

# CRAIGIEBUCKLER AND SEAFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Mr Paul Williamson  
Planning Officer  
Development Management  
Planning and Sustainable Development  
Aberdeen City Council  
Business Hub 4  
Marischal College  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

[REDACTED]  
Aberdeen  
AB [REDACTED]

03 February 2015

Dear Mr Williamson,

Application Reference: 141888

Local Authority Reference: 000106607-001

Upgrade of Jessiefield junction on the A944 and construction of an all-vehicle eastern access road, footpaths and cycle paths from the A944 to the proposed OP58 Countesswells development site.

We consider that the proposed upgrade of the Jessiefield junction on the A944 and the construction of a all-vehicle eastern access road are essential to manage and facilitate the anticipated volume of traffic movements which will be generated by the 3000 homes development referred to as OP58 in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012. Furthermore, we are supportive of the Applicant's intention to incorporate footpaths and cycle paths on this proposed route.

However we are aware that, for much of its length, the proposed eastern access road would be constructed on land designated as "greenbelt" by the ALDP. Also, in order to connect with the Jessiefield junction, it passes through land to the north east of OP58, which is designated on the ALDP as OP68 - "*Network Planning Permission granted for a phased cemetery development*". The proposed access road would cut off a small triangular area of land from the 49.7 hectare (123 acres) surface area of OP68. In our opinion, the area which would be separated by the proposed connecting road is small in proportion to the area of OP68 and therefore should have little or no impact on any future cemetery development.

A section of the proposed access road will be located between 30 to 50 metres from the western boundary wall of the Garden of Remembrance associated with Aberdeen Crematorium. On Page 4 of the "Planning and Consultation Statement" the Applicant states that the noise impact of traffic on the Garden of Remembrance will be reduced by "new woodland planning extending north from Anderson Wood". The new woodland, which will be planted west of the boundary wall and the established belt of trees "will provide a natural buffer for noise and pollution". We contend that the applicant should provide a substantial temporary form of screening to protect the Garden of Remembrance from noise and pollution until the trees of the planned woodland are sufficiently mature to be fit for that purpose.

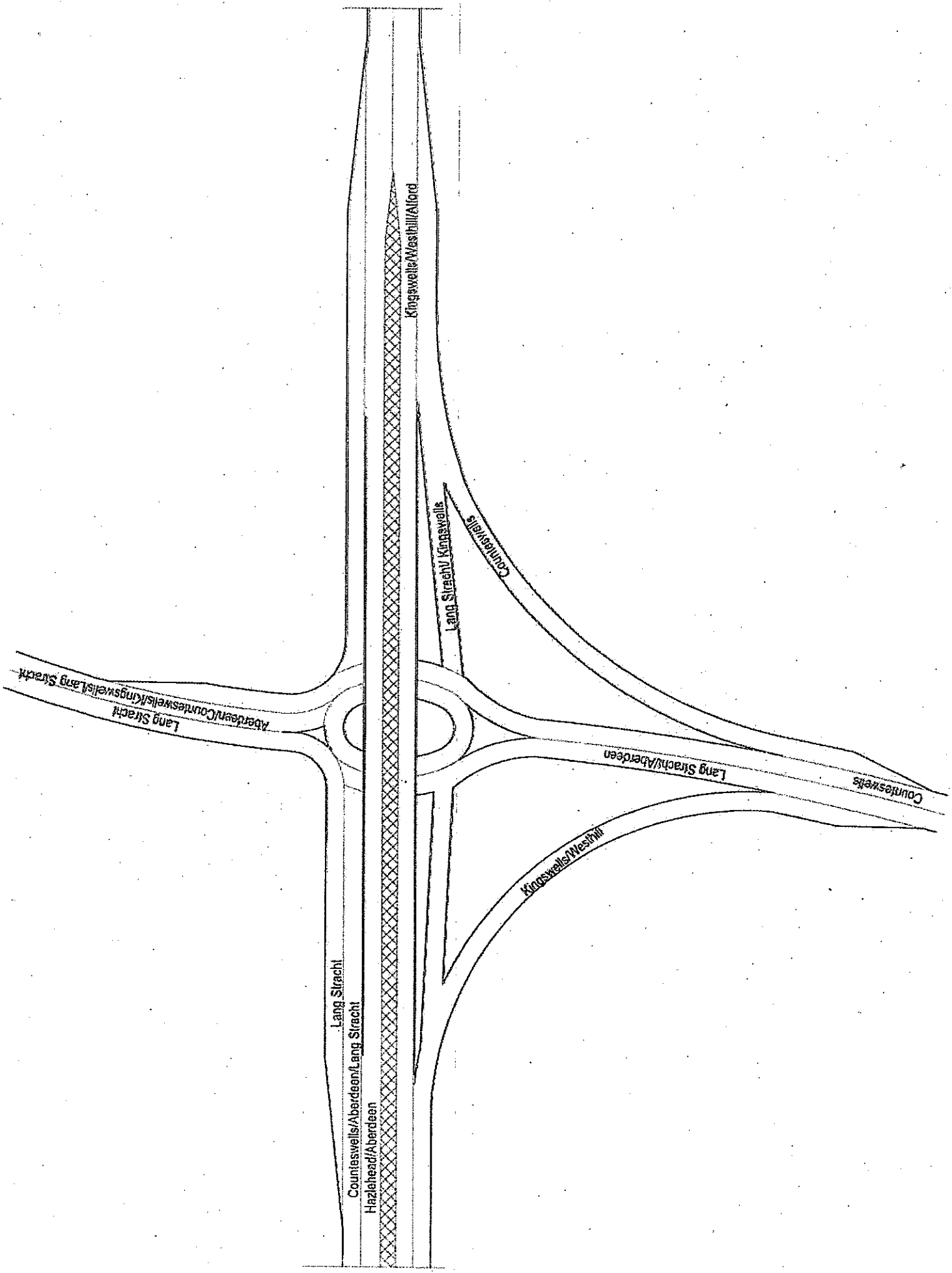
07 FEB 2015

PAJ

In our opinion, although the construction of the proposed eastern access road will result in some loss of greenbelt, we consider that the Applicant compensates in some measure for this loss by planning to include a footpath and a cycle path along its length, thus facilitating green and sustainable forms of transport. Furthermore, it is an improvement on the original application which is unacceptable because its plan is for a road that encroaches the boundary to the Garden of Remembrance thereby causing it to be the subject of a lot of public opposition.

