

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 30 AUGUST 2006

**SUBJECT: ELGIN STAG PART 1 REPORT & IMPLICATIONS OF THE
OPTION TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ELGIN STAG
PART 2 APPRAISALS**

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and to report Stakeholder feedback and comments to Committee.
- 1.2 To present information on the cost and programme implications of the widening of the scope of the STAG Study.
- 1.3 To present information on the procurement costs for a Parking Survey and Strategy Study that is a secondary recommendation in the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report.
- 1.4 To seek approval from Committee for the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and to proceed with the STAG Part 2 Study based on the recommended Themed Groupings.
- 1.5 To seek approval for the additional costs and revised programme associated with the additional transport modelling and STAG appraisal work due to the widened scope of the STAG Study.
- 1.6 To seek approval for a presentation of the results of the Initial Option Testing to a future Committee.
- 1.7 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (13) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the function of the Council as Roads Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Committee is invited to note:-**
 - (i) **the contents of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report;**
 - (ii) **the responses from Stakeholders;**
 - (iii) **the cost and programme implications of the widened scope for the Elgin STAG Study;**
 - (iv) **the cost of procuring a Parking Survey and Strategy Study**

2.2 The Committee is invited to approve:-

- (i) the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and to proceed with the Elgin STAG Part 2 based on the recommended Themed Groupings (Traffic Management and Link and Junction Improvement);**
- (ii) the procurement of the additional transport modelling, testing and STAG appraisal work with a value of £84,333.83.**
- (iii) The presentation of the Initial Option Testing results to a future Committee.**

2.3 The Committee is invited to defer any commitment for

- (i) the procurement of the Parking Survey and Strategy Study with a cost of £84,789.64 until new retail developments in Elgin will have been completed/operational and there is a possible integration with a wider regeneration initiative.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 General

3.1.1 Members will recall that an update report on the Elgin Transport Model and STAG Study was presented to the 15 June 2006 Environmental Services Committee (item 3 of the agenda refers).

3.1.2 A Pre-appraisal Workshop was held on 22 March and involved Elected Members at the workshop and written submissions from a number of Councillors. The problems/issues, planning objectives and outline options were developed at the Pre-appraisal Workshop for the whole of Elgin.

3.1.3 The widening of the scope of the Pre-appraisal Workshop was reported to the 15 June 2006 Environmental Services Committee (item 4 of the minute refers) and it was agreed that the STAG Part 1 Report and an evaluation of any cost and programme implications for the STAG Part 2 would be presented to a future Committee.

3.2 Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and Stakeholder Comments

3.2.1 A presentation of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report was held for Stakeholders on 10 July. Copies of the report were issued to all Stakeholders and comments invited by 31 July 2006. A copy of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report is attached at **Appendix A** and includes the Appraisal Summary Tables (AST) for each of the Themed Groupings.

3.2.2 The recommendations of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report are summarised below.

Themed Grouping	Recommendation
	Secondary Recommendation
Public Transport	This option is not taken forward as part of the Elgin STAG Study
	It is recommended that bus services to Dr Grays Hospital are analysed and opportunities to improve services are examined
Travel Planning and Information	This option is not taken forward as part of the Elgin STAG Study
Parking	This option is not taken forward as part of the Elgin STAG Study
	A 'Parking Strategy' is considered as a study in its own right.
Traffic Management	Further consideration in the Part 2 Appraisal
Link & Junction Improvements	Further consideration in the Part 2 Appraisal

3.2.3 A summary of each response received from Stakeholders is attached at **Appendix B**. Copies of the full responses have been made available in the Members Library.

3.2.4 Grampian Fire & Rescue has raised initial concerns relating to Traffic Management - One Way Gyrotory System proposal that would impact on their operations. A request for parking to be considered in the STAG Part 2 appraisal has been received.

3.2.5 The Elgin STAG Part 1 appraisal has been carried out in accordance with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidelines and Stakeholders have been involved in the process. It is now necessary to consider the recommendations of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and the Stakeholder comments and make a decision about the Key Themed Groupings to be considered in the Part 2 appraisal.

3.2.6 The Elgin STAG Part 1 Report makes several secondary recommendations. They concern bus services to Dr Grays Hospital and a Parking Strategy. The review of bus services to Dr Grays Hospital can be carried out by Transportation section - Public Transport Unit, however it is not possible to carry out a Parking Strategy with the current staff vacancy levels and the degree of survey work that is required. Under the Transportation Professional Services Call-Off Term Contract Halcrow was requested to submit a 'Parking Survey & Strategy' task proposal following the receipt of the Stakeholder request.

