

The Highland Council

Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee

14 May 2014

Agenda Item	9
Report No	PDI 6/14

Inshes and Raigmore Development Brief – Issues and Options and Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 Consultation

Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

Summary

This report sets out the background and material relating to a forthcoming public consultation event, being carried out in partnership with Transport Scotland, relating to land use opportunities and strategic and local transport network improvements in the Inshes and Raigmore areas of Inverness. Members are asked to agree the material relating to development opportunities in the area that will inform a draft development brief (Appendix A) and also the related outline roads proposals for Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 (Appendix B), as a basis for public consultation.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Highland-wide Local Development Plan (2012) provides a spatial strategy for Inverness. It identifies that strategic transport and infrastructure improvements in the Inshes and Raigmore areas of Inverness are key to the future development of the area. The Local Development Plan sets out the need for a Development Brief to be prepared for this area in order to guide development and allow a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure delivery. Recognising the links in this area between local and trunk roads, Council officers have also been working closely with Transport Scotland in taking a proactive and joined up approach to addressing the issues.
- 1.2 In addition to preparing a Development Brief for the area, outline road improvement proposals for Inshes Junction are being developed by the Council. Regular discussions have been held with Transport Scotland on their ongoing A9/A96 Connections Study. This report seeks approval for public consultation material relating to development opportunities in the area that will inform a draft development brief (appendix A) and also the related outline roads proposals for Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 (appendix B). Further information on the preparation of the Development Brief and Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 is provided in sections 2 and 3 of this report respectively. Next steps for both the development brief and Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 are explained in section 4.
- 1.3 This report has been brought to the PDI Committee mainly due to the timescales set out by Transport Scotland for their public consultation. However, subsequent drafts

of the development brief will be reported to the City of Inverness Area Committee and taken back to this committee for final statutory approval.

2. Inshes and Raigmore Development Brief

- 2.1 The City of Inverness has a major role to play in delivering the vision and spatial strategy for the Inner Moray Firth Area as set out in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. This plan identifies Inshes and Raigmore as one of four regeneration areas in the City and commits to the preparation of a development brief to optimise the area's role within the City as a transport corridor and employment hub.
- 2.2 A report was presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 9 December 2013 that provided an update on development briefs for regeneration areas in Inverness. It identified the following key challenges and opportunities for Inshes and Raigmore:
 - Delivery of a solution to the local and trunk road network issues, including Inshes Roundabout and an A9/A96 Link;
 - Ensure the vitality and viability of the area as a significant employment hub for Inverness;
 - Need to improve connections by walking and cycling both within and outwith the area; and
 - Delivery of a solution to address flood risk in the area.
- 2.3 To inform the material presented in appendix A, liaison has been undertaken with key partners and community groups during March and April 2014. Meetings were held with significant landowners and/or their agents within the brief area, including Police Scotland, NHS Highland, Tesco/Dobbies and Scottish Widows Investment Partnership (owner of development site at Dell of Inshes). Meetings were also held with the three Community Councils within the brief area. Comments were also sought from a range of specialist officers within the Council and external agencies including Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.
- 2.4 The material presented in appendix A will form the basis of an Issues and Options Paper that will be available in the form of a hand out at public exhibitions and available to view on the Council's website. The same paper will also include the related outline Inshes Junction Improvements proposals that are described further in part 3 of this report. Comments received on the Issues and Options Paper will inform a draft development brief.
- 2.5 The consultation material has been prepared prior to a draft development brief to raise awareness of the issues and options within the brief area and to allow for an opportunity for all stakeholders to inform the draft brief.
- 2.6 The Issues and Options Paper focusses on the following four topics:
 - Development Plan - recognition of the commitment to prepare a brief for the area in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and emerging Inner

Moray Firth Local Development Plan;

- Constraints – to ensure that built development takes account of constrained areas – i.e. significant trees, existing and new roads and active travel connections, flood risk areas and land required for flood storage and defences for the Dell Burn;
- Accessibility – to ensure that the development brief and related Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2/potential Transport Scotland improvements deliver efficient travel connections between people and facilities, especially by active travel and public transport; and
- Development guidelines – to identify acceptable land uses and development guidelines for two key development opportunity sites within the brief area at Dell of Inshes and land to the rear of Police Scotland.

2.7 Members may be aware a planning application (reference: 13/04334/PIP) for a mixed use development encompassing retail, financial professional and other services and food and drink uses; public house/restaurant, community allotments and associated works has been submitted to the Council for land at Dell of Inshes. This applicant has been informed that the Council considers the application premature as it has been submitted prior to finalisation of the development brief and Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2. Agreement has been reached with the applicant to postpone the determination of the planning application until the preparation of the Development Brief has moved on sufficiently to guide decision making.

3. Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2

- 3.1 A meeting of the Council's Transport, Environment and Community Services Committee held on 22 January 2009 was advised on the outcome of the Scottish Government's Transport Projects Review (STPR) which set out the Scottish Government's 29 transport investment priorities over the period to 2032. STPR included recommendations to upgrade the A96 between Inverness and Nairn, a Nairn Bypass and the A9/A96 Link Road. The meeting was also advised that the A96/A82 (East and West Link) had not been included within the STPR recommendations.
- 3.2 Transport Scotland presented two options for a dual carriageway trunk link road between Inshes and Smithton in February 2012. Following comments received, Transport Scotland took the opportunity to examine the wider context of the link road within the A9/A96 Connections Study. Having worked closely with Highland Council officers to develop alternative options to the A9/A96 dual carriageway trunk link road, Transport Scotland will present these options at public exhibitions on 30 May and 3 June 2014. Comments will be invited from the public. Unfortunately the options which will be presented to the public are not yet available from Transport Scotland.
- 3.3 The consultation events being arranged by Transport Scotland for the end of May have provided an ideal opportunity for the public exhibitions to include the related

issues of the Inshes and Raigmore Development Brief and the Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2. This demonstrates that a coordinated and joined up approach to development and infrastructure issues in the area is being taken.

