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Aberdeen
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25 November 2007

Alison Hughes, Transport Scotland
Trunk Roads: Infrastructure and Professional Services
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 0HF

Dear Ms Hughes,

Formal Objections to Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

We wish to register our formal objections to the AWPR draft Side Road Orders, reference RYC/G109/13/073.

The A90 (Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route) Special Road (Side Roads) Order 200
(Maps SR1 to SR37)

1. The effective stopping up of the North Deeside Railway Line means greater danger to cyclists, pedestrians and walkers who are forced onto Station Road and Milltimber Brae. The diversion of the route from the east end of Station Road to the B979 means that views over the Dee Valley previously enjoyed will be lost and the integrity of the walkway along the railway line permanently interrupted. This action also jeopardises the reinstatement of the railway line, if this was to happen.

It seems curious that Aberdeen City Council has recently been put to great expense tarring this stretch of the route and setting up a handrail as if the AWPR is ever built, this part of the route will be destroyed.

2. Stopping up access from point 273 to 272 has serious implications for the farming business at Milltimber Farm, as well as pedestrian access along that route.

3. The creation of a new access at 396 is extremely dangerous and impractical, particularly with respect to livestock access. Another solution should be found regarding this access. The inclusion of the access seems to indicate a lack of local knowledge and any actual ground investigation, which is very disappointing. If this reflects the approach taken to other areas of the road, which would seem to suggest simply a desk-based study, then it is to be expected that serious issues may arise at other points.

4. Access is stopped up at 278 and 279. No provision of an alternative route is shown, although this does appear to be included on the Jacobs maps. This is therefore an omission on map SR23.

5. The provision of access and realignment at 397 and 398 has been included without any detailed discussion with the landowner. There may be environmental reasons why this should be altered to advantage from the proposed line on the map, bearing in mind that ample headroom should be given at the underpass for all foreseeable agricultural and forestry uses.

6. SR24. The provision of a new road for those living and accessing Blaikiewell Farm (Points 64 - 401) presents a number of difficulties, including that of access during winter conditions. Will

Aberdeenshire Council give an undertaking to keep this road open during periods of snow and ensure that it is gritted? It is well known that the north facing nature of the land and the gradient mean that the sun will not rise high enough to melt ice and snow, which almost guarantees that there will be access problems, as well as accident risk.

There will also be a much greater distance for access to these properties and a tortuous route will have to be taken to reach the current access point from Blaikiewell to the Burnhead road, leading to great inconvenience, not only to the local residents but also the farmers of the land there. There may be increased accident risk diverting this traffic onto the C5K.

7. Has due consideration been given to the re-routing of broadband lines at point 280/281 and at all other places where business access on line is imperative during and after construction?

8. No explanation has been given for the addition of access along the road numbered 452.

9. No mention is made of the stopping up of the farm road north-west of Megray Farmhouse, towards the B979 (North of map SR29). Although this is a right of way, it is also an access road for local inhabitants in time of snow and wintry weather where otherwise access may be impossible. If this road is stopped up, will Aberdeenshire Council undertake to keep the access to Megray Farmhouse open?

10. The local road C127 (plan SR35) is to be realigned and straightened where it passes under the AWPR. This is a dangerous road already and parts are single track. Parts will permit 2 cars to pass with caution. However, at present cars regularly travel at high speeds and there are a number of accidents each year. The localised straightening on a short downhill stretch can only lead to greater speeds and more accidents as the rest of the road is still in its original condition. There are numerous horse riders and cyclists who use this road to access the Rotten O'Gairn forest for recreation. Traffic analysis provided to date as part of the appraisal process indicates that there will be an increased traffic flow on the Silverburn / Blacktop road, increasing the accident risk.

11. The same argument applies to the road straightening on Plan SR36, along the Lairhillock to Portlethen road. Although it may seem an improvement to straighten bends and ensure a better approach to a bridge crossing the AWPR, it may be that this actually increases driver speeds and may lead to more accidents in the longer term.

12. The new means of access to farmland on plan SR18 is unsuitable for the farming co-operative that exists in the area and may seriously affect the viability of the farms there.

13. SR18. The Right of Way at point 253 to 254 is to be stopped up. The alternative new road is far too long and the design of the proposed underpass connecting to Auchlea Moss appears unsuitable to prevent the accumulation of snow and water and may be impassable throughout many winter months. Please confirm that Aberdeen City Council will adopt these access roads and undertake maintenance and snow clearing to avoid the cost falling on individuals in the area.

14. On plan SR19, the Gairnburn, Silverburn and Ord Burn Valley is subject to frequent flooding during periods of heavy rain. Local residents expect that both the AWPR itself and the realignment of the C127, Silverburn Road will substantially exacerbate flooding of the C127 and the valley floor itself. Proper modelling should be done of the impact of both the AWPR and the realigned side roads on run off and sediment transport both during construction and operation of the AWPR, and the realignment of the C127, Silverburn Road appears to exacerbate the situation with even more of this road being subject to flooding.

The A956 (Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route) Special Road (Side Roads) Order 200
(Maps SR1 to SR8)

15. Plan SR1, 32-33. The fields at Swellhead are predominantly used for livestock and an underpass is required to allow movement between the two severed areas and prevent a two mile walk over the new bridge with cattle moving between one part of the severed area and another. At meetings with the AWPR team and Jacobs, the owner and tenants were assured that farm access would be taken into consideration. No provision has been made for the Swellhead back road underpass and this will have a major impact on farming operations. The provision for movement of livestock across the severed holding is by way of the new overbridge at point 17. It is very difficult to move cattle along the public road for this distance, causing frustration to drivers, stress to the livestock and public safety issues.

16. The re-alignment of the road between points 20 and 17 will mean greater traffic speeds downhill approaching the T-junction at Burnhead. This carries the extra risk of traffic accidents, bearing in mind the proposals objected to at point 14 above. It is also possible that due to increased traffic volumes in the area, accruing as a result of the AWPR, there will be more traffic using the C5K Lochton to Auchlunies road, which also increases the risk of accidents. In addition, there will be extra cattle movements along this road leading to additional danger.

17. The map SR1 is unclear, as the whole road from point 20 to 27 to 17 is shown as being stopped up. This is unacceptable, as this denies access to 3 properties and we object to this. There is no right of access along the track leading north west from Clianthus Road (to the west of the stopped up road) and this suggests a lack of detailed local knowledge by the designers of the scheme at this point. Again, no detailed discussion has taken place between Jacobs, the AWPR team and the landowner or tenant regarding this issue.

18. Access is required for cattle and vehicles off the new side road 50m south of point 20 to the north west and south east. No access is shown, but this would be much safer than what is proposed.

19. The stopping up at points 32 and 33 cut a well-used local recreational walk. The new proposals are far from satisfactory.

20. SR3. We have been advised that the road C34K will be stopped up and only local farming traffic will be able to use it between points 9 and 10 to the south of the Beeches. Would you please confirm if this is the case? If so, we would object to this in the strongest possible terms as this major local route should be kept open.

21. If the road C34K is to be kept open, the current proposed alignment appears awkward and without adequate turning areas to the east of point 9, especially for HGV's. There also appears to be a large land take with the attendant sterilization.

22. SR2. The realignment between point 7 and 8 at Bishopston also seems to be awkward, potentially leading to driver frustration and accidents. Again, there seems to be a high level of land take for access to the proposed over-bridge, with subsequent sterilization.

23. Due to the size of the land area involved and the on-going development of the route even at this late stage, we reserve the right to comment further on any aspects of the Side Road Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders or Environmental Assessment that have yet come to light relating to any of the above points raised or other issues.

We look forward to receiving an acknowledgement from you and a full and detailed reply on the matters raised.

Yours sincerely

Henry Irvine-Fortescue
Vice Chairman
On behalf of Road Sense

(Paper Version to be posted to Alison Hughes on Monday 26th November)