

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	20 January 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Third Don Crossing – Traffic Management Proposals (Stage 3 – Public Advert)
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/331
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report deals with the proposed Traffic Management proposals associated with the Third Don Crossing Traffic Regulation Order at the final statutory stage; that is to say, the main statutory advertisement period is now over in respect to this order and this report presents the objections received.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended this Committee:-

Over-rule the objections received and instruct officers to make 'The Aberdeen City Council (Danestone/Tillydrone/Bedford Area, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 201(X)' as originally envisaged.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The traffic management proposals contained within this report will be fully funded as part of the overall scheme costs for the Third Don Crossing which has been budgeted for within the current 4 year capital budget plan and allows for an estimated £18m expenditure.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There is a risk that any approved traffic regulation order may have to re-enter the legislative process if they are unable to be implemented within the statutory implementation time of 2 years from the start of public consultation.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 At its meeting on 4 September 2014, the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee resolved to commence the necessary legal procedures for the various traffic management proposals associated with the Third Don Crossing.

The following stage, the initial statutory consultation, was then carried out from the 17 September to 8 October 2014 and reported back to Communities, Housing & Infrastructure Committee at its meeting on 28 October 2014, at which it was resolved to acknowledge the responses received and instruct officers to progress to the public advertisement stage and report the results back to a future Committee.

The public advertisement stage for a majority of these proposals was completed from 22 June 2015 to the 20 July 2015 and reported back to Committee on 27 August 2015 and given final approval. There was two items for which we did not advertise at this time as we awaited the road to be named, which was for a 40 MPH and 'Urban Clearway' on the stretch of road from its junction with the A90 Parkway and its junction with Gordon's Mills Road.

Additionally, further items associated with the Third Don Crossing, were included within the 'Various Small Scale Traffic Management and Development Associated Proposals (New Works)' report presented to Committee also on the 27 August 2015.

- 5.2 The public consultation for these various traffic management proposals, was carried out from the 26 November 2015 to the 18 December 2015; with a press notice advertised in the Evening Express and also street notices erected on site. (A copy of this can be seen in Appendix 1.)

5.3 Objections

A total of four objections have been received during the public consultation stage in relation to the proposals advertised associated with the Third Don Crossing scheme. Three of these objections are in relation to the proposed re-opening of the junction at Bedford Road and Hermitage Avenue and the final one relating to the proposed 40 MPH speed limit on the stretch of road from its junction with the A90 Parkway and its junction with Gordon's Mills Road. The objections are shown in Appendix 2 and 3 of this report.

5.4 Proposed revocation of 'Prohibition of Driving'

5.4.1 Objection

Three objections were received with regard to proposed removal of the current 'Fire Path' at the junction of Bedford Road and Hermitage Avenue, grounds for these objections are that by re-opening this junction would increase the traffic flow through this residential area and bring added safety concerns to children of the area and all pedestrians.

The residents believe the current restrictions have worked appropriately now for many years as to avoid rat-running through the area and should this be opened up there is potential for this to occur again in the future.

(See Appendix 2)

5.4.2 Response to statutory objections

This proposal came about during the statutory consultation stage while officers were in discussion with local Councillors and the Froghall, Powis and Sunnybank Community Council. As there is to be a 'bus gate' to be introduced on Bedford Road some of the current restrictions within the area become redundant. Removing the 'Fire Path' provides a further access/egress option to Hermitage Avenue for residents and there would be no potential for rat-running through this area given there will no longer be through traffic on Bedford Road due to the 'bus gate'.

The opening up of this junction also provides a route for vehicles who have missed the advance signage indicating there is no through road at the point of the 'bus gate' ie. a route to loop round via Hermitage Avenue, Sunnyside Avenue and Sunnyside Road.

- 5.4.3 Given the above, it is recommended this Committee overrules the statutory objections received and instruct officers to implement this proposal as originally envisaged.

5.5 Proposed 40 MPH speed limit

5.5.1 Objection

An objection was received from the Grandholm Village Resident's Association (GVRA), in which they state ".....a 40 MPH speed limit to be wholly inappropriate and inconsistent with the remainder of the route through Tillydrone to St Machar Drive. It is also not consistent with other similar routes in the city". This statement is raised based on the pedestrian footways and cycle path networks adjacent to the

carriageway will be readily used as well as there being no right turn stacking lanes, causing stationary traffic.

At a public meeting on 22 September 2014, the GVRA raised these concerns and requested that the proposed speed limit to be re-examined before a final decision was made to progress with this proposal.

(See Appendix 3)

5.5.2 Response to statutory objection

When proposing the speed limit on this new section of road from the A90 Parkway to its junction with Gordon's Mills Road, officers require utilising various guidance to determine an appropriate speed limit.

The Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 01/2013 Setting Local Speed Limits states in its key points 'speed limits should be evidenced and self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should encourage self-compliance. Speed limits should be seen by drivers as the maximum rather than a target speed'.

This guidance is used as the basis for assessments of local speed limits, for developing route management strategies and for developing the speed management strategies which are included within our Local Transport Plan. This guidance should not be used in isolation, but in conjunction with appropriate Traffic Advisory Leaflets and legislation.

The DfT Circular 01/2013 further states:-

'Speed limits are, however, only one element of speed management. They should be part of a package along with other measures to manage speeds which includes engineering and landscaping standards that respect the needs of all road users and raise the driver's awareness of the environment, together with education, driver information, training and publicity. Within their overall network management responsibilities, these measures should enable traffic authorities to deliver speed limits and driven speeds that are safe and appropriate for the road and its surroundings, as well as help drivers to be more readily aware of the road environment and assess their own appropriate speeds at all times'.

Furthermore, paragraph 22 of the same document states:-

'If a speed limit is set in isolation, or is unrealistically low, it is likely to be ineffective and lead to disrespect for the speed limit. As well as requiring significant, and avoidable, enforcement costs, this may also

result in substantial numbers of drivers continuing to travel at unacceptable speeds, thus increasing the risk of collisions and injuries’.

Paragraph 41 goes on to state:-

‘Speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, for example a single road junction or reduced forward visibility such as a bend, since speed limits are difficult to enforce over such a short length. Other measures such as warnings signs, carriageway markings, junction improvements, superelevation of bends and new or improved street lighting are likely to be more effective’.

Officers considered the above criteria and concluded that the section between the A90 Parkway to its junction with Gordon’s Mills Road is totally different to the remainder of the route to the south given that it’s semi-rural in nature and has not frontage access from it. The proposal will create a buffer zone between the 50 MPH speed limit on the A90 Parkway and the 30 MPH speed limit in the more residential area in Tillydrone. This is similar to the routes within the City such as Riverview Drive, West Tullos Road and sections of Scotstown Road which have been designed in accordance with the DfT Circular 01/2013 Setting Local Speed Limits.

To introduce a reduced speed limit on this section of road would set an unwelcome precedent that could lead to requests for similar speed limits to be introduced on other routes across the City. Thereafter the Council could be put in a position where it is compelled to promote these lower speed limits, as communities would be of the opinion they warrant the same attention.

- 5.5.3 Given the above, it is recommended this Committee overrules the statutory objections received and instruct officers to implement this proposal as originally envisaged.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience – The content of the report meets with the local Community Plan objectives and as the recommendation is to approve the proposals, there will be a positive impact on current customer experience.

Improving Staff Experience – N/A

Improving our use of Resources – N/A

Corporate – The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a “sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all”.

The projects will contribute to the delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of *Aberdeen – The Smarter City*. “We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world. We will encourage cycling and walking”, and “We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.”

This project supports the 5 year Corporate Business Plan which includes an aim of delivering a fully integrated transport network to support movement and economic growth which the proposals supports.

Public – This report may be of interest to members of the public as it concerns traffic management measures associated with Third Don Crossing and the increased access from the North, benefitting many people living in and around Aberdeen.

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has been prepared to accompany this report and noted no negative impacts are anticipated on protected groups.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Having assessed the risks identified with the proposals and the potential to impact negatively or positively on the decision required of the Committee it has been assumed that the risk is low. The introduction of the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) in relation to the Third Don Crossing are necessary in order to regulate vehicular movements, speeds and parking, along with rationalising pedestrian and cyclist movements throughout the route. The introduction of the TRO's throughout the length of the new Third Don Crossing will impact in a positive manner on Aberdeen City Council as the measures will be seen as valuable in providing a safer environment for the local community.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report of 'EPI/14/225 - Third Don Crossing – Traffic Management Proposals' submitted to Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee 04 September 2014.

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=140&MId=2901&Ver=4>

Report of 'CHI/14/021 – Third Don Crossing – Traffic Management Proposals (Initial Statutory Consultation from September 2014 E,P&I Committee)' submitted to Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee 28 October 2014.

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s41573/CHI-14-021%20Third%20Don%20Crossing%20-%20Traffic%20Management%20Proposals.pdf>

Report of 'CHI/15/219 – Various Small Scale Traffic Management and Development Associated Proposals (New Works)' submitted to Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee 27 August 2015.

