

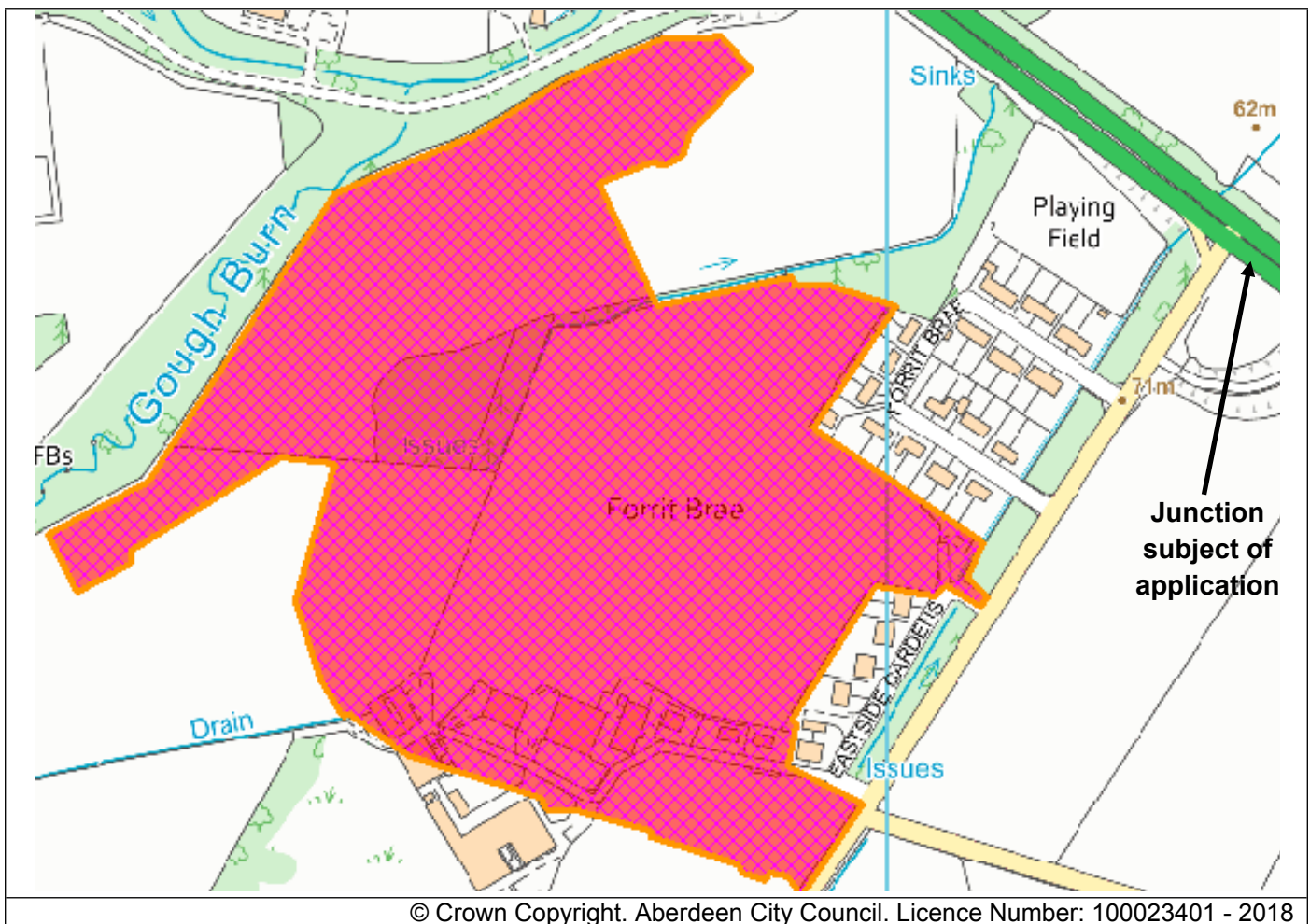


Planning Development Management Committee

Report by Development Management Manager

Committee Date: 18 April 2019

Site Address:	Land at Rowett South, Junction Between Forrit Brae and A96, Bucksburn, Aberdeen AB21 9SL
Application Description:	Approval of matters specified in condition 23 (junction layout) of Planning Permission in Principle ref.140844, to prevent right turn movements from the A96 into Forrit Brae or from Forrit Brae onto the A96 eastbound
Application Ref:	190281/MSC
Application Type	Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions
Application Date:	19 February 2019
Applicant:	Bancon Homes and The Rowett Research Institute
Ward:	Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone
Community Council:	Bucksburn and Newhills
Case Officer:	Matthew Easton



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RECOMMENDATION

Approve Unconditionally

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The Rowett South site (c.106ha) is located on the north-western edge of Aberdeen and is largely agricultural land, with a small number of private residential dwellings scattered throughout. The north-west part of this site is currently under development by Bancon Homes for 288 homes.

This application relates specifically to the road junction between the A96 and Hope Farm Road, onto which this Bancon Homes site would access onto. The existing access of Hope Farm Road with the A96 is designed as an all-movement priority junction, with a gap in the A96 central reservation providing an island for right exiting traffic seeking to head south along the A96 and right turning traffic heading onto Hope Farm Road from the A96. This junction lies approximately 1km east of the A96/AWPR/Airport Road roundabout and 800m west of the A96/Bankhead Avenue/Sclattie Park roundabout.

Hope Farm Road is sometimes known locally as Forrit Brae (and is named such in the planning condition subject of this application), after the street and community of the same name adjacent to it. To avoid confusion, the road will be referred to as Hope Farm Road within this report.

Relevant Planning History

- Planning permission in principle (140844) for a residential led mixed-use development of 1700 homes approved in September 2016.
- Three matters specified in conditions applications (171502/MSC, 180136/MSC and 180303/MSC) were submitted and approved during early 2018 for approval of the first phase of 288 residential units by Bancon Homes. Construction of this phase is currently underway.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Approval of matters specified in condition 23 of planning permission in principle 140844 is sought. Condition 23 states that –

(23) A96 / Forrit Brae Junction Alterations

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Transport Scotland, no part of the development shall be occupied until the layout of the A96 / Forrit Brae junction has been altered to prevent right turn movements from the A96 into Forrit Brae or from Forrit onto the A96 eastbound. The details of these alterations shall be agreed in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Transport Scotland.

Reason - in order to mitigate the adverse impact of development traffic on the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road.

The applicant has submitted details of proposed junction alterations, which show a new section of traffic island would be constructed, in order to prevent right turns onto the A96 from Hope Farm Road and prevent right turns from the A96 into Hope Farm Road. The existing gap in the A96 central reservation, which allows right turn manoeuvres, would also be closed with de-mountable bollards.

The central reservation has been closed by traffic cones for temporary periods for much of the last few years, mainly associated to construction works for the AWPR and later for the TECA development, presently it is currently still closed. A traffic regulation order (TRO) made in May 2018 allows for this and the permanent alteration of the junction to prevent right turn manoeuvres.

It is important to note that as the works would take place entirely within the boundary of a road, they may be carried out under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 with the consent from the Roads Authority, irrespective of the outcome of this application. The purpose of the condition is to ensure that from a planning perspective the works were undertaken prior to occupation of the development. It also required the submission of the technical detail of the proposed junction layout, because in September 2015, when the conditions attached to the planning permission in principle were drafted, that detail was yet to be produced. This application seeks approval that the condition would be satisfied by the implementation of the applicant's proposed works.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at:

<https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PN4MZYBZL6U00>

Reason for Referral to Committee

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because six or more representations have been received which express objection or concern about the application.

CONSULTATIONS

ACC - Roads Development Management Team – No objection. The proposal to construct a splitter island at the junction and close the central reserve with de-mountable bollards is acceptable.

As of the 1st April 2019, this section of the A96 is no longer be maintained by Transport Scotland and is the responsibility of the Council. There is no change in circumstances with regard to the Rowett South development and therefore the requirement to retain a closure of the central reserve remains.

