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The application proposal would provide the opportunity for greater accessibility from the areas of new development as well as the existing housing areas. There is the opportunity for public transport to run along the proposed new route, providing a shorter journey time for all modes of transport into the City.

In addition, the application scheme would reduce the number of vehicles standing in queues, this together with shorter journey distances would reduce emissions compared to a situation without the application proposal.

It is therefore considered that improving accessibility and connectivity within the City would not contribute to the causes of climate change. However, there may be an issue with the provision of additional capacity on the road network, encouraging more people to drive into the city. However, this issue is addressed through wider measures within the local and regional transport strategies.

In terms of playing fields, the application proposal is considered acceptable as the University has made significant investment in the Aberdeen Sports Village, where high quality indoor and outdoor pitches have been provided. In addition, the pitches in the area to the east of the application site could be laid out in such a way as to provide the same number and size of pitches as currently exist.

The relationship of SPP on green belts to the application proposal is similar to that described above in respect of green belt policy in the adopted local plan. Essential infrastructure is included as one of the types of development that may be appropriate within the green belt.

The application site does not contain any statutorily designated landscape and natural heritage sites, although it does provide habitat for protected species, there are areas of protected trees and a locally designated district wildlife site. The site is not therefore the most sensitive landscape described by SPP as having little or no potential for new development.

The application site is located to the side of the green space where it crosses the University playing fields, although there would be small areas of treed open space created to the west of the road in Danestone and to the north east of Grandholm, where the proposal would result in habitats being severed. The impact on the green space east of Grandholm would be to sever the existing open space. However, the wildlife corridor along the River Don would remain, and would physically link the two areas of green space that would remain either side of the embankment to the north of the river, albeit that there would be disturbance for wildlife from the traffic on the road and the link alongside the river would be along a well used footpath. Wildlife could also use the Mill Lade itself, and foot/cycle way alongside, to cross between the areas of green space that would be created by the proposed road.

With regard to particular protected species, these would be the subject of further surveys and mitigation measures that would form part of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that would be conditioned as part of any consent granted.

As described above, the application proposal is included within the Regional Transport Strategy and the Local Transport Strategy. The proposal also includes providing separate cycle and footways, the former being off-road which together with the creation, by the application proposal, of a more direct route into the City from many areas north of the river, would encourage cycling.

Listed buildings

The Category B listed Danestone walled garden would be partially demolished as part of the application proposal, as the road corridor would cross the garden. A length of wall and the octagonal tower would remain to the west side of the road, whilst walls and the house and associated outbuildings would remain to the east. The walled garden would effectively be destroyed by the application proposal. The octagonal tower would remain, but its context would be lost and its setting significantly damaged. The applicant has indicated that there would be proposals to undertake some works to the tower to ensure that its structural integrity and this could be the subject of a condition attached to any consent granted.

Historic Scotland have confirmed that it is content with the principle of the partial demolition of the walled garden, on the grounds of public benefit.

With regard to the impact on the Category A listed Grandholm Mill, it is considered that the Mill Lade is not part of the curtilage of the Mill. In any case, the proposals do not involve blocking off the lade.

In terms of the impact of the proposed road, on its embankment, on the setting of the Category A Mill, it is considered that the setting of the Mill is formed principally by Grandholm Village. There is an area of separation, albeit relatively small, between the proposed road and Grandholm Village. The road would be seen together with the Village mainly in views from south of the River, however, views of the Mill would not be obscured. The road would be clearly in view from the observation tower in the Mill, however, trees planting on the embankment would help to screen the road in time. It is considered that the public and economic benefit of the road would outweigh any impact on the setting of the Mill. In addition, the road, being located on the embankment at this point, would provide additional views of the Mill, within its setting in Grandholm Village and this would provide a high degree of interest from this public vantage point.

Conservation Area

The application site abuts the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area, however, the proposal has an insignificant impact, as described above.

Designing Streets

The layout design would not fully integrate the road into the existing road network to the north of the river, however, this is not possible given the layout of residential cul de sacs and streets. There would be junctions from Fairview Street, Laurel Drive and Grandholm Drive, and pedestrian crossings. To the south of the river, the proposal consists of a road widening in order to incorporate cycle and wider footways. There would be junctions with most of the existing side roads, providing a high degree of integration with the existing road network in Tillydrone. There would be a degree of severance between the existing Tillydrone to the west and the Donside Village and existing houses to the east of the road.

A condition would be recommended to be attached to any permission granted, relating to an additional pedestrian crossing within Tillydrone adjacent to the Donside papermill site.

Although the new road to the north of the river would be within cuttings and on an embankment, this is required to create acceptable gradients on the road, and also to avoid flood risk to the road. The embankments and sides of the cuttings

would be tree planted to help minimise the visual impact and soften the design. Although the widening of the road corridor through Tillydrone does not require planning permission, it is part of the application. The proposal for a separate cycle way would result in much of the land take that is required in Tillydrone. The amenity aspects of this have been dealt with above.

In terms of design, the impact of the loss of gardens and open space for cycle and footways would be capable of being mitigated to some degree by tree planting within the verges. However, retrofitting the proposals within an existing residential area inevitably results in a less than ideal layout design.

Proposed Local Development Plan

The application proposal is zoned within the Proposed Plan as land safeguarded for transport proposals that are required in order to meet the objectives of the local and regional transport strategies

In addition to this requirement the Proposed Plan allocates significant areas of land for development adjacent the existing built up area to the north of the River Don. These development would benefit from the proposed bridge and road, in terms of providing a shorter route into the City, the potential for public transport improvements and the easing of congestion on the existing bridges.

The application proposal clearly accords with the Proposed Plan. However, there are 169 letters of objection to the Proposed Plan in respect of the Third Don Crossing. The Proposed Plan is a material consideration and is required by the structure plan to allocate a site for the Third Don Crossing, however, the weight to be attached in the decision making process is somewhat less than would be attached to an adopted plan.

Other matters (including those raised by objectors)

Many of issues raised by objectors have been dealt with in the report above. The outstanding issues are dealt with below:

Reporters' report on the adopted local plan – the purpose of this was to report on those proposals and policies that should be included in the adopted local plan, rather than to comment more widely on the merits of the individual proposals. This is explained by the Reporters in the first paragraph of their report on this issue. The Reporters' report is not directly relevant and the extent to which this report is a material consideration is limited by the fact that the Reporters' Report was part of a process that lead to the adopted Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. That plan has been fully considered earlier in this report. The Reporters, in paragraph 89 of their report, did not recommend including the Third Don Crossing in the local plan, as it would not have conformed with the structure plan current at the time. A new structure plan has now been approved.

There has been a change in context since the Reporters issued their report, in the form of the local and regional transport strategies, the benefits of the application proposal for the Haudagain, the proposal being an integral part of the Access from the North proposals, the new SPP and the Proposed Local Development Plan.

With regard to the other issues raised by the Reporters including in terms of traffic and congestion, and the environment and impact on the amenity of those living close to the application site, these issues have been dealt with above.

Impact on Tillydrone, a deprived area – it is acknowledged that the application proposal would have local adverse impacts principally in terms of noise, air quality and amenity and these have been dealt with above. There are considered to be positive impacts from the application proposal for the residents of Tillydrone, these include the provision of quicker and easier access to areas of employment to the north of the river, with the possibility that public transport would be extended to cover the new road. The issue of severance would not impact upon the majority of residents in Tillydrone, as there would be access provided to the riverside and pedestrian and cyclist crossings of the road would be provided at various points.

It is noted that there are more affluent residential areas of the City through which busy roads run, for example, Queens Road, North Deeside Road and Great Western Road. It is considered to be the case that the burden of traffic congestion is not only carried by those in the deprived areas of the city. In addition, the air quality assessments show that improvements would result from the proposals for the less affluent areas to the east of King Street.

Traffic models – The traffic modelling exercise was repeated during 2010 and the information submitted relates to these results. The particular traffic model used 2007 as a baseline, however, all relevant traffic growth patterns would have been added to the figures for both the short and long term predictions. It is considered that the traffic models used are up to date and appropriate.

Access from the North

Access From the North study was not a planning document - this was not its purpose. The study was carried out in accordance with national guidelines to identify the best means of reducing congestion in the north of the City. It was in part carried out under powers within the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 which permit roads authorities to construct new roads.

In terms of the options considered, the applicant has stated that it is not possible to take every option that is suggested forward to more detailed route investigation studies. Therefore, in accordance with recommended national practice a sifting exercise was carried out and four options were taken forward to more detailed study. Taking this limited number of options forward is consistent with practice elsewhere.

The applicant has confirmed that the widening the Bridge of Don was not taken forward to detailed study because the capacity issue on the Ellon Road/King Street corridor is caused by junction capacity and not by the width of the Bridge of Don. As such, widening the Bridge of Don would not have provided effective congestion relief and would additionally have potentially required significant property demolition at the Balgownie Road/Ellon Road junction. In view of this, a route running parallel to the Ellon Road/King Street, a few hundred metres to the east, was selected for further investigation. This parallel route provided extra capacity without the problems associated with upgrading Ellon Road/King Street. The study found that this option was more expensive, provided less congestion

relief, had lesser modal shift benefits and had greater environmental impact than the line that is currently being proposed.

It was also confirmed by the applicant that, as with the Bridge of Don, widening Persley Bridge would not have provided adequate congestion relief since the primary capacity problem is not Persley Bridge but the junctions at the Haudagain and Mugiemoos/Parkway. A report was submitted to Council in January 2004 giving high level costs for upgrading the Haudagain and the Parkway as an alternative to the Third Don Crossing. The cost of this upgrade was estimated to be over £20m more than the Third Don Crossing. Subsequent to this a full study was carried out into the upgrading of the Haudagain and that study concluded that any Haudagain improvement that complemented the regeneration of the adjacent residential area would require to be an at grade (single level) junction. Such a junction would require both the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) and the Third Don Crossing to be constructed if the congestion problems at the Haudagain were to be adequately resolved.

Given the topography of the north of the City, a tunnel under the River Don would have required excessive approach gradients and would have cost many times that of a bridge solution.

Prematurity - There is a duty on the planning authority to determine applications and the planning legislation includes provisions for processing applications that do not accord with the development plan. The relationship of the proposal to the structure plan, and other approved strategies is outlined above.

Human Rights - Consultation has taken place in accordance with planning legislation and legislation covering Environmental Impact Assessment and a public hearing has been held in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures. All representations have been taken into account.

The Courts have ruled that the Scottish planning system complies fully with Human Rights legislation.

Conclusion

The proposal is identified in the Structure Plan as part of the strategy for strategic growth, without identifying a site. One of the key objectives of the structure plan is economic growth and part of this is the provision of essential infrastructure. The structure plan also requires the emerging local development plan (the Proposed Plan) to identify a site for the Third Don Crossing and sites for 21,000 homes on greenfield sites up to 2030.

The adopted local plan does not make any mention of the Third Don Crossing (the issue of the Reporters Report is dealt with above) and the proposal is contrary to some individual policies, has tensions with a number of others but is consistent with others.

Scottish Planning Policy emphasises sustainable economic development as its overarching purpose. The Government's Economic Strategy identifies infrastructure development as one its five strategic priorities that are critical to economic growth.

The Energetica concept is central to the region's aspiration to be a global energy hub focussing on all energy technologies. It also contributes to the desire to make the City and Shire one of the most interesting and enjoyable locations in which to live and work. The Third Don Crossing is one of the critical infrastructure projects required to achieve this.

The Proposed Plan identifies the application site for the Third Don Crossing as well as making land allocations for 7610 homes and 32 hectares of employment land to the north of the River Don. This Proposed Plan is the subject of objections and the weight given to it is therefore more limited than the adopted plan. However, there is a requirement for the plan to identify a site for the Third Don Crossing and it is the Council's settled view on the content of the new adopted local development plan.

It is accepted that the proposed bridge, associated new road and road widening would have an adverse impact the amenity of some local residents, with a significant impact on a relatively small number of local residents; on the environment within the local area, including on a listed structure and on a large number of trees. At the same time, looking at the impacts on a wider scale, issues such as air quality and noise have an overall neutral impact, and air quality will improve for some residents in the King Street area. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the landscape from the gateway entrances into the city. The landscape impact is capable of mitigation to some extent by tree planting. It is considered that overall the adverse impact is local to the proposal. The proposal would also enhance accessibility: for existing residents to cross the river in both directions for employment as well as leisure purposes; and, from new areas of sustainably located development, providing the opportunity for enhanced public transport to these and existing areas.

The economic benefits of the proposal are clear and have been described above. The proposed bridge would take local traffic into the city, dispersing traffic from the bottlenecks at the existing bridges, easing congestion on these strategic routes. The Scottish Government emphasises the importance of economic growth and this is picked up by the structure plan. The Regional Transport Strategy picks up the transport contribution to economic growth and specifically recognises the dependency on the delivery of the Third Don Crossing to implement improvements to the Haudagain. It is therefore considered that the wider economic benefits of the proposal outweigh the negative local impacts of the proposal and that with the attachment of conditions, including for an Environmental Management Plan and other mitigation measures, that the proposal is acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve conditionally

with the following condition(s):

- (1) that no development shall take place within the application site to the north of the corner of Gordon's Mills Road, until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work which shall include post-excavation and publication work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority - in the interests of protecting items of

historical importance as may exist within the application site.

(2) that the development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to and approved by, the planning authority, in consultation with Transport Scotland, details of the proposed tie in arrangement of the A90 parkway / Whitestripes Avenue Roundabout and that the development shall be implemented in complete accordance with the details as so approved - to ensure that the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road is maintained.

(3) That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by, the planning authority, as plan showing the relocating of the goal posts to the south of Balgownie Drive, and that the the development shall not be brought into use unless the goalposts have been relocated in accordance with the scheme as so agreed - in the interests of recreation

(4) that no development pursuant to the planning permission hereby approved shall be carried out unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority a further detailed scheme of landscaping for the site, which scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and landscaped areas on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development, and the proposed areas of tree/shrub planting including details of numbers, densities, locations, species, sizes and stage of maturity at planting, including details of planting in areas around the underpasses - in the interests of the amenity of the area and security.

(5) that all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a size and species similar to those originally required to be planted, or in accordance with such other scheme as may be submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority - in the interests of the amenity of the area.

(6) that no part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied unless a plan and report illustrating appropriate management proposals for the care and maintenance of all trees to be retained and any new areas of planting (to include timing of works and inspections) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The proposals shall be carried out in complete accordance with such plan and report as may be so approved, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

(7) that any tree work which appears to become necessary during the implementation of the development shall not be undertaken without the prior written consent of the Planning Authority; any damage caused to

trees growing on the site shall be remedied in accordance with British Standard 3998: 1989 "Recommendation for Tree Works" before the building hereby approved is first occupied - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

(8) that no materials, supplies, plant, machinery, spoil, changes in ground levels or construction activities shall be permitted within the protected areas specified in the aforementioned scheme of tree protection without the written consent of the Planning Authority and no fire shall be lit in a position where the flames could extend to within 5 metres of foliage, branches or trunks - in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development.

(9) That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority detailed layout plans showing:

- a) a pedestrian crossing between on the new road between the two junctions with Grandholm Drive;
- b) a pedestrian crossing of the new road close to the junction with Hayton Road;
- c) a pedestrian links by steps, or otherwise, between the riverside path on the north side of the river, and the new road close to the new bridge;
- d) details of the link between the pedestrian cycleway under the bridge on the south side of the river, and the riverside pathway

The development shall not be brought into use unless the scheme has been implemented in complete accordance with the details as so agreed, unless otherwise agreed by the planning authority - in the interests of safety and accessibility for walkers.

(10) That no development shall take place unless a scheme for external lighting, including lighting within the underpasses has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with said scheme - in the interest of public safety.

(11) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority a full site specific Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that includes all matters indicated within the Environmental Statement by AECOM dated April 2010 and incorporates detailed pollution prevention and mitigation measures for all construction elements potentially capable of giving rise to pollution during all phases of construction, reinstatement after construction and final site decommissioning. The EMP shall be submitted at least 2 months prior to commencement of works and shall include:

- a) details of an appropriately qualified and experienced designated 'appointed person' who would be responsible for enforcing the EMP and will have the authority to stop and implement work;
- b) pre-construction surveys, including of otters, bats and badgers mitigation measures;

- c) a construction EMP including measures for controlling dust during construction;
- d) details of measures to prevent entry of pollutants into any bodies of water;
- e) a full site waste management plan;
- f) details of waste water drainage from temporary and permanent facilities for workers on site;

The scheme shall be implemented in complete accordance with details as so approved and work shall not take place unless the measures as so agreed and those within the ES referred to above are in place and fully operational - to control pollution of air, water and land.

(12) That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted and approved in writing by, the planning authority, details of noise mitigation measures. The development shall not be brought into use unless the scheme has been implemented in complete accordance with the details as so agreed - in the interests of residential amenity.

(13) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority, details of works to the listed octagonal tower in order to preserve its structural integrity. These shall take place in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed, within 6 months of the new road being brought into use - in the interests of preserving a listed building

(14) That the development of the proposed embankment in the area to the south of the mill lade shall not take place unless there are in place compensatory flood storage provisions as described in the Flood Risk Assessment by AECOM dated February 2010 and letter from the applicant to SEPA, dated 7 July 2010 - in the interests of avoiding flooding.

(15) That two months prior to the commencement of any works, a detailed water feature survey and risk assessment is undertaken, submitted and approved in writing by, the planning authority (in consultation with SEPA). No development shall taken unless the survey and assessment have been so approved. The work shall be carried out in complete accordance with the assessment as so agreed - in order to protect people and the water environment.

(16) that no development shall take place unless a scheme of all drainage works designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter no part of the development shall be brought into use unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the said scheme - in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

(17) that no development shall take place unless a scheme detailing all external finishing materials to the development hereby approved has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out

in accordance with the details so agreed - in the interests of visual amenity.

(18) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the planning authority, details of protection measures to sports pitches. Development shall not take place unless the measures as so agreed are in place, fully in accordance with the scheme as so agreed - in order to protect sports pitches.

(19) That the proposal for the partial demolition of the Category B listed garden walls, should be implemented only as part of a wider scheme for the development of the Third Don Crossing (as approved under this application, or other permission subsequently granted). That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority a scheme showing the phasing of development. Thereafter the proposal shall be implemented in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed – in the interests of the listed building

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning and Sustainable Development

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE 17TH FEBRUARY, 2011

PLANNING APPLICATIONS WHICH ARE THE SUBJECT OF WRITTEN REPORTS

DEVELOPMENT PLAN DEPARTMENT

3. DANESTONE MARKET GARDENS (OFF LAUREL AVENUE), DANESTONE. With reference to Article 2 of this minute wherein the Sub Committee considered a report in respect of Danestone and Tillydrone (Third Don Crossing (100135)), the Sub Committee had under consideration a report by the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development on the application (100150) for removal of a 44 metre section of the north boundary wall and 30 metre section of the south boundary wall of Danestone Market Gardens, off Laurel Avenue, Danestone.

