
4a Access to Aberdeen from the South

- Purpose of Report

This report advises Board members on the latest progress in bringing forward projects identified within the Access to Aberdeen from the South Study.

- Background

The Nestrans Board approved the principle of the findings within the draft Access to Aberdeen from the South Study in February 2008 and remitted the final study to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils for further consideration of the identified potential solutions and for implementation in line with their Local Transport Strategies. Progress in bringing forward the findings of the study was last reported to Board in April 2009 and brief updates on individual projects being funded through the 2009/10 budget have since been noted in the progress report. It is considered however an appropriate time to again report in full on the latest progress.

- Short Term Measures

The Board has approved a sum of £60,000 in the 2009/10 Capital Budget to develop the design and implement short term measures identified within the Access to Aberdeen from the South study. This has been used to investigate a preferred improvement at the Wellington Road/ Souterhead Road junction. Aberdeen City Council has since approved the implementation of a scheme to introduce part time signals in the morning peak period at the Langdykes Road arm of the junction. The tender was awarded to MTM construction and the works are due to be complete by 31 March 2010.

The preliminary design for a segregated left turn lane from King George VI Bridge to West Tullos Road has been revised due to the significant costs associated with the initial design previously reported. This slip lane can be accommodated within the existing road boundary and does not require significant diversion of services. A plan of the proposal is contained in the Appendix. Site surveys have shown around 200 vehicles, which is approximately 20% of those making a left turn manoeuvre in the morning peak hour, do so from the offside lane and turn through 450° therefore increasing the cutting movement and delays across all 4 arms of the junction. Further modelling has indicated that the proposed slip lane will provide sufficient capacity for all left turning vehicles to remain within the nearside lane on the bridge therefore benefiting other arms of the junction as well as the journey time savings on King George VI Bridge that are directly associated with the scheme. Aberdeen City Council has previously approved this scheme be progressed to tender stage. A sum of £75,000 to construct the slip lane is proposed in the draft 2010/11 Capital Budget, which is to be considered by the Board at a separate item on the agenda.

- Medium Term Measures

The Access to Aberdeen from the South study identified the potential for traffic signals to more evenly distribute the capacity at the junctions of Souterhead Road and Hareness Road with Wellington Road. The Board previously approved a sum of £50,000 in the 2009/10 Capital Budget to develop the preliminary design of an improvement at the Wellington Road/Souterhead Road junction. The junction is partly signalised at present and this is being supplemented by the short term measure to introduce part time signals at the Langdykes Road arm as detailed above, but this will be insufficient to address capacity requirements in the longer term. Preliminary designs have been prepared for 3 options to replace the roundabout with two linked traffic signal junctions and the options are currently being tested using a Paramics microsimulation model. Topographical

surveys of the areas possibly affected by the junction options at Souterhead and also the Hareness Road/Wellington Road junction have been commissioned.

A sum of £100,000 has been proposed within the draft 2010/11 Capital Budget to continue the preliminary design work to replace the roundabouts at Souterhead and Hareness with signalised junctions and this will be considered by the Board at a separate item on the agenda,

Schoolhill has been identified as the optimum location in transport terms for a Park and Choose facility off the A90 to the south of Aberdeen. This financial year a sum of £30,000 within the Capital Budget has been used to progress the preliminary design. A topographical survey and geotechnical investigation has been undertaken and the potential of providing lorry parking facilities within the site is being considered. The Minister for Transport has indicated that the construction of the A90(S) and A96 Park & Choose sites could be considered for inclusion within a contract for the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, but this would require planning permission and any necessary land acquisitions to be in place in advance of the contract being tendered. An allocation of £100,000 is therefore proposed within the draft 2010/11 Capital Budget to progress the design of the A90(S) Park & Choose and submit a planning application.

- Long Term Measures

The Access to Aberdeen from the South study identified the need for additional capacity over the River Dee in the longer term. The study considered the options to widen the existing Bridge of Dee or construct a new bridge to the west of the existing bridge. A further option was later proposed by Aberdeen City Council officers to locate a new bridge to the east of the existing bridge. The Nestrans Board approved a sum of £80,000 within the 2009/10 Revenue Budget and this has been used to develop a new Paramics microsimulation model to replace the earlier 2004 version and extend it to include the Coast Road, Victoria Bridge and further upstream junctions to the north of the river Dee. At its last meeting the Nestrans Board approved a sum of £150,000 within the 2010/11 Revenue Budget for project feasibility and development to progress the testing of the various options using the new model and undertake any necessary economic and environmental appraisals. The Board will continue to be advised of progress in future project updates.

- Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board note the progress with projects identified within the Access to Aberdeen from the South Study and consider the proposals for Capital funding in 2010/11, which are the subject of a separate report.

JA/31 March 2010