- 3.4 In tandem with the Transport Scotland option development, the Council has been considering improvements along the Culloden Road and Old Perth Road corridor to identify proposals to relieve traffic congestion. Issues that had to be addressed included access provision to the Inverness Campus site, the need for on-going dialogue with Transport Scotland regarding their A9/A96 Connections Study proposals and the need to improve traffic flows at Inshes Junction from both existing and planned development in the area.
- 3.5 The Council project was split into two phases, Inshes Phase 1 was constructed in 2012/13 and included improvements to Culloden Road west of Inshes Overbridge, including the access provision to the Inverness Campus site. The Phase 2 project extends from Inshes Overbridge westwards along Culloden Road through Inshes junction and along Old Perth Road to the Fluke Roundabout at the junction of Old Perth Road and Culcabock Road.
- 3.6 Regular liaison meetings have been held with Transport Scotland to ensure that proposals arising from the A9/A96 Connections Study and local roads proposals are compatible. Highland Council officials and Transport Scotland have worked closely together to consider road layouts and proposals and also integrated traffic modelling to ensure consistency in traffic flows and capacities.
- 3.7 The expanded objectives of the Inshes Junction Improvements scheme are to deliver an improved transport network that relieves existing congestion and has capacity to accommodate future development taking into account the following key factors:
- Transport Scotland A9/A96 Connections Study;
 - Implications of the Inverness West Link
 - The National Cycle Network (routed through the site);
 - Bus routes which use the junctions;
 - Flood risk associated with the Dell Burn;
 - Adequate access to Inshes Retail Park;
 - Adequate access to Police Scotland; and
 - Existing and planned housing and mixed use developments in the area.
- 3.8 As the proposed road improvement works could potentially impact on the alignment of the Dell Burn, where flooding has previously occurred, it has been necessary to consider how flood defences and attenuation could be provided in this area, which will aim to provide an improved standard of protection to the area and also reduce the risk of flooding downstream.
- 3.9 The proposals for Inshes Improvements Phase 2 presented in appendix B have been developed following traffic modelling work. The layout and associated capacities seeks to address future growth in traffic from existing and new developments. It should be recognised however that until Transport Scotland has established their preferred route, the finalisation of the road improvement

proposals to accord with both their proposed road layouts and associated traffic modelling figures cannot commence.

- 3.10 Consultation on the draft layout of Inshes Junction Improvement Phase 2 will allow comment from affected businesses, statutory bodies, landowners and communities in the area to influence the design development. It should be noted however that there is no preferred option at this stage.
- 3.11 The consultation boards to be used for the public exhibitions are contained in appendix B. These consultation boards will also be available in the form of a hand-out, in combination with the initial development brief proposals, at public exhibitions available to view on the Council's website.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The development brief will establish the Council's detailed planning policy for the area and it will be pivotal to future planning decisions in the area and important in respect of other supporting proposals associated with Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 and Transport Scotland's A9/A96 Connections Study.
- 4.2 The consultation period for material relating to development opportunities in the area and also the related outline roads proposals for Inshes Junction Improvements presented in appendix A and appendix B respectively is proposed to run from 30 May to 31 July 2014. This will include two public exhibitions/drop-in sessions attended by Council Planning and Transportation Officers. Transport Scotland will present options arising from the A9/A96 Connections Study at the same event and seek feedback from the public. At the events the public can find out more and ask questions of Council and Transport Scotland officials. These events will be held on:
- 30 May 2014 at Inshes Church (12 noon till 7pm)
 - 3 June 2014 at Old High Church Halls, Academy Street, Inverness (12 noon till 7pm)
- 4.3 The public exhibitions and consultation will be widely publicised by means of writing to residents and businesses within and adjacent to the brief area and Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 and those on the development plans mailing list; placing notices in local press, posters and by using social media.
- 4.4 The milestones and timescales for preparing the development brief thereafter are outlined in the table below.

Milestone	Timescale
Report findings of Issues and Options consultation and draft development brief to City of Inverness Area Committee	September 2014
Public consultation on draft Development Brief	September – November 2014
Report back findings of consultation and final Development Brief to City of Inverness Area Committee; begin statutory adoption procedures	December 2014

Adoption as statutory supplementary guidance at Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee	January 2015
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- 4.5 Due to the layout of the Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 Scheme being linked to the preferred option selected by Transport Scotland in respect of the A9/A96 link, a detailed timetable for the project delivery can only be established on confirmation of a preferred route. Once the preferred A9/A96 route has been announced by Transport Scotland, a paper on the Inshes Junction Improvement Phase 2 proposals will be brought to committee for approval with a final layout.

5. Implications

- 5.1 The brief will be required to undergo due process with regards to Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Appraisal. These processes have commenced and will be concluded at an appropriate time.
- 5.2 There are no known direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.3 Resources to deliver the development brief are available from the Development and Infrastructure Service budget. Resources to develop the proposals for Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 are contained within the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.4 In regard to equalities, any design for development will take into account access requirements for individuals with disabilities and vulnerable user groups.
- 5.5 The development brief and Inshes Junction Improvement Phase 2 will look at the wider active travel connections from Inshes and Raigmore to other key destinations in the city. This will help to mitigate the impact of climate change by reducing traffic congestion, improving journey times and supporting active travel and cycle routes thereby reducing the carbon footprint of the city and contributing to the carbon clever initiatives.

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to:

- Agree for the material contained as appendices to this report to form the basis of a public consultation on development opportunities in the Inshes and Raigmore areas that will inform a draft development brief (appendix A) and the related outline roads proposals for Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2 (appendix B).

Designation: Director of Development & Infrastructure

Date: 1 May 2014

Authors: Lynn Clarke/Colin Howell/Malcolm Macleod

Background Papers:

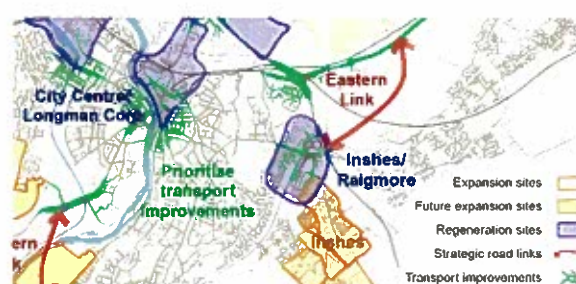
- Highland Council committee report HC-33-07
- Highland Council committee report TEC-03-09
- Highland-wide Local Development Plan (2012)
- Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan (2013)
- Report to City of Inverness Area Committee on 9 December 2013 - Update on Development Briefs for Regeneration of Sites in Inverness

Development Plan

The Council's development plan sets out how places should change and what they could be like in the future.

Highland-wide Local Development Plan

The Highland-wide Local Development Plan was adopted by the Council in 2012. Its spatial strategy for Inverness (extract opposite) identifies Inshes/Raigmore as a key regeneration area.