The report before members contained a description of the site and surrounding area; contained also the detail of consultation response received from Historic Scotland, which highlighted they are content with the principle of the partial demolition of the Category B Listed Danestone walled garden, on the grounds of public benefit; advised that one letter of representation had been received in respect of the proposal and the views expressed therein; identified the planning policy and considerations arising and against which the application would fall to be assessed; and provided a detailed evaluation of the proposal in light of the policy position and other material planning considerations to be taken into account.

The report recommended:-

that the Sub Committee indicate the willingness to approve the application subject to referral to the Scottish Ministers and upon the following conditions:-

- (1) That the proposal that is the subject of this listed building consent, for the partial demolition of the Category B listed garden walls, should be implemented only as part of a wider scheme for the development of the Third Don Crossing (approved under application reference 100135, or other such application subsequently approved). That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority a scheme showing the phasing of development. Thereafter the proposal shall be implemented in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed.
- (2) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority, details of works to the listed

octagonal tower in order to preserve its structural integrity. These shall take place in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed, within 6 months of the new road being brought into use.

At this point, the Convener indicated that in view of the inter-relationship of the application with the application referred to in the previous article and given its referral (article 2 of this minute) to Council under Standing Order 36(3), the Sub Committee agree that the application under consideration in respect of the removal of sections of the north and south boundary wall at Danestone Market Gardens also be dealt with by Council.

The Sub Committee resolved:-

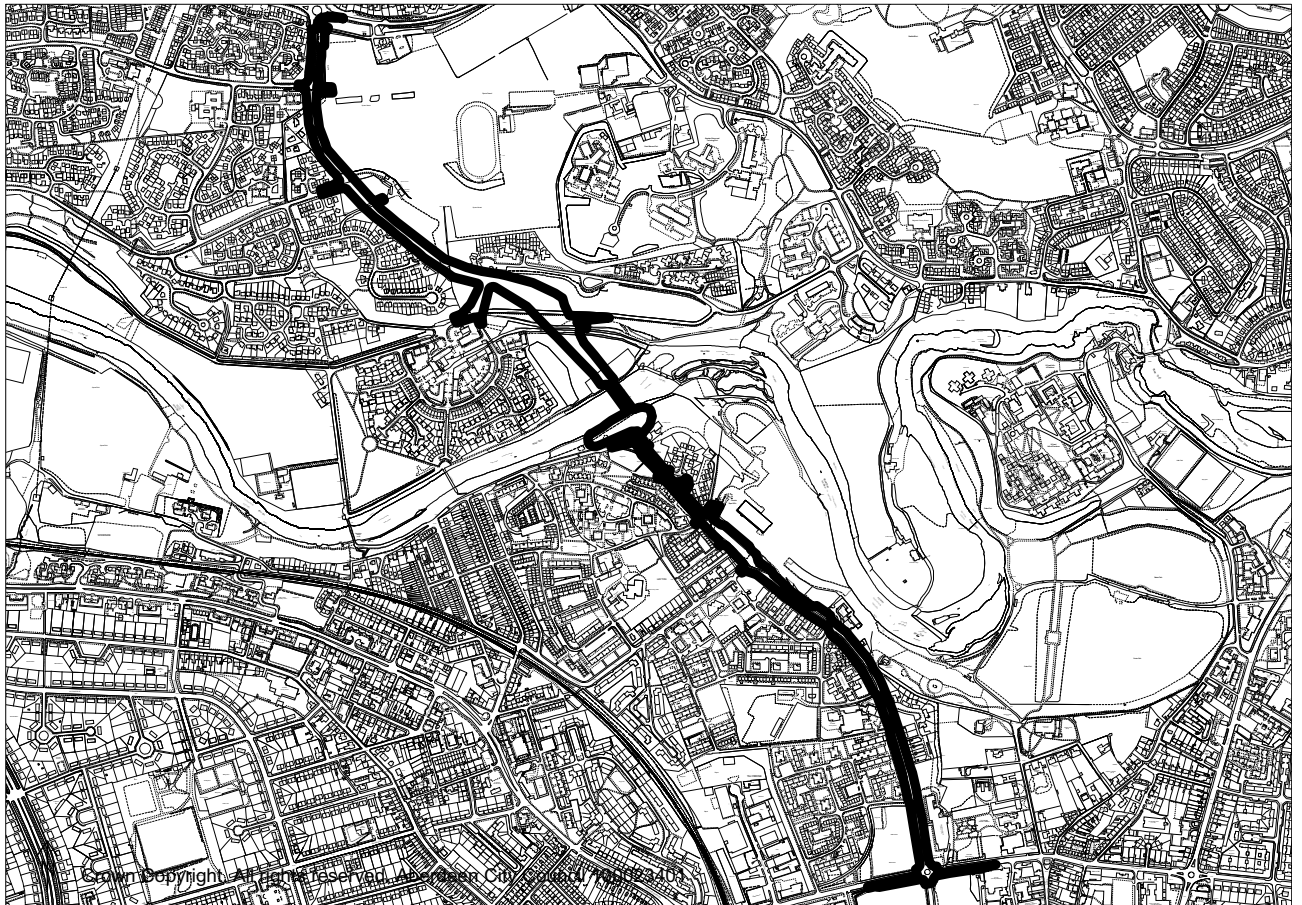
that the application be referred simpliciter to Council for determination in association with the application for the Third Don Crossing.

DANESTONE MARKET GARDENS, (OFF
LAUREL AVENUE) DANESTONE

REMOVAL OF 44M SECTION OF THE
NORTH BOUNDARY WALL AND 30M
SECTION OF THE SOUTH BOUNDARY
WALL

For: Aberdeen City Council

Application Ref.	: P100150	Advert	: Listed Building
Application Date	: 01/02/2010	Advertised on	: 17/02/2010
Officer	: Lucy Greene	Committee Date	: 17/02/2011
Ward: Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone(R Clark/B Crockett/M McDonald/ G Penny)		Community Council	: No comments



RECOMMENDATION: Willingness to Approve, Subject to referral to Scottish Ministers as the application relates to a Category B listed structure

DESCRIPTION

The application site extends from the roundabout junction of the Parkway A90(Trunk Road) with Whitestripes Avenue and Fairview Street, southward across open space just to the east and parallel with the edge of Danestone.

The site includes an approximately 27.5m wide section through the Category B listed Danestone Walled Garden and runs to the east of Grandholm. The walled garden dates from the 18th century and currently consists of walls on three sides with associated buildings to the east side, including a glazed lean to on the wall to east. The garden is roughly rectangular in shape. The walls consist of 1.9m high and 3.6m high stretches of wall, in red brick, around the north and west sides of the garden; and, 1m high stone wall to the south side.

The site crosses the River Don to join up with Gordon's Mills Road and Tillydrone Avenue in Tillydrone and includes a strip of land centred on but wider than the existing roads. The southern most extremity of the site is the roundabout at the junction of Tillydrone Avenue, St Machar Drive and Bedford Road and short lengths along St Machar Drive. The site varies in width between 25m and approximately 120m adjacent to the River and 75m to the east of Grandholm.

The site includes open space adjacent to residential areas, a Category B listed walled garden, the River Don and residential land in the form of gardens and a disused house, as well as existing roads.

The Category A listed Grandholm Mill lies approximately 85m from the edge of the application site.

From the point where Tillydrone Road meets Tillydrone Avenue, close to Benholm's Lodge, known as the Wallace Tower, the properties on the east side of Tillydrone Avenue lie within the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

An application (reference 100135) for full planning permission to develop an additional crossing of the River Don, together with a new stretch of road to join the new bridge to the existing road network to the north of the Don is also on the agenda for this meeting. The existing roads to the south of the River would be altered to be slightly realigned, upgraded and cycle paths added. An Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and an Environmental Statement submitted in relation to the abovementioned planning application.

The proposed road would cut through the Category B listed wall to the Danestone Walled Garden, with the octagonal summerhouse or dovecote remaining on the west side of the road and the existing building remaining on the eastern side of the road. Access would be provided from the proposed road to the house and buildings to the east. Almost the entire length of the two side walls would be demolished, including the north west corner and part of the end wall.

The proposal involves the removal of most of walls to the garden, with only the southern corner and partial lengths of wall to the west and south sides of the garden remaining, along with a length of wall near to the buildings in the north corner.

The walled garden would essentially no longer remain if the application works were to be implemented.

The Environmental Statement (ES) submitted in respect of the planning application includes looking at the impact on listed buildings. Most notably of these is the Category B listed Danestone walled garden, most of which would be removed if the proposal were to be implemented. The ES refers to mitigation works to the octagonal tower / dovecote.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE

The application accompanies the planning application (100135) also on the agenda for this Sub-Committee.

CONSULTATIONS

ROADS SECTION – No comments

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – No comments

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – No comments

HISTORIC SCOTLAND – Confirm in respect of the planning application, that they are content with the principle of the partial demolition of the Category B listed Danestone Walled Garden, which is accepted on the grounds of public benefit.

REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of objection has been received. This is on the grounds that the proposal would destroy an area of Danestone which has great character and probably historic interest. The wall is stated as being part of a conservation area that houses many species of birds, animals and protected trees.

Removal of the wall have a disastrous effect on the conservation area. The objector also refers to the planning application proposal for the new road, as having a disastrous effect on the conservation of the area, to the detriment of the quality of life of the residents.

PLANNING POLICY

The planning authority has a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

In the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan, the objective relating to the quality of the environment is to make sure that new development maintains and improves the region's important built and cultural assets.

One of the objectives of the structure plan is to encourage economic growth, while at the same time improving the essential strategic infrastructure necessary to allow the economy to grow over the long term.

In the adopted Aberdeen Local Plan 2008, paragraph 3.10.1 states that it is important that alterations do not destroy the features of the building that make it worthy of listing.

EVALUATION

The application proposal would destroy the character of the Category B listed walled garden, although some of the structure, including the octagonal summerhouse, would remain, it would be out of context and not part of a coherent built form.

Historic Scotland accept the partial demolition of the listed garden walls, as being justified by the public benefit of the proposed road and Third Don Crossing. The economic and traffic benefits of the Third Don Crossing are described in detail in the report on the planning application and the proposal is included in the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and the local and regional transport strategies.

The proposal would not accord with the aims of the structure plan, or adopted local plan in terms of listed buildings. However, the structure plan also has economic growth as one of its objectives and this therefore needs to be balanced against the desire to preserve historic buildings. It is considered that the granting of listed building consent is justified on the basis of public benefit from the wider development. It is therefore considered that the granting of any consent should be conditional upon the demolition being required as part of the road scheme.

RECOMMENDATION: Willingness to Approve, subject to referral to the Scottish Ministers and the following conditions:

(1) That the proposal that is the subject of this listed building consent, for the partial demolition of the Category B listed garden walls, should be implemented only as part of a wider scheme for the development of the Third Don Crossing (approved under application reference 100135, or other such application subsequently approved). That development shall not take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority a scheme showing the phasing of development. Thereafter the proposal shall be implemented in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed – in the interests of a listed building

(2) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority, details of works to the listed octagonal tower in order to preserve its structural integrity. These shall take place in complete accordance with the scheme as so agreed, within 6 months of the new road being brought into use - in the interests of preserving a listed building

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

10 Johns Park Place
Danestone
Aberdeen
AB22 8QL

Dept of Planning & Infrastructure
8th Floor
St Nicholas House
Broad Street
Aberdeen

12 March 2010

Planning Application Ref. No 100150

I write to oppose the Planning Application Ref. no 100150 which proposes the demolition of walls currently surrounding the Danestone Market Gardens. The removal of these walls will destroy an area of Danestone which has great character and probable historic interest.

The wall is a sympathetic part of a conservation area which houses many species of birds, animals, plants and Yew trees which are protected.

Removal of this wall would have a disastrous affect on this conservation area.

The reason behind the proposal the building of a road and a third bridge over the River Don will lead to a currently secluded area becoming a "rat run" for traffic and will have disastrous effects on the conservation of the area and will ultimately impact on the quality of life of the residents in this area.

Yours faithfully

Margaret J C Main MBE

This page is intentionally left blank

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 14 January, 2011 - Minute of PREDETERMINATION HEARING before the DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE in relation to the application for a Community Stadium, Land at Loirston Loch, Wellington Road, Aberdeen. Present:- Councillor Dean, Convener; Councillor John West, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Adam, Boulton, Cassie, Clark, Cooney, Cormack, Cormie, Dunbar, Farquharson, Jaffrey, Laing, McCaig, May, Milne and Penny. Afternoon attendance:- Councillors Donnelly and Kevin Stewart.

PRE-DETERMINATION HEARING

1. LAND AT LOIRSTON LOCH, WELLINGTON ROAD, ABERDEEN – PROPOSAL FOR 21,000 CAPACITY SPORTS AND LEISURE STADIUM, ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND LANDSCAPING. The Sub Committee met this day to conduct a predetermination hearing relative to the application (101299) by Aberdeen Football Club for planning permission in respect of the proposal for a 21,000 capacity sports and leisure stadium, associated car parking, access arrangements and landscaping at land at Loirston Loch, Wellington Road, Aberdeen.

The Convener opened the hearing by extending a welcome to all present. She explained that the Hearing was required because the application fell within the category of a major development and is considered to be significantly contrary to Policy 28 (Greenbelt) of the Aberdeen Local Plan.

The Convener made it clear that the purpose of the predetermination hearing was for Elected Members to listen to the representations made by all parties and for officers to take various points away with them for consideration as part of their final evaluation of the proposal. Reference was made to the new Code of Conduct for Councillors which came into effect on 21st December, 2010. In advance of detailed guidance on the Code of Conduct being issued, the Convener advised Members to continue with existing practices of not expressing opinions on the merits or otherwise of the proposal being discussed today. In addition, Members were advised not to express opinions on the proposal prior to the application being referred to Council at which a final decision on the application would be made. To do so would be to prejudge the final evaluation following consideration of the representations made today, as well as the responses of consultees and the written representations that have already been made. The Convener concluded her opening remarks by asking members of the public due to speak to group together

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

where possible if they were raising the same issues, and explained the format of the hearing, following which, the merits of the proposed development would be assessed by officers, taking into account all issues raised in written representations and by those speaking today. A report with a full evaluation of the proposal would be put before the Council in due course.

At this point in the proceedings, the Sub Committee heard a statement from Mr. Alan Strachan, Nigg Community Council who raised a procedural point of order requesting that the Convener take no involvement in determination of the proposal due to the view of the Community Council that a conflict of interest existed. The Acting Senior Democratic Services Manager advised the Sub Committee that the decision to declare any interest is one solely for each individual Member; that advice had been sought on this occasion and that there was no impediment to the Convener chairing this hearing.

The Convener invited **Mr. Garfield Prentice, Senior Planner, Aberdeen City Council** as the first speaker to address the Sub Committee. He would describe the application proposal, advise with regard to the policy background and the main considerations arising, and identify the nature of the concerns expressed by consultees and objectors. His presentation to the Sub Committee was in the following terms:-

Introduction

This Pre-determination Hearing is required under Regulation 27 of the 'Development Management' Regulations* because the proposed development is classed as a major development in terms of the 'Hierarchy of Developments'** and is considered to be significantly contrary to Policy 28 of the Aberdeen Local Plan by virtue of being a major development on an undeveloped site within the Green Belt. It relates to the consideration of the planning application submitted by Aberdeen Football Club seeking detailed planning permission at Loirston Loch for the construction of 21,000 capacity sports and leisure stadium and the associated car parking, access roads and footpaths and the provision of landscaping. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement which sets out the findings of the environmental impact assessment.

As part of the procedures for major developments, the applicant undertook extensive consultation with the local community prior to the planning application being lodged. This consultation involved meetings with Nigg and Cove & Altens Community Councils, public exhibitions, "drop-in" sessions and displays at the Central and Cove libraries as well as the Trinity shopping centre.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

This presentation will contain a brief description of the application site and details of the proposed development. There will also be a brief comment on the consultation process and a summary of written representations by members of the public. I will then set out the main planning policies and national guidance that are directly relevant to this application, before concluding with a brief outline of the main considerations for the assessment of the application.

However, before addressing these issues I will comment briefly on how the site at Loirston was selected. The concept of a community stadium as a joint venture between the football club and the Council was first explored in the North Beach Planning Study in 2003. In 2006 three areas were selected for consideration – Bridge of Don, King’s Links and Cove (two sites at Cove were considered). An Outline Business Case was carried out for each location. In December 2007 the Council agreed that both Loirston Loch and King’s Links should be subject to further analysis. The detailed feasibility and business case concluded that the site at Loirston Loch was the only deliverable option and therefore the optimum location in Aberdeen for a new stadium. In May 2009 the Council noted the results of the feasibility study and agreed not to provide capital funding for a new stadium. As a result of this, the current planning application was lodged solely by Aberdeen Football Club. If granted planning permission, the stadium would be developed and funded by the football club.

* The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

** The Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009

Site

A detailed description of the site is provided in the report in the agenda papers. In summary, the site is located to the west of the Wellington Road at the northern end of Loirston Loch. It extends westwards and northwards, wrapping round the business premises of The Balmoral Group, to join with the western extremity of Wellington Circle. The site is approximately 16 hectares. The general topography of the main part of the site is of a very shallow bowl, dipping down by some 3 metres towards the centre. The northern part of the site rises initially quite steeply from the shallow bowl before levelling out towards Calder Park, the difference in levels being some 10 metres. The site includes part of Loirston Loch and a number of gently undulating fields of low intensity agricultural and informal recreational use. Approximately 3 hectares of the site falls within the Loirston Loch District Wildlife Site. The eastern part is also identified as a Site of Interest to Natural Science. A right of way extends roughly east-west through the site from Wellington Road to Redmoss Road.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The area to the south supports a number of informal recreational activities based around the loch, including walking, fishing and bird watching. The Lochinch Interpretation Centre is located 400 metres to the south west. The Cove residential area is located 300 metres to the east on the opposite side of Wellington Road. Approximately 1 km to the north east lies Altens industrial area, while to the north is Calder Park and the commercial area on Wellington Circle. To the west and north west are agricultural fields and Kincorth Hill, beyond which is the residential area of Kincorth.

The Planning Application

A detailed description of the proposal is provided in the report in the agenda papers. In summary, the proposal comprises the following elements –

- A 21,000 spectator capacity all-seated football stadium 1,400 car and coach parking spaces
- A new signalised junction at the site access to Wellington Road and an access to Wellington Circle
- Ground maintenance accommodation
- Landscaped grounds with footpaths

Due to the topography of the site significant changes to ground levels would be required in order to form a level surface on which to construct the stadium and to form the internal road and car parking areas.

