

Annex A

Meeting Notes – Extracts in relation to orange and violet routes and online through Inverurie

Meeting with:	Aberdeenshire Council
Date of Meeting:	31/10/2018
Purpose of Meeting:	Cultural Heritage and Landscape Consultation with Aberdeenshire Council
Attended by:	Aberdeenshire Council AmeyArup

Extracts in relation to orange and violet routes and online through Inverurie

3.0	Public Exhibition
3.1	█ described the Public Exhibition held from 8 to 11 October 2018 at Inverurie, Huntly and Blackburn and outlined the exhibition display panels.
3.7	Options O1 to O4 (Orange): <ul style="list-style-type: none">█ noted that there is potential for a visual impact on St Apolinaris' Chapel Scheduled Monument from the proposed crossing of the River Don in this area. █ advised that the full extent of the burial ground associated with the chapel is not known and if the proposed river crossing were changed it may have a direct impact on any surviving burials, which could potentially lead to extensive mitigation measures being required (i.e. excavation (and re-internment) of human remains).█ advised that they did not foresee any specific issues regarding potential impacts on the setting of Bruce's Camp Scheduled Monument.█ advised that the route has the potential to affect a Special Landscape Area (but that shouldn't be an absolute restriction on its potential to accommodate a carefully designed road corridor). Although located in part of the Bennachie SLA the impact is more on the River Don Valley which forms a key part of the SLA but the potential for creating a positive visual statement at the River Don crossing was noted.
3.8	Options V1 to V3 (Violet):

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ■ advised that they considered the core area of the Inventory Battle of Harlaw Battlefield to be key to understanding the site and any direct impact on the core area should be avoided.• ■ advised that the implications of routing through high ground should be taken into account and the road should be designed to fit in with the landscape.	
3.9	Options G1 (Green)/V1 (Violet): No particular concerns regarding the effect on the landscape were raised but ■ noted the need to be aware of impacts on the LNCS.	

Meeting with:	Aberdeenshire Council, Historic Environment Scotland, SEPA, and Scottish Natural Heritage
Date of Meeting:	15/11/2018
Purpose of Meeting:	Consultation with Statutory Bodies and Aberdeenshire Council (Flood Team)
Attended by:	AmeyArup HES SEPA SNH TS

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2.0	Project Overview
	<p>█ gave an overview and update to the dualling proposals, and described the process undertaken to get the project to this stage.</p> <p>This was information that was summarised in the public exhibition materials from the October 2018 public exhibitions, details of which can found at: https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/43255/exhibition-panels-october-2018-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen-a96-dualling.pdf</p> <p>Specific issues raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route options were not progressed within the existing A96 corridor at Inverurie due to the proximity and extent of existing residential and commercial property to the trunk road;
3.0	Ecology
3.1	█ stated that invasive species are a known key issue on the River Don.
5.0	Cultural Heritage

5.1

The views from Bruce's Camp were an important consideration.

■ stated that the proximity of the proposed bridge to the St Apolinaris Chapel and Burial Ground is likely to result in a significant impact. The setting of the chapel is important, and the design of the bridge would need to take this into account and consider how this could be mitigated.

At Pitscurry Cairn and Hill of Selby there are 360 degree views from these cultural heritage features, but they would be subject to less impact than the other receptors noted above (Daviot Stone Circle and St Apolinaris Chapel and Burial Ground) by any new dual carriageway alignments.

■ noted that the landscape around Bourtie House, Hill of Selby and Keith Hall was of a high sensitivity.

Meeting with:	SEPA and Aberdeenshire Council
Date of Meeting:	27/11/2018
Purpose of Meeting:	Consultation with SEPA / Aberdeenshire Council
Attended by:	Aberdeenshire Council AmeyArup SEPA

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4.0	Flood Modelling Scope – Technical Note
4.3	<p>█ and █ confirmed that the final hydrology report for the R Don / R Urie had not yet been approved but that an updated rating at Pitcaple had now been agreed.</p> <p>█ confirmed that he would issue this report to AmeyArup when it is available.</p> <p>Post Meeting Note: The Inverurie Hydrology report was issued by Aberdeenshire Council on 09 January 2019.</p>
9.0	Specific examples using sketches
9.1	<p>█ tabled a set of sketches that were tabled at the previous SEPA meeting in July, alongside updated versions. This showed that in a number of locations, previous comments had been taken on board and the route options had been moved to reduce the impact on associated watercourses.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proposed crossing of the River Don had been removed as the route option had been dropped. • A skewed crossing of the River Urie had been reduced in length by designing the route option to be more perpendicular to the watercourse. • A potential diversion of the Glen Water had been removed by moving the proposed route option. • A proposed crossing of the Lochter Burn and its associated floodplain had been reduced in length by moving the proposed route option.