It commits the Council to producing a development brief for Inshes and Raigmore area. The text and map, far right, show the guiding principles of the development brief and the areas included.

Policy 7: Inshes and Raigmore

- the reconfiguration of the Raigmore Medical Campus to allow better public transport and active travel connectivity and to assess the potential for additional primary care facilities in place of staff accommodation;
- to achieve no net detriment to the existing surface water drainage regime and attendant flood risk;
- to build consensus with the community and stakeholders;
- the reconfiguration and potential expansion of Inshes Retail Park provided that expansion helps deliver improvements in strategic road capacity;
- to promote, co-ordinate and best utilise improvements to strategic road capacity;
- the southern expansion of the Police Headquarters; and
- provision for mitigation measures in relation to any identified environmental issues.



Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan

The Council is at an advanced stage in preparing the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan. This plan will refresh the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and provide more detail on the use of land. The extract below shows the text and map for the Inshes and Raigmore areas.

Mixed Use

Site: IN55 Land at Dell of Inshes

Area (ha): 3.8 Uses: Community, Retail (bulky goods only), Non-residential institution (Class 10)

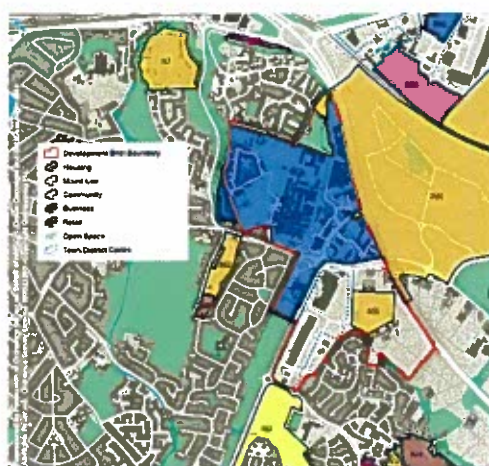
Requirements: The Council will produce a masterplan / development brief which it will adopt as Supplementary Guidance. This will address: the need for completion of and/or land safeguards for, improvements to the trunk road and local road networks prior to development; land safeguard for drainage improvements / safeguards; Flood Risk Assessment (may affect developable area); transport assessment.

Business

Site: IN65 Land at Raigmore / Beechwood

Area (ha): 42.4 Uses: Business

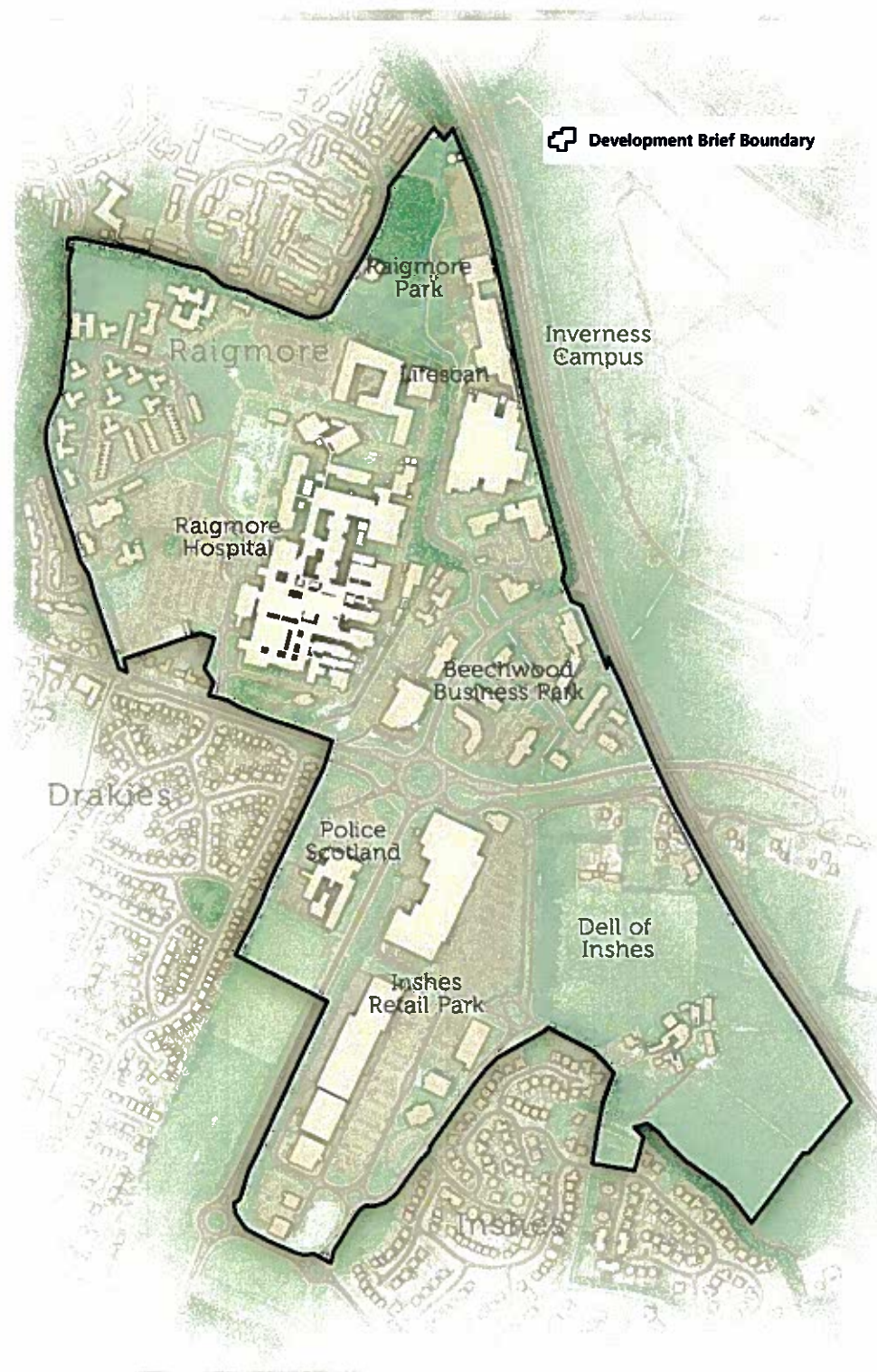
Requirements: The Council will produce a masterplan / development brief which it will adopt as Supplementary Guidance. This will address: the need for completion of and/or land safeguards for, improvements to the trunk road and local road networks prior to development; land safeguard for drainage improvements / safeguards; Flood Risk Assessment (may affect developable area); transport assessment.



Development Brief

The purpose of the brief is to develop a masterplan for the area that provides detailed information on design and layout of development and the provision of infrastructure.

The adjacent map shows the brief boundary. A number of minor amendments have been made to the development brief area in comparison to the Highland-wide Local Development Plan to include additional land relevant to future development of the area.



Constraints to Development

The maps below show key constraints to development in the area. These must be taken into account in any development.

Built and Natural Heritage



- Important areas of green space
- Several attractive areas of mature trees
- Some sites of historic importance
- Key gateway vista into city

All Constraints

The map below shows all key constraints in the area. The white areas may have potential for development.

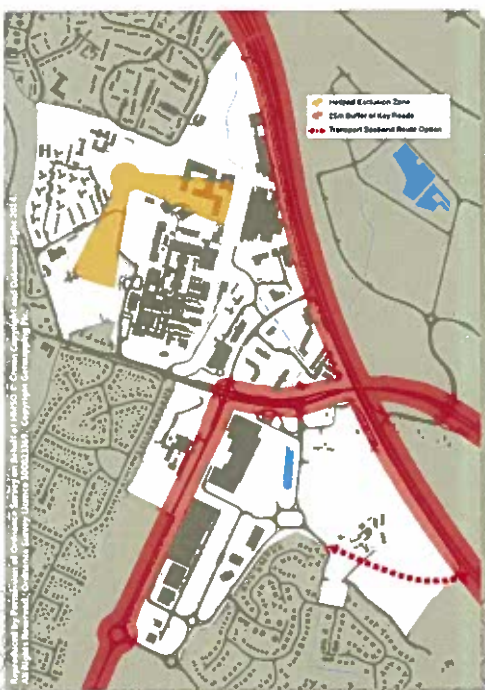


Water and Flood Risk



- Dell Burn and Inshes Burn have a history of flooding
- Some areas at risk from surface water flooding
- Built development must be set back from watercourses
- Safeguard land for flood storage and defences at Inshes

Infrastructure



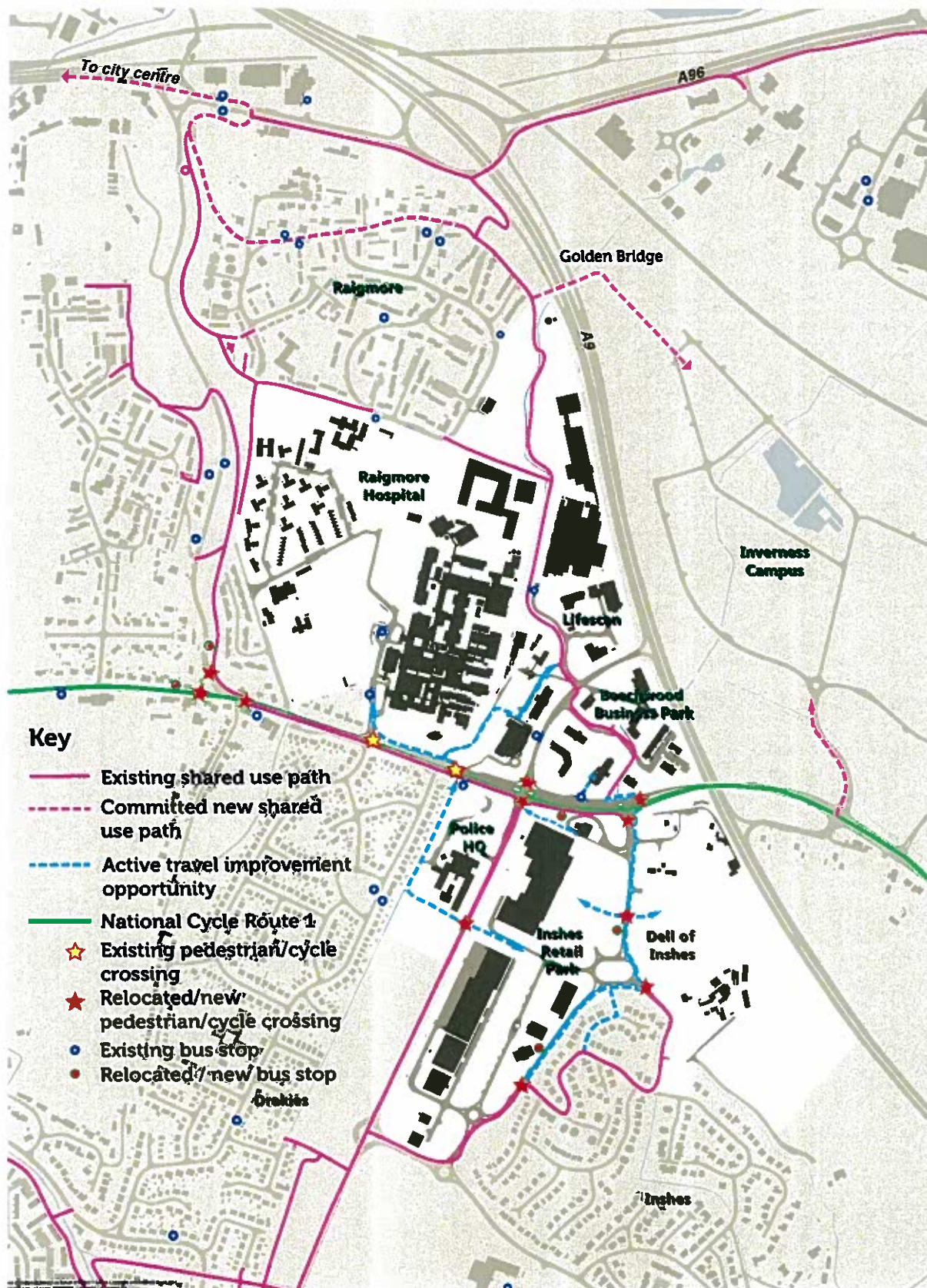
- Buffer should be maintained between key roads and residential development
- Heli-pad exclusion zone constrains future transport and development opportunities at Raigmore
- Land needs safeguarded for Inshes Junction Improvements Phase 2
- Consideration should be given to Transport Scotland Route Options for A9/A96 Connections Study

Question 1

What do you think about the constraints shown?

Are there any others?

Walking, Cycling and Public Transport



Walking and Cycling Routes

The area contains several important walking and cycling routes. The development brief provides an opportunity to improve these routes. These are shown in the adjacent map.