Transport Scotland – No objection. Do not advise against the granting of planning permission on the understanding that no works will be undertaken prior to the de-trunking of this section of the A96(T). Should any works be undertaken prior to de-trunking, then the written approval of Transport Scotland will be required before these can commence.

Bucksburn and Newhills Community Council – No response.

REPRESENTATIONS

Thirteen objections have been received, the majority from residents of Forrit Brae and Eastside Gardens, with one from a resident of Bucksburn and another from a regular visitor to Forrit Brae. The matters raised can be summarised as follows –

1. Residents were led to believe that the closure of the central reservation was to be temporary.
2. Those living at or visiting Forrit Brae and Eastside Gardens would be inconvenienced by the proposal, with the following implications.
 - Those wishing to drive east towards the city centre from Forrit Brae or Eastside Gardens would be required to first head west and turn at the A96/Airport Road/AWPR junction before heading back east to access the junction.
 - Those driving from the north to Forrit Brae or Eastside Gardens along the A96, would have to pass the junction and head towards and turn at the A96/Bankhead Avenue/Sclattie Park roundabout, before heading back west to access the junction.
3. The alternative to the above routes is to use Hopetoun Grange or the Chapel of Stonewood to Fairley Road, which are considered to be narrow and poorly maintained. They also have no pavements and are unlit. The Hopetoun Grange route has become busier with recent developments taking place and will become busier again once the first phases of Rowett South are occupied. Children from the Rowett South development may use Hopetoun Grange to access Brimmond Primary School and Bucksburn Academy. The proposal would result in more traffic on Hopetoun Grange, placing children at risk.
4. The application relies on a traffic regulation order issued by the Council in May 2018; however, it is not clear from the order what the reason for the change to the junction is.
5. It does not appear that a careful analysis has been carried out conclude that the change to the junction is required.
6. The completion of the AWPR has eliminated the use of Forrit Brae as an 'unofficial western bypass' and the introduction of traffic signals at the A96/Dyce Drive/Craibstone Estate junction allows for suitable gaps in traffic to make right turn manoeuvres. With a reduction in traffic and speed limit on the A96 there is no safety reason to implement the change to the junction as it is safer now than in the past.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan and that determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2014 (SDP)

The purpose of the SDP is to set a spatial strategy for the future development of the Aberdeen City and Shire. The general objectives of the plan are promoting economic growth and sustainable economic development which will reduce carbon dioxide production, adapting to the effects of climate change, limiting the use of non-renewable resources, encouraging population growth, maintaining and improving the region's built, natural and cultural assets, promoting sustainable communities and improving accessibility.

From the 29 March 2019, the Strategic Development Plan 2014 will be beyond its five-year review period. In the light of this, for proposals which are regionally or strategically significant or give rise to cross boundary issues between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development will be a significant material consideration in line with Scottish Planning Policy 2014.

The Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2017 will continue to be the primary document against which applications are considered. The Proposed Aberdeen City & Shire SDP 2020 may also be a material consideration.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2017)

- Policy T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development)

Other Material Considerations

- Rowett South Phase 1 Masterplan (July 2015)

EVALUATION

Strategic Development Plan

In terms of assessment against the Strategic Development Plan, due to the small scale of this proposal the proposed development is not considered to be strategic or regionally significant, or require consideration of cross-boundary issues and, therefore, does not require detailed consideration against the SDP.

Local Development Plan

The Rowett South Masterplan which provides a framework for the wider development was approved by the Planning Development Management Committee in September 2015, as part of planning permission in principle (PPiP) ref: 140844. The decision notice was issued in September 2016, after conclusion of the legal agreement.

Policy T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development) requires that larger developments are accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA). Such a TA supported the PPiP and masterplan. As a result of the analysis therein, section 3.5.5 of the masterplan describes the access strategy for the development –

“initial access to the Phase 1 Masterplan Area from the A96(T) will be via the existing Forrit Brae access which will be modified to operate “left in, left out” only, with the A96(T) central reserve at Forrit Brae to be closed, on the request of Transport Scotland and agreed with Aberdeen City Council Roads Authority.”