3.2.7 Any significant changes to the recommendations of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report would need to be justified by Stakeholder support and confirmation through the STAG process. The Parking Appraisal Summary Table (see Appendix 1) confirms that this Themed Grouping fails the Key Planning Objective and has an overall Neutral/Minor Beneficial rating for the Government Objectives.

3.3 Cost, Programme and Other Implications

3.3.1 The widening of the scope of the STAG Study has increased the range and complexity of options to be considered in the Elgin STAG Part 2 appraisal. Stakeholders identified possible options in the 2 Key Themes to be considered in the STAG Part 2.

3.3.2 Some of the options identified by Stakeholders have a number of alternative options and this has been recognised in the work to evaluate and manage the cost and programme implications of the broadened scope of the Elgin STAG Study.

3.3.3 A thorough and pragmatic review of the Key Themed Grouping options has identified 18 Fundamental Options that should be developed in more detail and would then undergo initial transport modelling. The results of the transport modelling for each Fundamental Option will allow Initial Option Testing prior to the Final Options appraisal. It should be noted that this approach to carry out transport modelling for all of the Fundamental Options supports the objective-led, open-minded, pragmatic, auditable and inclusive principles of the STAG process.

3.3.4 Some key points that came out of the review are:-

- The final options must be future proof - creating opportunities for development and providing benefits to the transport network
- Critical/sensitive role of the A941 New Elgin Road Railway Bridge (23,960 vehicles per day)
- Committed development and associated infrastructure works has to be included in the Future Do Nothing option
- If a Fundamental Option performs poorly at the Initial Testing stage and has significant Implementability (STAG criteria) issues then it should be rejected in advance of STAG Part 2 appraisal. A report should be submitted to Committee at this stage.

3.3.5 The Fundamental Options are shown in the table below.

Group		Ref	Modelling Options
Appraisal Benchmark	Future Do Nothing	1	Committed Development and Forecast Development
Traffic Management		2	Gyratory System
		3	HGV Routing
		4	Traffic Signals
Link & Junction Improvements	Edgar Road to A96	5	Wittet Drive
		6	The Wards
		7	Line of Bypass South (Part)
	A96 Improvements	8	A96
		9	(2 model tests estimated)
		10	Partial dualling of Alexandra Road
	A941 Improvements	11	A941
		12	(2 model tests estimated)
		13	TSP Scheme (Local Plan) test (1 model)
		14	Additional Junction Tests
		15	(2 model tests estimated)
Bypass	16	Bypass North	
	17	Bypass South	
	18	Southern Distributor	

3.3.6 The approved Elgin STAG task submission by the Consultant included costs associated with options 1, 4, 5, and 6. Under the Transportation Professional Services Call-Off Term Contract the Consultant has submitted a proposal for the additional transport modelling, testing and STAG appraisal work (i.e. options over and above options 1,4,5 and 6) that involves over 200 person days of additional work. The cost to carry out the additional transport modelling, Initial Option Testing, Final Option Testing and STAG appraisal work is £84,333.83.

3.3.7 Halcrow has submitted a revised programme and highlighted critical input required from the Council. The revised programme is set out below.

- End of August – Baseline Models Completion
- End September – Future Do Nothing Completion plus problem identification. (provided TMC supply future development data by August end)
- October – January End – Final option testing
- End February – Final STAG output

- 3.4 It is intended that a progress report would be submitted to a future Environmental Services Committee, and thereafter issued to Stakeholders, after the completion of the Initial Option Testing. This is likely to be in the autumn prior to the Final Option Testing and Final Option STAG work.
- 3.4.1 The Committee is requested to note the contents of the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and note the responses from stakeholders.
- 3.4.2 The Committee is invited to approve the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report and to proceed with the STAG Part 2 Study based on the recommended Themed Groupings (Traffic Management and Link and Junction Improvement).
- 3.5 The Capital Programme for Elgin Traffic Management and Car Parking has provisional allocations of 2006/7 £400k, 2007/8 £500k and 2008/9 £2,500k. The committed expenditure for 2006/7 is £196,725.04.
- 3.6 The widening of the scope of the Elgin STAG Study has created the need to consider 18 Fundamental Options in the Elgin STAG Part 2. There is a large amount of transport modelling work required in order to sift these options prior to the Final Option Testing. The Committee is recommended to accept the task proposal from Halcrow and to approve the additional transport modelling, testing and STAG work and the revised programme at a cost of £84,333.83.
- 3.7 It has been suggested that the Parking Themed Grouping should be taken forward in the Elgin STAG Part 2. This has implications for the STAG process described in paragraph 3.2.8 above. There would also be cost and programme implications if this is done. Taking the Parking Survey and Strategy Study forward at this stage would divert funds from the options identified with a higher STAG ranking in the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report (Link & Junction schemes and Traffic Management).
- 3.8 The cost of the proposed Parking Survey and Strategy Study is £84,789.64. It is considered premature to go ahead with this Study at this stage due to a number of 'committed developments' in Elgin that are likely to bring about changes to the parking patterns across Elgin over the next 6 to 9 months. It is for these reasons that the Committee is invited to defer any commitment for the procurement of the Parking Survey and Strategy Study with a cost of £84,789.64 until new retail developments in Elgin will have been completed and become fully operational.
- 3.9 The overall financial implications for the Elgin STAG Part 2 and the Parking Survey and Strategy Study are laid out in section 4(c) of this report.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