The Stadium

The proposed stadium has been designed to a standard that would be suitable for holding not only Aberdeen Football Club matches, but also International Football matches, Club and International Rugby games and concerts. It would be located approximately 160 metres from Wellington Road and 55 metres from the edge of Loirston Loch. It would measure 195 metres by 160 metres and attain a height of 24 metres. The stands would encircle the whole of the pitch, including the four corners, providing a fully enclosed arena and would be finished externally in a mix of materials - grey bricks, white and red coloured cladding and polycarbonate cladding. The south elevation would include substantial areas of glazing. The main entrance to the stadium would be at the south west corner and would be predominantly glazed. The west, north and east elevations would lean back at an angle of approximately 10 degrees from the vertical. A cantilevered roof would cover all of the seating. Floodlights would be provided on the leading edge of roof on the South and North stands.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The South stand would be the main stand, housing all of the club and hospitality facilities. It would include function suites and 26 hospitality boxes offering accommodation for between 6 and 14 people, which could be hired out on non-match days for conferences, meetings and weddings. There would also be space for community and commercial uses. The stadium would also include a bar for home supporters only, which would be managed as a members only 'club'. It would also be available for hire on non-match days. The main entrance area would contain the club shop, museum, café, ticket office and club offices. The stadium has been designed as far as possible to facilitate access by disabled spectators with space provided for 74 wheelchair users.

It is proposed to include a range of measures in the design of the stadium to reduce carbon emissions. This would be a mix of energy efficiency measures to reduce the demand for energy and the use of low and zero carbon generating technologies.

On-site car and coach parking, cycle parking, bus provision, access arrangements and off-site parking controls

Mr Smith, in his presentation, will explain in detail the proposed bus strategy, and the parking and access arrangements, but in summary, two new access roads would be built, one from Wellington Road and one from Wellington Circle. It is proposed to provide 1,400 car parking spaces within the site, mainly to the south and west of the stadium and in the northern part of the site next to Wellington Circle. For 'Old Firm' matches the number of car parking spaces would be reduced to approximately 1,250 to allow for additional coach parking to be provided. Approximately 100 coaches could be accommodated. It is proposed that about half of the parking spaces would be allocated for corporate fans, club directors, staff, players, officials and the media.

Covered stores for 60 cycles would be provided on the site, which would be accessed along a path segregated from other traffic. Pedestrian access would be via the two main entrances and from Redmoss Road along the existing right of way.

The cornerstone of the transport strategy is large-scale bus provision between the stadium and the City Centre. It is also proposed to implement a Controlled Parking Zone in the surrounding area, based on a 30-minute walk time from the stadium.

Landscaping

It is proposed to provide extensive landscaping on the site. The landscape scheme would include new mounding to provide screening of the car park areas from

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Wellington Road, hedging along the site boundaries and avenues of trees at key pedestrian routes and in the car parking areas. There would also be a Memorial Garden, the centre-piece being the relocated Merkland Road entrance gates. In total, it is proposed to plant over 430 trees, 2,000 linear metres of hedging and 12,000sqm of shrubs and ground cover planting.

Environmental Statement

The environmental statement reports on the findings of the environmental impact assessment of the proposed development. It presents and evaluates the significant environmental impacts and identifies appropriate mitigation measures. It covers several impacts including landscape character, visual impact, ecology and nature conservation, air quality, water quality and noise. It also considers and assesses a number of alternative sites. A comprehensive review of the environmental statement by officers has concluded that the main environmental effects of the development have been considered sufficiently and overall the environmental statement meets the requirements set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

In summary, the environmental statement concludes there would be a significant and permanent visual impact and a moderate to major impact on the landscape character of the locality. However, the effect on Loirston Loch and its habitat is predicted to be not significant, except for a potentially significant impact on all wintering waterfowl, such as geese. It is stated that the impacts relating to water quality, air quality and noise would not be significant. The environmental statement and Environmental Management Plan also sets out the mitigation measures to be implemented. These include extensive landscaping, the protection, where possible, of sensitive ecological features and habitats, measures to minimise any disturbance and a commitment to adhere to best practice guidance.

Consultations

Extensive consultation on the proposal and the Environmental Statement was carried out. The full list of the consultation bodies and their detailed responses are provided in the report included in the agenda papers. Nigg and Cove & Altens Community Councils were consulted. Both Community Councils have objected to the proposal. Their objections will be explained in the presentations later today by their respective representatives. The Community Councils are the only consultees to object the application.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Representations

144 letters of objection have been received. The report in the agenda papers provides a full list of all the grounds of objection. As you will see, the list of objections is quite extensive. However, the main issues can be summarised as follows –

- Concerns with the pre-application consultation process and the way feedback from the public was handled by the applicant.
- The pre-application consultation demonstrated there is no significant support for the proposal
- The proposal is premature pending the proper examination and adoption of the new Local Development Plan
- The proposal is contrary to the structure plan, the current local plan and national planning guidance
- Loirston is considered to be the wrong location to the a new stadium, there being better alternative sites, in particular at King's Links, which is identified for that purpose in the adopted local plan
- Aberdeen Football Club has not made a compelling case for a new stadium
- The environmental statement is deficient in that it is not comprehensive or accurate and does not deal with the cumulative impacts of the development or adequately considers alternative locations
- The adverse impacts on the habitat of the District Wildlife Site and surrounding area
- Concerns regarding air quality, light pollution, contamination of Loirston Loch and CO2 emissions
- The visual impact of the stadium on the landscape character of the area
- The size, height, design and colour of the proposed stadium
- Concerns regarding accessibility for fans, congestion on the road network, road safety and car parking, in particular the potential for overspill parking into adjacent areas and the possibility of an extensive parking control zone being imposed
- The impact on residential amenity due to noise disturbance, anti-social behaviour, increased traffic and overspill parking

Brian Adam MSP has stated that the stadium would be an important and well used facility in the North East. However, he raises a concern that there would be insufficient on-site car parking and thus an over reliance on public transport.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Planning Policy and Guidance

I will now set out briefly the planning policies and national planning guidance that are relevant to the assessment of the proposal.

The second National Planning Framework for Scotland (NPF2) is a material consideration in determining planning applications. It recognises that Aberdeen has a key role as a driver of economic activity and says that the primary aim for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire is to grow and diversify the economy, making sure the region has enough people, homes, jobs and facilities to maintain and improve its quality of life. Scottish Planning Policy, which is the statement of Government policy on land use planning is also relevant material consideration.

The statutory development plan comprises the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and the Aberdeen Local Plan.

The structure plan sets out the following key objectives:

- to provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries
- to make sure new development maintains and improves the region's important built, natural and cultural assets
- to make sure that new development meets the needs of the whole community, both now and in the future and makes the area a more attractive place for residents and businesses to move to.
- to make sure that all new developments contribute towards reducing the need to travel and encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport by making these attractive choices.

The structure plan proposes a number of specific projects that will help achieve the vision for the North East. A new community stadium is one such project, being a regionally important facility which will bring economic, social and cultural benefits. Two potential sites are identified on the Key Diagram - one in the City Centre and one near to the southern edge of the City.

Aberdeen Local Plan contains several policies that are directly relevant to the consideration of this proposal. In summary, the policies relate to the protection of the landscape character and amenity of the green belt, the protection and enhancement of the Green Space Network and recreational areas, ensuring development does not compromise the natural heritage of locally or regionally

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

designated habitats, ensuring high standards of design, the provision of new sports and recreational facilities and various policies relating to transport and access matters.

The proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan was published for consultation on 24th September 2010, with comments on the plan being invited until 17th January 2011. The application site forms part of Opportunity Site OP77. The Proposed Plan states *“Loirston is considered suitable for a new community stadium and a site has been identified to accommodate this as part of a mixed use area. The site can also accommodate 1,500 homes and 11ha of employment land.”* There are also several policies that are relevant to the consideration of the proposal. These policies are listed in the report in the agenda papers. The Proposed Plan is a material consideration. In accordance with Circular 1/2009 “Development Planning”, the Proposed Plan should represent the Council’s settled view as to what should be the final adopted content of the plan.

Main Considerations

I will now outline the main planning considerations. Planning legislation requires that in determining a planning application the determination should be made in accordance with the development plan unless there are other material considerations that indicate otherwise. The proposal constitutes a ‘major development’ and represents a significant departure from the development plan. The application requires to be assessed against the policies and guidance mentioned previously and any other relevant material considerations, including the issues raised in the written representations and by those appearing at the hearing today. The completion of the assessment will determine whether or not there are sound reasons for approving the application contrary to the development plan.

Important issues to be taken into account include –

- How the proposal responds to the local plan policies
- The impact on the green belt and on the landscape character and amenity of the area,
- The siting, scale and design of the development,
- The visual impact,
- The environmental impacts of the development on the habitat and ecology of the site and surrounding area
- The impact on the amenity of residents in the surrounding areas,
- The access and parking arrangements,
- The traffic impacts of the development, and
- The economic, social and cultural benefits of a new major sports facility in Aberdeen

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Under new legislation introduced in August 2009 as part of the Scottish Government's modernisation of the planning system, an application subject to a pre-determination hearing requires to be determined by the Full Council. Accordingly, following the hearing the application will be assessed in terms of planning policy, the details of the proposal and the economic, environmental, amenity and traffic impacts. This will be reflected in a subsequent report which will be prepared for consideration by the Council in due course.

I will leave you with an image of how the proposed stadium would appear when viewed from Wellington Road across Loirston Loch.

Mr. Prentice and Dr. Bochel responded to questions from Members and the following information was noted:

- (1) that the Environmental Statement covered the main environmental impacts and contained extensive mitigation measures. Scottish National Heritage was consulted on the environmental impacts and was satisfied with the mitigation measures, raising no objection to the environmental impacts of the proposal.
- (2) that the Structure Plan supports a range of proposals to help achieve the vision for the North-East, including a new community stadium, with two locations currently being investigated; one of which being to the south of the city and in the vicinity of Loirston Loch;
- (3) that the proposed Local Development Plan is the Council's settled view on the content of the new Local Development Plan and a material consideration, with any weight attached to this considered on a case by case basis according to each proposal; and
- (4) in relation to the effects on wildlife, while the RSPB was not a statutory consultee, any individual or body could make comments on the proposal and no comments had been received from the RSPB.

Andrew Smith, Transport Engineer Manager, Aberdeen City Council was next to address the Sub Committee and he made the following statement regarding transportation and accessibility issues:-

Location

The site lies on the southern periphery of the city, immediately to the north of Loirston Loch and is bounded to the east by the A956 Wellington Road and to the west by Redmoss Road.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Development Proposal

The planning application is for the construction of a 21000 capacity football stadium and a modest element of ancillary office development of 3682 m2.

Whilst the emphasise of the proposed development is with regard to the use of the stadium for football and major events the planning application does include for a small element of general office development which will attract daily trips to the site. However this ancillary use is considered to be modest in scale and would not be seen to have a negative impact on the local network. Issues related to sustainable travel and accessibility by all modes to the office element is to a large extent supported by the stadium use and is discussed later.

Two principle points of access to the development site are proposed to be taken from the A956 Wellington Road. A new signalised junction is proposed some 650m south of the roundabout junction of the A956 with Southerhead Road and Langdykes Road and a second point of access is to be taken from an extension of the existing industrial access road of Wellington Circle, giving direct access to the A956 via its roundabout junction with Southerhead Road.

An internal road network linking the access junctions and serving the car parking is proposed and will be managed by the applicant on match days and will be subject to internal traffic management measures. The link road will support the necessary public transport uses with bus stops and lay-bys incorporated within the layout to meet the significant match day demands.

Pedestrian and cycle access is to be provided via a network of footway links with pedestrian / cycle priority integrated within the design layout.

An existing Core path / right of way traverses the development site from the proposed junction with the A956 to Redmoss Road providing links to Kincorth. The right of way is to be improved and maintained as a shared footway / cycle way and would address concerns raised with regard to the maintenance of the right of way.

Parking for 1400 cars is to be provided within the site and is supplemented by adequate parking for the disabled and cycle parking. An area of parking to the east of the site will be given over to coach parking for Old Firm matches and whilst reducing car parking too approximately 1200 spaces will accommodate some 80 coaches. A parking area for services and broadcasting units will also be accommodated within the site.

The development master plan for the wider Loirston area indicates that access for future housing development is to be taken through the site of the proposed stadium and a concern was raised by officers with regard to the future access provision for

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

the proposed Loirston master plan area as it had not been incorporated within the stadium proposals. Following discussion with the applicant a revised internal road layout has been submitted that will accommodate the provision of an adopted road at a future date, providing access to the master plan area.

The proposed access arrangements from Wellington Circle will encroach and be in conflict with the approved application for the Calder Park site. Whilst it is appreciated that a working relationship exists between the applicant and Cove Rangers FC a suitable access arrangement that meets the needs of both parties will require to be submitted and agreed and form part of the application submission. It is understood that access arrangements are currently the subject of discussion between the football clubs.

Transportation Assessment

A Transportation Assessment (TA) has been submitted in support of the planning application and has considered the delivery of transport by all modes and included a detailed traffic analysis of both the local and wider network.

The application for a new stadium at Loirston presents significant challenges for the delivery of transportation by all modes. In particular, the delivery of a sustainable transport solution that supports the use whilst minimising the traffic impact on the road network and the impact on the immediate residential areas in terms of road safety, amenity and environment.

The TA has considered the impact of stadium to be for a maximum attendance of 21000 and whilst this maybe realised for major matches and events ie Old Firm / European matches , concerts, the anticipated attendance for general SPL matches is estimated is to be in the order of 14000 fans. The assessment is therefore considered to be robust and to provide for a worst case scenario.

The parking provision for the stadium has a major influence on the travel modes to the site and the way in which transport and accessibility requires too be delivered and supported. In line with both local and national parking standards a maximum of 1400 on site car parking spaces is to be provided for events at the stadium and will constrain the level of traffic generated on match days, provided it is supported by external parking controls on the local road network. On site parking will be pre booked for all matches or events and only those with allocated spaces will be given access to the car parks and this will, to a significant degree, influence car trips to the site. The car parking strategy is to include incentives for higher occupancy vehicles with parking costs reduced in line with occupancy and further incentives such as Car Share and Car Club are to be promoted. The details of the car park

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

management would be related to a Green Transport Plan and be subject to condition or legal agreement should the application be approved.

In preparing the TA substantial data relating to the existing supporters fan base was analysed and used in the assessment and included the distribution and travel characteristics of the supporters. This detailed information formed the basis of the TA with emphasis placed on the public transport access strategy and detailed traffic modelling of the road network.

In the assessment and consideration of the accessibility and transport delivery needs for the stadium I would firstly discuss access by walking and cycling.

Walking and Cycling

Pedestrian access to the site from Wellington Road and the wider residential and industrial areas has been considered assuming a maximum walk threshold of 30 minutes.

The pedestrian infrastructure on the main corridor of the A956 Wellington Road is proposed to be improved with the provision of a combined footway / cycle way on the west side, from the proposed new junction on the A956 to the roundabout junction of Southerhead Road / Langdykes Road. The capacity of the footway links on the A956 has been assessed and been shown too cater for the volume of supporters that are anticipated to attend matches. It was requested by officers that the applicant investigate the possible widening of the eastern footway of the A956 from a nominally two metre wide shared pedestrian / cycle way to a three metre wide facility. On investigation it was acknowledged that the widening of the foot/cycle way would require land outwith the control of the applicant and has not been pursued as part of the application.

Concern has been raised by the Cycle Forum with regard to the shared use of the existing footway by cyclists and the difficulties of pedestrian /cycle conflicts. Whilst this concern has been noted it is recognised that there would be very limited occasions when conflicts may occur and that the applicant is not in a position to address this concern by way of the widening of the foot/cycle way. Given the low level of cycle movements and the frequency and duration of high pedestrian activity it is felt that the conflicting movements can be managed through due care and attention of the users with nominal delay to cyclists.

Signal controlled pedestrian / cycle crossing facilities are proposed to be incorporated within the new access junction and would be further supplemented by signal controlled crossings on the A956 immediately to the south of Langdykes Road and on Langdykes Road and Southerhead Road approaches to the A956

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

roundabout The provision of the pedestrian/cycle facilities would be seen to provide safe and adequate access to the stadium by these modes from the main corridor of the A956.

Pedestrian safety with respect to vehicular / pedestrian conflict on the A956 has been raised by Grampian Police and the installation of pedestrian barriers over the section of the A956 from the proposed junction to the Souterhead Road / Langdykes Road roundabout has been requested. The applicant has indicated a willingness to install pedestrian barriers in recognition of the concern and in the interest of road safety.

Wellington Circle will also serve as a principle point of pedestrian access and the existing pedestrian infrastructure on this link is considered adequate to accommodate the likely pedestrian movements during match days.

A nominal percentage of pedestrian movements from the Kincorth area are likely to be generated and does raise a road safety concern, particularly for pedestrian movements along Redmoss Road. The applicant has indicated a willingness to contribute towards the Core Path network and the upgrade of paths to the south of Redmoss Road connecting the site to the residential area.

However I have a concern that pedestrian movements on Redmoss Road will potentially be in conflict with vehicular traffic on match days and that this could be addressed by the introduction of traffic management measures that would compliment and address existing traffic problems consistently raised by the community council. The applicant has indicated a willingness to support the introduction of traffic restrictions that would limit the use of Redmoss Road by through traffic and improve the local environment and safety.

The existing pedestrian infrastructure throughout the wider surrounding area is considered to be acceptable and would accommodate the proposed development.

Public Transport - Access Strategy

Access to the stadium by public transport on match days is anticipated to serve some 50% of all supporters and is vital to the delivery of a successful transportation strategy. A draft Bus Management plan was submitted within the TA and identified 20 routes city wide that would require dedicated match day services to meet supporter demands and was supplemented by frequent city centre shuttle services.

A revised Bus Management plan has been submitted that reduces the number of services that will be applied city wide and has indicated five principle pick up points – three centrally within the city centre with a further two at the park and ride sites of

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Kingswells and Bridge of Don. There is a concern that the revised bus management proposal will not meet the service demands appropriately and not be deliverable in its present form. Further discussions will be held with the applicant on this matter to resolve service provision and would ultimately be subject to condition and final approval of the planning authority should the application be approved at some future date.

For normal match attendances some 80 buses will be required with this increasing to a maximum of 120 for Old Firm matches. First Aberdeen Ltd has confirmed that they will take the role of the bus co-ordinator and will provide the necessary buses and drivers to fulfil the requirements of the Bus Management plan.

The internal road net work at the stadium will operate on a one way system to allow efficient access and egress for buses prior to matches with designated bus stances provided and will be utilised for the storage of buses during matches. However a significant number of buses will be held externally and called up as required. It is anticipated it will take approximately 60 minutes to board and transport all of the supporters from site.

The bus management plan will be further supported by the existing services that operate within the Cove and Altens area and supporters coaches and will contribute to the delivery of the transport strategy of the stadium.

With respect to the day to day uses of the proposed office development a shuttle bus, funded by the applicant, is to operate at peak periods between the local bus services and the site until a frequent service on the A956 is available.

The principle of public transport provision is acceptable, however, the Bus Management Plan requires to be agreed in further detail before the matter can be concluded. As noted earlier this matter would be subject to condition or legal agreement should the application be approved.

