

Objections – January 2007

20 of the Reasons

Why Road Sense is Challenging the Tavish Scott Route for the AWPR

1. The financial costs are high but the benefits are few

This proposal is not justified compared to alternative transport investment options using the Scottish Executive's own guidelines. The cost estimate excludes additional costs for under- and over-passes and adjustments to the radial routes into Aberdeen and mitigation of the damage it will cause.

The benefits of this particular route in both economic and traffic terms are grossly overstated.

The AWPR cost-benefit analysis excludes consideration of the associated social and environmental costs.

2. The financial costs are set to become even higher

The £295 - £395 Million quoted by Transport Scotland as the cost of the AWPR is increasingly being shown to be misleadingly low. Financing the road by means of a 30-year PPP funding scheme is unlikely to cost less than £700 Million, even if the road could be built for £345 Million. If the road were to cost the documented **AVERAGE** cost for roads of this type (£15.3 Million per mile) then the total bill will be more like **£1 Billion!** And that would mean *an additional cost to Aberdeen City and Shire of £2 Million per annum for 30 years!*

3. Emerging details of the road design are not what people expected

Members of the public attending the Road Shows at which the AWPR Project Team proudly presented their design for the new road were aghast to discover that

- Major intersections are not the modern free-flowing interchanges expected, but just traffic-light controlled crossroads or roundabouts
- Lack of access on to the new road, combined with the stopping-off of many minor roads it crosses, means that many local journeys will involve driving twice as far as at present to get from a point on one side of the new road to a point on the other
- Rush hour traffic volumes shown flowing so smoothly on the dynamic traffic models on display were very much less than the rush hour traffic volumes that we all know so well.

4. This route is already beginning to look like an expensive and unsatisfactory option

The true cost of the road was misleadingly under-estimated. The design of the road is now being compromised in an effort to reduce its actual cost. This has all the classic signs of a politically driven hotch-potch that fails to deliver and pleases no-one.

5. The route will cause great and irreversible damage to a special rural environment

The route passes through a landscape of outstanding beauty and will inflict great damage upon the environment. This includes damage to important habitats and species amongst which is the River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Major wildlife corridors will be severely affected, including the Old Deeside Railway, Red Moss and the Dee and Don Valleys.

6. The route will create barriers between local and diverse communities

The route will form a major physical and psychological barrier that will split communities forever.

7. There is no demonstrable need for the Stonehaven-Netherley fast link which was included merely for political expediency

The choice of a new 'fast link' paralleling the existing B979 Stonehaven to Netherley road was a political decision. Two connections off the A90 instead of one will be more costly and cause significantly greater environmental damage.

8. The route will only remove a very small proportion of heavy vehicular traffic from the city

The AWPR would only remove a very small number (2% according to the 1998 Oscar Faber study *Sustainable Transport for Aberdeen*) of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) trips from the city, because only a small percentage is HGV 'through-trips', i.e. 'trips not having an origin, destination or intermediate-call to make within the city'.

9. The route will induce additional traffic and create traffic congestion at new locations

The chosen route for the AWPR will induce more traffic generally, cause new localised congestion problems and create new rat runs. It will have a severely negative impact on some existing radial roads into Aberdeen.

10. The route is not part of a co-ordinated multimodal transport package nor does it form part of an integrated transport network

It is the current policy of the Scottish Executive to appraise new transport schemes within the context of what is known as a multimodal study, to consider all possible reasonable alternatives to the construction of environmentally damaging and financially costly schemes such as the AWPR. There has been no full and complete study to identify, examine and test all of the alternatives to the proposed AWPR.

11. The route was promoted without proper regard to due process

There has been no full and proper appraisal of either the alternative routes or the selected route. Contrary to the Scottish Executive's own guidance there has been no attempt to explain why consideration of any alternative route has been abandoned.

12. Members of the public were misled during the public consultation exercise

The consultation in March 2005 was flawed and public servants misled members of the public. Many local people believed officials and their advisers when told that the outermost routes were not being considered seriously.

13. There has been a conflict of interest amongst those designing the route

The same company has been contracted, without transparent procurement procedures being followed, to carry out the engineering design and prepare the environmental statement of the chosen route.

14. The route divides and fragments the green belt.

The route will cause irreversible damage to the green belt which was established to prevent inappropriate development and to check the unrestricted sprawl of built up areas.

15. The route will attract development and draw business away from the city.

Both local authorities will want to grant planning permission for new development such as housing and shops along the route in order to lever funds from developers to fund the AWPR.

16. The AWPR has been put forward in advance of the local and regional transport strategies

Neither Aberdeen City Council nor Aberdeenshire Council has yet produced their finalised local or regional transport strategies setting out the strategic vision and framework for transport provision within the North East of Scotland over the next 5-10 years. The case for the AWPR should be clearly and robustly established within these documents.

17. The AWPR is incompatible with global climate change principles.

The route is yesterday's solution to the problems of tomorrow. Additional traffic will cause additional greenhouse gases.

18. The lives of many are already being blighted by this route

If the road is built, then those near it would face months if not years of disruption, noise, pollution and inconvenience. Only once the road was open would there be any hope of compensation.

19. The route will lead to an overall increase in the number of accidents

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