

Projects –

4a A90 Laurencekirk Junctions

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- Purpose of Report

This report asks Board members to consider a draft report on work undertaken by Nestrans in relation to the Laurencekirk Junctions with the A90 Trunk Road. Board approval of the report is sought along with agreement to submit it to Transport Scotland in support of a case to construct grade separated junctions and to urge them to progress this.

- Background

The Regional Transport Strategy includes improving road safety as a key objective and more grade-separated junctions at key locations, such as Laurencekirk on the A90 south of Aberdeen is specifically identified as a priority for action.

Nigel Don MSP met with officers of Nestrans and Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils earlier this year and it was agreed that Nestrans would review studies undertaken to date in relation to the A90 Laurencekirk junctions and consider the scale of additional traffic growth in the area that may result from the housing and employment allocations within the adopted Aberdeenshire Council Local Development Plan and from potential development in the Angus area.

A public petition was lodged in February 2009 to urge the Scottish Government to improve safety measures on the A90 by constructing a grade separated junction where the A937 crosses the A90 at Laurencekirk. The Public Petitions Committee requested an update on the outcome of the work being undertaken by Nestrans and a copy of the response that was submitted on 10 August based on the work completed to that date was included within the information bulletin to the Nestrans Board on 29 August.

- Progress and Next Steps

The review of recent studies and consideration of the scale of additional traffic growth that may take place in the area of the A90/A937 Laurencekirk junctions has now been completed and the draft report is attached as an Appendix. The report highlights that previous predictions for future traffic levels in the Laurencekirk area have been significantly underestimated and raises a number of comments in support of an improved junction layout.

It is noted that the Petition Committee met on 18 September 2012 and will be writing to find out when the Nestrans report is to be published and also writing to Transport Scotland to ask its views on the letter submitted by Nestrans on 10 August and whether they would like to comment ahead of the report publication.

It is proposed therefore that the appended draft report be approved for publication on the Nestrans website and submitted to Transport Scotland in support of a case for further consideration of junction upgrades on the A90 Trunk Road in the Laurencekirk area at the earliest opportunity. It is noted that the draft report only provides a review of the potential traffic implications based on the studies previously undertaken and the known allocations for development and does not provide any opinion as to what should happen next. It is suggested that it should result in further discussion with Transport Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council to serve as a catalyst towards the progression of a positive solution at the earliest possible date.

- Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Approve the attached draft A90 Laurencekirk Junctions report for publication on the Nestrans website.
2. Agree to submit the report to Transport Scotland and urge that further consideration be given to the construction of grade separated junctions on the A90 at Laurencekirk.

JA / 27 September 2012