Meeting with:	Aberdeenshire Council Garioch Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	11/12/18
Purpose of Meeting:	Presentation to Aberdeenshire Council Garioch Area Committee
Attended by:	Aberdeenshire Council Transport Scotland AmeyArup

Extracts of Aberdeenshire Council meeting note in relation to orange and violet routes and online through Inverurie

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{extract} If the project is dualling the A96 why is it not following the existing online route of the A96? People feel it is not dualling the A96 but a new road, Why not follow/upgrade existing A96? Constraints due to buildings but proposal takes through new land? IS there a need for a high specification route north of Inverurie?

- A96 Dualling will be a category 7A road, only one step down from motorway standard; the traffic, environmental and people impact on Inverurie as a town means that existing alignment is not the right place for a road.
- The geometry of existing A96 alignment also does not lend itself to dualling.
- Online dualling would mean traffic continuing to filter through Inverurie town and would not solve the town centre traffic issues; further the existing roundabouts would continue which are major contributors to the town centre congestion.
- The transport objective is to take strategic movements off the existing A96 to leave local trips of the existing route. Traffic travelling to destinations to the north side of Inverurie would be likely to use a northern by-pass and grade-separated junction will improve capacity.

██████████ – Note importance of taking strategic trips off current A96 route, leaving local trips. The north side of Inverurie traffic likely to use a northern by-pass route and grade separated junctions would improve capacity.

██████████ – Concern about impact on existing A96 of construction including diversion and temporary roads?

- Constructability is a major issue as do not want to create more congestion and issues in town centres or local roads. Why following existing alignment and creating a by-pass of Inverurie is a difficult option.

Meeting with:	Aberdeenshire Council Formartine Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	15/01/19
Purpose of Meeting:	Presentation to Aberdeenshire Council Formartine Area Committee
Attended by:	Aberdeenshire Council Transport Scotland AmeyArup

Extracts of Aberdeenshire Council meeting note in relation to orange and violet routes and online through Inverurie

Discussion:

During discussion the following issues were raised and responses given as summarised:

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Compensatory storage may be required to construct new structure across River Don at Kintore. What capacity is available for this?

- Key topic as part of flood model work. Consultants been in close contact with AC's flooding team, and will be using AC's flood model to assess impact of new structure depending on size and design of structure – likely be Stage 3 work will determine compensatory storage calculations. Clear requirement not to have any adverse impact.

Highlighted that it may be advantageous to provide clearer reasons on the project website as to why options have been set aside, such as the "through Inverurie Route". Suggested that some explanation of alternative journey lengths may help illustrate that a variety of routes were as effective as the current route alignment.

- Generally accepted that the Transport Scotland website format did not always make it very easy to find all relevant information. Whilst appreciating the need to be transparent, much care has to be taken with the dissemination of information – for example there are over 17 different permutations of routes still under consideration. Journey time might be a better indicator than journey length.

Connectivity from north onto new A96?

- Lot of data collection undertaken on how traffic accesses A96 via Inverurie from the north, using number plate recognition. 1/3 of traffic joining A96 from north through Inverurie. Some options address that issue; also assist with expansion and development around Inverurie. The Southern/Western alignment caters for development to south of Inverurie, eg Crichie.

Meeting with:	Aberdeenshire Council Planning
Date of Meeting:	20/02/19
Purpose of Meeting:	Consultation meeting with Aberdeenshire Council Planning
Attended by:	Aberdeenshire Council AmeyArup

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<p>5.0</p>	<p><u>Aberdeenshire Council development planning update, including LDP 2021 MIR</u></p> <p>Orange Route/Thainstone Junction - ■ did not have any concerns about the route and impact on the 2017 LDP land allocation (i.e. strategic reserve land for business/industrial use) as a potential over provision was highlighted in the area taking account of the nearby Thainstone Mart development that was recently approved on appeal. ■ noted the developer may take a different view of any junction proposals but, as the development requires to provide a grade separated junction, ■ reiterated it would be worth consulting with ■ and ■ to understand what progress is being made with the developer.</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>■ advised that in terms of planning, AC planners prefer the northern bypass (Violet) option and highlighted environmental impacts of the Orange route option on Bruce's Camp, and the River Don crossing with the potential impact on the St. Apolinaris Chapel.</p> <p>■ suggested a junction should be considered at the B993 (Violet/green) to improve connectivity with Whiterashes/Newmacher and the AWPR.</p>

Meeting with:	Aberdeenshire Council
Date of Meeting:	23/07/19
Purpose of Meeting:	Consultation meeting with Aberdeenshire Council Planning & Environment
Attended by:	Aberdeenshire Council AmeyArup

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2.0	<p>Actions from previous planning and environment meetings</p> <p>It was noted by AC that the Orange route option was in close proximity to the mart / business/industrial area at Thainstone.</p>
3.0	<p>Project Progress Update</p> <p>It was noted that there was pressure from the A96 Action Group to reconsider upgrading the existing A96 through Inverurie.</p>
6.0	<p>Pitcaple to Kintore (Orange and Violet route options)</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the Orange route option and the potential loss of some or all of Pitscurry Moss LNCS, which is designated through the Local Development Plan. ■■■ advised that the most recent site survey and assessment had been undertaken in 2008/2009 and there was not any further up to date ecological survey data for the site. ■■■ also advised that Plantlife have identified this site has an amber warning for creeping lady's tresses.</p> <p>■■■ stated that appropriate ecological mitigation and compensation will be required concerning impacts on Pitscurry Moss LNCS, and any impacts need to be justifiable. ■■■ stated that detailed consideration of mitigation and compensation/enhancement measures will take place during DMRB Stage 3.</p> <p>■■■ noted that on the Orange route option the Old Kemnay Road is a Public Right of Way and the wooded area to the west of the River Don is used by dog walkers and is of notable ecological interest e.g. badger, red</p>

squirrels, and deer. ■ noted that at the public exhibitions comments had been made that Roquharold woodland to the east of the River Don crossing was also of notable ecological importance.

■ noted that the St Apolinaris Chapel and Burial Ground Scheduled Monument was a key cultural heritage receptor. ■ indicated that AAJV had avoided direct impacts but acknowledged that mitigation may be required i.e. sensitive design of the bridge crossing. ■ stated that AAJV had an architectural advisor within the team.

■ advised regarding the Violet route option that an NMU link between Oldmeldrum and Inverurie is currently under consideration by AC.

■ stated that wintering bird surveys had recorded notable numbers of geese feeding on the agricultural fields to the east end of the A96 dualling scheme (Violet and Orange route options) and that further Habitats Regulations Appraisal assessment could not be ruled out yet due to the proximity to the Loch of Skene Special Protection Area.

■ advised that there had been public recording of curlews, with A96 Action Group passing these records to AAJV and the local biological records centre (NESBReC). ■ stated that there may need to be habitat enhancement measures considered at DMRB Stage 3.

■ stated that the assessment of the Violet route option would need to include the setting of Balbithan House, Harlaw inventory battlefield and Keith Hall GDL, and the issue of noise impacts on the setting of cultural heritage designated sites.

■ noted the presence of Giant Hogweed on the River Don and River Urie and suggested this could be addressed by the scheme through ecological enhancement by supporting the eradication of this invasive species

■ commented that the DMRB Stage 3 of the project should provide a meaningful environmental design opportunity for high quality design, and that the landscape and visual impact assessment is also an opportunity to inform and improve the design process.

	<p>■ stated that the consideration of NMUs is extremely important, and any existing NMU links that are affected by the scheme will need to be mitigated by a suitable alternative and consideration also given to the opportunity to create new links and/or improve existing links. ■ stated that this would be addressed in detail at DMRB Stage 3.</p>
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