We conclude by stating that, in our view, the proposed junction layout could further be improved by allowing an unrestricted flow of traffic along the Hazlehead to Kingswells / Westhill corridor. This would likely increase the cost of construction, but it should at least be considered as an option. It seems that, all too often, opportunities are missed to try and address the problems of road infrastructure in the City. A sketch of the suggested improvement to the layout of the Jessiefield Junction is contained in the PDF attachment which accompanies this document

Yours sincerely,  
William Sell,  
Chair



# Proposed Re-design of Roundabout at Jessiefield Existing Roundabout

## Summary

### Interested Parties

Kingswells Community Council and John Gerrie (JG)

Aberdeen City Planning Department and Paul Williamson (PW)

Aberdeen City Roads Department and Mark Wilkie (MW)

Transport Strategy and Programmes and Joanna Murray (JM)

The Heron Group as applicant at this time (HG)

### Application details

The existing roundabout at Green Hedges/Jessiefield is a roundabout serviced with a system of traffic light controls for part of each daily 24 hour period that further contains a slip road running east to west from the B9119 Hazlehead through to connect with the A944 dual carriageway towards the Kingswells roundabout.

The proposal by Heron Group is to revise that roundabout configuration to add a south connection that will service a development of some 3000 houses at Counteswells and to remove the slip road as herein explained and bring the whole under the existing system of traffic control by the lights on that "roundabout".

The layout supplied as part of the provisional initial Planning application by Heron Group shows a junction similar in design to a junction on the east edge of Westhill/Garlogie Junction governed by traffic lights and not the roundabout at Kingswells with some three lanes on each approach and all subject to a system of traffic light order.

### Comments on Application

The application by Heron Group and objections submitted by Kingswells Community Council are with the Planning Department and are not for discussion here.

### Matters Arising from the Planning Application

The following items relate to information following on from meetings with interested parties with either an interest in the Application or have inputs that affect the overall Application beyond the original KCC letter of objection.

### The Contractor submission

The initial comment on the application relates to the design of a future junction governed by traffic lights and not what appears initially as a roundabout but is in fact a crossroad. The Heron drawing TPED1004\_100 Rev A shows the existing roundabout with the proposal for a traffic light governed crossroad overmarked with the new junction giving confusion when not observed closely.

To understand the thinking behind such a junction it was necessary to speak to a number of persons with information that related to the Application.

## Planning Department

It is understood that the Planning Officer (PW) has noted and collated information submitted by a number of parties that required to be addressed and thereafter submitted to the Planning Committee initially for its July 2015 meeting now slipped to the September 2015 meeting due to unforeseen circumstances.

Beyond that now the current Planning Application 141888 may now itself be in jeopardy given an article that appeared within the local Press (Evening Express of Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015).

## Roads Department

Following discussions with (PW) and e-mail discussions with the Roads department and Mark Wilkie (MW), that Roads department is of the opinion that the future of traffic movement from the city and conversely to the city at that junction will be by the priority road A944 and not the B9119 that is the Hazlehead/Queens road. This is the Lang Stracht, and using financial resources available at the time, the development along that corridor, is slated to be those parts along the Lang Stracht at present single carriageway to be updated to dual carriageway to link up with Westburn Road and Hutcheon Street to Mounthooley.

The "lesser priority" Hazlehead road B9119 will then remain as a lesser road to the Lang Stracht.

Funding for any proposal will be subject to funds availability from the Strategic roads fund provided from developers when developments are undertaken.

## Transport Strategy & Programmes

Roads advised that the future development of the roads structure and layout was in the hands of Transport Strategy & Programmes within the Communities, Housing & Infrastructure team at Aberdeen City Council.

A meeting with a Joanna Murray (team leader) (JM) within that department provided a somewhat differing view on the future on the road network within the Aberdeen City when taking consideration of the AWPR when complete and in use.

Aberdeen City is to be served with radial roads from the City centre leading north, west, and south to link with trunk and other roads into Aberdeenshire and beyond. That will include the AWPR as a means to cross Aberdeen City without the need to use radial and other lesser roads.

The inner area of Aberdeen City on the north/south axis will be served by a new dual crossing along the approximate line of Market Street/Guild Street to Woolmanhill dual carriageway/Woolmanhill to Maberley Street and through Caroline Place to Berryden and Great Northern Road to link up with the A96 north to the AWPR and eventually to Inverness. Anderson Drive will facilitate as an inner through route between radial routes across the City and within the Inner City Masterplan until the AWPR is complete and radial routes in use thereby reducing the priority of Anderson Drive to a cross link use between the radial routes.

There is no priority on radial roads such as the Lang Stracht and Hazlehead roads. They will be considered equal roads extending west from the City.

This will be linked into the City Centre Masterplan at present under consideration.

A public statement issued states that Aberdeen is now among the most congested cities in the European Union.

### Planning Aid Scotland

1. This body recommends that an inspection of the Traffic Impact Assessment for the Application must be undertaken now
2. Consider and make additional comments to the Traffic Impact Assessment as they appear
3. Look at the Application Notice to ensure that what is proposed is clear
4. Planning Aid holds a view that the Strategic Fund would not necessarily preclude a developer from further funding a junction if the proposal lessens the junction function such as the removal of the slip road along the B9119 at present in place.

### Councillors

Note here. The Ward Councillors have been advised of all comments and approaches as a matter of interest only at this time. They have not been asked for input under a possible conflict of interest.

### Observations as collated from the above parties

In respect of planning application number 141888 submitted by the Heron Group, it has been advised by Heron and Planners that this application number is for the Heron Group only and excludes the other two developers of the Counteswells opportunity site.

During discussions with other affected Community Councils as well as other interested parties, it appears that the proposal is not entirely clear.

Therefore it is understood that the junction at Jessiefield or also known as Green Hedges is not to be a roundabout governed by traffic lights but a junction of four separate roads governed by traffic lights with three access and two egress car width carriageways at each.

The proposal is:-

1. The existing roads be realigned and removal of the slip road Hazlehead to Kingswells and stated erroneously by Roads as the lesser road (B9119).
2. Each access is upgraded to dual carriageway status at the junction traffic lights.
3. These accesses contain three carriageways entering the junction turning left, moving straight forward and turning right from the four roads north, south, east, and west.
4. There are two carriageways exiting the junction to each of the four roads.
5. Given the number of carriageways with their configuration, the whole junction is to be governed by traffic lights.
6. Should that be the case, each road will have priority in sequence.
7. There will be no roundabout at this junction.

