



North East Scotland Freight Forum – Monday 23 June 2014

210 Bistro, South Market Street, Aberdeen AB11 5PQ

In Attendance:

Eddie Anderson	ARR Craib Transport Ltd
Andrew Robb	AECOM
Claudia Stuerck	Aberdeenshire Council
Derick Murray	Nestrans
Douglas Norris	CILT
Ian Jessiman	Aberdeen Harbour Board
Jason Moir	Dyce Carriers
Margaret Simpson	Freight Transport Association
Paul Finch	Aberdeenshire Council
Philip Smart	GreCOR
Rab Dickson	Nestrans
Richie Fraser	AECOM
Vycki Ritson	Aberdeen City Council
Ian Armstrong	SCDI
Roule Wood	Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber
Phil Flanders	SCDI
Lindsay Dall	Petersons
Louise Calder	Nestrans

Introduction

Chair Eddie Anderson welcomed all delegates to the North East Scotland Freight Forum. He expressed his appreciation that delegates were able to commit time to the Forum, and added that it again provides a platform for sharing the views of a cross-section of local interests.

Presentations were made as follows:

- Nestrans Projects Update – Rab Dickson, Nestrans.
- Nestrans Freight Action Plan Launch – Paul Finch, Aberdeenshire Council.
- Aberdeen Freight Specific Projects Update – Vycki Ritson, Aberdeen City Council.
- Impact of the Construction of the AWPR on Freight Movements – Paul Finch, Aberdeenshire Council.
- Wellington Road Corridor Multi-Modal Transport Study – Richie Fraser, AECOM.
- Nigg Bay Harbour Development (video) – Ian Jessiman, Aberdeen Harbour Board.

Nestrans Projects Update (*Rab Dickson, Nestrans*)

Rab Dickson (Nestrans Transport Strategy Manager) updated the Forum on the progression of several projects. Those of interest to the freight forum include:

- Work to remove the constraint on the A96 Inverramsay Bridge;
- The progression of the AWPR/Balmedie-Tipperty programme;
- The Third Don Crossing; and
- A90/A96 Haudagain Roundabout Improvements.

It was noted that each of these strategically significant projects has committed funding.



Nestrans Freight Action Plan Launch (*Paul Finch, Aberdeenshire Council*)

Paul Finch (Principal Engineer, Aberdeenshire Council) introduced a refreshed Nestrans Freight Action Plan (FAP) to the Forum. He explained that the FAP had been updated following previous consultation with the Freight Forum, wider stakeholder consultation, and internal consideration by the FAP Implementation Group. The revised Plan contains 46 actions, some of which have been carried over from the initial Plan, while the refresh process has provided the opportunity to introduce new actions for delivery.

It was stressed that although the Plan has now been adopted (following approval by the Nestrans Board on 18 June 2014) the FAP Implementation Group are still keen to receive feedback on the Plan, particularly if there are actions that the freight industry feels should be considered.

Aberdeen Freight Specific Projects Update (*Vycki Ritson, Aberdeen City Council*)

Vycki Ritson (Senior Engineer, Aberdeen City Council) provided an overview of freight specific projects that have recently been undertaken in Aberdeen. These have been facilitated through compilation of issues previously raised through the Freight Forum and the Traffic Management team.

Schemes have included the A947/Dyce Drive junction improvement, while a land purchase process has commenced to facilitate improvement of the Howe Moss Drive/Dyce Drive junction. Jason Moir noted that with respect to the former, the junction is still quite tight for HGVs. Vycki confirmed that this would be examined to see if a further enhancement to this improvement could be made.

A number of other points were raised with regard to the Dyce area.

- A new turning circle is being introduced at Dyce Station (on the opposite side from the existing bus access, to facilitate easier access between the station and airport).
- Derick Murray noted that Aberdeen City Council is looking at a Cross City Connections Study which will examine how to tie up (via a bus link) new development in Bridge of Don, the new Grandholm development, Dyce, the proposed Exhibition Centre, Aberdeen Airport, Kingswells, Countesswells, and beyond to Chapelton.
- The Dyce Link Road will be built prior to the Park and Ride site which will be located by the Marshall Trailers site on the A96.
- There was discussion on the need to get employers together in Dyce to stagger working hours. It was stated that the peak period of congestion in the area is now from 4pm-6pm rather than 5pm-6pm.

Vycki also confirmed that previous changes to the Traffic Regulation Order on Market Street/Guild Street (which have since been reverted) are due for review. It was noted that warning signs or improved markings around this junction could help to promote safety (with a previous accident having occurred due to undercutting of an HGV).

Impact of the Construction of the AWPR on Freight Movements (*Paul Finch, Aberdeenshire Council*)

Paul Finch introduced a discussion on the AWPR/Balmedie-Tipperty project. He noted that disruption is anticipated during the construction period of the scheme, and although mostly offline, will impact at points where the route crosses the main radial routes and at interchanges. A key consideration is how this can best be managed so that impacts on freight (and the wider economy) are mitigated. This is also captured in the refreshed FAP.