The reason for the restriction is that the growth in traffic using the junction would increase the number of right-hand manoeuvres crossing the carriage-way and potential risk of vehicles colliding.

The requirement for the junction modification was carried forward into the Rowett South planning permission in principle, by condition 23. This requires details of the revised junction layout to be submitted and for the works to be undertaken prior to occupation of the first units.

The proposed junction design and layout, featuring construction of a traffic island on Hope Farm Road and demountable bollards to close the gap on the central reservation, has been considered by both Transport Scotland and the Councils Roads service and is acceptable from a technical perspective. Therefore, this fulfils the aspect of the condition requiring the submission of details to be agreed.

Timing of Works

Transport Scotland indicated that the works should not be undertaken until this section of the A96 was de-trunked and responsibility passed to the Council. This occurred on 1st April 2019. It is understood that the applicant has consent through the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to carry out the work in late April.

Other Matters Raised in Representations

The decision to implement the restriction has already been taken by the Council when planning permission in principle ref: 140844 was approved. The matters raised in representations, which largely relate to the principle of the proposal, are however addressed below.

- A permanent restriction associated to Rowett South has been proposed since at least June 2014. The use of temporary measures to restrict right hand manoeuvres, for reasons unrelated to the Rowett South development, may have led to residents believing that no permanent restriction was proposed. (*Issue 1*)
- Concern is raised that those driving to and from Forrit Brae and Eastside Gardens would be inconvenienced by the restriction, for the reasons set out above.

It is acknowledged that residents in the local area that use the junction would see a change in possible routes. However, the advice of ACC roads officers and Transport Scotland is that the restriction is required for road safety purposes and therefore that is considered to override such concerns of inconvenience and added journey times. (*Issue 2*)

- Residents of Forrit Brae and Eastside Gardens indicate that to avoid using the A96/Hope Farm Road junction, alternative routes would be taken eastwards along Hopetoun Grange or along the Chapel of Stonewood to Fairley Road to the south. However, these routes are considered by those submitting representations to be narrow and poorly maintained. It is also highlighted that they do not have pavements and are unlit but are used by school children to access schools in Bucksburn.

The condition of the existing road network is not something that can be addressed through this planning application. Although the alignment of Hopetoun Grange will change in future as part of the Rowett South development and pedestrian routes will be provided as it is built out, there is no requirement for work to be carried out in the intervening period. (*Issue 3*)

- The traffic regulation order issued in May 2018 by the Council in its capacity as roads authority, allowed for the temporary and current restriction during works associated with the TECA development, as well as the planned permanent restriction. (*Issue 4*)
- The requirement for the restriction is a result of traffic analysis during the planning permission in principle and the consultation responses from Transport Scotland and Council roads officers. (*Issue 5*)

- Although traffic may have reduced on Hope Farm Road as a result of the AWPR opening, traffic levels are expected to increase as the Rowett South development is built out. Furthermore, since the AWPR opened, due to the ongoing TECA works, the speed limit on this section of A96 has been reduced to 30mph. Once TECA works are complete the limit will be increased to 40mph, increasing the risk of undertaking right hand turn manoeuvres. (*Issue 6*)

Summary

The decision to implement a restriction on right-hand turn manoeuvres has already been considered and is required as part of the planning permission in principle. This application is to approve the technical design and layout of the permanently amended junction. This has been considered by the relevant officers and found to be acceptable and therefore it is recommended that the details submitted be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Unconditionally

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The decision to implement a restriction on right-hand turn manoeuvres was taken in 2015, as part of the approval of the planning permission in principle which involved detailed traffic analysis of the impact of the development. Whilst it is acknowledged that users of the junction would see a change to possible routes, the revised junction arrangement is required due to the anticipated growth in traffic using the junction which would increase the number of right-hand manoeuvres crossing the carriage-way and potential risk of vehicles colliding. The design and layout of the junction is considered acceptable.

CONDITIONS

None