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s49789/CHI.15.219%20Various%20Small%20Scale%20Traffic%20Management%20Development%20Associated%20Proposals%20Stage%201.pdf>

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Michael Cowie
Traffic Management Team
micowie@aberdeencity.gov.uk
(01224) 522316

Appendix 1

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (DANESTONE/TILLYDRONE/BEDFORD AREA, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) ORDER 201(X)

Aberdeen City Council proposes to make “The Aberdeen City Council (Danestone/Tillydrone/Bedford Area, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 201(X)” in terms of its powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The effect of this order will be to impose a 40 MPH speed on the section of un-named road that incorporates the new bridge crossing over the River Don, between A90 Parkway and Gordon’s Mills Road. There will also be imposed on this section of road an Urban Clearway; for clarity an urban clearway restricts stopping except for as long as necessary to set down or pick up passengers. Southbound vehicles crossing the new bridge will also be prohibited from turning right onto Gordon’s Mills Road.

This order would also revoke an existing prohibition of driving at the junction of Bedford Road and Hermitage Avenue; that is to say this junction that is currently closed will open to all vehicles. An existing one-way system on Bedford Place currently operating in a westbound direction between Erskine Street and Bedford Road will be revoked and similarly the prohibition preventing vehicles from turning right when exiting Bedford Place onto Bedford Road will be revoked.

Full Details of the proposals are to be found in the draft order, which, together with maps showing the intended measures and an accompanying statement of the Council’s reason for promoting them, may be examined during normal office hours on weekdays between Thursday, 26 November, 2015, and Friday, 18 December, 2015, in the offices of the Traffic Management Team at Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen. It is recommended that anyone visiting Marischal College to view the documents should make an appointment to do so, in order that a member of staff can be present to offer an explanation if necessary. **The telephone number is (01224) 522316.**

Anyone wishing to object to the proposed order should send details of their grounds for objection, along with their name and address, in writing to the undersigned, or by email to trafficmanagement@aberdeencity.gov.uk , **during the statutory objection period which runs from Thursday, 26 November, 2015 to Friday, 18 December, 2015, inclusively.**

Any person who submits an objection to a road traffic order should be aware that any objection made will be available to members of the Committee, available for inspection by members of the public, distributed to the press, and will form part of the agenda pack which is available on the Council’s website. To that extent, however, they are redacted, with email addresses, telephone numbers and signatures removed from this correspondence.

**Traffic Management Team
Aberdeen City Council
Bus Hub 11, Level 2 West
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB**

Appendix 2

From: George Corbett [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 December 2015 12:22
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Order 201(X)

4 Hermitage Avenue
Aberdeen
AB24 3LU
Reference Danestone/Tillydrone/Bedford area, Aberdeen
Traffic Management Order 201(X)

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing with concern to the proposed plans to open Hermitage Avenue to through traffic. My main reservation is that introduction of increased traffic flow to a residential area would bring added safety concerns with the amount of children in the area who find some freedom to play in relative safety at the moment.

This road was closed many years ago by the council due to it being considered as a rat-run for through traffic.

I spoke to a member of the Traffic Management team concerning this matter and was informed that it is necessary to create a turning area for traffic on Bedford Road due to the introduction of the bus gates.

I agree with this as a common sense and safety matter but may I suggest a more practical and cost effective solution to the problem.

Remove the restrictions for residents allowing them to exit Hermitage Avenue onto Bedford Road and retain the no entry signs from Bedford Road thus creating a turning point for other residents in the area and also vehicle drivers unaware of the restrictions in place.

This would keep the surrounding area safer for children and elderly due to the reduced traffic flow and also alleviate the difficulty some residents have leaving the area in the winter months.

As a resident who has lived in the immediate area for over 30 years I have witnessed many changes therefor I would ask you to take these points into consideration before making a final decision on implementing these changes to the road structure.

Yours sincerely

George Corbett

From: Donald Pirie [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 December 2015 16:54
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ORDER 201(X) - OBJECTION

I am writing in *objection* to the proposed “Aberdeen City Council (Danestone/Tillydrone/Bedford Area, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 201(X).

In particular, the objection is to the section of the order that “would also revoke an existing prohibition of driving at the junction of Bedford Road and Hermitage Avenue: that is to say this junction that is currently closed will be open to all vehicles”.

From the information I have in relation to the proposed installation of a bus gate at Bedford Road, the opening of the above mentioned junction appears to be worthless, and would create an additional cost to the City Council & taxpayer that could easily be avoided.

