

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Report No</b>	<b>CIA/36/19</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** City of Inverness Area

**Date:** 29 August 2019

**Report Title:** A9/A82 Longman Junction Improvement scheme – Preferred option consultation Summer 2019

**Report By:** Director of Development and Infrastructure

### **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1 In June 2019 Transport Scotland announced its Preferred option for the A9/A82 Longman Junction Improvement scheme. This report seeks homologation of the Council's response to Transport Scotland's subsequent consultation.

### **2 Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is invited to note and welcome Transport Scotland's progress with preparation of the A9/A82 Longman Junction Improvement scheme and to homologate the Council's response to the recent consultation that was held on the Preferred option.

### **3. Implications**

3.1 Resource – The improvement scheme is Scottish Government funded; the Council will engage with the process of scheme preparation as part of its work programme.

3.2 Legal – None; Transport Scotland is aiming to publish Draft Orders in 2020.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – The scheme is of critical importance to enabling the City to grow and act as an economic catalyst for the region.

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – With the improvements to the trunk road network that will be delivered by this scheme, there will also be considerable improvements for walking and cycling. Transport Scotland is aiming to publish an Environmental Impact Assessment Report in 2020.

3.5 Risk – Ongoing engagement is vital in order to deliver shared outcomes and achieve value for money.

3.6 Gaelic – Proposals for signage will be developed at a future stage.

## 4. Background

- 4.1 At its meeting on 2 September 2014, the Committee agreed, as part of the Council's response to Transport Scotland's A9/A96 Connections Study, to fully support the grade separation of the Longman A9/A82 junction and any widening between the Longman and Raigmore Interchange junctions. Transport Scotland has since then been progressing such plans, identified as part of the Scottish Government's commitment within the £315 million [Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal](#). Transport Scotland has assessed a number of options for the improvement scheme through Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 2, progress being reported to Members through the governance arrangements for the City-Region Deal.
- 4.2 Transport Scotland announced its preferred option in June 2019. As part of ongoing community engagement Transport Scotland supported by its design consultants, Jacobs UK, invited comment, made materials available on their [project webpages](#) and held public exhibitions on 25 and 26 June 2019, giving the local community and road users the opportunity to view and comment on the preferred option. Transport Scotland sought the submission of comments and feedback by 9 August 2019. A leaflet provided an overview of the options assessment work carried out so far, and presented the preferred option. The leaflet and other exhibition materials are available for reference on Transport Scotland's project webpages (see link above).
- 4.3 As a reminder, Transport Scotland chose Option 1 as preferred. Option 1 involves the grade separation of the A9 passing over the A82 and Stadium Road. The junction slip roads will form a diamond layout ending at an enlarged roundabout with connections to the A82 and Stadium Road. The roundabout would be fully signal-controlled with three lanes on the circulatory carriageway. Non-Motorised User (NMU) routes are incorporated into the junction, and would feature signalised crossings between Inverness city centre and Stadium Road. These would connect into the existing NMU paths on the A9, A82, Stadium Road and National Cycle Network (Route 1). **Appendix 1** provides an extract from the consultation leaflet, illustrating some of the features of the preferred option.
- 4.4 The consultation response in **Appendix 2**, which was compiled and submitted by officers covering aspects of transport planning, development brief and common good highlights some main points and principles which are founded on the Council's established position. Committee is asked to homologate that response.
- 4.5 Transport Scotland will take forward the development and assessment of the preferred option as part of the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment, taking into consideration the feedback received through the recent consultation. There will be ongoing engagement with the Council through that process.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