Question 2

Do you agree with the proposed improvements for walking and cycling?

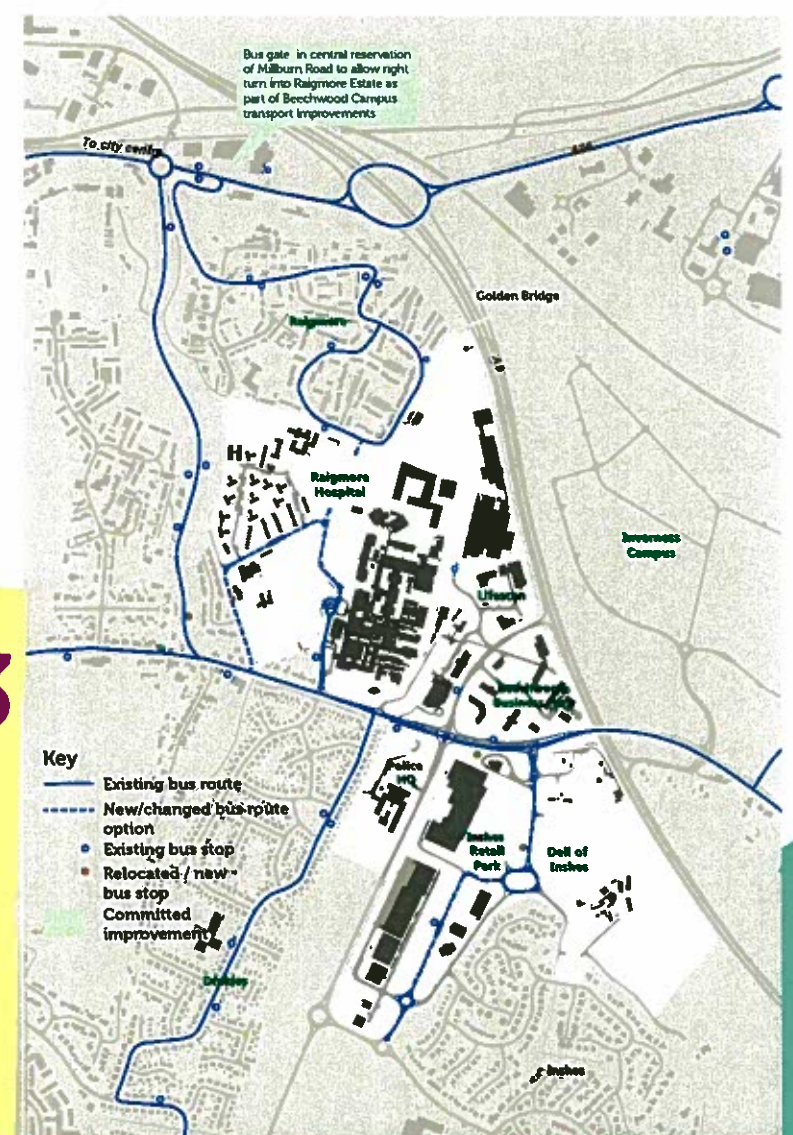
Are there any others?

Public Transport

It is important that existing and proposed services and businesses within the brief area can be accessed conveniently by an integrated public transport network. Opportunities for improving the network are shown in the adjacent map.

Question 3

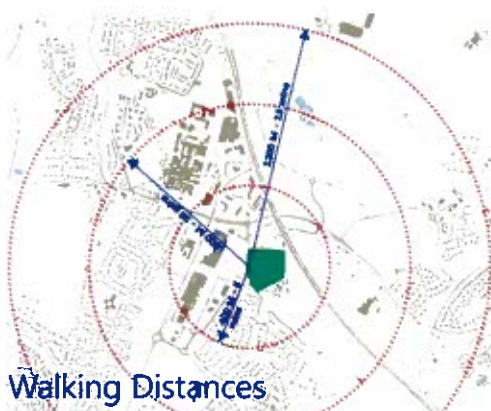
What improvements to public transport would you like to see in the area?



Guidelines for development

Dell of Inshes

Our key aims are to expand the range of services available to local communities and businesses, improve public transport links and make it easy and attractive to walk and cycle to Inshes District Centre



View A



Safeguard key views of the site from A9 and Inshes over-bridge

View B



Enhanced walking and cycling connections



Small commercial units with active ground floors



Spill-out space for outdoor uses



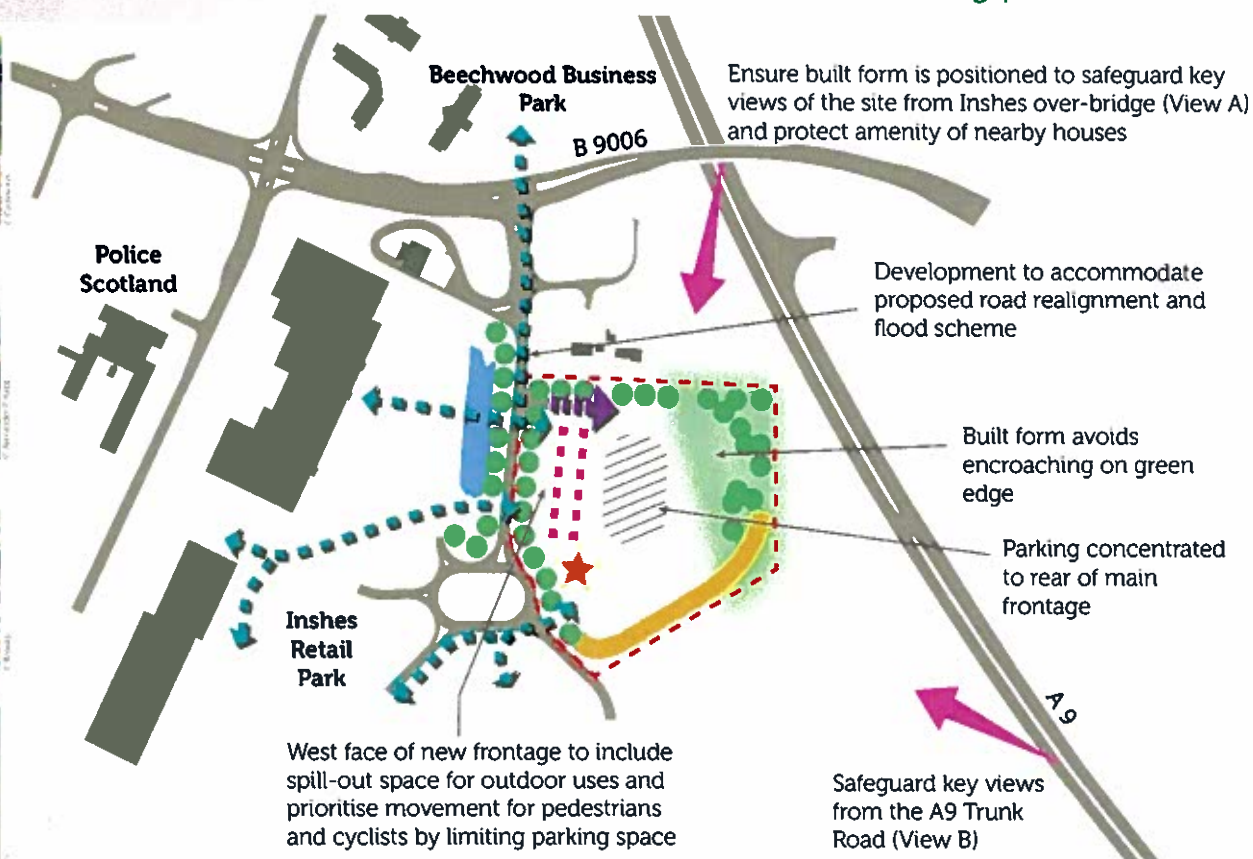
Public realm prioritises walking, cycling and social interaction