Parking Controls

The level of traffic that will be generated by the proposed stadium is directly related to parking controls both internal and external to the site. Whilst parking within the site can be controlled and regulated by the applicant the external public road network can only be managed by the Local Roads Authority.

The delivery of the proposed transport strategy for the stadium will require a match day controlled parking zone to be implemented over an area of the surrounding local road network approximating to a walk distance of some 30 minutes. This area

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

would extend too and include all of the Cove / Altens and a southern portion of the Kincorth residential areas.

The implementation of the CPZ is critical, not only for the delivery of a sustainable transport solution, but also to ensure that traffic generation levels are maintained at a level that would not have a largely detrimental impact on the level of network congestion and delay that would otherwise occur.

Local issues must also be considered and from experience it is accepted that unrestricted roads will be utilised for parking by supporters and that significant local problems of obstruction, amenity and environment will occur were the application to proceed without a CPZ being in place.

The applicant has indicated agreement to fund the implementation, maintenance and enforcement of the CPZ which would be subject to the progression and approval of a Traffic Regulation Order out with the planning process. The legal procedure for the CPZ would take some 12-15 months to conclude. Should the application be approved the implementation of a CPZ should be subject to a condition or included within a legal agreement.

Traffic Impact Assessment

A detailed traffic impact assessment has been carried out for the road network and considered the impact on the immediate and wider road network. The transportation consultant has utilised the council's "Access from the South" Paramics model in the assessment of the extended network and analysed the local network performance of the A956 between the proposed junction and the roundabout junction of Langdykes Road and Southerhead Road using a traditional modelling application.

The traffic analysis that has been carried out has examined an evening match or event with a capacity of 21000 that would start at 7pm. Existing network flows for a Saturday and evening event were compared and indicated the critical period to be that of the evening peak.

The Paramics modelling results have clearly indicated that some additional delays to journey times will occur on the A90 at the Bridge of Dee (southbound) and on Wellington Road (southbound) with additional delays in the order of 10 minutes and 45 seconds respectively. The additional delay on the A90 southbound approach to the Bridge of Dee indicated by the recent traffic modelling is considered to be excessive. However, in practical terms this level of additional delay is unlikely to be realised and is influenced by the lack of route choice due to its location at the

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

perimeter of the model. Inversely some minor journey time improvements can be seen on opposing movements and will reflect junction turning proportions.

Whilst additional network delays are noted the modelling of both the wider and local network has indicated that queuing and congestion levels can be managed through the network.

The match / event scenario that has been subject to modelling and analysis would be considered to be robust and would have a maximum frequency of some 4 events per year. It is of note that the anticipated capacity of a standard SPL match would be 14000, 30% below the modelled scenario and will occur on average, some 20 matches per year. In this context it can reasonably be concluded that the traffic impact of a standard SPL match will be of a reduced scale with the additional journey time delays reduced accordingly.

A comparison of network flows between a Saturday and evening event has indicated that in general evening flows are significantly higher with the exception of the Bridge of Dee where flows are of a similar scale. In this context it can be assumed that the delay for Saturday events will be considerably less and that network capacity would more easily cater for the weekend matches that represent the majority of matches or events.

For evening matches their remains a concern with respect to the additional journey time delay that has been indicated through the modelling process. The scenario considered is that for a 7pm kick off and in practical terms is unlikely to be realised as evening matches are in general scheduled for 8pm.

The later time would significantly reduce the traffic impact on the network and should the application be approved a condition or legal agreement should be attached such that evening matches do not commence prior to 7.45 pm but earlier events may be considered subject to an application and the consent of the planning authority.

The traffic modelling has considered the impact of the proposed stadium in isolation and has not taken into consideration the existing match day traffic that currently operates on the network, particularly the southern corridors of the A90 and A956 and traffic reductions within the city centre.

Whilst some technical matters relating to the traffic modelling assessment remain to be concluded it is acknowledged that the impact of the stadium can be accommodated and managed on the existing network.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Match Day / Event – Network Traffic management

Concern has been raised by both Grampian Police and Roads officers with regard to the management of the network on match days and in particular the ability to respond effectively to changing road conditions. The proposed junction on the A956 will be incorporated within the councils Urban Traffic Signal Control (UTC) system that will monitor and manage network changes. However the UTC system has difficulty in responding to immediate and dramatic flow changes that can occur on match days and particularly at the end of an match or event. Following discussions with the applicant it has been agreed that strategically placed CCTV cameras linked to the UTC operations room will be used by roads officers to monitor and prioritise movements to efficiently manage traffic. The applicant would be expected to fund the necessary infrastructure provision and meet any staff cost required to manage events. A legal agreement would be necessary to secure this provision and commitment.

This concludes the observations of the Roads section.

Mr. Smith responded to questions from Members and the following information was noted:

- (1) that improvements to the A956 would enhance and improve the junction and the impact of the AWPR had not been included in traffic modelling but it's implementation would provide further improvements;
- (2) that a permit system was suggested for the operation of a Controlled Parking Zone to restrict fans parking in Cove/Altens/Kincorth;
- (3) that bus operators would provide direct buses to the stadium as a supplement to the current provision from the city centre, with the operators indicating they had significant reserved capacity for the time when matches would take place;
- (4) options were being considered to address concerns regarding pedestrian safety and access in Redmoss Road including agreement with AFC to provide pedestrian barriers;
- (5) further discussion was required between First Bus and the applicant in respect of a public transport strategy – planning approval would be subject to the agreement of the Council on how the strategy would be implemented and managed;
- (6) the current proposal was based on the AWPR not being in place;
- (7) a legal agreement would be put into place to ensure the cost of any controlled parking zone for the area surrounding the proposed site would be met by the applicant, to include all on-going costs;
- (8) further discussion was needed between the Police, the bus operators and the applicant regarding the bus strategy and proposed pick-up and drop- off points;

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

- (9) the number of car parking spaces provided on site (1400) and the view that an integrated car parking strategy was required;
- (10) that taxi provision and drop off sites had been incorporated into traffic modelling;
- (11) in respect of pedestrian access for local people to the stadium, Mr. Smith suggested a pedestrian route from Kincorth, which would be included in the core path network;
- (12) in relation to the controlled parking zone, this would contain flexibility for when matches changed days, with restrictions also applying to major events;
- (13) that implications for the residents of Torry had been considered in traffic modelling;
- (14) that the signalised junction on the A956 would be demand led;
- (15) that CCTV was being rolled out to allow officers to intervene and control traffic as needed, with any requirement for further CCTV provision in respect of the proposal to be paid for by the applicant and secured through a legal agreement; and
- (16) that parking out with the site, making use of business car parks in the Altens area was a possibility, but ultimately a decision for businesses to take.

Andy Gilchrist, Principal Environmental Health Officer, Aberdeen City Council made the following comments in respect of the Environmental Statement produced by AECOM lodged in respect of the application:-

The concerns I have in relation to environmental impact are in regard to:

- (1) air quality
- (2) noise
- (3) lighting
- (4) contaminated land

These matters are assessed within the Environmental Statement and I can make the following comment as to the extent that they address these issues –

Air Quality

- (1) Air quality in the vicinity of the proposed development is currently good and there would be no risk of exceedance of national air quality objectives at this location. Additionally there is a low number of sensitive receptors close to the proposed development.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

(2) Traffic from buses, coaches and private cars attending football matches and other events has the potential to impact on residential properties on the commuter routes to and from the stadium e.g. Wellington Road, A90 and West Tullos Road. The air quality modelling predicted increases along these routes. These levels are classed to have negligible significance on air quality.

(3) It should be noted there will obviously be an increase in traffic flow within the existing Wellington Road AQMA during event days. Additionally the modelling predicted existing PM10 levels to exceed the annual mean objective at receptors on Wellington Road, north of the Hareness roundabout and parts of the A90. Although the increase in air quality is not significant, there is still an impact on areas of existing poor air quality.

(4) The assessment did not consider the potential for additional traffic generated at concerts or other events at the proposed development. However, the modelling was based on an average of 1 football match per week as a worst case scenario. It would be reasonable to consider that the impact of concerts would not cause additional deterioration in air quality from the model output results.

(5) Generation of dust during the construction phase is adequately assessed and I am satisfied that mitigation measures can be employed to control this.

Noise and vibration

The ES states that it will consider the potential impact from the following sources –

- road traffic
- car parking
- stadium events , specifically sport and music concerts
- sports training facilities
- fixed plant
- catering facilities
- stadium construction

I consider that the potential for noise and vibration disturbance has been adequately addressed in the assessment. Having regard to the intermittent nature of the facility for its primary purpose and to the low density of the local population, I am of the opinion that the potential for disturbance is not significant.

Lighting

The ES mentions potential impact on wildlife from artificial lighting associated with the proposal, but there is no assessment in relation to disturbance of local residents. The Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008 now allows impact from artificial lighting to be considered as a statutory nuisance. I am of the opinion that by careful design this should not be a significant concern.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Contaminated Land

Preliminary ground investigations on behalf of the applicant revealed no significant contamination. However it would be prudent for controls to be put in place to ensure monitoring and disposal of material showing significant contamination during the construction phase.

In summary, I am assured by the ES that there will no significant impacts resulting from these issues.

Mr. Gilchrist responded to questions, wherein it was noted that lighting from the stadium would have an impact on local wildlife and migratory birds. In addition, Mr. Prentice advised that Scottish National Heritage had commented on the impact on bats and were satisfied that the design of the lighting would minimise that impact. With regard to concerns on the noise impact from concerts, Mr. Gilchrist stated that the stadium would be built to current standards and mitigation measures would be taken into consideration, with further controls in place for bigger events.

Aberdeen Football Club, as applicants, were represented at the predetermination hearing by (a) **Stewart Milne, Chairman, Aberdeen Football Club**, (b) **Michael Halliday, Associate Director, CB Richard Ellis**, and (c) **Gareth Yule, Partner, The Miller Partnership**.

Mr. Milne commenced the applicants' address to the Sub-Committee in the following terms:-

Introduction

As is the case in any project of this magnitude, Aberdeen Football Club has had substantial challenges to address prior to reaching this stage in terms of planning issues, technical issues and design issues. It would be fair to say that there can be few projects that have ever been undertaken to such an acute level of detail and indeed such public scrutiny as this one.

So why does AFC need a new stadium? Firstly our current home is long past its sell by date and is a major burden in terms of ongoing maintenance and running costs. It is quite simply not fit for its purpose in the 21st century. It is not something that gives the right image for the Club or indeed the City. Given that redevelopment of Pittodrie is simply NOT an option, as Scotland's 3rd largest City we need a stadium that demonstrates that the Club and the City have real ambition - a modern outdoor stadium capable of attracting and staging major national and international events, and complementing existing indoor facilities. Something the North East can be justifiably proud of. It will be the largest new build stadium this country has seen built in over a century, and as such, by definition, will become a

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

major visitor attraction for the area. It will be a platform to showcase more than 100 years of heritage and tradition and the Club's vital links with the City. Included in the design are a Club Museum, classrooms for educational opportunities for the region's youngsters, and other community facilities can be accommodated. But, as I said, there were many challenges to overcome, over a lengthy period, to arrive at where we are today.

I would now like to hand over to my colleagues Michael Halliday and Gareth Yule to explain in greater detail how these challenges were met.

(Michael Halliday)

There are many challenges progressing a planning application as complex and sensitive as this through the planning system. Important issues to consider include choosing the location, assessing the environmental impact, addressing transport issues and taking account of the development plan.

The Structure Plan supports Loirston as a potential location for a new stadium. The full business case prepared jointly by Aberdeen Football Club and the Council identified Loirston as the most deliverable location.

The siting of the stadium has been influenced by discussions with Architecture and Design Scotland and other stakeholders. This was a comprehensive process which resulted in a development framework being prepared which fed into the proposed Local Development Plan.

There has been comprehensive public consultation and extensive pre-application discussions with the council, community and statutory consultees.

No objections have been received from any statutory consultees, excluding Nigg and Cove and Altens Community Councils.

The approach to mitigating any potential environmental impacts included the preparation of an Environmental Statement and an Environmental Management Plan. Measures adopted:

detailed landscape plans to address visual impacts particularly of the car and coach parking areas

retention of existing vegetation to ensure development is integrated into its surroundings

avoidance of sensitive ecological features

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

minimising the site footprint and to reduce the disturbance of land, flora and fauna

development of footpaths to increase accessibility to the site and aid recreational activities such as fishing and bird watching

use of a SUDS.

We have worked with the Council to develop a transport strategy but there are still some details to work through.

Parking will be provided at maximum allowable standard - 1400 spaces for 21,000 capacity. Maximum standards contribute to national policy to reduce car use

There will be over twice the number of parking spaces than currently provided at Pittodrie (600).

There will be an extensive controlled parking zone based on residents permits throughout the local residential areas to protect residential amenity.

The current practice is largely to drive to the City then walk to Pittodrie. No significant change is anticipated in journey to the City, however the 'walk' element is replaced by shuttle bus to Loirston due to increased distance involved

First will co-ordinate the bus service, drawing on local providers. They have confirmed the numbers required can be delivered. Continuing consultation with AFC, First, ACC, Grampian Police to refine operational aspects of shuttle service - trial runs will be carried out during pre-season games and service will be monitored when operational

Traffic modelling shows that a weekday evening match kicking off at 7pm would induce around 10 minutes additional delay to the existing southbound traffic at Bridge of Dee. However, all weekday matches will be restricted to 7:45 so football traffic falls outwith the peak period and can be accommodated within the local road network.

The proposal is a departure from the Development Plan. This has to be balanced against the benefits that this development will bring to the area and the region. Not only will it be an iconic gateway development signalling the entrance to Aberdeen, it will also bring economic and social benefits. The local development plan is a significant material consideration. It states that Loirston is suitable for a new stadium as part of a larger mixed use development.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The need for Aberdeen Football Club to act now and progress plans for a new stadium has already been explained and is the reason that we are here today. The approved Structure Plan has set the scene by identifying Loirston as a potential location for a new stadium and for the significant growth planned for the south of the city, including the potential removal of land from the green belt. The proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan has moved this forward by identifying Loirston not only for a new stadium but also a large mixed use development in order to meet key Structure Plan aspirations and targets.

(Gareth Yule)

I would now like to talk about the design of the site and the building.

We have prepared a 3D animation of the Arena and still images which will be shown on the screen behind me.

Site

The site is located on the southern edge of the city and traffic entering the city from the south along Wellington Road will therefore pass close by.

It is bounded by industrial use to the north and east, (including several large buildings) and by the A956, Wellington Road to the east. Loirston Loch lies immediately south; land to the north and west of the site is currently farmland. Local communities include Cove to the east and Kincorth & Nigg to the north and west. The A90 Stonehaven Road lies to the west.

In line with the principles agreed in discussion with Architecture + Design Scotland and other stake holders, the Arena has been positioned on the site so that it is clearly visible from Wellington Road, across Loirston Loch.

As you approach along Wellington Road from the south, the Arena will be revealed from behind the screen of existing trees and will become a focal point in the distance which will draw the eye towards it.

This will ensure that it will form a Landmark Gateway, by marking the sense of arrival into Aberdeen from the south.

This location also means that the stadium is set away from the Loch, reducing the potential impact and so it has given the Arena greater prominence, maximising the opportunity to make it visible from Wellington Road and celebrating its design.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The building is orientated to exploit the views across the Loch; both to the building and from the building, while also addressing a potential future community development across a public plaza.

The principal access to the Arena will be off Wellington Road to the east and there will be a secondary access from Wellington Circle to the north.

While the main entrance to the Arena building is at the south west corner; there are various spectator entrances and exits distributed around the perimeter of the building for match days, so that spectators are able to arrive and leave in comfort and safety.

Away support will be segregated and will be accommodated in the east end stand.

There is no car parking for away fans, only coach parking, home fan car parking will be subject to a careful management procedure developed by the Football Club.

Transport

Transport links to and from the site are critical as we have heard and the site has been laid out in line with the Transport Strategy that has been developed.

Environment / Ecology

We have carried out a detailed Environmental Assessment and the findings have been published in an Environmental Statement which has been submitted as part of our Planning Application.

We have used this work to ensure that our design has been integrated into the existing landscape setting; we have recognised existing features and retained them where possible.

We have also carefully considered the ecological value of the site and where significant impact is anticipated, we have proposed mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or offset it.

Landscape

Landscape design has been integrated into an overall landscape framework, which recognises the existing Core Path network, including the retention of the Public Right of Way, the Green Space network and the Loch, while retaining most of the existing planting where possible to do so.

Land art mounding has been included in the design and is used to screen car parking from the important views across the Loch from Wellington Road.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

A Memorial Garden is proposed to the north of the Arena, using the existing Merkland Road end façade, relocated from Pittodrie.

Summary

In summary then, careful consideration has therefore been given to access, siting, transport, relationship to future development, the core path network, green space network, landscaping around the loch and the principles of space, place and movement.

Stadium Design

Unique and inspirational!

The design of the Arena building itself is a fantastic opportunity to create something special for Aberdeen FC, the supporters, the City of Aberdeen and the Region.

We want to create a landmark building which is unique and inspirational.

We have used simple, bold shapes and colour to make a strong and bold statement and create a unique and inspirational design which will be instantly recognisable.

We want this design to become synonymous with the City of Aberdeen and with Aberdeen Football Club.

Our proposal of a continuous bowl and roof creates a pure shape. We have deliberately broken the continuity of the bowl visually in the South West corner where the main entrance to the Arena is located along with the Club Offices, Shop and Museum;

this will achieve two goals –

It will emphasise the principal entrance to the Arena making it clear to visitors

It will address a public square, which will in turn will assist with integrating the Arena with the potential future community

The roof and upper walls of the Arena will be constructed from polycarbonate (which is a glass like material) and so will be transparent, giving the impression that the roof floats.

This will allow daylight to penetrate to the pitch (helping the grass to grow) and at night this will be lit so that it glows red, making it visible from a distance.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

We propose a simple palette of materials, with colour used sparingly to highlight certain aspects of the building, including three main entrance points.

The principal entrance facing the public square sees a concentration in the quality of materials, using granite and glazed curtain walling and so celebrating monumentality.

The design will meet current standards and guidelines such as UEFA, The Green Guide (The Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds) and of course, Scottish Building Standards.

As such it will deliver a significant improvement in facilities provided for fans.

For example –

The arena will be all seated and all seats will be covered.

The arena roof will be cantilevered so there will be no columns to obstructed sightlines.

Modern day standards mean that the levels of safety and comfort will be improved,

This will mean better legroom,

Quicker access and egress to and from your seat,

Safer and quicker escape in an emergency,

The quality and quantity of catering outlets will be better,

The quality and quantity of toilets will be better,

There will be many more and better quality toilets provided for ladies,

And in particular for wheelchair users, in line with current standards, the Arena will be fully accessible for disabled supporters with designated wheelchair platforms distributed around the Arena, designed to ensure the best views, unobstructed by fans in front standing up (“the super riser”).