Suggestions of things to consider during the AWPR construction raised by the Forum included:

- Regular review of estimated timescales/programme.
- Information dissemination through direct e-mails.
- E-mail templates for sending onto customers.
- Use of Scottish transport/motor transport/lorry driver magazines to communicate information.
- Local press communications.
- Dedicated website (as per London 2012/supermarkets).
- Provision of adequate stock levels in advance to avoid supply chain issues.
- General need to “get the message out there.”
- Wider communications between users/customers.
- Monthly/weekly plan – different information, different people, different times.
- Pre-determined haulier routes and timings, and customers.
- Night-time deliveries. Problem in that customers close down at 5pm (rather than hauliers).
- Approach for supermarkets?
- Use of radio – including a dedicated radio station.
- Major employer discussion – offshore businesses/Oil and Gas UK.
- Vendors/operators should be aware of the planning process.
- Communications Hub.
- Freight Holding areas – these can be useful for Union Square, and supermarket operations, but the nature of the oil industry is so reactive that these may not work.
- Use of VMS signs.
- Real time information / Smart Journey?
- How should the freight industry be organised to consult on these issues?

It was agreed that the FAP Implementation Group would pass onto the AWPR team that the haulage industry has requested input to the consultation process as part of junction design for the AWPR scheme.

Wellington Road Corridor Multi-Modal Transport Study (Richie Fraser, AECOM)

Richie Fraser (Principal Consultant, AECOM) provided a presentation on the Wellington Road Corridor Multi-Modal Transport Study. He explained that AECOM has been commissioned by Nestrans to consider transport options for this corridor and added that there is a need to ensure consistency with *Locking in the Benefits* of the AWPR; and future development plans. Consideration will be given to all transport modes, including freight, but this Forum provides the opportunity to identify problems and opportunities for freight on the corridor and to feed into the development of options to support a multi-modal transport corridor.

Key points relating to the Wellington Road corridor raised by the Forum included:

- The implications of the Nigg Bay Harbour development – this could provide opportunities to provide a new link road into the East Tullos industrial estate which will, in turn, change the pattern of freight access to and from Wellington Road.
- The old coast road is used as a rat run, but is unsuitable for efficient flows of HGVs.
- There is concern in Torry with regard to the use of Victoria Road by freight vehicles.
- Ian Jessiman of Aberdeen Harbour Board noted that as part of the Masterplan for the Harbour extension, traffic flow impact data has been recorded and this was offered to AECOM as a resource for the study.
- New traffic signals at the Charleston Village development are causing queues back from the Southerhead Roundabout (on the southbound carriageway). Vycki Ritson noted that this could be due to the patterns requiring calibration time to work out an optimum setting.



- Lane discipline issues on the southbound approach to the Charleston flyover.
- Journey times from Altens Industrial Estate to Aberdeen Harbour are long in the afternoon/evening peak, particularly on Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays.
- HGVs require ample space to perform the right turn manoeuvre at the QEII Bridge en route to the Harbour.
- Freight flows extend beyond the corridor from Tullos and Altens to Portlethen.
- The bus lane in the northern part of the corridor causes issues.
- Consideration should be given to allowing HGVs into bus lanes.
- Wellington Road is still regarded by drivers as the best route from which to access the A90 (North) to Peterhead and Fraserburgh.
- It was noted that the AWPR should help to reduce the number of HGVs using Wellington Road.
- Appropriate signing (to direct HGVs bound for the likes of Peterhead and Fraserburgh) away from Wellington Road will be a key measure to support the AWPR.
- The role of VMS signs in promoting effective freight movements should also be explored.
- The right turn from Greenwell Road onto Wellington Road can be dangerous for HGVs.

It was also noted that Nestrans want to ensure that any developments on Wellington Road do not preclude the opportunity to dual the section of the carriageway beside the old Craiginches Prison in the future.

Additional feedback to AECOM on particular problems and opportunities relating to the Wellington Road Corridor was encouraged following the meeting.

Nigg Bay Harbour Development (Ian Jessiman, Aberdeen Harbour Board)

Ian Jessiman of Aberdeen Harbour Board displayed a video showing plans for the Nigg Bay Harbour Development. It was noted that there will be little overall interaction between Nigg Bay and the existing harbour, with operations being undertaken independently. It is anticipated that the new harbour will generate an extra £1bn per year into the North East economy. The project has been designated within NPF3 – as a project of national importance – by the Scottish Government.

As noted above, there will be a relationship between this development and the Wellington Road corridor, although it was noted that road improvements (e.g. on the old coast road and the industrial estates) could help to mitigate the level of impact on Wellington Road.

Conclusions

Delegates were thanked for their valued time and contribution to the Forum and were encouraged to feed back any further thoughts to Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council or AECOM.

Going forward, it was agreed that consideration would be given to holding targeted discussions with individual hauliers to help to draw out freight issues and opportunities (including for the Wellington Road Corridor study).