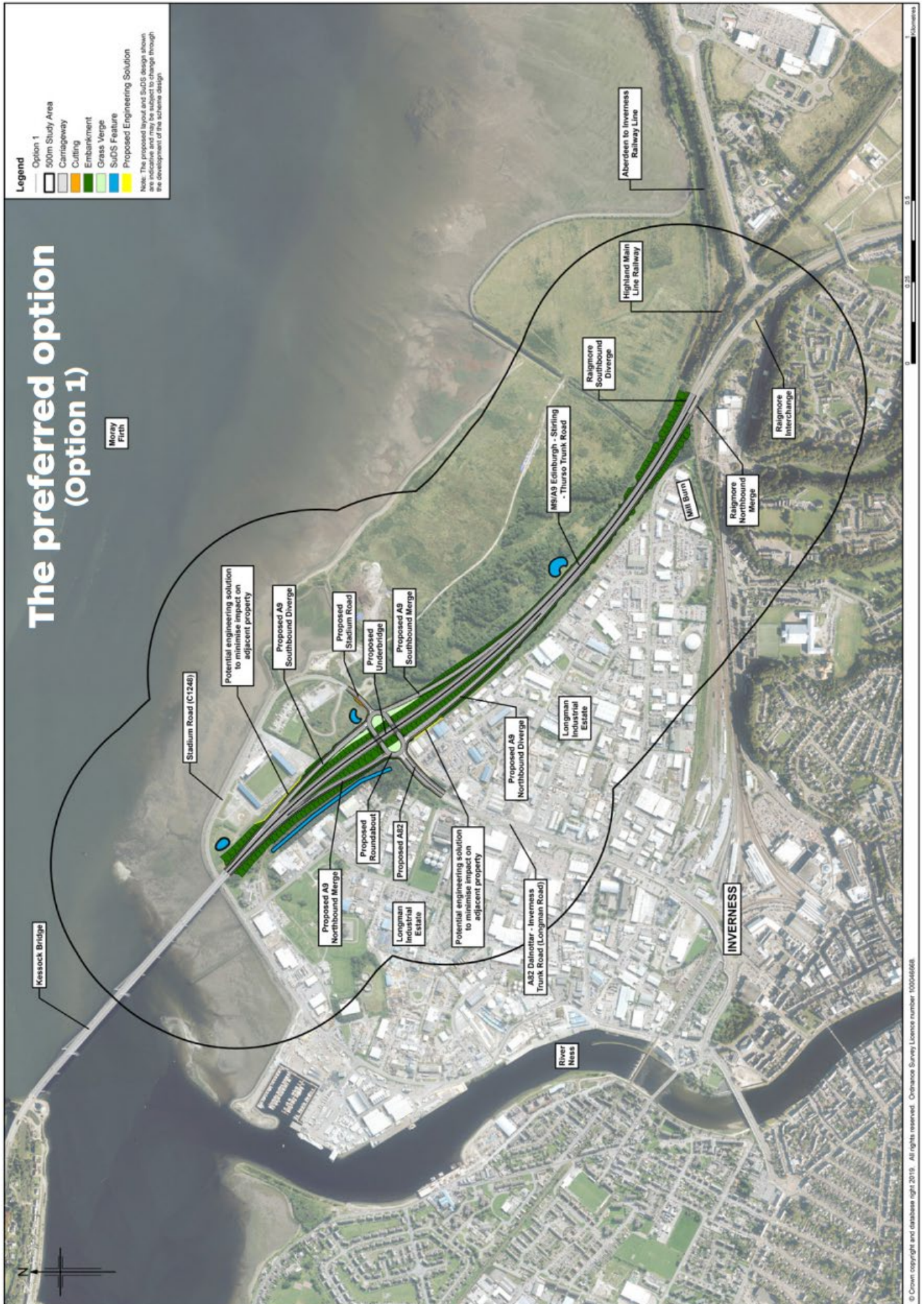
Date: 14 August 2019

Author: David Cowie, Principal Planner, 01463 702827

Background Papers:

- see materials hyperlinked from report

**Appendix 1**  
**Extract from Transport Scotland's consultation leaflet**





## Appendix 2

### Comments submitted by The Highland Council to A9/A82 Longman Junction Improvement team, 9 August 2019

1. The A9/A82 Longman Junction Improvement scheme is one of a number of projects within the scope of the Inverness & Highland City-Region Deal and progress of the project to this key stage of Transport Scotland's preferred option is welcomed.
2. We understand and consider that there were pros and cons of each of the options that were considered by Transport Scotland assisted by Jacobs. Overall, the identification of Option 1 as the preferred option is agreeable to us.
3. The Council would welcome continuing – and growing – engagement as part of DMRB Stage 3 Assessment and consider that this will be vital in order to deliver shared outcomes and achieve value for money. Engagement should include, but not be limited to, continuing our regular Working Group meetings together.
4. Design of the local road must enable, not hinder, the ambitions of the Council for the development of land at the former Longman landfill site. Well-established Development Plan site allocations are at the core of this and will be the focus for a forthcoming Development Brief. The Council also has interest in this from the perspective of the land being Common Good.
5. Site investigations being undertaken at the former landfill site – and (subject to business case) remediation of the land – is a further City-Region Deal project. It is vital, particularly given the timescales for the City-Region Deal, that these projects work together to deliver shared outcomes and achieve value for money as already stated.
6. To help inform the projects on the landfill site, the Council now needs to be provided with the updated 'footprint' for the Longman Junction Improvement scheme, to reflect the preferred option. Please arrange for us to be provided with that, as previously agreed.
7. The provision for non-motorised users is a fundamental part of the overall scheme and is welcomed. In accordance with the sustainable transport hierarchy, effort should be made to connect with the wider active travel network through Raigmore Interchange. A joined up and collaborative approach is necessary to avoid missing this golden opportunity with the Inverness & Highland City-Region Deal.
8. We await further contact from you about environmental mitigation for the scheme; it would be helpful to know what you envisage incorporating on land within and adjacent to the junction improvement and whether you envisage exploring further with us any options to additionally provide exchange greenspace in other locations.
9. Delivery of the A9/A82 Longman Junction Improvement scheme is expected to take a number of years. It is essential that early consideration is given to limiting the impact on all road users during the construction phase. We note the efforts made by Transport Scotland during the major maintenance works on the Kessock Bridge to encourage alternative travel choices for those commuting within the Inner Moray Firth. We urge Transport Scotland and their designers to investigate initiatives that support modal shift (reduction in private car journeys) for commuters using the A9 corridor. A potential to re-open Evanton Railway Station is supported by The Highland Council and HITRANS and could form part of an overall 'travel management plan' to mitigate the possible congestion issues during construction.