Facilities such as the bars and hospitality suites will also allow the Arena to function out-with match days, providing opportunities for hosting events like Weddings and dinners.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

(Stewart Milne)

Sum up

Firstly, I must reiterate that I am here today as Chairman of AFC and not as a developer or house-builder, although faced with the understandable frustration of our fans at times, the perceived role of the big bad developer often might be more preferable! My passion for this Club is on a par with my passion in seeing this City and region achieve its real potential.

Our city region has ambitious plans for growth with a real success story in terms of the joined-up approach to developing the structure and local development plans. Also in terms of economic development and delivering the wider infrastructure and transport links the region needs. Through ACSEF we have a clear vision and ambitious plans but now we need to start delivering. The reality is there's not a great deal of projects at the tangible "spade in the ground" delivery phase. An inspirational stadium, with community facilities for the benefit of everyone in the city and region could be one of the first real outcomes of the city's ambition. It *can* be delivered, and in a way that has minimal cost and risk implications for the Council. In the face of spending cuts at national and regional level, potential closures of public facilities and all round general negativity, the region and the community really needs this kind of boost.

It is important to remember that this Stadium is much more than simply a new home for AFC. It can be a sign of Aberdeen's intent for the future in terms of a 21st century attraction at the gateway to the City. It is one that could help attract thousands of visitors to the area and will be the platform to host major national and international events, complementing existing facilities such as the AECC. Equally it offers greatly enhanced community facilities for the region.

The economic impact of a successful Football Club is substantial. A survey in 2006 demonstrated that the club contributes in the region of £8m to the local economy per annum and directly supports around 350 full time equivalent jobs. The new stadium would substantially increase this.

There is a natural pull towards Pittodrie among some fans. This is purely emotive which we can understand but it is not based on facts. The facts are we did consider the re-development of Pittodrie as an option. That was ruled out completely many years ago. We are bound on all sides so we start with a very restricted footprint. All new stadiums must be designed under the Green Code Guide. To meet these standards, we would end up with a capacity of around 12,000 with the cost to build close to the cost of a new stadium at Loirston. The build process over three or four years would cause major disruption to all the team and for television. To end up with a costly, compromised stadium with a capacity of

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

around 12,000 and with limited corporate facilities would be totally wrong. In addition, the Club simply would not be viable with that set up.

Also how would we fund the redevelopment of Pittodrie? It would be virtually impossible. One of the major benefits of relocating is that we realise the development value out of Pittodrie. That value, the best part of £20m will simply be lost if we stay there, whereby investing it in a new stadium, not only do we get brand new, fantastic facilities for our fans and corporate support, but the whole move allows us to put the Club on sound financial footing for the long term and regain the feel good factor a strong football team brings.

If we look for a parallel here, the new Sports Village is a tremendous success, way beyond expectation. Through that, the city has the potential opportunity to participate in the Commonwealth Games. The City and Aberdeen University can take great credit for their vision and tenacity against the odds to fund and deliver the project. With the new stadium combined with the Calder Park Sports Centre we can put Aberdeen on the sporting map - as a city/region with one the best sporting facilities in the UK and a city/region with one the best soccer centres in Europe.

If this bid fails and we can't move, we face severe consequences for AFC. The negative impact to the region will be very substantial, and not only does the Club face a very bleak future, we also lose the opportunity to develop football in the region. The people of the region lose an opportunity to have a much needed world class community facility that not only plays a huge part in health and education, but also in attracting and anchoring people to the region.

The approved structure plan supports Loirston as being the right location for a new stadium as does the emerging Local Plan. A comprehensive approach to the development in respect of all the planning and technical issues has been adopted. There is a robust business case and there has been comprehensive consultation with less than 50 objections compared to over 4,000 for Bellfield.

In conclusion, this is a unique opportunity to demonstrate that the City has real ambition and is prepared to help deliver the world class facilities in spite of the harsh economic environment around us.

This is much more than about securing the future of our football club. It's also about giving this city and region world-class facilities which can be shared by the whole community. As well as additional sports facilities, it's about promoting sport and physical activity in the region, providing a major Scottish attraction and enhancing civic pride. It is about delivering something special for the people of Aberdeen and the region, something the people of this region richly deserve.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Finally, thank you for the opportunity to present our case.

The applicants responded to Members' questions and information was noted on the following:-

- (1) that a retractable roof was considered but rejected on a financial basis;
- (2) that redevelopment of Pittodrie was not an option, with the need to realise the asset at Pittodrie to fund the new stadium;
- (3) that Pittodrie is beyond its 'sell by date', with high maintenance costs and is no longer fit for purpose. Pittodrie could only accommodate a new stadium with a capacity of 12,000 and it would take 3-4 years to develop;
- (4) the issues concerning the development of a stadium at the Kings Links site;
- (5) mitigation proposed in the Environmental Statement to deal with the sensitive ecological site, including the wetland habitat;
- (6) that in terms of the design of the stadium, it was regarded as inspirational and to act as a landmark gateway to the city. The design of the stadium, use of curtain walling and granite; the unit cost per seat in the main stand would be around £3,500, compared to, for example, the Emirates Stadium in London which was in the region of £4,500 per seat. Thus, the proposed stadium would not be a cheap development.
- (7) that the stadium's orientation was chosen to accommodate and integrate with potential future developments and to create the best "footballing view";
- (8) in relation to transportation issues, to note that further detail on the shuttle bus service and pricing was still to be considered in consultation with supporters;
- (9) the definition of a corporate fan and information provided that the number of corporate members of AFC was higher than for other clubs in Scotland; and the view that AFC provides an opportunity to the business community to entertain clients and encourages business to the City;
- (10) with regard to likely parking charges, to note the requirement for a minimum occupancy rate for cars and the need to pre-book places;
- (11) an assurance from the applicant that if approved, the proposal would be completed and the project would not be abandoned due to technical or financial difficulties;
- (12) the increase in corporate facilities would generate additional employment, in addition to wider use of the stadium's community facilities, for which 35,000 square feet have been set aside;
- (13) with reference to Police concerns regarding clashes with match schedules, note that there are never two SPL and Highland league games scheduled on the same day in Aberdeen;
- (14) in respect of transport issues, the option of linking transportation charges into the season ticket was being considered;

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

- (15) to note how parking spaces at the Pittodrie site were currently allocated; and the involvement of Architectural + Design Scotland and the Aberdeen City and Shire Design Review Panel in the design of the stadium;
- (16) the bar in the stadium would have a capacity for up to 1,000 people and would be for home supporters only; and
- (17) supporters using the bar prior to and after matches would spread the demand for buses from and back to the city centre over a longer period, thus allowing each bus to make more than one journey. The position of a bar would also encourage supporters to use the buses.

Next to address the Sub Committee was **Grampian Police**, represented by **Chief Inspector Keith Henderson** who advised that Grampian Police had submitted two letters containing observations and that his comments today would be confined to the content of those letters. He stated that Grampian Police were generally supportive of the proposal and from a policing point of view, the main areas of interest were (1) the safety of all those making their way to and from the proposed stadium; (2) the safety of those persons within the proposed stadium; (3) the management of traffic in the vicinity of the proposed stadium and in the surrounding area; and (4) the minimising of disruption and inconvenience to those who live and work in the vicinity of the stadium. There were concerns regarding the Bus Strategy and observations regarding proposed pick-up points. The view of the police being that the number of parking spaces appeared to be a low allocation and therefore the parking spaces on-site should be increased. He expressed concern regarding a gap in the transport assessment wherein there was a lack of emphasis on rail travel and concluded by indicating that the affects of other future developments in the area were unknown and that the police have already expressed concerns regarding the possibility of Cove Rangers and Aberdeen football matches taking place on the same day, whereby segregation and safety were a further consideration.

Chief Inspector Henderson was asked questions about the level of policing required at Pittodrie; whether or not there was a dedicated force for football; how policing at Loirston would compare with policing Pittodire; whether the majority of their concerns related to transport and whether any consideration had been given to alternative strategies for decanting fans from, for example, Portlethen. He stated that the police focus was on concerns regarding the transportation strategy, and in general, the police welcomed the opportunity to develop plans as required and further consultation.

Following a break for lunch, the next presentation to the Sub Committee was made by **Mr Alan Strachan** on behalf of Nigg Community Council. His statement to the Sub Committee was in the following terms:-

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The pre-application consultation exercise.

The pre-application consultation exercise is inadequate in a number of material respects. It is very far from being the “*comprehensive consultation exercise*” which is referred to in the “Aberdeen Community Arena - Options Appraisal and Site Selection” report (“the site selection report”) at section 3.3.

In particular, the “Feedback” form, which has been distributed to members of the public and is available to download, has been constructed in such a way that it does not properly facilitate expressions of the opinion as to whether proposed development is appropriate in this specific location. Rather, the Feedback form set out a series of specific questions which are peripheral to the core issues with regard to this proposed development. The opportunity for individuals to submit any view which might be contrary to the interests of the developer is limited to the generality of “any further comments” at the end of the Feedback form. The Feedback form does not enable a true and accurate reflection of the public opinion to be expressed.

Further, the consultation exercise with the local community councils consisted, in our opinion, of an abbreviated and condensed exercise which sought to give the appearance that proper consultation had been undertaken, but without any real engagement in the actual issues. The forum with Nigg Community Council was abbreviated at short notice because of double booking of a similar session with the Cove Community Council. This is not an appropriate way in which to conduct community consultation.

These inadequacies are all the more worrying when one considers that this a major proposed development on green belt land, and thereby constitutes a very significant departure from existing development plan policy. For experienced advisers to consider that this is an appropriate way in which to conduct a consultation exercise in relation to such a development is a worrying state of affairs. It is a matter that we intend to bring to the attention of both the local planning authority and to Scottish Ministers. It is also relevant both to any future determination of the proposed planning application by the City Council and the issue of whether this application should be called in by Scottish Ministers.

In light of what we submit has been a self-evident failure to engage in the real issues with regard to this proposed development, it is our view that this proposed application will fail to have any, or any proper regard, to the relevant views of local residents and the wider population of Aberdeen.

The proposed development - contrary to the development plan.

The proposed development is contrary to existing adopted local plan ‘Green Spaces - New Places’ 2008 in fundamental and widespread respects. We do not

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

propose to list every relevant policy which the development is contrary to, save to observe that it is contrary to a raft of relevant policies. For present purposes it is sufficient to observe that the site is currently designated as green belt. The significance of this designation cannot be understated. Indeed, the conclusions of the Reporter at the previous development plan inquiry made clear the importance of preserving this *“effective wedge of green belt”*.

The adopted local development plan identifies the King’s Links site the only location for a community arena. It is a site that *“received significant public support”*. In development plan terms, there is a clear preference for the community stadium to be located at this alternative site.

Whilst it is accepted the Structure Plan identifies the Loirston site as a “potential community stadium” location, such development would conflict with other policies in the Structure Plan which are designed, for example, to ensure sustainable development and the quality of the environment. Consistent with the adopted local development plan, the Structure Plan also identifies the King’s Links site for a community stadium. The Structure Plan is specifically silent as to which of the two sites is the preferred location. It is our considered view that when the alternative potential sites are considered by reference to Structure Plan Policy, the site which is clearly more in keeping with development plan policy is the King’s Links site.

In summary, if the proposed application is to be properly determined in accordance with the development plan, it should be refused. There are no, or no sufficient, material considerations which militate in favour of this development so as to displace the clear infringement of policy and obvious harm that this development would cause.

There are no very special circumstances which have been identified which would support proposed development at Loirston. Indeed, the “Aberdeen Community Arena - Options Appraisal and Site Selection” is singularly lacking in any clear evidential basis for preferring Loirston to any other potential site.

In fact, a proper analysis of both the SIAS Transport Feasibility Study reveals that the King’s Links is a better location for the stadium in transport terms. This is the case, even without taking account of certain failures in the SIAS report e.g. the overstatement of number of people within walking distance of the Loirston site (which includes large sections of Kincorth with no suitable pedestrian access across the privately owned farm land on the south side of Kincorth Hill).

In any event, as the SIAS report makes clear that when compared with the King’s Links site, the Loirston site is remote; it has a significantly lower catchment in material categories; it will place additional stress on the already congested

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Wellington Road; it depends upon the construction of the AWPR, which is presently far from assured in light of existing and lengthy legal proceedings; and it will require significantly greater public transport investment.

Of course, there is the further point that location of the site at the King's Links is a known quantity (in that there will be little difference in transport terms between the current use of Pittodrie and that which would transpire if the nearby site King's Links site were developed). The Loirston site, on the other hand, is very much an unknown quantity, and there is no guarantee that the current transport assessment is sufficiently accurate to provide assurance that the transport implications of this proposal might not be worse than is presently predicted. There are, of course, good recent examples of development within the city where the transport consequences have proved to be far worse than were originally predicted at the time planning permission was granted.

An analysis of the Environmental Appraisal (March 2009) also demonstrates that the Loirston site is less appropriate for the proposed development than the King's Link site. In terms of existing land uses, development of Loirston will result in the permanent loss of rural green belt land. The existing uses at the King's Links can be accommodated elsewhere (at the very least it has not been demonstrated that they cannot be accommodated elsewhere). In terms of landscape and visual assessment, the importance of the Loirston green belt area has already been referred to above, and was confirmed by the Reporter at the local plan inquiry. By contrast, the King's Links site has already been designated as appropriate for stadium development. In terms of ecology and nature conversation, the balance against development lies firmly in favour of the Loirston site, for the reasons set out in para 7.6 of the Appraisal. The Loirston site is also more sensitive in terms of cultural heritage and archaeology, water quality, drainage and flooding. In terms of noise impact, there will inevitably be a greater impact upon the Loirston site and its surroundings when compared with the existing uses at both sites. In terms of air quality, the Appraisal concludes that the King's Links is the preferred site for development of a stadium.

In summary, upon examination of all of the separate criteria by which to judge the relative environmental acceptability of the proposed stadium development, there is not one criterion in which the Loirston site emerges as the preferred location. Indeed, in all material respects, the Appraisal demonstrates that the King's Links site would be less environmentally harmful.

In relation to other considerations, no clear case for the Loirston site has been demonstrated. In terms of land assembly, the King's Links site may be more problematic, but there is no evidence to suggest that any problems would be insuperable. Advice from leading counsel has not suggested that Common Good

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

issues are a real obstacle. No case had been made to suggest that the existing uses at the King's Links site could not be relocated elsewhere. Even if the development of the King's Links would be more prolonged than the development of the Loirston site, there is not evidence to suggest that the differential would be significant (the Aberdeen Community Arena - Options Appraisal and Site Selection suggests that it would take an extra year to complete the King's Links site - see para 12.0). In terms of site costs, the difference between the costs of the two sites is marginal (circa 10%); it has not been demonstrated that the extra expense of the King's Links site makes it impossible to deliver. Nor has it been demonstrated that the present site at Pittodrie is on the verge of imminent collapse - it has a lifespan of at least another 5 years.

Further, whilst it is clear that the applicants propose an edge of city stadium development, it does not appear that the logical consequence of this approach has been fully analysed. If it is considered that an edge of city site is appropriate, it is difficult to see why consideration should not be given to more appropriate locations in Aberdeenshire. It appears that the developer invites fundamental conflict with existing green belt policy without exploring more suitable sites which are, in real terms, no worse in terms of their location and environmental impact.

In summary, when proper consideration is given to the available evidence contained within the appraisals and elsewhere, there are no very special circumstances which militate in favour of development in Loirston.

Finally on this issue, it is appropriate to note that a number of new stadia have been held up by the developer as examples of development which is said to be similar to the Loirston proposal. It is submitted that those analogies are wholly inappropriate. By way of demonstration, the Aberdeen Community Arena - Options Appraisal and Site Selection contains reference to the following stadia:

KC Stadium, Hull - built on a previous athletic track within walking of the city centre and the mainline city station.

Ricoh Aren, Coventry - built on a former gasworks.

Liberty Stadium, Swansea - built on a former copper works.

Madejski Stadium, Reading - built on a former household waste dump.

Patently, the planning history for none of these stadia provides any support for what is proposed at Loirston. On the contrary, they demonstrate the obvious:

that a green belt site is wholly inappropriate for development of this type, when other options are available.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Finally, it is not unreasonable to observe that the developer should know this, given that their professional advisers were involved of the development of at least one these other stadia which are referred to in the Appraisal document.

Prematurity.

The emerging local development plan is at an important stage and is soon to be the subject of examination. The submission of this proposed application at this stage in the emerging local plan process will run the risk of pre-empting the proper consideration of the possible location of Aberdeen community arena as part of the local development plan process (especially when the existing local plan identifies the King's Links site as the appropriate location for this development).

There have been a series of local 'drop in' sessions held around the city, including Cove, to which local residents were invited and positively encouraged by the City Council to express their views on various developer bids. Residents and representatives of Cove CC and Nigg CC participated in that process and made representations to the City Council in relation to various development bids within their areas. Those representations - which were generally hostile to any form of development in the Loch Loirston area - have been assessed and evaluated by planning officials at the City Council.

Approval of the current planning application would be 'premature' to the finalisation of the local development plan in that it would prejudice the legitimate rights of land owners, local residents and other affected parties in the determination of the site selection for the new community football stadium. It is understood that there are a number of possible alternatives for a community football stadium, including land at Duff's Hill to the south of the City boundary, as well as the King's Links site identified in the current local plan (OPS1).

It clear from the various appraisals referred to above comparing the suitability of the Links site and Loch Loirston sites that, at the very least, no definite conclusions were arrived at regarding the relative merits of the sites.

It is an essential element of natural justice that local residents and other affected parties, including any competitor land owners, should have the opportunity to present their case for and against various potential sites within the context of a local plan 'examination'.

It is clear that the proposed application in this case would have the effect, if it were permitted, of pre-determining the outcome of the local plan process in relation to one of the single most significant site specific issues which will need to be (and should properly be) addressed as part of the local plan process. For that reason alone it should be refused on the grounds of prematurity.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

It was evident from the initial Transport Assessment submitted with the application, that little or no explanation was given, on how the additional volume of traffic going to, or coming from the stadium would affect pinch-point areas such as the Bridge of Dee, Great Southern Road and Wellington Road. It was to be expected or assumed that their suggestion, to introduce a dedicated bus service, to ferry supporters to / from various Park and Ride sites around the city would be accepted, thus reducing the number of fans using cars to travel to the stadium. Following a debate, an Addendum Traffic report was submitted, which indicated several areas (within 10 / 20 / 30 minutes walking distance of the stadium), which would be suitable for off-street parking. The Addendum Report, completely reverses the original suggestion that fans would travel by bus, rather than by car to the venue. This confusion gives rise to suggest that a proper transport assessment had not been undertaken and that the application should be refused on the grounds of inconsistency.

In conclusion, it is our belief, that Loirston Loch, and the surrounding area, (with all the wildlife which use it) is one of the crown jewels of the city which should be treasured, preserved and enhanced for future generations to enjoy, not destroyed forever, for the sake of a football Stadium.

Nigg Community Council recommends refusal of this application

In response to a question raised by a member about actions taken to gauge public opinion, it was noted that several public meetings had been held by Nigg Community Council together with Cove and Altens Community Council to gather the opinion of residents, and that fliers had been distributed in the area. It was noted that the Community Council believed that people were wrong if they thought that the stadium wouldn't affect them.

Again, in response to a question, Dr. Bochel confirmed that economic development is a relative material planning consideration, as is the proposed Local Development Plan. She also clarified that officers and the Council are required to consider whether or not the current application is an appropriate use of this site, not to give a view on whether or not another site might be better.

Mr Andrew Findlayson representing **Cove and Altens Community Council** was next to address the Sub Committee and his statement to the Sub Committee was in the following terms-

There is concern at the way this whole matter been handled, pressure through media praising and supporting proposals and the general public perception that it's a done deal.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Site

This site is designated as Green Belt in the current Local Plan. It is part of Loirston Recreation Area and a District Wildlife Site haven for a wide range different habitat types. Loirston Loch is the only natural freshwater loch available to the public and wildlife within city and is a recreational area popular with anglers and an important migratory roost for pink footed / grey lag goose.

The development would have a deleterious effect on indigenous and migratory wildlife and affect Kincorth Nature Reserve. The area provides not only valuable recreational area but is also an important educational resource. It maintains the landscaping setting of the city.

The application contravenes the following sections of the current local plan -

3.3 - Protection of Urban Green Space

3.22.3 - Air Quality

3.23 - Green Belt

3.24 - The Green Space Network

3.26 - Landscape Protection

3.28 - Natural Heritage

3.29 - Access and Recreational Areas

Policy 28 - Green Belt

Policy 29 - Landscape Protection

Policy 35 - Access and Recreation Areas

The Council must reject this application as to approve it would flagrantly breach their own guidelines.

Environmental Impact Assessment

This was provided by the developer so must be treated with caution as it is in support of his application and it may be economic with the truth. Described in environmental statement as "redevelopment of a major area of dereliction leading to establishment of new and attractive landscape". The proposals significantly enhance the form and pattern of the landscape/further national objectives to regenerate degraded landscape. The EIA accepts that increased noise and floodlighting will deter use of the loch by geese and wildfowl

The natural land drainage to the loch will be destroyed and its loss coupled with runoff from the development, notwithstanding Suds ponds, will have a detrimental effect on the water quality in the loch.

Despite claims of mitigation measures there is every likelihood the loch will be contaminated by dust or contaminated water runoff during construction. Air quality would be affected by traffic attempting to reach the football ground.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

All in, there is very real potential for an environmental disaster and the Application should be rejected

Business Case Study

This needs to be revisited because:

The current footprint has been reduced from that considered in the study

There was no community involvement in the study

More in depth consideration should be given to renovating Pittodrie / King's Links / Exhibition Centre / Duff's Hill

Transportation

From a transport point of view Loirston is a nightmare waiting to happen. Why?

New and existing junctions with traffic entering / leaving proposed stadium will cause serious congestion on this already busy road particularly for evening games / concerts. Congestion will be caused in the city centre and Wellington Road by traffic coming and going from the football. There is no timescale for the Western Peripheral Route and the Bridge of Dee upgrade. The majority of fans travel by car are very unlikely to be willing to go by bus considering the extra time and cost involved and the unreliability of the service. First Bus is a private company and gives no guarantee they will run the services proposed if they are unprofitable. Opposing fans milling around the stadium or city centre looking for transport could come into conflict. Pedestrians entering / leaving stadium will come into conflict with traffic on Wellington Road, causing congestion and potential for accidents.

The provision of only 700 out of 1400 parking spaces for the general public is unbelievable and the suggestion of using company car parks on the industrial estates unworkable. The suggestion to prevent supporters parking in residential areas that the whole community will be made a controlled parking area with residents having to apply for a permit to park at their own house is unacceptable.

The whole transportation strategy is untenable and on this point alone the application should be rejected.

Footnote

In America, where the out of town developments were promoted appears to have had a rethink and are now advocating in-town developments, benefiting local businesses and utilising existing infrastructure. Maybe we should be thinking along these lines rather than an out of town development devoid of facilities when we have the city centre with its transport hub and many businesses would benefit from trade generated by football supporters

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

We query the right of Aberdeen City Council to determine the application - as the site is promoted by the Council and promoted in the Local Development Plan, it is not impartial.

Mr Findlayson responded to a number of questions from members in respect of (1) steps taken by the Community Council to gauge opinion regarding the proposal in response to which made reference to their website and community magazine; (2) whether the Community Council had a preference for a controlled parking zone or not, to which he responded that the community should not be imposed upon to accommodate the stadium; (3) whether the Community Council had evidence to support their view that people would not use public transport to travel to the stadium to which he responded by citing current car use to Pittodrie and the fact that people would need to take more than one bus; and (4) the Community Council's view that the journey to Pittodrie was more pleasant than it would be travelling to the proposed site at Loirston; (5) the Community Council's view that although Wellington Road would be quieter on a Saturday there would still be traffic pressures; (6) whether 144 letters of objection from a community of 7,500 was a fair reflection of public opinion, the response to which being that people were apathetic; and (7) the Community Council's view in respect of the landscaped setting and its view on the stadium as a landmark gateway to the City, to which the response was that it was an attractive stadium in the wrong location, and that landscape setting was a more important consideration.

The next speaker to address the Sub Committee was **Ms Catherine Thornhill** representing **Balmoral Park Limited** in the following terms:-

Introduction

- On behalf of Balmoral Park Ltd, Ryden have submitted representations to the Proposed Plan and have submitted objection in respect of this planning application. Wish to re-emphasise the main points of these objections.
- Balmoral Park Ltd do not oppose the principle of the stadium proposals, however their support for the stadium was predicated on the fact that it was initially proposed to the south west of Loirston Loch taking access from the Wellington Road south of Loirston Loch.
- It is understood that the Options Appraisal and Feasibility Studies, upon which Aberdeen City Council based their support, also showed the stadium located to the south west.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

- Balmoral Park Ltd recently secured Planning Permission for a high quality business park on 14.6 hectares of land, immediately to the east of the application site.
- the application site wraps around and encloses Balmoral Business Park in its entirety and Balmoral Park Ltd have major concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed stadium to their recently approved development.
- AND to the proximity of the access to the stadium from Wellington Road to the access to the Business Park.
- As currently positioned, both the stadium and associated access and parking infrastructure will adversely impact on both the attractiveness and operation of the business park. And will also significantly impact upon the setting of Loirston Loch.

Balmoral Park Limited

- In securing that Planning Permission for Balmoral Business Park the environmental sensitivities of Loirston Loch and its immediate environs were consistently highlighted by Aberdeen City Council.
- Significant emphasis was placed on the fact that this area was considered as a “gateway” to the city.
- The importance of Wellington Road as an arterial route serving the city was also heavily emphasised with the Council wishing to minimise any interruption to traffic flows on Wellington Road.
- It was noted that Balmoral Park Ltd. were “lucky” to secure an access from Wellington Road between Altens and the flyover. It was also commented that for the above reasons of maintaining traffic flows, that “no further accesses would be permitted in this location.”

Access

- The introduction of a further major junction at this location, in such close proximity to the recently approved Balmoral Business Park junction, would seriously interrupt traffic flows on Wellington Road to the detriment of the proposed business park and the wider area.
- However, siting of the stadium to the south west of the Loch with access taken from the south of the Loch which would alleviate these concerns and also

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

provide an opportunity to reconfigure the currently proposed convoluted parking arrangements - particularly the remote parking areas to the north should be omitted.

- The frequency and scale of the events proposed at the arena is likely to have a significant impact on the proposed Business Park by way of noise, nuisance and traffic congestion.
- Overall, the stadium proposals entirely enclose the Balmoral Business Park development with the second access to the stadium and parking areas being taken from the Wellington Circle roundabout. Access to a major commercial development through an existing busy employment area is highly undesirable.
- Furthermore, this could encourage spectators to take a direct route between the car park and the arena, through our client's existing business operations. This would pose a very significant health & safety risk; as would the inevitable unauthorised use of the private business and industrial areas for overspill car parking.
- The relocation of the stadium to the south west could help address these concerns, whilst also protecting the integrity of the loch and retaining an open aspect on a major approach to the City.

Premature

- Consultation on the Aberdeen Proposed Local Development Plan is currently ongoing. The plan identifies land lying immediately to the south and west of Balmoral Business Park as an opportunity site, OP77, for major residential and employment development over the lifetime of the plan.
- The proposals for a new community stadium are referred to in the text for Loirston and Cove – no specific site for the stadium is outlined within the plan. Site OP77 is to be developed in accordance with a masterplan which considers these uses in context.
- Significant impacts in terms of landscape, ecology, wildlife and traffic are likely to arise from the stadium development – thus the stadium proposals should be addressed more fully in the Local Development Plan.
- Determination of individual elements of the significant mixed development proposed for site OP77, prior to the production of a high-level overview document for the area and the major development proposed within is premature.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

- The stadium should thus be considered within the context of the wider development of the site, as proposed in the Proposed Aberdeen Local Plan, the content of which has been approved by Councillors.

Summary

- In summary, whilst the application conflicts with the policies of the current Aberdeen Local Plan, the proposed development would prejudice the outcome of any Examination in Public into the Aberdeen Local Development Plan; consultation on the Proposed Plan is not yet closed.
- The Proposed Plan does not identify specific locations within OP77 for major residential, employment and stadium development. This entire site requires to be subject to a masterplan to consider all these uses and their requisite infrastructure requirements in context.
- Whilst premature to the LDP process, any masterplan would be the responsibility of the developer(s) and thus work on its preparation is not restricted by Council timescales.
- The development, as sited would adversely impact upon Balmoral Business Park. Whilst Balmoral Park Ltd does not oppose the principle of development in this area, but for the reasons highlighted above, would request that the arena and associated access and parking infrastructure be refused planning permission and encouragement given to their relocation to the south west of the existing site.
- Re-location to the south west of the site would also deter unauthorised parking in the adjoining private commercial and industrial areas; which in the current proposal are accessed directly from the stadium car park. The introduction of the Controlled Parking Zone would not deter unauthorised parking on private land.

Ms. Thornhill was asked questions regarding (1) whether the proximity of the junction to the stadium would be mitigated by the timing of traffic lights, to which she responded that the Roads department was not keen on an additional junction; (2) access through Wellington Circle, to which she advised that this would be via the northern car park and conflict with the level of traffic and (3) whether or not spectators crossing the Business Park could be potential customers, to which she stated that the Business Park was not a retail park and it was not desirable that it be used as a through-fare.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The next objector to address the Sub Committee was **Mr George Urquhart, local resident**, who made his statement in the following terms:-

Having been Convener of Arts & Recreation when Loirston Recreation Area was set up some twenty years ago, I make no apologies for fighting tooth & nail to save this wonderful area from development.

It is enjoyed by nature lovers, dog walkers, rambles & children who love the play area. It is home to the award winning Ranger Service who do such a great job teaching our young people about climate change and the importance of caring for the environment and highly commended by Britain in Bloom Judges, it must be saved from the threat of development. I will refer you to your own notice board; it states a number of reasons for protecting this area among them; wildlife, rare plants and animals live there, it offers attractive & peaceful walks away from the hustle & bustle of the city and concludes for these reasons it is, important to protect this area of countryside from being built upon. It bears the logos of ACC; the Forestry Commission; Scottish National Heritage; Grampian Enterprise and Community Woodlands Scotland. Add to that, it is a district wildlife site of scientific interest and in the recent Nature Conservancy audit requested by the Scottish government, met all the criteria to be classed as a nature conservancy area.

I would respectfully remind elected members & officials that the council has a civic duty to protect and safeguard the rights of its citizens to countryside access to public footpath etc. The Community Woodlands part of the woodland in and around town project must be left for the enjoyment of all citizens. All in all, an overwhelming case to say 'no' to this unwanted environmental disaster.

Ten very good reasons to refuse this stadium

This is greenbelt/green space in the local plan which runs until 2012 at least.

It is a district wildlife site of scientific interest.

It would damage Loirston Loch, a very important migration stopover for all sorts of birds a haven for birdwatchers who have used the bird bides for many years.

It would threaten the very existence of both Loirston recreation area and the Ranger Service based at Lochinch Interpretive Centre built by volunteers with large grants of public money.

It is not wanted by local people in the area.

It would destroy Community woodland/Drystane Dykes and vital wetlands it is the only wildlife corridor between Cove and Kincorth Local Nature Reserve.

It is completely at odds with aims of nature conservancy areas.

Destroy wildlife habitat - the home to protected species such as bats.

A great many supporters do not want to leave Pittodrie and their traditional watering holes.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

There are far less environmentally sensitive sites such as Duff's Hill or the Links.

APPLICATIONS AND APPLICANTS

Having allowed Pittodrie to deteriorate over many years in spite of receiving a large grant from the football trust towards the building of the Richard Donald Stand and showing a complete disregard for the planning process by submitting an application for Pittodrie before this one is even considered. Having been a die hard supporter myself for 70yrs and seen the steady decline of this once great club and a procession of under funded managers, I would say the dwindling support do not support this move away from Pittodrie.

For a start, this is not the site that the council approved in the survey, it could obstruct a public right of way and wildlife corridor. Then the much vaunted bridge was dropped when they found that a legal condition prevented any development within 50m of the loch. The office element is also speculative. There have been offices lying empty for years on Wellington Road and Altens, throwing in a bar for 1,000 people, seemingly ignorant of the problems alcohol has caused football in the past. Even the applicant has realised that parking is totally inadequate and this latest attempt by Farehurst just makes things worse. It is a work of pure fiction; it is difficult to get a parking place at Macro on a Saturday, oil firms need their parking 24/7 and there is no way an operational fire station would allow supporters to use their car park. Governments, local authorities and many others have tried to get people out of cars and on to public transport - all have failed miserably. Supporters, especially those from outside the town, will stick with their cars. The residents of Cove, Redmoss, and Kincorth are well aware of the parking problems this will cause in their areas, which strengthens the opposition to the stadium.

ROAD ISSUES

As a former councillor for this area and having sat on the Roads Committees over nearly 30yrs I feel qualified to comment on this application. Two bottlenecks stand out straight away at Wellington Road and at Wellington Circle. Wellington Road is one of the busiest roads in the city the main artery to the harbour and inner ring road crowded with LGV oil related traffic. It is an urban clearway from the prison to Macro roundabout. When the long awaited duelled extension was finally completed it was the intention to speed traffic out of the city, I clearly recall the Balmoral Group being refused an access on to it for this very reason. That being the case it is plain crazy to allow this application for a main access to a 21,000 capacity stadium on Wellington Road, the applicant is very well aware of this, that was the reason for the bridge across the Loch, only to discover a legal condition to prevent it being built. The only other access at Wellington Circle is even worse, a very sharp bend

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

around Macro and a junction before you can access the round a bout made even more difficult by the siting of a permanent hot food van outside Macro.

Given the near traffic gridlock at the Bridge of Dee, Market Street and Torry at peak times, this whole application should be deferred until the WPR is completed. As with any major development, AFC should pay for all costs for pavements, road improvements; traffic lights etc.

Members of the Sub Committee sought Mr Urquhart's views in respect of evidence as to supporters' dissatisfaction with the proposal, and what evidence there was that they wouldn't attend matches to Loirston, in response to which, he stated that he wouldn't go himself; whether migratory birds would stop coming to the loch, to which he responded that his friends, who were members of the RSPB, gave the impression that the stadium will have an impact on birds passing through; whether the loch was stocked with trout, to which he advised that as there was no long term lease it wasn't stocked; the impact on other wildlife; traffic issues relating to bottlenecks around Pittodrie and the impact of the AWPR, to which he responded that the same difficulties exist as Pittodrie, that the AWPR was bound to have a positive impact, and that the development shouldn't be considered before the AWPR is in place, but even with the AWPR, he wouldn't support this application; and further information regarding the legal condition preventing any development within 50 metres of Loch Loirston; and whether Duff's Hill would be better from a transport point of view, to which he replied that it wasn't as environmentally sensitive and had a better road system.

After returning from a break in the proceedings, The Head of Planning and Sustainable Development clarified that in view of the Council's land interest in the proposal and the fact that it is a major development, which is a significant departure from Policy 28 of the Local Plan, the Council is required to notify the Scottish Government, having taken a view on the application. Following this, Scottish Ministers would decide whether they would call in the application or allow the Council to determine it. This provided checks and balances within the planning process.

In regard to the legal conditions on building within 50 metres of the loch as mentioned in the previous presentation, the applicants advised that an early proposal for a bridge to be built over the loch was abandoned following public consultation. The reference to 50 metres was contained within the environmental impact assessment, wherein consultants made a recommendation not to build within 50 metres of the loch and there was no mention of a 50 metre restriction prohibiting building within any of the land deeds.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

The next speaker was **Mr. Bernard Smart**, local resident who advised that he strongly objected to the application. He had lived in the area for 60 years and loved the quiet surroundings. As a member of the Aberdeen District Angling Association, he fishes in the loch and stated that he would hate to lose it. He commented that 2000 fish had been added to the loch and it was his view that the stadium should be built on brownfield land at Kings Links as opposed to Greenbelt land.

Mr. Smart was asked questions about why the Angling Association would be defunct if the development went ahead, to which he responded that fish didn't like light and the environment would be lost, so people wouldn't want to go there; whether or not the loch had been restocked this year, to which he advised that it had; and whether or not the light really affected fish and if that was highlighted in the Environmental Statement, to which the answer (from Mr. Prentice) was that there was nothing in the Environmental Statement to say that fish were affected by light.

Next to speak was **Mr. Andy Dalziel**, local resident who addressed the Sub Committee in the following terms:-

I am a local resident and also a member of Cove and Altens Community Council and bring knowledge and background from my role as a Community Councillor. I have several reasons for objecting to this proposal, but before going into them in any detail I would like to raise a more general point that I have grave doubts on the independence of Aberdeen City Council as one of the landowners and in theory stands to gain from the sale of the land to AFC so it is in the interests of ACC to ensure that this development goes ahead. Secondly and more seriously some members of this committee have publicly stated their support of this proposal on many occasions. Indeed representatives from AFC stated at a joint meeting of Nigg and Cove and Altens Community Councils' on 5th July 2010 that they had been steered in the direction of Loirston as a possible site for a replacement for Pittodrie by 3 Councillors including at least one from this committee. I have reservations on consultations we have on planning matters in Aberdeen – there is a concern that decisions have already been made. The whole planning process in Aberdeen is in my opinion developer-led and the electorate have very little influence over the process.

As to my objections to the proposal they are as follows.

1) Over development of the area.

The Cove area is already over developed with no overall master-plan of what the area should be like once all developments have finished. All we get is a random approach to development with master-planning done only within each development

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

rather than looking into how all the developments fit together. This development is one too far in my opinion and will only be made even worse once the rest of the developments which are in the new LDP go ahead.

2) Loss of green space.