This report contributes to:

CDP Environmental Programme 4 Transport

CDP Environmental Programme 5 Development Plan

SIP 5 Working with the community to plan for the future

(b) Policy and Legal

The final outcome of the Elgin STAG Part 2 may precipitate modification to the Moray Development Plan prior to the Public Inquiry (para 2.3 of the 'Moray Local Plan Review: Consultative Draft' Report to the Environmental Services Special Committee on 15 June 2006 refers).

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

The Capital budget allocation for Elgin Traffic Management & Car Parking for 2006/7 is £400,000.

The procurement of the Elgin Transport Model and Elgin STAG Study is to be drawn down from this budget. The committed expenditure approved by the 01 February 2006 Environmental Services Committee (item 14 of the minute refers) and subsequently reported to the Policy & Resources Committee is shown below.

The widening of the scope for the Elgin STAG Study has cost and programme consequences. A review of the Key Theme Options has identified 18 Fundamental Options that would need varying degrees of transport modelling to allow option testing and sifting prior to the Final Options appraisal. The financial situation and possible additional commitment is presented below.

(17.26) Elgin Traffic Management & Car Parking		
2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
£400k	£500k	£2,500k
Budget Allocation Situation 2006/7		
Allocation	Committed	Unallocated
400,000	196,725.04	203,274.96

Existing Commitment/Expenditure		
Activity	Commitment	Expenditure
Elgin Transport Model	126,802.79	92,934.16
Elgin STAG Study	29,922.25	9,597.01
Management, Supervision and other costs	40,000	16,464.25
Sub Totals	196,725.04	118,995.42

Possible Additional Commitment		
Item	Cost	Recommendation
Additional Option Modelling, Testing and Appraisal	£84,333.83	Approve
Sub total	£84,333.83	
Parking Survey	£42,333.33	Defer Decision
Parking Strategy	£42,456.31	Defer Decision
Sub Totals	£84,789.64	

The Committee is requested to consider the financial implications of the widening of the scope of the Elgin STAG and to approve the commitment of additional finance to carry out the Elgin STAG Part 2 with a cost of £84,333.83.

The Committee is invited to defer a decision on the Parking Survey and Strategy Study because this would divert funds from the options identified with a higher STAG ranking in the Elgin STAG Part 1 Report, it is considered premature to go ahead at this stage due to a number of 'committed developments' in Elgin that are likely to bring about changes to the parking patterns across Elgin and there may be an opportunity to integrate the Parking Survey and Strategy Study with the wider regeneration agenda identified by the Planning & Development Manager.

(d) Consultations

Planning & Development Manager

"effort is made to co-ordinate with the scoping and commissioning of a wider regeneration study for Central Elgin, which The Council and HIE Moray are to consider as a key project emanating from Moray 2020"

Comments from the Principal Accountant and Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) have been incorporated in this report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The widening of the scope of the Elgin STAG Study has cost and programme consequences. A review of the Key Themes has identified 18 Fundamental Options that should be developed in more detail and would then undergo initial transport modelling and Initial Option Testing. Poorly performing Fundamental Options would be rejected prior to the Final Option Testing and Final STAG appraisal. The results of the initial transport modelling and Initial Option Testing would be reported to a future Committee and thereafter Stakeholders. The increased cost for the additional transport modelling, testing and STAG work is £84,333.83 and the forecast programme indicates completion of the Initial Option Testing in the autumn and the Full STAG outputs at the end of February 2007. The Committee is invited to approve the procurement of the additional transport modelling, testing and STAG work for the Elgin STAG Part 2.**

- 5.2 A secondary recommendation proposes a Parking Strategy as a separate study. Halcrow has submitted a 'Parking Survey & Strategy' task proposal. The Committee is invited to defer a decision on the Parking Survey and Strategy Study because this is deemed premature for a number of different reasons set out above.**

Author of Report: R.Gerring Engineer (Transport Development)
Background Papers:
Ref: