

REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 15 JUNE 2010

SUBJECT: ELGIN TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - CAPITAL PLAN 2010/2011

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Committee approval for a number of projects in the Capital Plan as detailed in the report.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to Capital and Revenue budgets.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that:-

- a) the Committee note the proposed timetable for the Western Distributor Option Appraisal and approve progressing the four options as outlined below.
- b) the Committee approve the 2010/2011 expenditure for the Elgin Traffic Management projects detailed in this report.
- c) the Committee note the situation regarding the affordable housing site at Bilbohall and approve the commencement of relevant detailed design and utility consultation in order to meet the Council's obligations.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Core Capital Plan for 2010/2011 was approved at the Special Meeting of The Moray Council on 11 February 2010 as part of the Financial Plan for 2010/11 (Para 4 (iii) of the Minute refers).
- 3.2 The Elgin Traffic Management budget approved by Moray Council on 11 February 2010 is made up from identified sub-projects, each of which further the overall key planning objective of "***providing a quicker, safer and more reliable transport system in and around Elgin while accommodating future development***" adopted by the Elgin STAG in 2007. A description of each sub-project is provided in subsequent paragraphs.

3.3 Edgar Road / Access to Affordable Housing

- 3.3.1 The Capital Plan budget allocation to Elgin High School & Sports Facilities has been deferred and consequently there is no immediate need to construct a new access road to the school. The design of an extension to Edgar Road

and a school access is substantially complete with further development work put on hold.

- 3.3.2 Ground Investigation work for an Edgar Road extension and access to the High School was completed last year.
- 3.3.3 The area of Bilbohall South (R5) is designated for affordable housing in the current Development Plan and was sold to Grampian Housing Association (GHA) in 2007 with the proviso that the Council would provide a suitable access and foul sewer within 5 years of the purchase date. This deadline expires on 31 March 2012.
- 3.3.4 The site is in GHA's long-term development programme. It is also included in the Council current Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for future development. GHA await a commitment from the Council on the access / sewer provision. However both parties confirm that should this commitment be made, and funding be available, then development of the site could be brought forward in the programmes.
- 3.3.5 In order to meet this deadline, it is recommended that work on detailed design and utility consultation should commence. The proposals would be compatible with a future access road to the High School and proposals for the route of a western distributor road.
- 3.3.6 A plan showing the location of the affordable housing site is shown in **Appendix 1** which is based on an extract from the current Development Plan.

3.4 Western Distributor Road Option

- 3.4.1 Reference is made to the report to Economic Development & Infrastructure Services Committee on 3 February 2009 (para 19 of the Minute refers) approving continued investigation into Options A and B of a western distributor road.
- 3.4.2 The Framework consultants, Jacobs, are progressing this option appraisal as well as updating the Elgin traffic model. The option appraisal process needs to be robust to ensure it can stand scrutiny and interrogation. National standards for scheme assessment are being used and this requires a prescribed process to be followed.
- 3.4.3 The STAG process has previously been followed and was the appropriate strategic appraisal method during the transport planning phase. The scheme development and appraisal phase follows the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and covers a three stage process. Stage 1 is the Preliminary Assessment and Stage 2 is the Route Option Assessment as outlined below. Stage 3 develops a Preferred Option to support the statutory authorisation of the project. The STAG process will now take on a supporting role to the DMRB method.

3.4.4 This Committee gave approval to further consider Options A and B however the design standards (and good practice) recommend a “Do-Nothing” option be considered as a baseline for comparison. In addition, given the likely financial implications of advancing with either Option A or B, a “Do-Minimum” option should also be investigated to consider interim lower cost interventions.

3.4.5 It is proposed that the **Stage 1 Report** will be submitted to the **August** cycle of this Committee. The report will include:

- A review of the existing information and designs.
- Development of the options to reflect changes since the 2007 Halcrow study and committed development.
- High level engineering assessment of the 4 options.
- Traffic and junction assessment of the options including an initial assessment of the impact on the road network.
- Economic assessment of the options including updated budget-range estimates.
- Qualitative based preliminary Economic Activity Location Impact (EALI) assessment of the options.

3.4.6 Following approval to proceed, an **Interim Stage 2 Report** will be submitted to the **December** cycle of this Committee. The report will include:

- Development of the scheme options to Stage 2 level.
- Engineering assessment of scheme options.
- Environmental Impact Assessment including details of mitigation measures.
- Traffic and economic assessment of the scheme options including more detailed modelling and junction assessments.
- More detailed, quantitative based EALI (Economic Activity & Location Impacts) assessment.
- Budget costs estimates.

3.4.7 At the December meeting it is hoped that approval to proceed with public consultation on a neutral format can be agreed allowing the **Final Stage 2 Report** to be presented at the **March** 2011 Committee. This final stage would report on the technical aspects and the public consultation, with a preferred option identified for consideration.