Accommodate community use



Energy efficient design and use of sustainable materials



KEY

- New commercial uses accommodated in formal frontage parallel to road comprised of small commercial units with active ground floors.
- Potential community use that could include, for example, allotments / open space
- Create focal point for new neighbourhood facilities, e.g. family restaurant/pub

- New or enhanced walking and cycling routes between local communities, public services, businesses, areas for recreation and the city centre
- Potential vehicle access
- Visually attractive landscaping and improved wildlife habitats that minimise / compensate for any loss of existing mature trees
- Area for flood storage and defences

Land south of Police Scotland

Our key aims are to enable business expansion, create employment opportunities and develop safer walking and cycling routes to Inshes District Centre

Car parking restricted to western edge of site

Minimise loss of existing trees and enhance development with new landscaping on south and east boundaries

Enhance key views from parkland and Sir Walter Scott Drive

KEY

- Safer, attractive walking and cycling links to Inshes Retail Park and Old Perth Road
- Existing shared-use path
- Potential vehicle access
- Maintain existing building line along Sir Walter Scott Drive and complement massing and orientation of Police Scotland building
- Principal entrance clearly defined and positioned to prioritise connection to walking and cycling routes
- Maximise opportunity for energy efficient, passive solar design presented by south-facing site
- Visually attractive landscaping and improved wildlife habitats at existing watercourses

Land use
Business
(e.g. office or light industry)

Question 4

Do you agree with our guidelines for development?

Scheme Objectives

The key objective of the Inshes Junction Improvements are to:-

- Deliver an improved transport network that relieves existing congestion and has capacity to accommodate future development taking into account the following key factors:
 - Transport Scotland A9/A96 Connections Study;
 - The National Cycle Network (routed through the site);
 - Bus routes which use the junctions;
 - Flood risk associated with the Dell Burn;
 - Adequate access to Inshes Retail Park;
 - Adequate access to Police Scotland; and
 - Existing and planned housing and mixed use developments in the area.
- Delivery of a solution to reduce flood risk in the area.

LEGEND

- CARRIAGEWAY
- FOOTWAY
- VERGE
- FLOOD ATTENUATION BASIN
- CYCLE ROUTE ON FOOTWAY/CYCLEWAY
- CYCLE ROUTE ON CARRIAGEWAY
- CROSS SECTIONS

FLUKE ROUNDABOUT (FOR ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENT PLEASE SEE BOARD OPPOSITE)

AMBULANCE JUNCTION (FOR ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENT PLEASE SEE BOARD OPPOSITE)

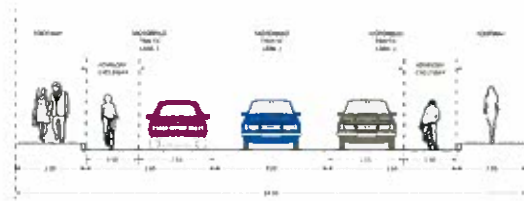
INSHES OVERBRIDGE (FOR ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENT PLEASE SEE BOARD OPPOSITE)

INDICATIVE ARRANGEMENT FOR RETAIL PARK ROUNDABOUT TO INCLUDE TRANSPORT SCOTLAND A9/A96 CONNECTIVITY LINK

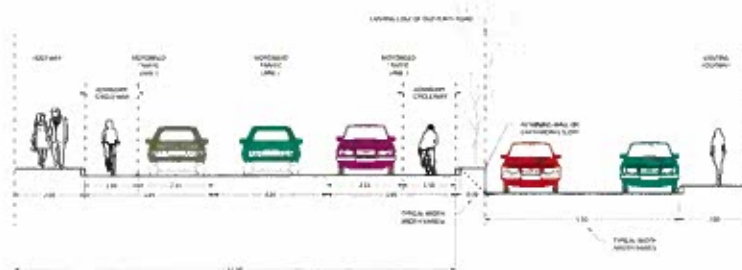
ACCESS TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES BEING INVESTIGATED AS PART OF TRANSPORT SCOTLAND PROPOSALS