One of the good things about living in Cove used to be that despite it being part of a city it still felt relatively rural with open countryside not too far away. This provided easy access for people like me who want to walk in the countryside and enjoy the wildlife, farm livestock etc. This development removes a substantial tract of open space which is well used by local residents for exercise, bird-watching, dog walking, fishing etc. Once this development goes ahead this green space will be lost and will never be adequately replaced. ACC's view of open space is very different from what I regard as usable open space.

3) Environmental Impact

This development along with what is proposed in the Local Development Plan will totally destroy a unique set of habitats at or near Loirston Loch. There are 5 distinct habitat types in that area. They are; the loch itself; the surrounding wetland; the rough grassland; smooth grassland and the mixed woodlands which were deliberately planted to enhance wildlife. Since the Council stopped Doonies Farm from grazing the fields at Loch Inch we have already lost the smooth grassland habitat. It is very unusual to find 5 such habitat types all together in close proximity within a city boundary and it shows remarkable foresight by those involved in creating this resource in the first place. This is something which the city should be proud of and making the most of rather than seeking to destroy. These habitat types all together in the one place provide a unique educational resource as well and provide a fantastic opportunity to educate future generations about how the environment works. One of the greatest ironies in all of this is that parking at the site will be limited in an attempt to reduce car use, presumably to reduce CO2 emissions. Yet one of the most highly polluting human activities in terms of CO2 emissions is the production of cement for the construction industry. (burning limestone to drive off CO2). If you want to limit CO2 emissions then you need to limit development. Some developments are needed, I'm not anti development per se, but this is not one of them.

4) Road/Traffic issues

A representative of ACC planning department has already admitted that the Cove/Altens area is already at saturation point with regard to traffic management at peak times. This development will only make things worse, particularly for evening kick off games. Although there will only be parking for 1400 cars at the new

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

stadium that still means an extra 1400 cars on already over-congested roads. The idea that public transport/cycling/walking will be the main way for fans to get to the stadium is laughable. The public transport provision for Cove is already pretty pathetic with crowded, dirty over-priced and unpunctual buses so adding in a lot of football supporters to the equation is a recipe for disaster. Despite the fact that special services will be laid on I believe there will be pressure on existing services. Having thousands of spectators walking from town along Wellington Road is also a recipe for disaster. As for the idea that a significant number of them will use bikes, that is ridiculous and dangerous. Wellington Road is not suitable for bikes. Not only is it a busy road, but it is especially busy with LGV's Having been behind the wheel of an LGV in the past I know how much of a problem it is when these vehicles are mixed with cyclists. To have a lot of extra bikes mixing with 44 tonne trucks is downright dangerous.

5) Parking

It is inevitable that most spectators will try to get to the match by car. They will then have to park somewhere nearby as there will only be limited parking at the stadium, in order to discourage car use. When representatives of AFC were asked about this they said they anticipated that they would park in the adjacent industrial areas. When it was pointed out that residential areas were in fact closer to the proposed stadium than the industrial areas they said they would get ACC to put parking restrictions on all the local streets. When pressed on how this would affect local residents, they stated that they could then go and apply for parking permits from the council like everyone else. This attitude is breathtakingly arrogant. Why should people have to suddenly have their lives disrupted in such a way because of this proposal. Worse still, what is to stop supporters from parking in peoples drive-ways. I doubt if the authorities would be interested in having them removed as it would be a civil matter.

6) Noise and visual pollution

There will inevitably be noise from this stadium and I do not believe this will be dealt with by mitigation measures. It is simply too close to residential areas, both existing and proposed. The idea to have the stadium lit up at night by a red glow will turn it into even more of an eyesore than it will be already. How a dirty great concrete monstrosity lit up and glowing red at night is a visual enhancement to the southern approaches to the city is a mystery to me. The red glow will also be a waste of electricity at a time when we need to be conserving energy.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

7) Money

I think this development has nothing to do with making Aberdeen a better place to live or enhancing the southern approach to the city. It has everything to do with money. AFC is a commercial organisation and that should not be forgotten. This development has everything to do with releasing the existing stadium for redevelopment into high value housing. Somebody will make a big financial gain from this development at the expense of the environment and the quality of life of local residents. That is simply not fair.

Summary

We have heard from AFC about all the problems they have with the existing stadium. However I believe that their proposed solution will simply create more problems than it solves. Not only that, the new problems will be foisted onto the residents of Cove, Altens, Nigg and Kincorth. This is simply unfair. Far too much will have to be taken on trust as far as mitigation of the likely problems is concerned. I don't trust the developers to do what they say they will and I certainly don't trust ACC's ability or willingness to hold them to account.

Mr. Dalziel answered questions relating to the difference in people walking along Wellington Road and King Street, to which his response was the speed at which traffic went and the mix of cyclists; and whether or not in commenting on the independence of the process and statements allegedly made by members in support of the application he takes the same view of members who have expressed support for the development.

The next speaker was **Ms. Suzanne Kelly**, local resident who addressed the Sub Committee in the following terms:-

Thank you.

I speak as an opponent to any proposed building at the Loirston site, particularly of such an overwhelming size, in what is most definitely a catchment of the River Dee Special Area of Conservation, or SAC. "SACs are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the habitat types and species." For some reason, this is not being taken seriously by some of our representatives and developers. It is clearly 'contrary to the protection the SAC status is meant to confer to build this stadium, and it is definitely against the wishes of the local communities, at whose expense this development would be.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

First I will present some of my specific objections and noise issues regarding some of the documents produced, namely Aberdeen Arena Environmental Statement Volume 2, Chapters 8 - Ecology & Nature Conservation, and Chapter 13 Summary of Assessment. I also have some serious-concerns concerning the Aberdeen City Council Development Management Sub Committee Pre Determination Hearing report dated 21 December 2010 signed by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. Some of these concerns I consider warrant further investigation, and I will, be sending my findings to the appropriate governmental authorities in due course. I have found what I believe to be omissions, inaccuracies and unfounded conclusions, all of which are favourable to the project's approval.

Chapter 8

Table 8.1 is meant to be a "summary of consultation responses". It should be noted, as one of the community councils points out in its objection, that the Environmental Statement was paid for by Aberdeen Football Club, and was not an independent scientific study. The Summary response made for the SNH excludes the point made clear in the SNH letter to the City Council that this development falls in the River Dee SAC and "the site's status means that the requirements of the conservation Natural Habitats & Regulations 1994 apply. The SNH also recommends viewing their website for legislative guidance. I would have thought that saying the site is protected by legislation would be among the most important summary points. The summary points do manage to say how important the site is for overwintering birds, but omits the SNH's point headed in the SNH letter 'European protected species' that "Surveys carried out to inform the ES found evidence of otters and bats, which are both European Protected Species".

In the same table the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' opinion is summarised as being "advised on locating the development as far from the loch margins as possible and to reduce disturbance to the water body". When I contacted the RSPB, their representative replied and I quote "When this development was being proposed initially, we responded very clearly to Aberdeen City Council at an early stage that the Loirston Loch site was sensitive, that the impact of proposed development would be adverse on bird and wildlife interest of the area, and the Kings Links site was a far better location for the AFC stadium development". The RSPB also wrote to me saying "it would be hard to see how any sensible person could favour this scheme and "it's obvious from the application that there is no realistic mitigation or compensation which could alter the main impacts of the proposed development". I suggest that the summary table does not remotely reflect the RSPB position of rejecting the site and I am concerned by this.

Chapter 18 Page 8-9 does admit that otters, a legally protected species are most definitely in the area. Curiously, the ES also admits badger setts, but says "... none of the setts will be negatively influenced by the site development and the loss of

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

potential foraging habitat is not expected to have any detrimental impact on the sustainability of the adjoining badger populations". Perhaps it is because I am not a scientist, but I would have concluded differently, that to build a 21,000 seat stadium and 1400 parking spaces where there are animals and which removes foraging areas will have a detrimental effect. I do not see any scientific method quoted to support this conclusion. This page also states "There are no records of bats on the NBN Gateway within 1 kilometre of the site". This is directly at odds with the SNH letter which states there are indeed bats in the area.

Concerning birdlife, covered in 8.4.5, it is admitted that the site is important for a variety of overwintering birds. Various surveys are quoted in the report, but not the 2003 RSPB Farmer's alliance survey which lists 11 species, about half of which were red and half amber. If indeed we have lost important species since 2003, this is a sign that there has already been too much construction in the area, and is not a go-ahead for more environmental damage. I also question the report's assertion that only one barn owl siting and one red species bird were reported and that back in 2006; I have spoken to rangers who have seen owls and red listed species, and I believe this is reflected in records.

The Chapter also notes on page 8-13 that the proposals include part of the Loirston Loch District Wildlife site within its site boundary. It should be noted that such wildlife sites may not have as much protection in law as SACs do - but they are recognised. In the Habitats and flora section, this chapter advises there will be a drainage pipe into the loch: I do not understand how any type of drainage into the loch could be anything but harmful and I look forward to clarification. This section also says there are no notable species of flora "observed on the day". In my experience, a day's observation is immaterial to determining what plants are present on a site. If you look at the records, you will find that orchids are present for a start. There are one or two fields which are no longer used as grazing, and experts I spoke to expect that this means a potential renaissance of plants that would have otherwise been eaten by grazing livestock now possibly returning to the area, and this is of potential benefit in terms of biodiversity. I might remind the Council that it is party to a number of biodiversity initiatives, and this is not limited to giving habitat only to the most endangered species, but is also intended to ensure that populations can continue. The section also states that clearance of surface vegetation and soils may lead to increased soil erosion and damage to the water body, which would affect both flora and fauna for a considerable distance downstream of the works.

I am curious to read on Page 8-14 in the protected species section that the report preparers expect the otters, bats, owls and birds to basically 'commute' during construction. I see no basis for this presumption, no mention of the animals' return,

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

or further disruption to them during the stadium's operation. It is known that such interruptions to habitat are detrimental to populations and breeding.

In 8.6.2 'Potential Operational effects' are listed; they are: permanent land take and loss of habitat, increased surface water run-off and potential pollution risk of Loirston Loch, increased lighting, and increased noise and disturbance. Biodiversity loss is also admittedly going to happen. I wonder that the obvious threat of air pollution is somehow glossed over. I suppose we are meant to believe these are small prices to pay for football and events. Which, of course, could simply continue in the existing facilities at Pittodrie - which aren't exactly filled to capacity, and at the AECC, which the taxpayer subsidises.

The Chapter mentions light in several areas, in terms of the construction phase and inside the stadium. There is no mention at all of the proposed red glowing light, but we do know that night time light of any kind disrupts the living patterns of all the animals we have so far mentioned.

Somehow at 8.7 'Mitigation' we have changed tone from a generally scientific list of what exists and what cause and effect may mean for the site to what sounds to me like a sales pitch. The report says that the following mitigation measures WILL be taken - not should be taken. The conclusion has been made by the Environmental Statement writers that the stadium will be built, and the builders will follow best practice and the law on a dozen points of conservation in doing this. I suggest the Environment Survey is overreaching its remit. It would have us believe that construction workers, for instance, will dutifully look for badgers and stop work if they are encountered. How on earth can an environment summary make a promise as to what an as yet unnamed construction company will do? Could the assertions be related to the AFC's commissioning of the report, I wonder.

There is mention towards the end of this chapter about positives (there are three very minor ones) - such as creating a wildlife corridor. If I take an existing large wildlife ecosystem and put a stadium on it, I am not creating a new corridor - I am squeezing wildlife into a bottleneck.

Section 8.8.1 entitled Habitats and Notable Flora says 'The majority of these habitats are low ecological value with only fragments of habitats which contain a level of value.' This statement is not supported and is indeed contradicted by the RSPB, by the site's falling in the SAC area, and by the SNH who are keen that the protected species be, well, protected.

The closing few paragraphs of this Chapter are amazing. Despite ranger records and sightings, the chapter concludes there are NO barn owls. It concludes that habitats and notable flora are not predicted to be significantly adversely affected.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Aquatic habitats and species are not predicted to be significantly adversely affected. Residual effect on otters and bats are predicted to be not significant. In all seriousness - are these the conclusions you yourselves would now reach, or would you agree this is a SAC area which will be irreversibly damaged by a 21,000 seater stadium and 1400 car park spaces? Or do you agree with SNH that this is part of a legally protected SAC with protected species, and the RSPB who say 'no sensible person' would build here? Somehow, air pollution and the carbon footprint aspects are barely mentioned. Where is the analysis?

I now turn to Chapter 13 - Summary of Assessment. If you add the adverse temporary impacts it lists, there are no fewer than 22. And for the permanent negative effects? Just over 40. These include loss of habitat, land take, possible pollution, and all the negatives I have previously mentioned. Ladies and Gentlemen, Councillors: Why are you even thinking about it?

I turn then to the City Council's report issued for the pre-determination hearing on 21st December. I have mentioned previously the rather serious omission of the important SNH points in the Environmental Summary. SNH wrote to the Planning & Sustainable development, enterprise planning and infrastructure committee on 10 September 2010 saying "that this development falls in the River Dee SAC and "the site's status means that the requirements of the conservation Natural Habitats & Regulations 1994 apply. The SNH recommends viewing their website for legislative guidance." and "there are evidence of otters and bats, which are both European Protected Species". It is worrying enough that the paid environmental surveyors neglected these important points from their summary. It is to me inexcusable that in summarising this letter, in the pre-determination report, the City Council left out these two points, which most definitely cast a huge shadow on the suitability of Loirston. I will be asking for a formal explanation of how this happened. Thankfully the Council's document at least reports that this is a significant departure from the plan by virtue of it being a major development located on an undeveloped site within the Greenbelt where policy 28 Green belt of the Aberdeen Local plan applies. Is this in itself not enough reason to halt this scheme? I had also objected and cited Scottish Planning Policy issues including "Efficient Use of Land and Buildings" issues – these points do not seem to appear to be addressed by the Council.

The City Council report goes on to quote the virtues of the stadium from its design to its potential for holding international events. As to the design elements, it is subjective to praise them but moreover, a good design respects its environment. The architectural praise is irrelevant to the location of the site in the greenbelt land; it could be built elsewhere. As to hosting international tournaments, there are more than a few UK cities which have lost millions in trying to get events - look at

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

London's bid for World Cup 2018 - and lost even more by hosting them - Birmingham I recall lost a small fortune when hosting events some years back.

Perhaps the most blatantly untrue, unworkable aspect as we have seen today is the scheme to bring viewers to the stadium by bus. If the 1400 car spaces are used by cars with 4 people each, as a very generous allowance, then if the stadium were running at capacity, a further 15,400 people need to get to holds to Loirston. If a bus holds 80 people, then you need about, oh 192 dedicated buses or coaches to get them there. The plan is for 80 buses which is still a huge amount. And how much time do the planners say buses will need to get from College Street to Loirston? Fifteen Minutes. Perhaps it's just me, but it can take 15 minutes to get from the Nigg roundabout to the Cove Bay Roundabout. I would like to ask for the figures supporting that there is a suitable transportation plan in place. The details are needed. We heard today that only 710 spaces would be for fans. Where is the train transport analysis? Are all away supporters coming by coach?

Let's say that getting just 10,000 people there is the issue. Looking at this report, apparently the Council's Environmental Health Services say and I quote "Air quality in the vicinity of the proposed development is currently good and there would be no risk of exceedance of national air quality objectives at this location...although it is predicted that air quality will be affected, the impact is not" I would at this point like to relate my personal experience. I lived in New York for 20 years; I lived in London for 20 years. After 3 years of living in Aberdeen, I had a severe asthma attack on Wellington Road, and was diagnosed with asthma. I do not smoke. My research tells me that exhaust fumes not only damage the atmosphere, but the small particles are a recognised, real health risk, acknowledged by the EU and BMA. But what angers me about this assertion that the air is fine is that the City knows this is not the case. You may want to search for Wellington Road and air pollution on the ACC website, and you will see the Council knows there is an air pollution issue at present. Wellington Road has poor air quality. Asthma is only one health disease associated with the exhaust on this heavily travelled road. But for the City's authorities to tell me that transporting 21,000 people to this stadium where there was once greenbelt 'will not have a significant impact' is an extreme insult to everyone's intelligence. The councillors favouring the development might want to think on this.

Speakers and the report state only Nigg has objected. I put it to you that had the reporting been done without crucial omissions, perhaps there would have been more observations.

Please listen to the Community Councils', respect the SNH and RSPB experts and leave this site alone. There is a line between progress and urban sprawl - we are crossing it.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Following Ms Kelly's address, Members sought clarification on the role of the RSPB and Mr. Prentice explained that the RSPB was not a statutory consultee, with consultation undertaken with Scottish National Heritage and SEPA to cover the environmental issues. The RSPB did, however, have the opportunity to make representations and they have not raised any objections. A question was also asked of the historical cairns, to which Dr. Bochel replied that Historic Scotland were a statutory consultee and they had not raised any objections. It was also asked whether any of the statutory consultees had objected, the answer to which was only the two community councils.

Mr. Eric Witton, local resident, was next to address the Sub Committee in the following terms:-

I am a resident of Redmoss Terrace and Operations Manager for a company with premises in Altens Industrial Estate. My reasons for objection are as follows:

1. Need for a Stadium:

Firstly, I would question the move from Pittodrie at all. AFC have not made a compelling case for the need for a new stadium. The official capacity of Pittodrie is 22,199 and AFC have not come close to that figure on a single occasion in recent seasons! Examination of AFC's own website reveals the following statistics for the past five seasons:

The largest crowd for any fixture was 20,500 for a pre-season friendly against Manchester Utd on 12/07/2008.

The largest crowd for a competitive fixture was 20,446 for a UEFA Cup match against FC Copenhagen on 20/12/2007

For SPL matches there have only been three crowds over 20,000, all vs Rangers.

The only SPL matches attracting crowds of over 15,000 are vs Rangers and Celtic, with one match v's Hearts also exceeding that figure.

The remaining SPL fixtures predominantly attract crowds of less than 12,000 with many less than 10,000.

The average SPL attendance at Pittodrie for the 2010/11 season so far is just over 10,300.

I am a football supporter myself and my team, Norwich City has a ground in a similar geographic situation to AFC with a busy road on two sides, housing on the

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

third and club car parks with housing behind on the fourth side. Over a period of several years, Carrow Road was re-developed one side at a time and three of the four corners between the new stands also had infills constructed. The result is a modern 27,000 all seater stadium, which unlike Pittodrie, has had average crowds of 25,000+ for the last several seasons. During the redevelopment, the ground capacity was significantly reduced, although as much of the work as possible was carried out during the close season periods.

There is no reason whatsoever, why AFC cannot do something similar to Pittodrie. Even if the eventual capacity is somewhat reduced from the present, they won't fill the stadium anyway. Dundee Utd have managed it, so what is preventing AFC? It is a complete red herring to talk about the pitch size and 'run offs' as AFC do. If space is limited, just make the new stands steeper, as they boast they are going to do with the proposed new stadium anyway. The £30M cost of redeveloping Pittodrie is significantly less than that of the proposed stadium.