3.5 Car Parking Hardware

3.5.1 At the Moray Council Special meeting on 11 February 2010 (Item 3 refers) the Council agreed to introduce car park charges to Lossie Green and Lossie Wynd public car parks in Elgin. At the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee on 23 February 2010 (item 12 refers) approval was given to start the statutory processes. The funding is required to install six Pay and Display ticket machines and the associated underground electrical supply work should Members agree to over-rule the objections received to the statutory consultation process. This is the subject of a separate report to this Committee.

3.6 Signing

- 3.6.1 Following a period of consultation, the Elgin Roads Hierarchy was approved by this Committee on 20 April 2010 (para 17 of the Minute refers). As a result of this, replacement road signs will be required at a number of locations. This is one of the actions in the Elgin Traffic Review which was carried out in partnership with Transport Scotland. The Council is expected to deliver this signing to mitigate congestion problems by reducing traffic flows on the A96 Alexandra Road.

3.7 Summary

- 3.7.1 The following describes the individual elements of the Elgin Traffic Management Plan to be progressed during 2010/2011 and highlights the total projected expenditure for the year:

<u>Description:</u> Development of Western Distributor Road Options.	
Details:	Projected Expenditure (£'000)
Continue development of options with a view to producing a robust proposal. (See para 3.4 above)	360
<u>Description:</u> Extension of Edgar Road to service housing (and 1st phase of a Western Distributor Road)	
Details:	
Detailed design of extension to Edgar Road and access to R5 Bilbohall housing.	95
Initial utility consultation.	
<u>Description:</u> Elgin Traffic Model	
Details:	
Updating, developing and analysing the traffic model in line with assessing current and proposed major developments and transport appraisals in Elgin.	65
<u>Description:</u> Elgin Car Parking Strategy	
Details:	

Pilot study of Elgin Car Parking Strategy (subject to any major development changes which may delay this work).	20
<u>Description:</u> Property Acquisition	
Details:	
Legal fees, condition surveys, etc following the acquisition of 78 Wittet Drive.	7
<u>Description:</u> Car Parking Hardware	
Details:	
Set-up costs for the implementation of Pay and Display restrictions in Lossie Green and Lossie Wynd Car Parks.	50
<u>Description:</u> Signing	
Details:	
Replacement / upgrading of signing relating to implementation of the Elgin Roads Hierarchy to remove some traffic from Alexandra Road.	25
<u>Description:</u> Transportation Study for “Elgin-City for the Future”	
Details:	
Contribution of £20k towards £50k cost for Transportation consultant’s input to this project.	20
Total Projected Expenditure for 2010/11	642

3.8 Summary of Expenditure:

A Capital plan allocation for this project requires the following adjustment.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	Total
Current Allocation	1,110	1,590	1,000	1,000	2,900	7600
Proposed Allocation	642	←———— See Note below —————→				7600

All figures are in £,000

Note: Capital funding beyond 2010/11 is to be reviewed in further reports to this Committee on scheme progress, and is dependant on which option is approved to proceed to detailed design.

- 3.9 Funding in 2011/12 and 2012/13 will be required to construct the infrastructure needed to access the affordable housing site. If the Council cannot achieve this by the date set out in the legal agreement with Grampian Housing Association Ltd., then the Council is required to pay back the £2.7m purchase price plus interest from the date of purchase.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

- (i) **This report is in line with National Outcome 1 and Local Outcome 3: “Moray will benefit from an improved and safer transportation infrastructure”.**
- (ii) **Service Priority 2 (Elgin Traffic Management Plan) of the Service Improvement Plan.**
- (iii) **Information already provided for the Theme Groups and Service Improvement Plan have been based on this emerging report.**

(b) **Policy and Legal**

None.

(c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

As contained in Section 3 of this report.

(d) **Consultations**

The following have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents:

Lorraine Paisey, Principal Accountant.

Aileen Scott, Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing).

Graeme Davidson, Housing Strategy and Policy Manager.

Stuart Beveridge, Senior Estates Surveyor.

Nick Goodchild, Educational Resources Manager.

The Elgin South West Working Group will be convened at key milestones to consider the progress reports being prepared for future consideration by this Committee.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The schemes listed in this report are currently Provisionally Approved in the Capital Plan. Authorisation is sought from the Committee to proceed with the schemes and to spend within the budget allocation for 2010/2011.**
- 5.2 It is important to note that the individual elements outlined in this report, together form an integral part of the Elgin Traffic Management Plan and as such should not be seen as discrete projects.**
- 5.3 The Elgin Traffic Management Plan is critical, not just to the implementation of the current Development Plan but also in its review. In addition it will help deliver the Council's obligations under the Elgin Traffic Review and the Single Outcome Agreement. Whilst a phased approach to the delivery of the Elgin Traffic Management Plan will be required, it is clear that a number of its individual elements are inter-related and delays in one element may have a consequential effect on others.**

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Background Papers:

Ref: