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TRANSPORTATION BRIEFING NOTE

143948 Aberdeen Beachfront, Transportation Briefing Note**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 In May 2021, Aberdeen City Council's City Growth and Resources Committee agreed to instruct the Director of Resources to undertake a public survey on the future of the Beach to help formulate the development of the Beach Masterplan; and instruct the Director of Resources to report back an update on the output of the technical feasibility studies, public consultation and proposed Beach Masterplan to the City Growth and Resources Committee (CG&R) on the 25th August 2021.
- 1.2 A number of options for development of the Beachfront area were presented to the 25th August CG&R Committee Meeting. The Committee agreed to progress plans and budget costs for the proposal.
- 1.3 Each of the Masterplan options that have been considered have a similar level of new development, and will have similar transportation characteristics that will need to be considered through the planning process to ensure that key transportation policies, objectives and requirements will be met. This Briefing Note aims to set out the main transportation issues that will need to be addressed through planning and design, and through a Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan prepared to support the principles contained in the Masterplan.

2 Beachfront Proposal

- 2.1 The content of the Beachfront Masterplan is yet to be determined. The Ballroom will be retained and reimagined and a stadium for Aberdeen Football Club is also desired. These are anchor developments for the Beachfront area and are present in all options.
- 2.2 Other development content that has been considered, and could feature in the final plans, include:
- A Leisure Centre (which is existing).
 - An Ice Arena (which is existing).
 - An Outdoor Sports Pitch.
 - A Multi-Storey Car Park.
 - Cycle Paths and Running Trails.
 - Public Gardens.
 - Water Sport Centre.

- Restaurants and Bars.
 - Public Realm and Landscape.
- 2.3 Key aspects of the Masterplan also include the need to improve links between the City Centre and the Beachfront, requiring changes to Beach Boulevard. There is a desire to develop the Beachfront as a destination area where people will visit and spend time.
- 2.4 The emerging preferred concept for the Beachfront is development around a 'Ropeworks' theme, which is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 – 'Ropeworks' Masterplan Concept**

- 2.5 A central concept is to develop the main Beachfront area as car free, to encourage Active Travel and provide a destination for people to enjoy spending time without having their amenity spoiled by vehicles. The concept requires vehicle routes to be redistributed around the Beachfront, rather than through it as they currently are.
- 3 Transportation Considerations**
- 3.1 The transportation issues and considerations to be addressed within the Masterplan broadly fall into 3 main categories, as follows:
- Trip generation associated with the new / reimagined leisure facilities.
 - Trip generation associated with the new football stadium for AFC.
 - Traffic and transport changes associated with new and altered transport networks.

New / Reimagined Leisure Facilities

3.2 Transportation aspects of the new and reimagined leisure facilities that need to be considered within the Masterplan, and the associated Transport Assessment, are:

- Trip generation and distribution, including an understanding of traffic impacts during road network peak times, and times when the leisure facilities will peak. Trip rates to be established through the TRICS database or surveys of existing relevant facilities.
- Car parking demand and appropriate levels of supply.
- Cycle parking.
- Public Transport accessibility.
- Development access routes.
- Servicing.

New Football Stadium

3.3 The development of a new football stadium for AFC within the Beachfront Masterplan area may require its own future TA to support a separate detailed stadium planning application. That could be developed with specific input from AFC to guide the scheme requirements. Nonetheless the Masterplan TA can draw upon the principles that Fairhurst developed within the TA for AFC's extant planning permission for a 20,000 seat stadium at Kingsford. Doing so will identify stadium transportation matters that need to be taken into consideration in the wider Masterplan context.

3.4 The current AFC stadium at Pittodrie is around 400m away. Crucially therefore, a new stadium at the Beachfront and the transportation demands associated with stadium events will not be new to the area. AFC draw home support not only from within Aberdeen city, but a significant proportion of home supporters travel to football matches from all parts of Aberdeenshire and further afield. For most supporters, their journey to a new stadium at the Beachfront would be relatively unchanged given how close the new stadium would be to Pittodrie. This has significant benefits with respect to disruption caused by infrequent stadium events. There will generally be no net detriment to the surrounding area.

3.5 Notwithstanding the above, a new stadium within the Beachfront area will generate some specific changes to how transport demands for events are currently managed within the immediate vicinity of the stadium. It is anticipated that the stadium will require the following aspects to be considered within the Masterplan TA:

- Match day attendance profiles and transport demands, including Old Firm matches and European matches.
- Car parking demand and proposals.
- Car parking displacement from streets in the Beachfront area where some supporters currently park.
- A review of event parking restrictions on surrounding streets, and associated Traffic Regulation Order requirements.
- Provision for coach parking, including around 50 coaches for Old Firm supporters, as well as coaches for home supporters, and the segregation of home and away supporters.
- A review of public transport strategy for events.
- A review of pedestrian and cyclist supporter routes from key transport hubs and the City Centre, as well as identification of infrastructure improvements and event action plans
- A review of Road Safety.
- A review of taxi routes to the new stadium on event days.
- A review of emergency routes to the stadium on event days.
- A review of access strategy for the stadium grounds on event days.
- Interaction between the stadium and other surrounding leisure facilities on event days.
- Implications for having a fan zone and the subsequent spreading of trip generation over a longer time period.
- Trip generation and distribution of staff and visitors associated with other aspects of the stadium (restaurants and function suites for example) on non-event days.

New and Altered Transport Networks

3.6 The new and altered transport networks in connection with the Beachfront Masterplan will need to be considered within the Transport Assessment. Key matters will be:

- Road network changes, including any new roads and Stopping Up of any existing roads.

- Traffic redistribution, including link and junction capacity impacts.
- Bus journey route changes and service time impacts.
- Review the classification, use and geometry of relevant existing roads, including proposed changes.
- Review the need for Redetermination Orders on any routes.
- Review the need for Core Path Diversion Orders.
- Review on-street parking.
- Review any impacts on accessible parking and Electric Vehicle parking.
- Review cycleway networks.
- Review of links to the City Centre, including enhanced pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.

4 Traffic Modelling

- 4.1 The implications of road network changes and bus journey time impacts should be assessed through Paramics traffic modelling. This should also include the impacts associated with other planned City Centre infrastructure changes and major committed developments, to assess the implications over a wider area. New traffic surveys may be required, depending on the availability of existing traffic flow data.
- 4.2 The 'Year of Opening' for the Beachfront development will need to be established and traffic modelling should be undertaken for that year, though ultimately the modelling scenarios will need to align with the existing Paramics models that are available. It is anticipated that traffic modelling should include a Saturday scenario, as well as weekday peak hours.
- 4.3 Traffic capacity analysis at individual junctions would be undertaken using the ARCADY or PICADY suite within Junctions software, or LinSig for traffic signals.

5 Travel Planning

- 5.1 A Travel Plan Framework will also be required to support the planning application. This will set potential Travel Plan measures that individual uses within the Masterplan area can implement. Travel mode share targets will be set, for individual developments to achieve.