

## ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE  
ROADS COMMITTEE -

5 JUNE 1997  
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**SUBJECT: MONTROSE TOWN CENTRE, STREETScape DESIGN -  
OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

**REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND DIRECTOR OF ROADS**

**Abstract:** Extensive public consultation has been undertaken on the Streetscape Concept Design produced for Montrose Town Centre. This report outlines the outcome of these consultations.

### 1 RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the outcome of the public consultation as outlined in this report and to await the review of the Streetscape Concept Design in due course.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Following approval in principle of the Streetscape Concept Design for Montrose Town Centre produced by Gillespies (report No. 83/97 refers), extensive public consultation was undertaken.

2.2 This consultation included a meeting with representatives of the Montrose Community Council, the Business Association, the Chamber of Commerce and the Montrose Society. The Concept Design was also presented at a meeting of the Montrose Area Forum followed by a public exhibition in Montrose Library for over a fortnight. A handout outlining the Concept proposals and containing a comment sheet was widely distributed and members of the public encouraged to make written comment. Finally, meetings were held with the Scottish Civic Trust and Historic Scotland to discuss the Town Centre.

### 3 OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

3.1 It is felt that the consultation exercise stimulated considerable interest in Montrose and that the level of public response was encouraging. A total of 1,100 handouts were taken of which 250 (23%) were returned. As would be expected a wide variety of opinion was expressed but a majority view was that the central reservation should be retained (60% of respondents). Where a reason was stated, about half felt that it added to the appearance of the High Street and the other half felt that it aided pedestrian safety. Other common views expressed were that the footway surfaces should be improved (14%) but not widened (10%) and that improvements to the shop fronts should be a priority (10%). Approximately 12% of respondents specifically supported the proposed roundabout at Castle Place. It has to be said that almost 20% of the respondents wanted no change to the High Street and only 5% expressed general approval.

- 3.2 Both the Scottish Civic Trust and Historic Scotland cautioned against a tendency to over design and recommended that proposals be complementary to rather than in competition with the buildings which create the urban space. Historic Scotland also expressed reservations about relocating the Hume statue and the fountains and recommended against the inclusion of trees and planters.
- 3.3 The Montrose Chamber of Commerce warmly welcomed the proposals, expressed strong opposition to those who advocated no change and recommended that consideration be given to the provision of longer term parking.
- 3.4 No comments were received regarding the proposed signing and interpretation strategy which, it is felt safe to assume, was generally supported.

#### **4 THE WAY FORWARD**

4.1 In view of the public reaction to the Concept Design prepared by Gillespies, it is suggested that it would be appropriate to undertake a fundamental review of the proposals. The consultants have fully met the terms of their original commission and would require an additional fee to undertake this review. It is therefore proposed that this be carried out in house utilising Angus Council professional services. This review would consider the following:-

- The provision of a central reservation (not necessarily the retention of the existing one).
- A review of on-street parking and servicing arrangements.
- The retention of the change in level on the west side of the High Street and an assessment of the need for an upper level footway.
- A possible increase in the pedestrian area in front (north) of the Town House with a subsequent reduction in the level of car parking.
- A general retention of existing footway widths with increases in width only where necessary, coupled with improved surfacing.
- The opportunities for pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures together with the possible introduction of a flexible traffic management system.
- The appropriateness, or otherwise, of soft landscaping and in particular trees in the High Street.
- The upgrading of the public closes as a higher priority, including Churchyard Walk.
- The opportunities for establishing a facade treatment/town scheme on a phased basis also as a higher priority.
- The opportunities for a reduction in the overall cost of the proposals whilst retaining high quality.

#### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 As stated above, the overall cost of the proposals will be considered as part of the design review. The Roads Department and Property Services' design costs can be met respectively from the Roads and Planning Departments' capital allocations for Montrose Town Centre for 1997/98.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Law & Administration, Director of Recreation Services and Director of Property Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Despite some comment to the contrary, the High Street in Montrose continues to be a vehicle dominated thoroughfare and there is a need to redress the balance in favour of pedestrians. Equally, the fabric of the Town Centre has gradually deteriorated and action must be taken to halt that decline and to retain vitality in the retail part of the town.
- 7.2 The Concept Designs prepared by Gillespies may not have received universal support but the design objectives on which they were based are still valid. The proposed design review will assess how these objectives can be met in a way which will be more generally supported.

## NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

- Report No. 83/97 by the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Development and the Director of Roads to the Planning and Transport Policy Committee and the Roads Committee.

AA/RM/IAL  
27 May 1997

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