## Consequences

The east/west slip road will disappear in favour of the new west pointing Hazlehead road as part of the junction.

Given that each road will have the same length of green light, no one road will have priority.

There will be vastly greater time between each road having a green priority resulting in each line of waiting cars extending.

Approach roads will become further congested resulting in longer major backlogs beyond those existing and possible gridlock at peak times.

The radial roads that back-up to beyond the Anderson Drive road will take longer to clear beyond peak periods into non-rush-hour quieter times.

The Government targets on pollution reduction will get far worse around residential areas rather than clear.

The Transport Assessment inspected is fragmented and difficult to find traffic flow levels before and after changes. Indeed, the Assessment could be easily manipulated to show the numbers to suit the situation. The traffic assessment fails clearly to show the additional traffic movement particularly along the Queens Road B9119 corridor that will move to and from the AWPR junction on the A944.

## Actualities

Despite collective discussion, the reality is that most of the traffic expected to use the AWPR is for a north/south movement peeling off as necessary on to radial routes. Therefore the current backups each day on the affected A944 and to a vastly greater degree on the B9119 travelling east and west will continue and if met at a traffic controlled junction at Green Hedges/Jessiefield will inevitably grow.

This application proposed is provisional.

Provisional applications cement an idea in the mind and regularly have a tendency to become the actual final decision.

This provisional application is flawed without a fuller traffic assessment.

Given that it is widely stated that junctions/roundabouts with traffic signals/lights are "failed" junctions; this proposal is completely flawed and all because developers refuse to provide additional funding to provide a junction that must equal and not reduce from the existing situation that would eat into their profits.

Finally

We must look at sustainable development of our city to provide a future of wellbeing for its residents and a quality of life moving away from illnesses related to car emissions by producing faster clearance of traffic at these bottlenecks.

The existing slip road or equivalent travelling west must remain. Another slip road travelling east would benefit and if it means a flyover then so be it.

Developers must understand and accept that they cannot get away with reducing existing infrastructure quality for profit and accept that if the only answer is to increase infrastructure to make access possible to Counteswells, that must happen.

This Report should be taken as an Appendix to the Kingswells Community Council objection.



From: Ian Cox [REDACTED]  
Sent: 05 February 2015 12:54  
To: PI; Paul Williamson  
Subject: Planning Application 141888

Application Reference:	141888
Local Authority Reference:	000106607-001
Proposal Description:	Upgrade of Jessiefield junction on the A944 and construction of all-vehicle eastern access road, footpaths and cycle paths from the A944 to the proposed CP58 Countesswells development site
Application type:	Planning Permission in Principle

Kingswells Community Council (KCC) make the following comments on the above Planning Application.

KCC attended a meeting with the Roads Dept at ACC to discuss the road network around Kingswells. KCC were advised that the two roundabouts at Kingswells and Jessiefield, the subject of this planning application, would be upgraded to suit the level of traffic planned in various developments. This would be done in one visit at each location, but not necessarily at the same time. Roads did not want to upgrade the junctions for one development and then come back and update again for the next development. All the upgrades should be addressed at the same time and in a single visit.

Roads also advised that the Kingswells Roundabout was approaching capacity as a roundabout and would only be viable if the leg to Countesswells was made a bus only access. i.e there should be no through traffic to the Countesswells development. Any traffic to the development would have to travel via the junction at Jessiefield. This arrangement would give optimum performance of the roundabout in the east-west direction and the north-south traffic could be accommodated.

The proposed Kingswells junction is contrary to the expectations of the Roads Dept, and is therefore a concern to KCC. The existing Kingswells Roundabout has volume problems and the current proposal does nothing to address the anticipated over capacity issues on that roundabout. Improvements to the southern approaches are appreciated, but they do not address issues in the other directions during the p.m. peak period when current traffic flows will increase due to the development.

Currently, the A944 has a dedicated lane which ensures that traffic travelling west from Hazelhead can do so without negotiating the Jessiefield roundabout. Although there are no drawings of the Eastern Junction for review, it is difficult to imagine a solution that can maintain this through flow of traffic without the use of a flyover. Anything less would not satisfy the criterion that the flow of traffic should be no worse than the current situation. ACC Road Dept advised that there were plans to upgrade the Jessiefield junction using funding from the Strategic Transport Fund. KCC would expect the developer and ACC to work together to provide a suitable solution to the roads issues, and to do so with one upgrade project which is partially funded by the Strategic Transport Fund and the developers involved with Countesswells and Maidenraig developments.

A solution like the intersection of the Lang Stracht with Anderson Drive would not be acceptable as there would be delays at off peak times when this junction would be free flowing. The current traffic lights at the existing roundabout are not required at off peak times. Any improvement to the junction should allow for this.


Road capacity is often only considered at peak times. Currently, there are major delays passing through the Kingswells Roundabout at peak times. There is near gridlock in the local road network. This should not be used as an

excuse by the developer to allow the provision of an inferior junction at Jessiefield. If the flow of traffic at the Kingswells roundabout were to improve in the future, then the flow at the Jessiefield junction should not then be the limiting factor in the design of the road network in that area. The provision of the AWPR should reduce the flow of traffic in the north-south direction and this should improve the efficiency of the Kingswells roundabout. It is thus essential that the design of the Jessiefield junction should not build in any limitations that the current traffic flow through the Kingswells roundabout currently imposes. The construction of the roads system around Jessiefield to Kingswells and its phasing is very important. KCC would favour a timetable that completed the Jessiefield Junction before any upgrading of the Kingswells Junction. This would ensure minimum disruption to the public as there would then be a choice of routes during construction. The developer has advised that it should be possible to complete the road works without the need to close the road. This should be a requirement written into any planning consent. Closing public roads is not acceptable to the public.

The views of KCC are:

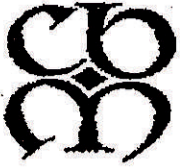
- KCC approves the alignment of the southern road approaching the Jessiefield Junction that avoids the Garden of Remembrance.
- The design of the Jessiefield junction should ensure free flow of traffic in a westerly direction, and also now provide a free flow of traffic in an easterly direction.
- KCC has provided a sample design to both ACC Planners and Heron Group as joint developer that includes a flyover at the Jessiefield Junction with roundabout below accessing all roads and has called for it or equal to be designed into the overall development the proposal is only a first pass, and could be improved by ACC Roads Dept. The network of slip roads could be reduced and simplified, and single carriageway construction could minimise costs.
- Traffic at the Jessiefield Junction should not be controlled by traffic lights at off peak times.
- KCC share ACC concerns about the capacity of the Kingswells roundabout, and would only accept the proposed north-south access road if there was no impact on the roundabout.
- Conditions should be included that ensure the road network is provided as early as possible. Certainly prior to the sale of the 300th home.
- Construction must be undertaken without the need to close any roads.
- Construction at each junction should be completed in one visit, and should include all the works required by all the interested parties in one project. This will minimise disruption to the public.
- These conditions should be included as a condition of planning consent.
- There is a current application for roads in this area and this has been approved by Planning. Approval of either or both of these applications will complicate matters. The issue of multiple applications to do essentially the same work is a concern and this issue should be addressed to ensure clarity, and certainty of what will be provided

Yours Faithfully,

  
Ian Cox

Secretary

Kingswells Community Council



**CULTS BIELDSIDE AND MILLTIMBER COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure  
Aberdeen City Council  
Business Hub 4, Marischal College  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1AB

3 February 2015

Dear Mr. Williamson,

**Planning Application 141888: Upgrade of Jessiefield junction on the A944 and construction of all-vehicle eastern access road, footpaths and cycle paths from the A944 to the proposed OP58 Countesswells development site.**

I am writing on behalf of the Cults Bieldside and Milltimber Community Council (CBMCC) to support the Planning Application 141888 for the upgrade of Jessiefield Junction and adjustment of the route of the proposed Countesswells development access road to avoid the Garden of Remembrance. We support the Heron Property Ltd proposal as it provides a better route for the access road to the Jessiefield Junction. We also support the submitted planning application 141889 for a second main all vehicle transport route from the Countesswells development to the Kingswells roundabout, with associated upgrading of the roundabout. We ask that there should be a clear condition set in the approval of the application that the road and Jessiefield junction upgrade should be available no later than when the 1000<sup>th</sup> house is sold in the Countesswells development; ideally the road should be available sooner than this.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

*Peter Roberts*

Peter Roberts  
Planning Liaison Officer

Copy to: Councillor Marie Boulton, Councillor Aileen Malone, Councillor Tauqeer Malik

PI

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From: Paul Williamson  
Sent: 04 February 2015 16:44  
To: PI  
Subject: FW: Objection to Planning Applications 141888 and 141889 - Jessiefield Junction and Kingswells Junction

Please log as a representation both **141888** and 141889

Regards

Paul

Paul Williamson  
Senior Planner (Development Management)

Planning and Sustainable Development | Communities, Housing and Infrastructure | Aberdeen City Council  
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From: Steve Crawford [mailto: ]  
Sent: 04 February 2015 16:43  
To: Paul Williamson  
Cc: Christine Dalziel  
Subject: Objection to Planning Applications 141888 and 141889 - Jessiefield Junction and Kingswells Junction

FAO Paul Williamson

Objection on behalf of Drum Kingswells Business Park Ltd to Planning Application refs: **141888** and 141889 Jessiefield and Kingswells Junctions

The proposal presented by Heron involves provision of 2 principal points of access to the Countesswells development, which would include a new signal controlled crossroads in place of the A944 / B9119 'Bellfield' roundabout, and improvements to the C128C Kingswells to Cults Road in order to allow access via the Kingswells Roundabout. This is contrary to the access strategy proposed and approved for the Countesswells PPIp (planning ref: P140438). The approved Countesswells access strategy involves one principal point of access via a new roundabout formed at the A944 / B9119 'Bellfield' junction. A secondary access would be available for buses / cyclists only via the C128C connecting with Kingswells Roundabout. Heron's proposals therefore run completely contrary to the agreed access strategy.

These proposals taken as whole are also contrary to the Council's Supplementary Guidance on Countesswells – The Countesswells Development Framework and Phase 1 Masterplan, June 2014. That policy document is quite clear that the Kingswells Roundabout junction with the new access to Countesswells is to be a public-transport only link, specifically paragraph 5.4.4 relating to Junctions to the A944. Supporting information lodged with the two applications suggest that this is a "proposed" solution and that the Masterplan is now out of date. That isn't the case. The masterplan is one of the most recent adopted by ACC as Supplementary Guidance and a key

element guiding development is the restriction of travel by private car between Countesswells and the Kingswells roundabout. Indeed, that is the basis of its allocation in the Local Development Plan, the masterplan itself and the recent PPP application and the Council's willingness to approve subject to a Section 75. It is also the basis that all other developments that impact on these junctions have been negotiating with the Council. Planning is about creating certainty and these applications run contrary to that prime principle by re-introducing uncertainty with potential significant impacts on other approved, allocated or proposed developments that access onto the A944.

Drum Kingswells Business Park Ltd, as operators of the Prime Four Business Park, therefore object to the proposals made by Heron on the basis that they are directly contradictory of the existing Development Plan. They also object on the basis that the proposals would alter approved travel plans which could be detrimental to the way that people travel to and from Prime Four Business Park. Countesswells is a major residential proposal which is being developed in close proximity to employment land at Prime Four. Without doubt commuter trips will be generated between Countesswells and Prime Four over time. By closing the C128C to general traffic and retaining it as a bus / cycle only link between Countesswells and Kingswells Roundabout the approved access strategy for Countesswells encourages future travel to Prime Four by sustainable means, rather than by car trips. Drum Kingswells Business Park Ltd approve of that as a means of encouraging sustainable travel to Prime Four and reducing solo driver car trips. The close proximity of Prime Four and Countesswells has been planned, promoted and developed through the Local Development Plan, giving consideration to Land Use Planning and the potential to encourage sustainable travel between both sites. The proposals made by Heron would be detrimental to future public transport links between the sites, which would go against transport planning policy which cannot be acceptable.

Fairhurst have reviewed the Transport Assessment prepared by Curtins and note that traffic figures that it is based upon were the ones that were agreed in connection with the recently approved Countesswell PPIP application, which made an appropriate allowance for development at Prime Four. Those traffic figures were prepared by Fairhurst who undertook the Countesswells Transport Assessment, and they were supplied to Curtins by Aberdeen City Council. Fairhurst have asked Aberdeen City Council for a copy of the traffic models submitted by Curtins in order that they can make a full appraisal of the traffic analysis, however the data has not yet been supplied to Fairhurst. We therefore reserve the right to make further comment when this vital information is made available.

The Countesswells proposal should involve closure of the C128C to general traffic. Currently the road accommodates high levels of traffic that travels between Cutis and Kingswells (around 850 - 900 vehicles in the peak hours), and closure of the C128C to general traffic would cause the existing traffic to be displaced. The AWPR will accommodate that flow in future, relieving traffic flow on roads such as the C128C which were never intended to carry the level of traffic that they currently do. The Transport Assessment prepared for Countesswells allowed for displacement of the existing C128C traffic by removing it from the traffic models. The proposal made by Heron would retain use of the C128C by all traffic, allowing it to remain as a rat run which could be used by some in preference to the AWPR which would be detrimental to the C128C. The Curtins Transport Assessment is based upon the traffic figures for Countesswells which removed the existing C128C traffic. However it would not be appropriate to remove the existing traffic from their model, as their strategy would still allow use of the C128C by existing traffic. On that basis the Curtins Transport Assessment seems to underestimate the traffic impact on Kingswells Roundabout in particular. It would also permit levels of traffic on the C128C that it was never intended to carry.

Fairhurst have reviewed the Curtins TA and note that it only provides details of the maximum Degree of Saturation (DoS) at Kingswells Roundabout and does not provide queuing or delay

data, and there is no data available for the individual approaches or internal queues either. The submitted Transport Assessment therefore lacks full details relating to traffic impacts which are required in order to fully appraise the proposal. As the Curtins model files were not made available by ACC, Fairhurst attempted to replicate the modelled scenarios. They found that the internal links on Kingswells Roundabout showed considerably higher DoS values than the Curtins TA had presented as being the maximum DoS. They also found that internal queues on the roundabout were at a level whereby in practice they would not be accommodated on the circulatory carriageway of the roundabout, and would result in queues backing up onto the main approach arms. It could lead to internal links locking up, restricting flow through the roundabout. This was not reported in the Curtins TA.

Fairhurst undertook additional scenario testing to model the effect of keeping existing C128C traffic in the model. The Curtins TA excluded all existing C128C traffic which is not reasonable given that the road would remain open to all traffic under the Heron proposal. Fairhurst found that adding in the existing C128C traffic under the 3000 house scenario would have a detrimental effect on the operation of Kingswells Roundabout, increasing queuing and delay on internal links and on the C89 approach. They concluded that the Heron proposal would be detrimental to the operation of Kingswells Roundabout, which would affect travel to and from Prime Four Business Park and general traffic on that stretch of road, including for the residents of Kingswells. The impact of traffic as you will know was a major concern to the people of Kingswells during the planning of the Prime Four development.

In summary, Drum Kingswells Business Park Ltd object to the application made by Heron on the basis that it:

1. Is directly contrary to the Development Plan, the associated Countesswells Framework and Masterplan and the PPP consent;
2. Will have a negative impact on sustainable transport links between Prime Four and Countesswells, discouraging use of public transport and cycling which is contrary to transport planning policy objectives
2. Will have a negative impact on traffic flow at Kingswells Roundabout, affecting travel to and from Prime Four Business Park and the remaining road users travelling to and from Westhill and Kingswells.
3. The application has not presented full details of traffic impacts in order to allow a proper assessment to be made

If further information is provided for these applications we reserve the right to make further comment.

Steve Crawford  
Regional Director of Planning



**Halliday Fraser Munro**  
Chartered Architects & Planning Consultants  
Garden Church, 6 Garden Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1UR

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E-mail: [sl@hfm.co.uk](mailto:sl@hfm.co.uk) or [planning@hfm.co.uk](mailto:planning@hfm.co.uk)

Planning and Sustainable Development  
Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure  
Aberdeen City Council  
Marischal College, Broad Street  
Aberdeen, AB10 1AB

Our Ref: JF/ML

13 January 2014

Your Ref:

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Sirs

**PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE P141888:  
UPGRADE OF JESSIEFIELD JUNCTION ON THE A944 CONSTRUCTION  
OF ALL-VEHICLE EASTERN ACCESS ROAD, FOOTPATHS AND  
CYCLE PATHS FROM THE A944 TO THE PROPOSED OP58  
COUNTESSWELLS DEVELOPMENT SITE**

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Glasgow  
0141 204 3838

Leeds  
0113 243 6777

Dundee  
0382 227900

Inverness  
01463 717202

Ryden LLP submit the following holding representation on behalf of our clients, Stewart Milne Group (SMG) in respect of Planning Permission in Principle application as detailed above and recently lodged with Aberdeen City Council by Heron Property Limited (HPL).

My clients are members of the Countesswells Consortium and were actively involved in the preparation of the Countesswells Development Framework, which was approved by Aberdeen City Council in June 2014 and has been subsequently adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the approved Development Plan. My Clients also submitted an application for Planning Permission in Principle (ref: P140438) on behalf of the Consortium, for the Local Development Plan site OP58 at Countesswells. This application was recently granted a willingness to approve at Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> October and a S75 legal agreement is in the final stages of being concluded.

Given the associated delays in relation to formal neighbour notification being carried out and relative information being made available in the public domain in respect of the above application, my clients hereby respectfully request that this letter be treated as a holding representation, until such time as formal neighbour notification has been carried out by the Council in accordance with

Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.

The Council's website currently indicates that the date of expiry for the period allowed for representations to P141888 is 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015. It is our understanding however, from correspondence received from Paul Williamson (Senior Planner) via email of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015, that the application requires advertisement in the local press for the purposes of neighbour notification, which will result in the associated timescales for submission of public comment being extended by 14 days from the date of publishing of the press advert. Accordingly, once this process has been undertaken and my client has had the opportunity to view all available supporting documents submitted with the above application, a further more detailed representation will be made to Aberdeen City Council.