Everyone knows that this is all about Milne Homes or a similar umbrella company (not AFC) making millions of pounds from the redevelopment of Pittodrie - we are not fools! And do Aberdeen City Council really want another concert venue to rival the AECC, which is in financial trouble already and having to be bailed out as we all know?

2. Environmental:

The proposed site for the new stadium is on part of the only piece of 'green belt' land left on the South side of Aberdeen. Should the project be approved, Both AFC and ACC will be guilty of environmental vandalism of the worst kind!

3. Noise and Annoyance:

My property backs on to the rear of the Gordon Hotel on Wellington Road, which if the stadium goes ahead, will be full of fans (many drunk) on match days, as it is the only licensed premises in the locality. The previous owners of the hotel have already made a planning application to extend the premises and build a large new rear car park adjacent to my garden.

4. Access & Parking:

I am told by many AFC supporters who I know and work with, that the majority of home supporters travelling to AFC matches from out with Aberdeen City, come from the North rather than from the South. Why then force these supporters to travel right across the city from one side to the other? It makes no sense, at least not until the Western Peripheral Route is constructed and open to traffic, whenever

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

that may be. Please don't tell me there will be a 'Park and Ride' scheme - nobody uses them!

The proposed stadium can only be accessed by vehicular traffic from Wellington Road, which is already one of Aberdeen's busiest arterial routes. The section passing Loirston loch has only recently been upgraded to dual carriageway at a cost of several million pounds and now the proposal is to put traffic light junctions on the dualled section to access the stadium. Ludicrous - this was certainly not planned by anyone who has to use these roads on a regular basis. The only alternative is to access the proposed car parks via Wellington Circle past Balmoral and Makro. However, exiting via this route on match days would be a nightmare, causing huge congestion to through and local traffic negotiating the Altens Thistle roundabout.

From visiting the exhibition at the Altens Thistle Hotel, I noted that there is a planned pedestrian access to the proposed stadium from Redmoss Road. Given that AFC will doubtless charge for parking in the stadium car parks and the inevitable congestion around the ground, it is highly likely that people will park either on Redmoss Road or in other parts of the Redmoss area and walk to the stadium. I am sure that I speak for the vast majority of Redmoss residents when I say that this is totally unacceptable!

5. Future Development:

We know from the consultation exhibitions that the proposed AFC stadium is just 'the thin end of the wedge' for Loirston Loch. If the main stadium is approved, there are already draft plans for a stadium for Cove Rangers and a large housing development to the West of the AFC stadium. Of course, once the stadium is approved, the following developments have a fair greater chance of being approved too. If Cove Rangers need a new ground, build it in Cove, not on the Calder Park, unless of course they plan a name change to Redmoss Rangers?!

In summary, the local people don't want the stadium development and in my view the majority of AFC's own fans don't want it either! It won't significantly benefit the city in the longer term. It may benefit the football club in the longer term, but their chairman (or one of his companies) will make a huge financial gain as a result and it's about time that both he and the football club admitted that fact and that ACC removed their blinkers and grasped reality!

Following his address, a Member of the Sub Committee sought his views on why he thought football supporters would not use the in-house bar to which he responded that traditional football supporters did not like drinking on the stadium grounds; whether closing off Redmoss Road would help solve problems, to which

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

the response was yes, and whether the Controlled Parking Zone would be welcome without the stadium, to which he replied he had no objection if there was no cost to residents.

The next speaker was **Mrs. Moira Hay**, local resident who explained that she lived in Redmoss Road and her biggest concern was that football fans from Kincorth would come across the hill, causing disturbance to farm animals on her farm. Mrs. Hay then withdrew.

In response to questions, Mrs. Hay clarified that there was a core path from Kincorth Hill through to Redmoss Road.

The next speaker was **Mr. Alexander Elrick**, local resident who addressed the Sub Committee in the following terms:-

As a local resident in the area, I wish to register my objection to the building of the new Aberdeen Football Stadium at Loirston Loch, Wellington Road, Aberdeen. My objection is in regard to the Transport Assessment and also to the lack of amenities in the local area which will be required to cater for large gatherings of people. I believe I can offer an objective view as I have lived and travelled from Edinburgh, Fife and Moray by rail, coach and car to support Aberdeen Football Club in years gone by. I have also driven coaches/buses in Aberdeen and the surrounding area over the last 16 years.

Transport - Stadium Car Parking

I understand that only 1400 car parking spaces will be available and will be reduced to 1200 car parking spaces for Rangers and Celtic matches. A proportion of the car parking spaces will be allocated for 1650 hospitality guests occupying corporate boxes, catering for 2 - 3 parking spaces per hospitality box. Therefore, there is little or no parking arrangement for the average football supporter who travels by car. As currently 72% of 'home' supporters travel to Pittodrie by car, parking will be a requirement for those supporters visiting the new stadium.

On other occasions when the new stadium is likely to have up to 21000 people attending, such as a concert, international rugby match or international football matches, as does occur at Pittodrie Stadium, 1400 parking spaces once again will not be enough to cater for the crowd.

The industrial sites of Altens and the Gateway Business Park may be a solution for car-parking away from the residential streets of Cove, Charleston, Redmoss and Kincorth, which will undoubtedly be areas where supporters will attempt to park, with all the inconvenience to local residents and any visiting relatives and friends. Public transport in the area can also be seriously delayed because of inconsiderate

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

parking, so to state in the future development plans that parking restrictions will be determined in consultation with Aberdeen City Council prior to the opening of the stadium, without actually having worked out a plan showing the residents in the area the effect the restrictions will have on their lives for 10 months of the year, is in my opinion treating the residents with contempt. I believe Wellington Road currently an Urban Clearway from Monday to Friday between Hareness Road and Makro roundabout should be extended to include Saturdays and Sundays and to continue along Wellington Road until at least the Charleston Flyover Junction to allow travellers not visiting the stadium to pass relatively freely on their journeys.

Travel

As I stated, currently 72% of "home" supporters travel to Pittodrie by car. In an era when people will not get out of their cars to travel by public transport and with rising costs on travel by public transport, no evidence that this will change has been shown and this appears to be a flaw in the fundamental changes to travel behaviour envisaged. First Group had no buses running on New Years Day, a match day when Aberdeen hosted Dundee United. Over 12,000 fans turned out for this game, the vast majority travelling to the game by car. People will make their own choices on methods of travel.

I wish to consider the various traffic routes. Traffic getting to the stadium from the south should have little trouble arriving whether by coach or car, however traffic coming from the north, west or even east of the new stadium have only two access roads ie Wellington Road or Great Southern Road. The old Bridge of Dee is a key trouble spot with well known traffic problems at South Anderson Drive with the retail park congested at weekends and no consideration seems to have been given to the additional traffic that comes in to the city from October to December for Christmas Shopping, the same period that the football stadium will be active. In October I travelled from Hazlehead to Charleston. I got to the roundabout at Broomhill Road/Anderson Drive at 2.15pm on Saturday afternoon around the same time that the majority of supporters would be travelling to the new stadium. No home game was being played that day and yet it took 25 minutes to travel from Broomhill Road to the roundabout at the Bridge of Dee. I can only envisage the delays that will be likely in that area if the Stadium development is approved.

Closer to the new stadium the Makro store on Wellington Circle will also be extremely busy during the same Christmas Shopping Period giving additional traffic and parking problems in the area close to the access area to the new stadium.

The Charleston flyover is an accident black spot, particularly in the darker days of winter. The immediate turnoff to the left of the flyover on to the old A92 (by Fedex) leading to Redmass Road and the rear of the new stadium is an accident problem

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

area as cars come off the flyover from the south and cut across vehicles that have come up the slip road from the Bridge of Dee.

If there is an accident at the Charleston flyover, and a diversion is required, traffic from the south would likely be routed in the first instance along the A90 to the Bridge of Dee and then via West Tullos to the Stadium. This would cause even further traffic chaos at the Bridge of Dee.

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) appears to be a significant change to the transport plan if it ever gets off the ground. However, the area of the Charleston flyover will remain a problem area for traffic to the stadium as travellers from the North and West may use it, but they will link with the travellers from the South and the city supporters who will still be travelling via the Bridge of Dee and who are not affected by the AWPR. All will join Wellington Road at Charleston, so making a three way junction, where they will also likely meet queuing traffic going to the stadium.

Take two other routes. Travelling from King George VI Bridge via West Tullos Road and also city centre traffic coming via Queen Elizabeth II Bridge via Wellington Road (ie Nigg Brae), both will join at a bottleneck at Hareness Road Roundabout and from there to the stadium more traffic congestion can be expected. The impact with all the additional traffic will seriously inconvenience residents living in the area who wish to travel to/from the city centre, or other parts of the city, whether by car or by public transport, due to the traffic congestion in the area. Public transport users will be inconvenienced with overcrowded buses and rowdy fans. Segregation of fans on public transport would be required for those visiting fans arriving at the Railway Station and travelling to the game, as well as away team supporters who live within the city. Without segregation trouble can easily break out anywhere, as was experienced at the Gordon Hotel after an Aberdeen/Celtic match as recently as I believe, the year 2009. Any outbreak of trouble is more than likely to affect the innocent local residents in the area when it occurs.

With an additional 3000 or so homes being built on either side of Wellington Road by Scotia and Stewart Mime Homes in the West Cove and Redmoss Areas, additional traffic from those homes also requires to be brought into the equation when considering future traffic trends. The average home in the Cove Area appears to have at least 2 cars per household, therefore an additional 6000 cars could be anticipated within the area of the new build homes.

For future developments in the Cove area, the Local Plan proposes a Rail Station in Cove. If this is the case then football supporters will be walking through the housing estates of Altens, Cove and Charleston to reach the new stadium.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

Currently at Pittodrie, strong policing of visiting supporters being escorted from the Joint Railway Station to the football ground, segregating them from home supporters has been successful. It is not that long ago away supporters walked along King Street smashing windows etc and business's having to board up premises until the games were over. These lessons must be remembered if a railhead is to be built at Cove or disgruntled away supporters could cause a great deal of damage to houses and other properties in the area.

Local Amenities

A great number of travelling supporters who may have been on the road for up to 4 hours will require on arrival, the use of local amenities whether these be restaurants, fast food outlets, public houses and of course toilet facilities. In the area around the planned stadium there are few facilities of this nature and certainly not enough to cater for a large football crowd or concert audience.

Alternatives

From a travel perspective, Pittodrie Stadium is like a hub. Traffic comes in from the North along King Street or the Beach Promenade; from the West along various routes such as Great Northern Road, Clifton Road, Cairncry Road, Lang Stracht, Queen's Road, North Deeside Road/ Great Western Road, Garthdee/Broomhill Road, then from the south along Great Southern Road and Wellington Road, splitting traffic throughout the city, in comparison to the new stadium development with only two main access roads linking on Wellington Road. Parking is also available near Pittodrie along the Beach Promenade and City Centre parking areas from where people do walk to the stadium.

The city centre has an abundance of amenities required for all supporters, ie restaurants, fast food outlets, public houses, toilet facilities and a public transport service which is already established and runs from all areas around the city into the centre.

On a totally separate issue, I do have some concerns with regard to the area surrounding the Loch of Loirston. I am one who daily walks my dog around the Cove and Kincorth Hill Areas. The one thing which is of concern is the amount of water always lying on paths or in fields and never draining away. I know of two houses which are relatively close to the Loch and which have both suffered from subsidence. With such a large development as the AFC Stadium being proposed close to the Loch, if subsidence is an issue in the area, has a risk assessment been carried out regarding future safety of a capacity crowd within the stadium.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I do not believe the Loirston site to be the appropriate site from either a travel or local amenities perspective. Commercial Quay to be the hub for public

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

transport to the Stadium in an area off Market Street which became a traffic disaster area during the period prior to and up to Christmas with traffic attempting to get into the Union Square parking area hardly appears to be an ideal new hub for travel to the stadium. A football stadium in a venue near to the current Pittodrie Stadium would be more advantageous and is the stronger option when comparing travel requirements and amenity availability.

There are too many uncertainties in the Loirston travel plan which relies on fundamental and yet unproven changes in travel behaviour and I believe the residents of Cove will be greatly inconvenienced with parking restrictions and travel congestion and for those reasons I am opposed to the AFC Development at Loirston.

There were no questions for Mr. Elrick.

Mr. Gene Abel, local resident was next to address the Sub Committee wherein he explained that he had been a resident in the area since 1971. He expressed his view that most objectors to the proposal having seen plans submitted for the Pittodrie site assumed that a decision on the new stadium had already been taken, therefore the total number of objectors recorded was not an accurate reflection of the total number of objectors to the stadium. He stated his view that the area had become a dumping ground for various projects over the years and expressed his disbelief at wildlife being destroyed to allow a stadium in its place. He referred to the types of geese in the area. He believed that with the building of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route the stadium would be better positioned nearer to the road. He appealed to the Sub Committee to consider that decisions taken in respect of the application would affect the lives of the residents in the area and gave his opinion that the younger generation need to see wildlife. He referred to Loirston Park as being suitable for families and provided the example of the lady who donated the Duthie Park to the city, referring to her foresight in doing so. He concluded by expressing his strong objection to the proposal and urged the Sub Committee to reflect on the proposal before it was too late to change after the stadium was built.

Mr. Abel was asked the justification for his statement that the area was used as a dumping ground for planning issues and that people didn't engage because the Council didn't listen to them when he cited examples of developments not progressed; if the developments were to go ahead, what would make it less of an evil, to which he replied that the Council were contravening the rules to even be considering the proposal at that. It is even worse that Councillors were not listening to what residents were saying. In responding to a question about raising awareness of the development in the community, he stated that people had seen

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

the application submitted for Pittodrie and were of the view that it would be progressed regardless of what they said, therefore they had not objected.

Next to address the Sub Committee were **Mr. Carlo Crolla** and **Ms. Natasha Crolla**. Mr. Carlo Crolla, local resident commenced by advising that he agreed with the comments made by both Nigg Community Council and Cove Community Council and stated that he had the same concerns. With reference to the size and location of the stadium, he expressed his concern regarding noise levels during a football match and during concerts. He referred to an Elton John concert held at Pittodrie (June 2004) which could be heard in Cove. He indicated that he chose to live in the area which was near both town and the country. However, his choice would be taken away by the proposed application. Mr. Crolla agreed with the comments made by Mr. Abel in relation to ongoing issues and projects for the area. He concluded by expressing his concern that the stadium proposal would alter the character of the area and was therefore undesirable.

Ms. Natasha Crolla continued by expressing her view that the proposed stadium would ruin greenbelt and questioned why the proposal could not be built on brownfield land. She highlighted transportation problems and stated that the transport details had not yet been thought through, which should be the case prior to any application being decided. She questioned the evidence that Scottish National Heritage had no objections to the application and concluded by stating that the benefit would mainly be to the developer.

In response, Mr. Prentice clarified that each organisation listed in the report had been consulted in August, 2010, and their responses were available for public inspection. It was also clarified that the Council as planning authority can impose conditions on any planning application.

Ms. Crolla was asked whether or not the Balmoral Group had a junk yard, to which she responded that it was not a tidy operation.

Mrs. June Wemyss, local resident, was next to address the Sub Committee. She expressed her support for comments previously raised regarding the area for the proposed development being a greenbelt site with a wealth of wildlife including young deer who appeared in her front garden during December when there was an abundance of snow. She expressed her view that she would like to keep the area as it was and to continue enjoying the wildlife.

In relation to traffic issues, she referred to the traffic chaos which would be created along Wellington Road and questioned whether the bus service would improve. She also referred to the impact of the proposal on the railway station and the bus station at Guild Street. It was her view that traffic congestion would contribute to

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

the traffic bottlenecks at the Bridge of Dee and at the Haudagain roundabout, and stated that there would be parking problems for residents, particularly if a controlled parking zone was in place. In addition, the stadium should remain at the Beach, there being no benefits of a move from Pittodrie to the Loirston site. There was a lack of concern for residents in the area for the stadium to be lit up with a red light at night and also to the creation of noise pollution. Further, was the issue of the stadium competing with the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre. She concluded by referring to the proposal's carbon footprint and environmental pollution and highlighted her concern regarding the health and safety risk of exiting onto Wellington Road in an emergency situation.

There were no questions for Mrs. Wemyss.

Next to address the Sub Committee was **Mr. James Brownhill**, who commenced his presentation by advising of his family background in the area and as a football supporter and claimed that he represented the whole population of Aberdeen.

He stated the reasons for opposing the proposal, advising that the area was greenbelt as stated in the existing Local Development Plan. This should drive the land use and the application was, in his view, premature in light of the consultation currently on the developing Local Development Plan. He referred to the feasibility study wherein there was reference to the capital costs of a stadium at Kings Links and at Loirston. In referring to the transport assessment and the extended road network, he suggested that the modelling was insufficient and shows traffic delays of only ten minutes at Bridge of Dee. He questioned the issues contained within the traffic modelling in that the shift of the mode of transport was a reversal of the current situation and suggested there were gaps in the transport assessment.

In referring to the environmental assessment, he expressed surprise that otters had not been mentioned earlier and questioned the detail concerning the number of birds around the loch contained within that statement.

Mr. Brownhill advised that he attended the site visit to the loch prior to the hearing and in relation to the lie of the land, the base site needed 3.5m of landfill to bring the height up to the level of the loch. The stadium would be half the height of St. Nicholas House and the proposed mitigation measures of planting 400 trees in addition to a large number of bushes would not hide the stadium.

He referred to a survey undertaken in 2009 of Aberdeen Football Club fans and gave statistics on the fans' views on a preferred site of a stadium. He also provided statistics regarding transport usage.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE
14 January, 2011

In referring to the community meeting held last night, he advised that no one attending supported the proposal. He concluded by showing various pictures of the loch and the surrounding areas and expressed his view that any development should enhance the natural aspects in the area. He hoped that the Council would make the right decision and allow the sun to continue setting over the loch.

Mr. Brown was asked to clarify how many of the photos he had shown were of the actual development site, rather than the loch, to which the response was that most were taken from the northern end of the loch; and how this would change things for ospreys and otters.

There being no further presentations to be made to the Sub Committee, the Convener invited anyone present who had not previously spoken to come forward if they felt that a concern which they had or a matter which they felt should be aired had not been raised. There being no other speakers, the Convener thanked everyone for their contributions and for raising the points made. She appreciated that many of the speakers were not used to addressing the Sub Committee and indicated her thanks for their efforts in providing their views today.

She advised that the next step in the process was for officers to fully assess the merits of the proposal taking into account all the written representations and the issues raised today.

Under new legislation introduced in 2009 as part of the Scottish Government's Modernisation of the Planning System, a planning application that has been subject to a predetermination hearing required to be determined by the full Council. Officers would endeavour to complete their assessment and report to the Council meeting in February, 2011.

Elected Members were reminded not to express opinions on the proposal prior to the application being referred to Council, at which, a final decision on the application would be made.

It was clarified that submissions for consultees could still be contributed prior to the stage where a decision would be taken on the application.

- **KATHARINE DEAN, Convener**.

Exempt information as described in paragraph(s) 9 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank