

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

Report Name	Scottish Government Additional Investment Update
Lead Officer	Adam Priestley
Report Authors	Rebecca Long
Date of Report	29 April 2024
Governance	Additional Investment Minute of Understanding

1: Purpose of the Report

To update the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee on the progress of projects being taken forward through the additional Scottish Government investment announced alongside the Aberdeen City Region Deal. This report covers progress on the A90/A937 Laurencekirk Junction Improvement Scheme.

2: Recommendations for Action

To note the update in the report.

3: Summary of Key Information

A90/A937 Laurencekirk Junction Improvement Scheme

Transport Scotland appointed design consultants (AMEY) for the A90/A937 Laurencekirk Junction Improvement scheme in September 2016 to support progress of the design development and assessment phases based on the standards of good practice set by the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

The options from the DMRB Stage 2 assessment process were presented to the public at an exhibition in October 2017 with the preferred option itself announced in July 2018 at a series of public exhibitions. The preferred option consists of a south grade-separated junction with a full diamond layout and bridge over the A90 together with retention of the existing central reserve gaps at the Centre (B9120) and North (A937) junctions.

The DMRB Stage 3 detailed development and assessment of the preferred option was completed with the culmination in the publication of the draft Orders and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report on 19 December 2019. A public exhibition was held on 10 January 2020 to allow local communities and road users to view and comment on proposals for the scheme. The statutory

3: Summary of Key Information

consultation period closed on 14 February 2020. Three statutory objections were received from landowners directly affected by the Compulsory Purchase Order. The substance of these objections was primarily in relation to loss of land and access arrangements. Aberdeenshire Council as local Roads Authority also lodged a statutory objection on the basis that the stopping up of Oatyhill Junction to the southern end of the Scheme would leave residents with a single point of access over the Oatyhill Rail bridge which is in poor repair.

Transport Scotland has continued to work with objectors to the scheme to resolve concerns where possible. To date this has resulted in the successful withdrawal of three objections, including Aberdeenshire Council's, and we continue to make positive progress with the one remaining objection from a landowner.

Transport Scotland reached a formal agreement with Aberdeenshire Council on 20 February 2024 regarding funding and provision of a new bridge at Oatyhill, enabling withdrawal of their objection.

The decision of Aberdeenshire council to close Oatyhill Bridge to vehicular traffic following publication of draft Orders directly impacts on the deliverability of the scheme as currently being promoted. Further Statutory Process will be required in order to progress the new bridge solution at Oatyhill. This is because additional land is required to deliver the new bridge solution which is outwith the extents of land identified for the originally promoted scheme. Transport Scotland will work with directly affected parties to reduce the likelihood of objections being received as far as possible during the design development and promotion of the new bridge providing access to Oatyhill.

Should we be unsuccessful in removing all objections, a public local inquiry may be required. As with all trunk road projects this is the appropriate forum for considering objections received and not withdrawn.

Construction of the scheme itself can only commence if the scheme is approved under the relevant statutory procedures and thereafter a timetable for its progress can be set.

A Partnership Group with Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils, along with Nestrans has been set up to support this scheme by providing a cohesive policy and investment approach which will help to maximise the benefits of the investment. Consultation with the group has been maintained throughout the scheme development stages, with further engagement with the Group planned as part of the ongoing scheme development.