Yours faithfully



Michael Lorimer  
MA (Hons) MRTPI  
Senior Planning Consultant

P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number: 141888		
RECEIVED 14 JAN 2015		
Nor	✓	SOV
Case Officer Initials	PAU	
Date Acknowledged	16/01/2015	



Mr Paul Williamson  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Sustainable Development  
Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure  
Aberdeen City Council  
Marischal College, Broad Street  
Aberdeen, AB10 1AB

Our Ref: JF/ML

4<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Your Ref:

Email: 

Dear Sir

**REPRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF STEWART MILNE GROUP & IDJ PROPERTIES  
PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE (141888):  
UPGRADE OF JESSIEFIELD JUNCTION ON THE A944 CONSTRUCTION  
OF ALL-VEHICLE EASTERN ACCESS ROAD, FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE  
PATHS FROM THE A944 TO THE PROPOSED OP58 COUNTESSWELLS  
DEVELOPMENT SITE, AND  
PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE (141889):  
UPGRADE OF KINGSWELLS JUNCTION ON THE A944 CONSTRUCTION  
OF ALL-VEHICLE WESTERN ACCESS ROAD, FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE  
PATHS FROM THE A944 TO THE PROPOSED OP58 COUNTESSWELLS  
DEVELOPMENT SITE**

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Ryden LLP submit the following representation on behalf of Countesswells Consortium members Stewart Milne Group (SMG) and Ian Suttie (trading as IDJ Properties (IDJ)), in respect of the applications for Planning Permission in Principle as detailed above, recently lodged with Aberdeen City Council by Heron Property Limited (HPL). This follows on from our previous holding representations dated 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 submitted in respect of the same applications.

#### Separation of applications

Although HPL have made two separate applications, they form a single access strategy for the Countesswells Development. They are therefore inextricably linked and each application needs to be considered on that basis.

### **Insufficient Information**

To date not all of the supporting information for the applications has been made publicly available. The supporting Transportation Assessment (TA) carried out by Curtins Consulting submitted in respect of both applications is incomplete. It only provides "high-level" information in relation to the performance of the access junctions, with no information on predicted queues, which are particularly crucial at the signalised Kingswells Roundabout. Without details of the full outputs, it is not possible to comment fully on the results presented within the submitted TA. Our Clients have requested detailed modelling analysis outputs, currently missing from the TA, both from Aberdeen City Council and also from Curtins, however these have yet to be made available.

On the basis of the information available, our Clients and their appointed traffic engineers have serious reservations regarding the access strategy proposed by HPL and its ability to provide a satisfactory access to the Countesswells new community of 3000 dwellings, business, education and community uses, whilst ensuring no net detriment to the existing road network. Our Clients believe that the Council could refuse the application due to insufficient information being provided.

Notwithstanding our comments above, our Clients wish to object to the applications on the grounds set out in detail below.

Our Clients reserve the right to provide further detailed representations upon such time as all supporting information has been made available in the public domain.

### **Grounds for Objection**

#### **Background to Countesswells Access Strategy**

On 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014 Aberdeen City Council granted a willingness to approve Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) application (ref: 140438) for the Local Development Plan site OP58 at Countesswells. The PPiP application was submitted on behalf of the Countesswells Consortium in accordance with the approved Countesswells Development Framework (CDF) which was adopted as Supplementary Guidance by Aberdeen City Council in June 2014 and therefore forms part of the approved Development Plan.

A Section 75 legal agreement is in the final stages of being drafted and is expected to be concluded imminently, thereby allowing the associated PPiP consent (ref: 140438) to be issued. The Council's "willingness to approve" the PPiP application subject to the conclusion of the S75 legal agreement, is a material consideration in the determination of the applications lodged by HPL.

The CDF and Countesswells PPIp application (ref: 140438) are based on robust and accurate traffic assessments carried out by engineering consultancy Fairhurst. These detailed assessments have been subject to substantial scrutiny and collaborative working with Aberdeen City Council (ACC) Roads Service to reach an agreed access strategy for the allocated OP58 Countesswells site. The current Countesswells access strategy evolved through extensive consultation with ACC to provide one principal point of access at the A944 / B9119 Jessiefield junction with a secondary access connecting with Kingswells Roundabout as a pedestrian/cycle and bus only link. The aim of this strategy was twofold, firstly to encourage trips between the new settlement at Countesswells and the significant employment land at Kingswells and Westhill to be made by sustainable transport modes and secondly to discourage the use of the existing Kirk Brae and Blacktop roads by significant levels of traffic in the future. It therefore provides the optimum solution to maintain existing traffic flows thereby ensuring no net detriment on the surrounding road network. This strategy has been accepted by the Council's Roads and Planning Services and subsequently agreed by Members at the Full Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

Accordingly, our Clients express concern that the two PPIp applications (141888 & 141889) submitted by HPL which propose two all-vehicle accesses into the Countesswells site, undermine these principles and could therefore be considered contrary to the sustainable transport objectives of the Countesswells development. This is clearly contrary to the access strategy approved within the CDF and also the PPIp application (ref: 140438) which has been rigorously tested and agreed with the Council.

Furthermore and as highlighted above, the two HPL applications are inextricably linked, as they seek the principle of a revised access strategy, therefore it is somewhat surprising that they have been submitted separately, as one cannot be granted consent in the absence of the other.

#### **1. Application (P141889) Western Access and Kingswells Junction**

##### All Vehicle Access

Our Clients object to the proposals to have the western access connecting Kirk Brae with the Kingswells Roundabout as an all-vehicle access road. Such a proposal is clearly contrary to the agreed access strategy contained within the approved CDF and the willingness to approve the Countesswells PPIp application (ref: 140438).

Policy NE2 – Green Belt of the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan (LDP) allows for development of roads within the Green Belt, provided they are appropriately masterplanned and essential to the delivery of identified housing allocations. HPL application (ref:141889) deviates from the access strategy contained within the adopted CDF.

The proposed access has not been subject to an appropriate and agreed Masterplan process. Furthermore the HPL access is not required or essential for the delivery of the identified housing allocation as there is already a willingness to approve an alternative access arrangement agreed pursuant to the PPIp. The proposals would therefore contravene LDP Policy NE2.

Robust analysis carried out as part of the Fairhurst TA for the Countesswells PPIp (ref:140438) demonstrates that post-delivery and opening of the AWPR, the Kirk Brae access should operate as a public transport and cycle connection, utilising a bus gate to prevent access and any resultant conflict with private vehicles. This approach has been agreed by the Council's Roads Service and by Members at Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014 in accordance with LDP Policy D3- Sustainable and Active Travel and T2 – Managing the Transport Impact of Development.

#### Traffic Flows

The traffic flows and figures submitted by Curtins Consulting Ltd within the TA submitted in support of the HPL PPIp applications are misleading. The analysis within the submitted TA simply utilises the traffic flows which were previously agreed with ACC as part of the PPIp single access solution, and redistributes them across the two east and western accesses. Kirk Brae currently has two-way peak hour traffic flows of approximately 850-900 vehicles. The agreed single access solution, as adopted within the CDF and Countesswells PPIp application (ref: 140438), resulted in no through access to the Kingswells Roundabout. As this route would no longer be available, existing users would divert to other available routes such as the AWPR, rather than following a more convoluted route through the heart of the new Countesswells settlement. However, by retaining an all-vehicular access to the Kingswells Roundabout, it is highly likely that a proportion of the above trips would remain on the network, resulting in the southern leg of the Kingswells Roundabout being significantly busier than that presented within the Curtins TA. Consequently, the performance of the Kingswells Roundabout would be significantly worse than that presented within the submitted TA, with resultant knock-on congestion and delays to the detriment of the surrounding network. Unfortunately at the time of writing the Applicant has failed to provide sufficient information to allow a full and detailed review of the analysis of the performance of the Kingswells Junction and consequently we must reserve our position to comment on this information as and when it is supplied by the Applicant.

Notwithstanding the lack of information provided by the Applicant, Fairhurst have carried out an independent assessment of the performance of the Kingswells Junction and this has revealed that the degree of saturation (DoS) for the junction will, for many scenarios, fail to meet the threshold set by ACC for the analysis carried out to support the approved single access scenario (ie DoS < 85% on any leg of the junction) and will fail on the 'no net detriment' principle. Additionally the flows on which this

analysis is based are those which were derived for the single access scenario and do not necessarily apply to the two access scenario as the retention of the direct link onto the Kingswells Roundabout from the South provides a route choice option that is not available in the single access scenario and which will influence traffic flow distribution. The effect of this is likely to be the retention of all or a proportion of the current "rat run" flows that utilise the existing link on to the Kingswells Roundabout from Kirk Brae and Blacktop. When a sensitivity analysis is carried out where different percentages of these flows are retained it shows further deterioration in the DoS figures for the junction.

The DoS output from the analysis of the junction only tells part of the story in terms of the likely performance of the Kingswells Roundabout. The HPL application proposes no alteration to the existing Kingswells Roundabout whatsoever. The existing roundabout has a very tight geometry and therefore very little internal queuing capacity. If Queues of any length are predicted by the modelling the likely impact will be that access from one or more legs of the Kingswells Roundabout will be compromised for some or all of a signal cycle. This will in turn result in further queuing on the access routes to the junction. The Fairhurst analysis indicates internal queue lengths of up to 29 vehicles in the shorter term (1000 units) and 19 in the longer term (3000 units) both of which are well in excess of anything that can be accommodated by the Kingswells Roundabout geometry and would result in a complete breakdown of the function of the junction

A further issue that is not adequately dealt with by the modelling of this junction and which is particularly severe at Kingswells is lane crossing caused by the very tight geometry of the Kingswells Roundabout. This has the effect of reducing the internal capacity of the roundabout and slowing access onto the Kingswells Roundabout during the green signal phases. This has an impact on both internal and external queuing. Additionally any HGV's or busses using the junction inevitably stray outwith their lane and severely compromise the junction capacity.

Taking the various issues addressed above, DoS close or above acceptable limits, excessive internal queue lengths and constrained geometry, it is quite clear that the access scenario proposed by HPL comes at a severe price for the traveling public on the A944. This should come as no surprise because at a very simplistic level the Kingswells Roundabout is under severe pressure at present during peak traffic flows. The HPL proposal seeks to add significantly to the traffic using this junction without making any material modifications other than adding additional stacking capacity and lanes on the south approach (which due to land constraints may not be deliverable in land under the control of the Applicant). The net result will inevitably be increased congestion and delay at the junction. In contrast to the HPL proposals, the single access strategy which forms part of the approved PPIP for Countesswells is supported by robust and agreed modelling, whereby the pressure on the Kingswells

Roundabout is alleviated by turning the south leg into a bus and cycle access only, thus freeing capacity for the inevitable growth in traffic resulting from other committed developments in the area.

#### Sustainable Travel

As demonstrated within the approved CDF and the Countesswells PPIIP application (140438), closure of Kirk Brae to private vehicles and the provision of a bus gate provides an enhanced solution for public transport, cycle and pedestrian linkages as well as overall fluidity in vehicular movement through the site in accordance with Policy D3 of the adopted LDP. This is in contrast to the proposal within HPL application (ref: 141889), which would have buses and cars utilising the same access. Our Clients maintain that the proposals contained within HPL application (ref:141889), to incorporate an all-vehicle access connecting to the Kingswells Roundabout, would neither minimise travel by private car, nor prioritise public transport as required by LDP Policies D3 and T2.

#### Capacity

The only proposed road capacity improvement to the Kingswells Junction evident within HPL's application (ref: 141889), is lane widening on the southern approach. This would only increase capacity of that approach, without providing any internal queuing capacity/storage. Our Clients would also question the deliverability of the proposed arrangements within the delineated red line application boundary, given there are significant level differences evident to the south west of the Kingswells junction.

#### Deliverability

Our Clients note that there is a suggestion within paragraph 5.14 of the supporting "Scott Hobbs Planning Statement" to the effect that there is uncertainty regarding the delivery of the western public transport only access as proposed by our Clients and approved by the Council through the PPIIP. On behalf of our Clients, we confirm that the proposals as granted a willingness to approve have been demonstrated to be both workable and deliverable, as evidenced within the supporting TA for the Countesswells PPIIP application (ref: P140438). There has been ongoing correspondence with the Council and internal work since the original TA was submitted. Requiring finalised details of the bus gate to be submitted to the Council prior to the opening of the AWPR via a suspensive condition on the Countesswells PPIIP application (ref: P140438) is not unusual for this size of development.

## 2. Application (P141888) Eastern Access and Jessiefield Junction

#### Signalised Crossroads

The proposals for this junction must be considered in respect of the overall two- junction access strategy proposed by HPL.

While the signalised crossroads can be shown to function adequately for the modelled flows the layout does not lend itself to future upgrade in the way that the junction for the approved PPIP does. The ability to provide future upgrade at this junction as a key requirement of ACC roads in order to provide flexibility to accommodate future traffic growth from development of the wider area, the HPL application provides no such flexibility.

As acknowledged within paragraph 5.2.3 of the TA submitted with the above HPL application, the construction of an enlarged roundabout at Jessiefield, with provision for a future partial grade separation to accommodate the total development at the OP58 site, 3000 new homes and 10ha of employment land, at the Jessiefield junction has been tested as part of the Countesswells PPIP application (ref. 140438). This junction arrangement has been approved following detailed discussions with the Council's Roads Service, as both a workable and deliverable access arrangement, providing the best solution for access to the Countesswells site and maintaining appropriate flows on the wider road network. In particular, the agreed junction arrangement provides a high degree of flexibility to accommodate future changes in traffic growth and demand in the area associated with the development of the wider area.

Our Clients therefore object to HPL's proposals to alter the agreed access arrangements.

#### Ownership

Additionally, our Clients have concerns that the red line application boundary delineated within the HPL application (ref. 141888) deviates from the boundary set out within the approved Countesswells Development Framework.

#### **Conclusion**

The supporting information supplied to supplement both HPL applications (ref:141888 & 141889) is incomplete and does not allow a full and proper evaluation of the proposals to be undertaken. Further modelling work is required to allow this to happen.

The two applications made by HPL form an inextricably linked proposal for accessing the Countesswells site and require to be assessed and considered on that basis.

The recent decision to grant a willingness to approve the Countesswells PPIP application for the OP58 LDP allocation, encompassing an agreed single access strategy, in line with the approved CDF, is a material consideration in the assessment of the applications submitted by HPL.

The revised access strategy put forward within these applications has not been appropriately masterplanned nor is it essential infrastructure such as to comply with Policy NE2 – Green Belt of the adopted LDP.

In reaching the decision in respect of the Countesswells PPIP application (ref. 140438), a robust analysis and testing of a single access strategy has been carried out in collaboration with Aberdeen City Council's Roads and Planning Officers, which provides an acceptable and deliverable solution, prioritising sustainable modes of transport in line with LDP Policies D3- Sustainable and Active Travel and T2- Managing the Transport Impact of Development. An initial analysis of the HPL TA demonstrates that their flows and figures are based on the approved single access strategy pursuant to the PPIP. A simple redistribution across both of the HPL proposed all-vehicle access proposals would suggest inaccurate and misleading results.

A signalised crossroads junction at Jessiefield as proposed within application (ref. 141888) fails to provide essential flexibility for future upgrading at this key junction on the road network.

On behalf of our Clients we formally object to both applications and trust the above concerns are clear and will be taken into consideration in the determination of both HPL applications (141888 & 141889). In light of the issues and reasoning as set out above, our Clients would ask that both applications are refused accordingly and we reserve the right to make further representations once the additional supporting information required is made available in relation to the applications.

Yours faithfully



Michael Lorimer  
MA (Hons) MRTPI  
Senior Planning Consultant

cc: Jim Fitzsimons Esq, Stewart Milne Group  
Ian Suttie Esq, IDJ Properties

P&SD Letters of Representation		
Application Number:	141888	
RECEIVED 05 FEB 2015		
Nor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SoJ	<input type="checkbox"/> Mac
Case Officer Initials	PAU	
Date Acknowledged	09/02/2015	



PI

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**From:** webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 04 February 2015 16:51  
**To:** PI  
**Subject:** Planning Comment for 141888

Comment for Planning Application 141888

Name : Elizabeth Lindsey  
Address : 51 Hazledene Road  
Aberdeen  
AB15 8LB

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I am writing on behalf of Aberdeen Cycle Forum. We have two comments to make:

- 1) Whereas we are pleased to see that there are segregated cycle/pedestrian paths on both sides of the eastern access road, we note that one has a width of only 2 m. Cycling by Design gives a desirable minimum width of 3 m for dual use paths. I hope it might be possible to increase the width so that both are 3 m.
- 2) We are pleased to see that the junction is to be signalised - much safer for cyclists than roundabouts.

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**From:** webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 04 February 2015 21:46  
**To:** PI  
**Subject:** Planning Comment for 141888

Comment for Planning Application 141888

Name : Shaun Finch  
Address : Holmview  
West Middlefield  
Kingswells [REDACTED]

Telephone :

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : I currently reside within the properties designated West Middlefield and gain access to the woodland paths around the crematorium / golf course / Hazlehead via East Middlefield. The proposed road will cross the path (running north / south) running up past the Garden of Remembrance.

I would like confirmation that access to this path will still be accommodated within the proposed road layout.

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**From:** webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 30 January 2015 09:23  
**To:** PI  
**Subject:** Planning Comment for 141888

Comment for Planning Application 141888

Name : Allan Parkinson  
Address : Loracin  
Kingswells  
AB15 8QB

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : No objections to proposed road alignment and proposed screening to Garden of Remembrance. However given the time for the screening to develop to be an effective screen this should be planted few years before the road is to be brought into use.

Concern signal detail of junction would add long traffic queues and loss of current slip road heading west bound. Propose flyover design for A994, which given natural hollow for this junction lends itself to this concept.

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**From:** webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 12 January 2015 12:31  
**To:** PI  
**Subject:** Planning Comment for 141888

Comment for Planning Application 141888

Name : Dr Tom Straiton  
Address : 3 Kingswood Walk  
Kingswells  
Aberdeen  
AB15 8AG

Telephone : [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

type :

Comment : The proposal to re-align the eastern access road away from the Garden of Remembrance and provide screen planting is very welcome.

The western access, however, should remain as a dedicated bus route as originally planned. The proposal to make this road accessible to all traffic is not acceptable for the following reasons:

(1) The C class road from Cults to Kingswells is already heavily congested at peak times between Kingswells roundabout and the junction with Blacktop Road. The extent to which the AWPR will stop it being used as an unofficial bypass is uncertain. If it continues to be used by "non-Countesswells" traffic, as well as traffic from the new development, the implications for Kingswells roundabout are serious.

(2) At peak times, Kingswells roundabout is already heavily congested. This section of the A944 is one of the few routes where traffic volumes are not projected to be reduced by the AWPR. Traffic at the roundabout will only increase as further developments at Prime Four, Arnhall, Newhills and Maidencraig come on stream. The roundabout will not be able to cope if it also becomes a main access point for 3000 homes at Countesswells. It is unlikely that converting the roundabout to a junction with traffic lights will make much difference.

(3) The creation of a second main access road open to all vehicles will only increase car usage to/from Countesswells. It does not encourage the use of sustainable transport options.

(4) The applicant's case that no bus operators have shown any interest in serving Countesswells is invalid. Kingswells, with half the projected population, has a regular bus service.

(5) The new access road leading to/from Kingswells roundabout will cut across fields that are currently designated as Greenbelt. This incursion was not included in the Masterplan that went out for public consultation.

(6) The applicant is being disingenuous in suggesting that community councils supported their plans at the meeting on 25 November. In fact, views were divided on the proposed changes to the western access road. The revised eastern access was supported.

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