

# ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee
<b>DATE</b>	14 February 2025
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour – Progress Report
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<b>REPORT DATE</b>	03 February 2025

<b>1:</b>	<b>Purpose of the Report</b>
<p>At the Aberdeen City Region Deal Joint Committee of 8 September 2023 the committee instructed:</p> <p>i. <i>that regular update reports be provided in respect of the timescales and project finance costs to each future meeting of the Joint Committee;</i></p> <p>The purpose of this report is to update the Joint Committee on timescales and the project finance costs.</p>	

<b>2:</b>	<b>Recommendations for Action</b>
<p>i. Note the ongoing discussions with both Governments with regard to the Outline Business Case.</p> <p>ii. Note the progress of the scheme with regard to the ongoing detailed design work, Planning Application, and the progression of the Compulsory Purchase Order.</p> <p>iii. Instruct the Chief Officer - Operations, Aberdeen City Council, to progress all necessary consultations and traffic orders required for the implementation of a width restriction on St Fitticks Road.</p>	

- i. Following consideration by the Aberdeen City Region Deal (ACRD) Joint Committee the Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 3 Scheme Assessment and Updated Outline Business Case were submitted to the governments. The OBC has subsequently been updated and reissued to the Governments for their approval. A copy of the Updated OBC will be circulated to the ACRD Joint Committee once agreed by Governments.
- ii. The detailed design for the project continues to progress with the second phase alignment design, fencing, road restraint systems, earthworks, pavement, traffic signs & road markings, and street lighting packages all completed. Final stage design packages are currently being prepared.
- iii. The contract documents for the main works contract are currently being developed, including specification, Site Information and Bill of Quantities.

#### Structures Package

- iv. Additional ground investigation work has been completed on site, this has allowed our technical advisors to adjust the structural foundation of the bridge and update the Structures Approval in Principle package.

#### Planning Application

- v. A planning application for the project was submitted to Aberdeen City Council on 20 May, this application was subsequently validated on Monday 27 May 2024. Nine consultees raised feedback on the submission with one further letter of support. Further documentation has since been submitted and subsequently responded to the consultees for further feedback. A decision on the planning application is expected before 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

#### Compulsory Purchase Order

- vi. As previously advised to the Committee, notice was served for The Aberdeen City Council (Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road) Compulsory Purchase Order 2024 and those with an interest in the affected land were given until 10 July 2024 to submit objections to the Scottish Ministers. Two objections were received. A Reporter has now been appointed by the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division and dates have been set for a Preliminary Examination Meeting and Oral submissions in April.
- vii. Since the last Joint Committee in November 2024, following discussions an agreement has been reached with one objector and they have formally withdrawn their objection. Discussions are now well advanced with

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representatives acting on behalf of the remaining objector, with a draft agreement now in circulation. Should agreement be reached, the associated formal withdrawal of objection will remove the requirement for the inquiry process to proceed.

- viii. One plot within the Compulsory Purchase Order was registered to a company which has been dissolved, discussions are ongoing with the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer to confirm the bona vacantia (BV) status of the property. If confirmed the plot of land will fall to the Crown, at which point agreement for the acquisition of the land can progress.

#### Procurement

- ix. Aberdeen City and Shire Central Procurement Unit has progressed the adoption process to allow Aberdeen City Council to utilise the Scottish Government's National Construction Framework which has recently been established. It is intended that an Expression of Interest (EOI) will be submitted to the suppliers/ contractors included within Lot 2 of this framework.
- x. Upon confirmation of the acceptance of the Outline Business Case and the necessary governance approvals, the reallocation of the Strategic Transport Appraisal funds must be completed before the commencement of the main works procurement.

#### Constructability

- xi. At its meeting of 2 June 2023, the Joint Committee noted a progress report on the Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road project. In addition to agreeing the recommendations of the report, the minute of the meeting recorded "*There was also discussion of the buildability of the project and the need to ensure that access was maintained to surrounding roads and infrastructure during the build to ensure the minimum of disruption to local residents and businesses.*"
- xii. A Constructability and Phasing assessment has been undertaken, this assessment considered the construction phases of the project, how access can be maintained to properties and whether roads can be kept open whilst maintaining appropriate working space to ensure the health and safety of construction workers, road users and users of the adjacent sites.
- xiii. The high-level construction phasing approach is based on three categories of works areas.

#### **Offline Construction;**

- activities outwith the existing carriageway.

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- activities can be undertaken with a limited impact on existing road network.

**Online Construction;**

- activities within the existing carriageway which do not require significant change in the existing ground level.
- activities will require significant traffic management to construct these works.

**Tie-in Construction;**

- activities within the existing carriageway which require a change to existing ground levels to construct the works.
- The activities will require significant traffic management, temporary diversions and road closures.

xiv. The key activities associated with each of these works areas have been considered, including temporary traffic management opportunities available and the estimated durations to undertake these activities given the differing traffic management options.

xv. Hareness Road as key route through the Altens Industrial Estate, with two-way Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in the order of 10,000 vehicles per day. There are multiple direct accesses to premises off Hareness Road, and given the need to undertake online works and the availability of alternative diversion routes, a one-way restriction is suited to this location with limited disruption to premises or the traveling public.

xvi. Coast Road with a 2-way AADT of just over 5000 vehicles per day, has a number of different areas depending on whether the works are online, offline or as tie-ins. There are a low number of access along its length all associated with industrial, commercial and agricultural uses and as such the traffic management opportunities are greater with road closure, one-way restriction, or two-way shuttle working. It should be noted that the nature of works to replace the East Tullos Burn culvert, temporary diversion road construction and some tie-ins mean the closure of Coast Road cannot be avoided, however, options to limit the total duration of any closures have been considered.

xvii. An 8 – 12 month full closure of Coast Road gives the greatest opportunity for the contractor to undertake multiple work areas simultaneously, however any closure must also consider the need to maintain access to Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works, Port of Aberdeen sites at South Harbour and Greg Ness, Coastguard Station, the development of the Ness Farm Landfill Site/ ACCBP Hydrogen Hub/ Solar Farm, Ness Gully Treatment Facility, Suez/ ACC

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Recycling depot. However, a full closure has the greatest disruption to routing of vehicles in the area.

- xviii. Operating a one-way restriction on Coast Road requires a temporary diversion route around the main structure works area. Once constructed a one-way system northbound would generally allow the free flow of traffic in a northbound direction for the duration of the works, whilst maintaining access to all the adjacent sites. This would cause some disruption to the routing of vehicles.
- xix. The third option considered was the use of temporary traffic lights, this would continue the current traffic signal shuttle working operation on Coast Road. However, the maximum permitted length of temporary lights is 300m, limiting the length of construction activity that can occur before the traffic management can switch sides or length of carriageway. This extends the duration of works, and disrupts journey times, there are also limitations on the proximity of sets of shuttle working on a length of road, meaning that the temporary lights could not be used close to the existing lights or temporary lights for the structure work area. Shuttle working would introduce journey time delays to the network which may result in vehicles rerouting to avoid the area.
- xx. Programmes have been developed to understand the implications of the 3 traffic management scenarios. The total construction duration for a full closure is estimated at 82 weeks, similarly a one-way restriction results in a construction programme of 83 weeks, however shuttle working extends the construction duration to 104 weeks.
- xxi. The table below summarises the benefits of each option.

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Disruption</b>	<b>Safety</b>
(i) Full Closure	Shorter Construction Programme	Cost Savings due to shorter Construction Programme	Access still to be maintained for ETZ, Scottish Water, BP & Coastguard	<b>Increased HGV traffic through Torry</b>	Removal of live traffic leads to significantly increased safety
(ii) 1 Way Operation	Shorter Construction Programme	Cost Savings due to shorter Construction Programme	Access still to be maintained for ETZ, Scottish Water, BP & Coastguard	Increased HGV traffic through Torry <i>(northbound traffic)</i>	Increased safety risk due to reduced TM changes and reduced traffic flow.
(iii) Shuttle Working	<b>Increased construction duration due to significant TM movements / changes</b>	<b>Increased cost due to longer programme. Increased TM costs</b>	Access still to be maintained for ETZ, Scottish Water, BP & Coastguard	Traffic delays due to signals, potential traffic rerouting.	<b>Live traffic risk adjacent to works areas. Frequent changes in TM layout required</b>

- xxii. Officers consider that the full closure allows the project to be delivered in the shortest possible time, for the lowest cost, with the greatest opportunity to maximise safe working areas and contractor productivity. However, recognising the potential impact on the surrounding communities, and the need to maintain access to the adjacent properties, there may be benefitted to including a contract restriction. Whilst any restriction might evolve during the procurement process an initial constraint could state that the maximum duration for road closures during the contract will be [20] weeks however vehicular traffic cannot be restricted in a northbound direction for periods of longer than 5 weeks per closure. Further requirements will include the need to maintain monthly stakeholder engagement meetings throughout the duration of the contract.

### **Permanent Traffic Management**

- xxiii. At its meeting of 9 February 2024 the Joint Committee agreed to *“Instruct the Chief Officer – Capital, Aberdeen City Council, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services, to consider the viability of further restricting access by Heavy Good Vehicles to Torry and Cove via the Coast Road and bring a report to the Joint Committee on any proposals.”*
- xxiv. Furthermore, as part of the public engagement exercises previously undertaken on the project, the issue of existing nuisance HGV traffic was regularly raised. Concerns were also expressed that the new improvements to the road may increase the routing of HGVs through the communities of Cove and Torry. An Automatic Number Plate Recognition ANPR traffic survey was undertaken throughout the area over Summer 2024. Attached Appendix A is a copy of a report outlining the Permanent Traffic Management Proposals developed following analysis of the survey data.
- xxv. The report identifies five key HGV movements in the area and outlines the average number of HGV trips doing these movements per day-
- Movement 1: Coast Road as a through route via Torry (43 HGVs)
  - Movement 2: Coast Road as a through route via Cove (7 HGVs)
  - Movement 3: Accessing/ egressing ASH/ Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works via Torry (52 HGVs)
  - Movement 4: Accessing/ egressing ASH/ Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works via Cove (10 HGVs)
  - Movement 5: Accessing/ egressing ASH Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works via Hareness Road (83 HGVs)

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- xxvi. The surveys do indicate that there are HGV movements which currently utilising the Coast Road as a through route via the residential communities of Torry and Cove. Furthermore, there are similar numbers of HGVs accessing the South Harbour and the Nigg Waste Water Treatment Works via Torry rather than the preferred route of Hareness Road.
- xxvii. In order to prevent unnecessary HGV routeing through the residential community of Torry, whilst maintaining bus access to the South Harbour, it is considered appropriate to propose the introduction of a width restriction on St Fitticks Road with an exemption for buses. This would prevent the use of Coast Road as a through route via Torry, reinforce the requirement for HGVs accessing South Harbour to utilise the new road improvements.
- xxviii. The survey results indicates that the number of HGVs routeing through Cove is relatively low. With the reprioritisation of the Hareness Road/ Coast Road junction and the tightening of the Coast Road junction geometry, it is expected that the number of HGVs is likely to reduce without the need for further restriction, as such no further action is suggested at this time.

**Programme and Milestones**

- xxix. As outlined above some of the design, planning, land acquisition and Governance/ Business Case elements are subject to delay. The original programme was submitted on a best case/ no float, scenario and as such these delays contribute to overall project delay. This is outlined in the table below.

<b>Project Milestones</b>	<b>Planned Date</b>	<b>Revised Date</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Supplier Selection – Complete SPD	11/09/2024	NA	Alternative procurement route being progressed.
Complete Detailed Design	01/11/2024	28/02/2025	The identification of a partially collapsed culvert resulted in the need to alter the drainage strategy and design, this required an update to planning documentation and has delayed the finalisation some design elements.
Post Design Public Exhibition	01/11/2024	17/03/2025	The timing of exhibition to be closer to start of Invitation to Tender which is delayed due to Governance / STA funding agreement.
Structure – Technical Approval (ACC and Network Rail)	07/11/2024	28/02/2025	Further Ground Investigation (GI) information was needed to finalise the design of the bridge foundation, arranging and undertaking this GI (November/ December) delayed the

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			finalisation of Structural Design Package.
Issue of Invitation to Tender	13/01/2025	31/03/2025	The Governance process for the reallocation of funding from STA to ASHLR and the conclusion of OBC has delayed the issue of the ITT.
Conclusion of statutory processes	20/12/2024	14/02/2025	Planning Permission delayed due to drainage considerations, due imminently.
Conclusion of CPO/ Entry to land	NEW	14/07/2025	Objections received have delayed land acquisition. Discussions are progressing well and the new date is based on agreement with final objector being reached, no legal challenge to CPO, and no objection to severance.
Final Business Case	01/04/2025	08/08/2025	Delay to ITT results in later procurement, delaying conclusion and confirmation of FBC.
Roads Infrastructure Construction starts	09/05/2025	22/09/2025	Timescales are based on approval of FBC, ACC governance.
Road Infrastructure Open for use	12/02/2027	05/04/2027	
Construction Completed	NEW	26/04/2027	

The critical path for the project currently relates to the approval of the governance/ change request and the approval of the OBC, this links to the start of the Invitation to Tender, approval of OBC and the construction duration. Land acquisition is not currently on the critical path however any further delay to this activity may make this part of the critical path.

**4: Finance and Risk**

- i. Ongoing global factors are having a significant impact on the supply of construction materials with associated impact on overall scheme costs, as such the Project Team will regularly review the scheme cost estimate.
- ii. Following procurement of the construction contracts the financial profile for the project will be updated and the Joint Committee will be updated as part of the regular progress updates.
- iii. Timescale risks associated with the statutory approvals and the acquisition of third-party land remain.