When I called and spoke to your staff I was told the junction was being opened as ‘a benefit to the residents’ to allow them to enter/exit Hermitage Avenue from this end, but due to the bus gate this would avoid it once again become a ‘rat-run’, as only vehicles wishing to enter Hermitage Avenue would travel down Bedford Road to that point.

It seems to me that if residents are being given this ‘benefit’, then to poll the residents (of whom there is a small number) to ask if they would actually like this benefit would be the most sensible course of action. Certainly from my own perspective as a resident, I believe this junction should remain closed. Aside from the savings this would make for the council and ultimately us as taxpayers, it would also continue to ensure the added safety the residents have enjoyed since this junction previously closed around 19 years ago, as well as avoiding any chance of the ‘rat-run’ emerging once again.

These streets are already busy with parked vehicles, particularly during the University academic year, and increasing the traffic flow by any margin will lead to greater difficulty in negotiating through these narrow streets safely for both vehicles, pedestrians, as well as increase the risk to parked vehicles. These issues could easily be avoided.

I very much hope the City Council will reconsider this particular section of Traffic Management Order 201(X), and leave the prohibition of driving at the junction of Bedford Road and Hermitage Avenue in place.

At the very least, the City Council should survey the residents of Hermitage Avenue & the lower half of Sunnyside Avenue to get a taste for the feeling amongst the residents, before making any final decisions on this section of the Order. I suspect if given a real opportunity to make a decision on this, other than simply posting a notice on a lamppost that many will not see, the residents would opt for the status quo.

Yours faithfully,
Mrs Donna Pirie
6 Hermitage Avenue
Aberdeen
AB24 3LU

From: Pirie, Donald L. [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 December 2015 15:10
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ORDER 201(X) - OBJECTION

Hello,

I am writing in *objection* to the proposed “Aberdeen City Council (Danestone/Tillydrone/Bedford Area, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 201(X).

In particular, the objection is to the section of the order that “would also revoke an existing prohibition of driving at the junction of Bedford Road and Hermitage Avenue: that is to say this junction that is currently closed will be open to all vehicles”.

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Yours faithfully,
Donald Pirie
6 Hermitage Avenue
Aberdeen
AB24 3LU

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Tha Oilthigh Obar Dheathain na charthannas clàraichte ann an Alba, Àir. SC013683.

Appendix 3

From: Graeme Fisher [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 December 2015 19:22
To: TrafficManagement
Cc: Ross Grant; Barney Crockett; Graeme Lawrence; Gill Samarai; Neil MacGregor
Subject: Danestone/Tillydrone/Bedford Area, (Traffic Management) Order 201(X) Letter of Objection

Dear Sirs

Further to the public notices Grandholm Village Resident's Association (GVRA) object to the above Traffic Management Order that a speed limit of 40mph is to be introduced on the new of unnamed road that incorporates the new bridge crossing over the River Don, between A90 Parkway and Gordon Mills Road in the interests of road safety.

This section of new road incorporates the following in it's design :-

- 1) Extensive pedestrian & cycle facilities
- 2) Three light controlled pedestrian crossings
- 3) A staggered junction at Grandholm Drive
- 4) Two T-junctions at Danestone
- 5) A private access road leading to Danestone Market Garden
- 6) Access roads for SUDS drainage ponds maintenance
- 7) A proposed core path/cycle path network linking into SUDS access roads and existing river paths

In support of our objection GVRA draw attention to the following hazards :-

- a) The pedestrian footways and cycle lane network adjacent to the carriageway will be used on a daily basis by primary and secondary pupils making their way to the various schools in Bridge of Don and Danestone.
- b) None of the junctions along the route has been designed with right turn stacking lanes. As a result there will be stationary traffic waiting to turn.
- c) The new road will be a bus route, no bus lay-bys have been incorporated therefore there will be stationary buses picking up and dropping off passengers.

Taking these hazards into account GVRA consider a 40mph speed limit to be wholly inappropriate and inconsistent with the remainder of the route through Tillydrone to St Machar Drive. It is also not consistent with other similar routes in the city. eg Lang Stracht, Westburn Road, North Esplande West, Wellington Road etc

At the public meeting held on 22 September last year I raised this issue. At the time both Councillor Grant & Councillor Young pledged the proposed 40pmh speed limit would be re-examined before a final decision was made. This received unanimous support from the other Councillors and members of the local community present.

Finally GVRA also seek assurance from the Council that a Stage 1 & 2 Road Safety Audit has already been carried out and that a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit will be carried out on completion of construction in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Fisher
Grandholm Village Resident's Association