Scheme Cross Sections

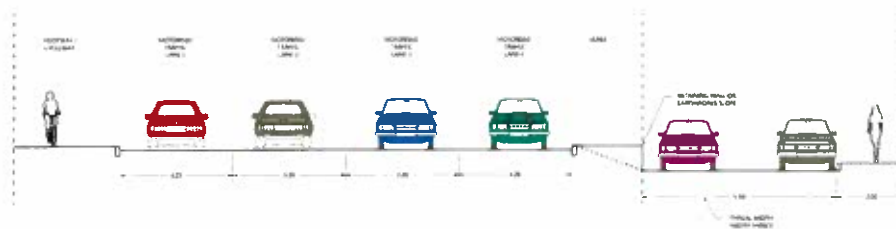
SECTION
A-A



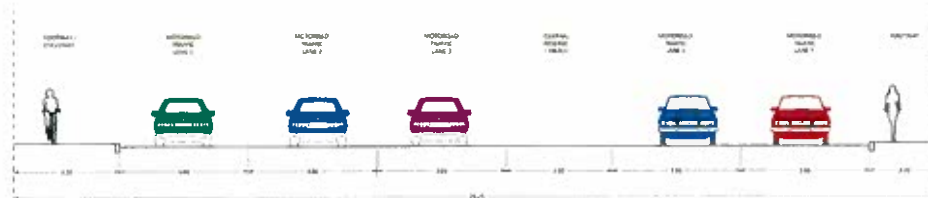
SECTION
B-B



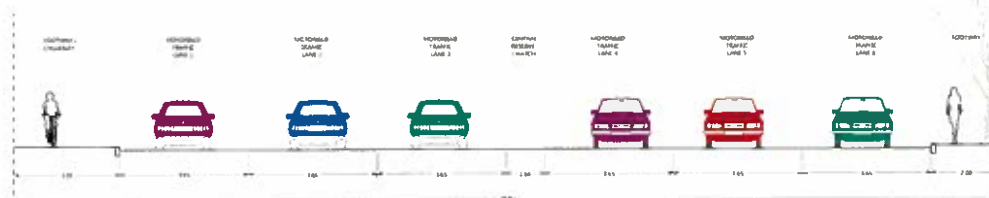
SECTION
C-C



SECTION
D-D



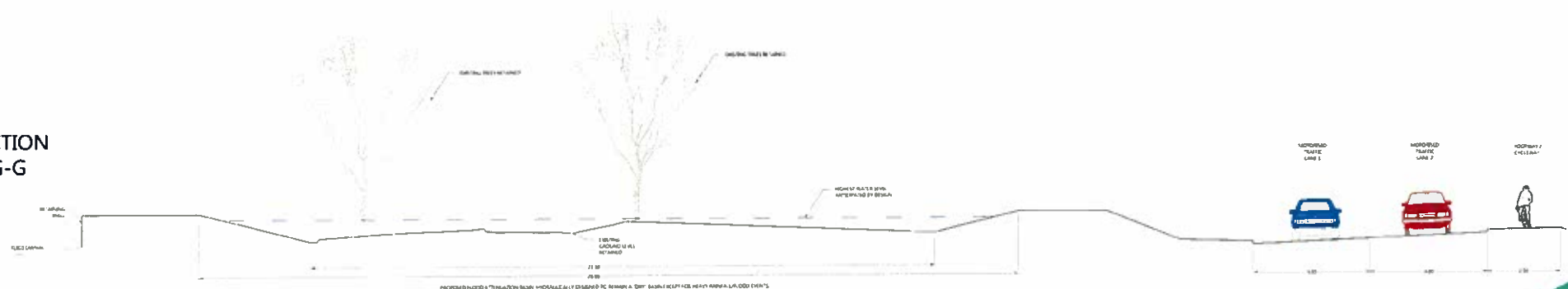
SECTION
E-E



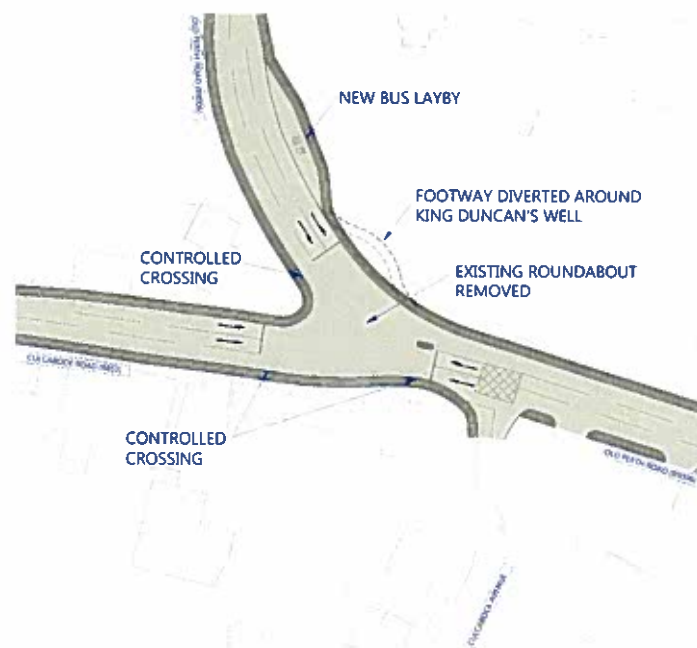
SECTION
F-F



SECTION
G-G

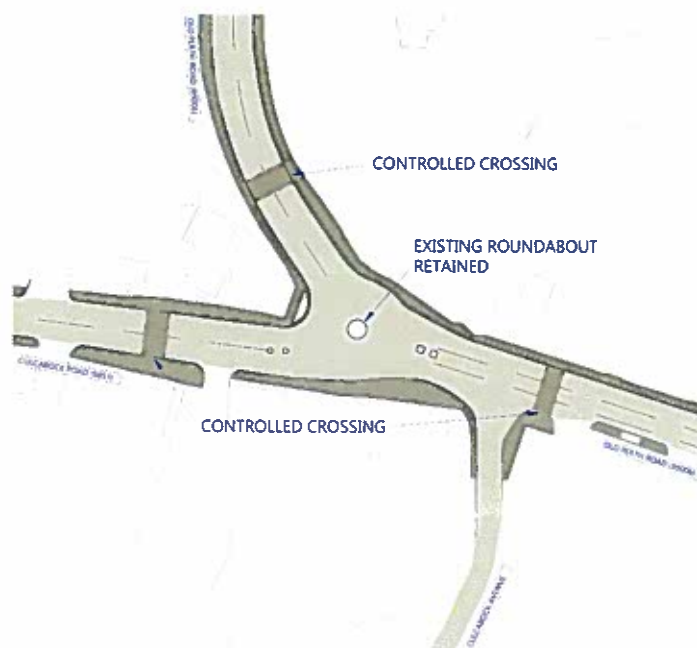


Scheme Alternatives



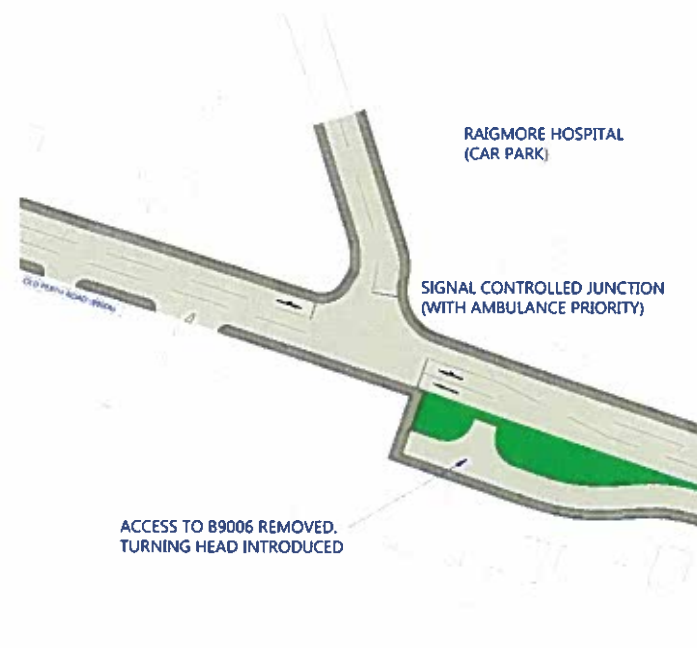
FLUKE ROUNDABOUT

Proposed Arrangement - Traffic signal controlled Junction with signal controlled crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.



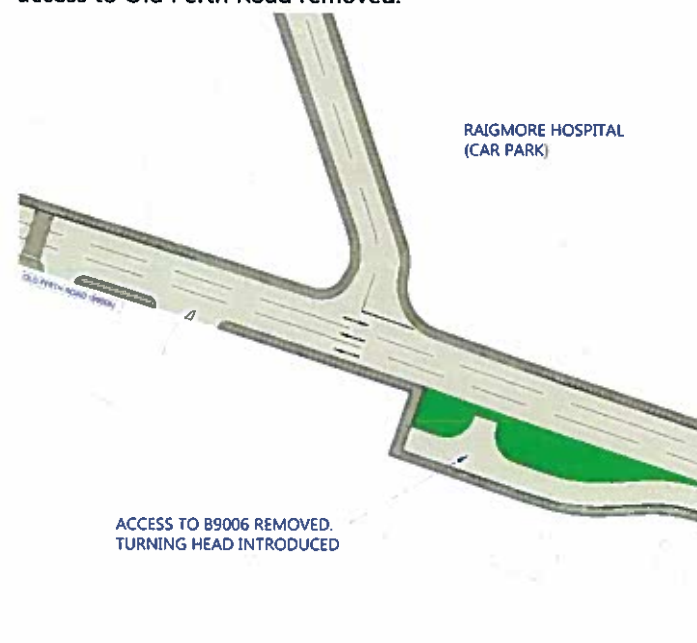
FLUKE ROUNDABOUT

Alternative Arrangement - As existing with pedestrian crossings set back from junction.



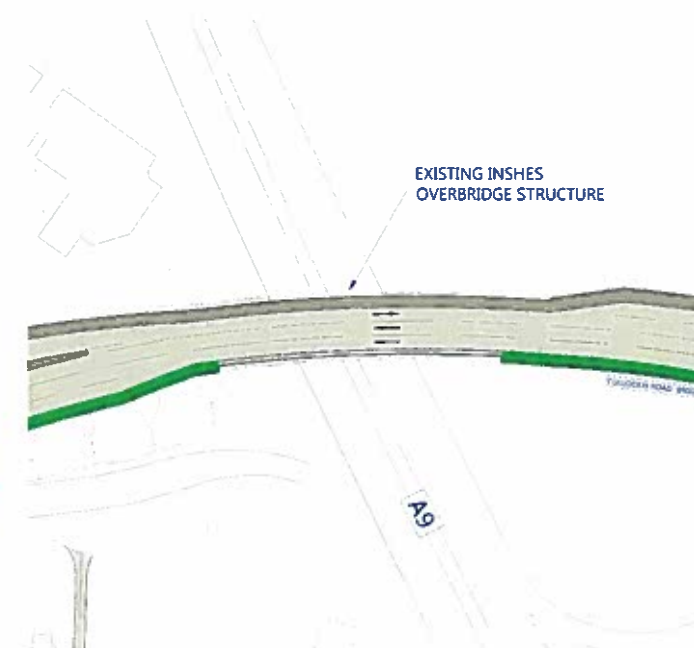
AMBULANCE JUNCTION

Proposed Arrangement - Traffic signal controlled junction with priority for Ambulances coming from the north leg. Local access to Old Perth Road removed.



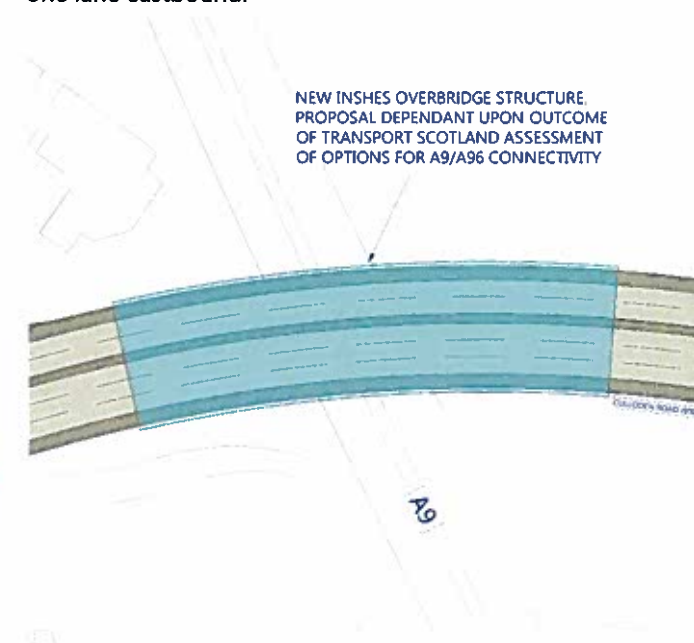
AMBULANCE JUNCTION

Alternative Arrangement - No traffic signals. Two lanes westbound, one lane eastbound. Standard T-junction arrangement. Local access to Old Perth Road removed.



INSHES OVERBRIDGE

Proposed Arrangement - Utilises existing structure. Carriageway arrangement amended to two lanes westbound, one lane eastbound.



INSHES OVERBRIDGE

Alternative Arrangement - New structure in the same location. Carriageway arrangement amended to three lanes westbound, two lanes eastbound.