

ANGUS COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

21 APRIL 2009

A92 ARBROATH TO LOWER NORTH WATER BRIDGE, ROUTE ACTION PLAN

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

ABSTRACT

This report outlines the progress made on the project for possible bend improvements at Courthill and Hawkhill on the A92 Arbroath to Montrose principal road following Report no. 820/08 which was submitted to the Infrastructures Services Committee on 26 August 2008. It also discusses the possibility of introducing a temporary 50 mph speed limit on the section of road between Arbikie and Big Tree Bends (Hawkhill Bends).

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) instructs the Head of Roads to progress design work based on the findings detailed below for both options 2 and 3 to a stage where the stakeholders will be consulted before recommending a preferred option for the later consideration of this committee, prior to procuring the associated works;
- (ii) agrees to proceed with the necessary negotiations with Historic Scotland and make, if required, the necessary arrangements to procure an archaeological investigation of the routes currently being considered;
- (iii) notes that under the provisions of the Council's current speed limit strategy, it is inappropriate for the Council to introduce a reduced speed limit between Arbikie and Big Tree bends (Hawkhill bends) at this time.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Since reporting to the Infrastructures Services Committee at its meeting of 26 August 2008 a meeting was held in the Village Hall, Inverkeillor on the evening of 25 September 2008 in order to engage with the local landowners/residents and ascertain their views on the proposals being considered at the time.
- 2.2 The Head of Roads was asked, in conjunction with Tayside Police, to consider the viability and potential benefits in road safety terms of introducing on an interim basis, a 50 mph speed limit on the A92, between Arbikie and Big Tree Bends (Hawkhill Bends).

3 DETAILS

3.1 Road Realignment Options

3.2 At the public meeting of 25 September 2008, Roads Division staff presented the four main options under consideration for bend improvements at Courthill and Hawkhill on the A92 between Arbroath and Montrose.

3.3 The landowners/residents in attendance readily accepted that Options 1 and 4, to improve both sets of bends separately, possibly as phased works, but attempting to use the existing roadline as far as was practically possible, was not desirable since it would leave a section with a substandard vertical alignment between Courthill and Hawkhill.

3.4 Although the vast majority of those present agreed that both options 2 and 3 were acceptable, all present expressed a strong preference for option 3 since it moved the road farther away from residential properties and minimised severance of agricultural land.

3.5 The Council staff present explained that although option 2 was the better solution on a purely technical basis, both options would be considered, meantime, taking into consideration cost, technical, environmental and land-use issues.

3.6 Since this meeting took place a preliminary ecological appraisal of the site has been carried out along with a ground investigation which concentrated on the two main options under consideration. Since none of these investigations uncovered anything unexpected which might impede the progress of the project, work is ongoing firming up on the designs in an effort to further reduce the impact due to severance of agricultural land.

3.7 However, consultation with Historic Scotland has uncovered the fact that there are sites of potential archaeological interest which may be affected by the proposals, although more so by option 3.

3.8 Preferred Option

3.8.1 Although option 2 is still the better option from a purely technical point of view, option 3 is more popular with the local residents and necessitates less undesirable severance of agricultural land. However, this option does have a potentially higher impact on the archaeology of the site. Since much of this archaeology is yet to be proven it may be possible to reach some agreement with Historic Scotland whereby an excavation of the site may be carried out and any significant archaeology recorded before any works proceed. Therefore, option 3 should not be discounted at this time, in view of its popularity, and further investigation in terms of the archaeology and likely costs should be carried out before recommending a preferred option.

3.9 Introduction of a Temporary 50mph Speed Limit

3.9.1 Report no. 266/08 was submitted to the Infrastructures Services Committee on 4 March 2008, outlining the process and progress made in review of speed limits in Angus, on both A and B class roads, in accordance with the Scottish Government guidance on the setting of local speed limits published in August 2006, and the production of a speed limit strategy for Angus Council.

- 3.9.2 The Guidance advises that 50mph speed limits should be considered, in rural areas, for lower quality A and B class roads which may have a relatively high number of bends, junctions or accesses. The accident threshold on any section of route assessed under the new guidance, should be above 35 injury accidents per 100 million vehicle kilometres at higher speeds. 50mph speed limits can also be considered where mean speeds are below 50mph so the lower limit does not interfere with traffic flow. The current figures taken from the permanent counter site at Upper Dysart on the A92, gives a mean speed of 46.7mph.
- 3.9.3 The Guidance clearly states that a reduced speed limit should not be used to treat an isolated hazard, such as a bend, junction etc.
- 3.9.4 The findings of the assessment at that time concluded that the section of the A92 between its junctions with the B965 and the A934 had an accident rate of 22.3 injury accidents per 100 million vehicle kilometres and therefore no further investigation in terms of providing a reduced speed limit over the relevant length was required, based on the guidance described above.
- 3.9.5 In terms of the necessary legal orders required for a 50mph speed limit, there is a current blanket legal order that can be utilised at any time, for any road in Angus, for temporary speed limits associated with roadworks. Temporary traffic orders, as per the Traffic Regulation Act, are for traffic restriction orders, road closures etc, not speed limits.
- 3.9.6 The council's Law and Administration division were consulted on the possibility of introducing a reduced speed limit on the A92, under a temporary order. The division do not consider a temporary order is appropriate in the circumstances. The circumstances in which temporary orders can be made, all relate to a temporary situation affecting the road, a situation which is time-limited, giving rise to an order which is time-limited. It is considered that to restrict the speed limit on this section of the A92 currently without certainty on the limit of time would not be appropriate.
- 3.9.7 In the case of a permanent 50mph speed limit, the process required to promote the required legal order would take in the region of 9-12 months to compile, following the necessary consultations etc, ie it is unlikely that any such order would be in place significantly in advance of the implementation of the physical works to improve the alignment.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The A92 Route Action Plan scheme is currently provided for in the Roads Division's provisional capital plan as reported to the Council's full committee in report no. 122/09 on 19 February 2009 (Report 122/09 refers). These entries have been combined in the following table to show the provisional expenditure profiles for the preparatory costs and the construction costs.

Current Provision in Financial Plan 2009/10					
	Estimated Total Cost	Estimate Expend- iture to 31/03/09	Estimate 09/10	Estimate 10/11	Estimate 11/12
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
A92 Arbroath to Lower Northwater Bridge (RAP) – Preparatory Costs	373	153	110	110	0
A92 Arbroath to Lower Northwater Bridge (RAP)– Construction Costs	2,815	155	60	1,690	910
Tactran	-67	-67	0	0	0
Supplementary Allocation	-81	-81	0	0	0
Net Cost to Roads Capital - Construction	2,667	7	60	1,690	910
Combined Net Cost to Roads Capital	3,040	160	170	1,800	910

- 4.2 It is anticipated that the cost of undertaking the work set out in the recommendations in this report can be met from the existing capital financial allocation for the project as set out in the above table.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no human rights implications arising from the proposals in this report.

6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An equalities impact assessment is not required.

7 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- 7.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus.

We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger

- Communities in Angus are safe, secure and vibrant.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance, Head of Law and Administration and the Chief Constable were consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.2 Specifically with respect to the proposal for the introduction of a temporary speed limit over the stated length the Chief Constable would not be in favour of providing a 50mph speed limit. Difficulties with enforcement were highlighted, due to the physical nature of the road, horizontal and vertical alignment.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 Options 2 and 3 for combined schemes to the north of the existing road are currently the preferred options. Therefore, it is recommended that both schemes be progressed to a stage where they can be taken back to the stakeholders for further consultation before one option is selected and land negotiations commenced in earnest and arrangements are made for the procurement of the works.

9.2 Negotiations should now proceed with Historic Scotland so that some agreement may be reached with respect to the preservation/documentation of any possible archaeology which may be affected by the proposals and, if required, the necessary arrangements are made for the procurement of a suitable archaeological investigation.

9.3 Whilst the Council has a will to carry out substantial bend improvements in this area, the introduction of a reduced speed limit is not recommended.

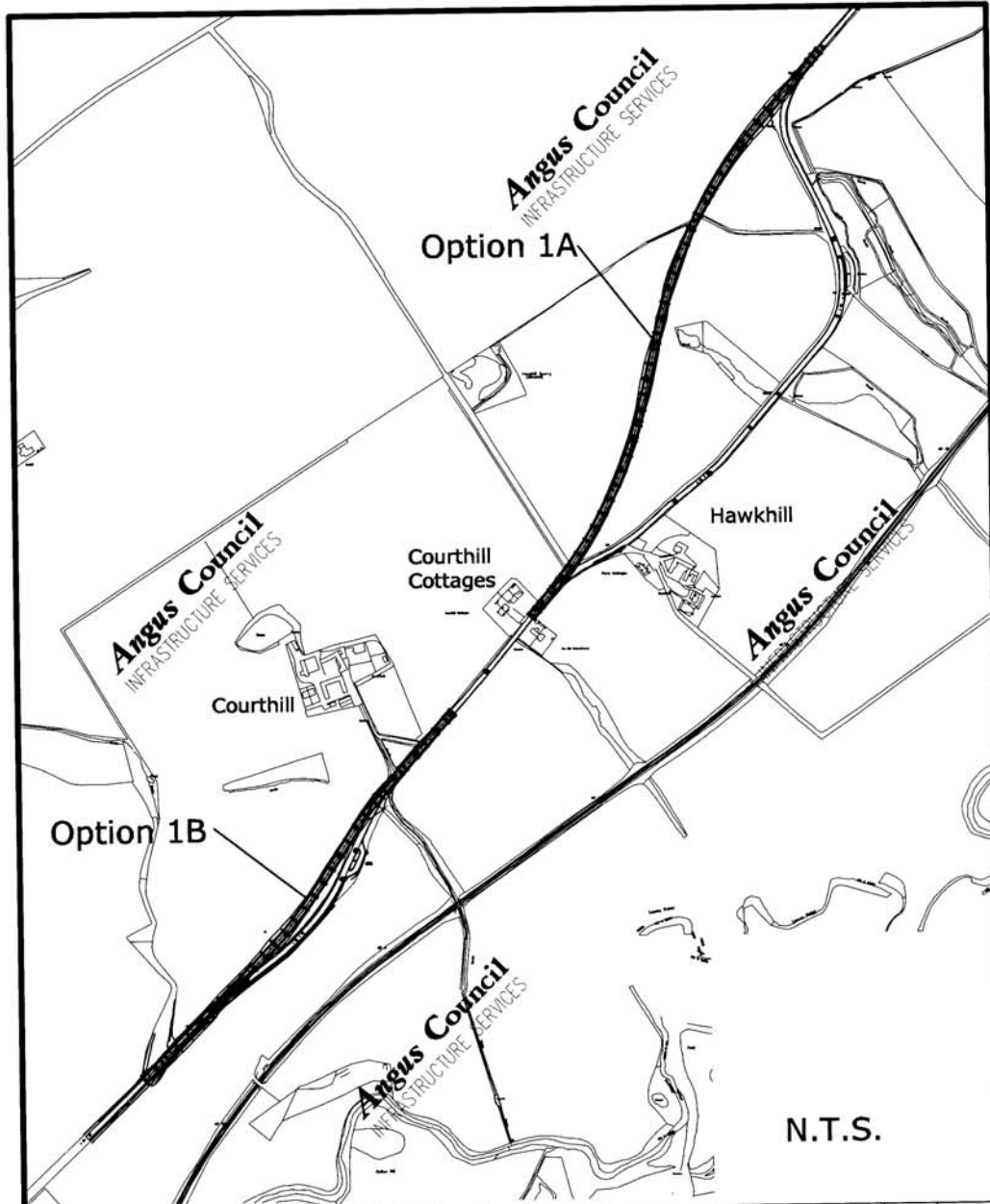
ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

NOTE:

Report No. 266/08 - Speed Limit Review – A & B Class Local Roads - Infrastructure Services Committee 4 March 2008.

Report no. 580/08 - Casualty Reduction Targets & Accident Investigation Programme - Infrastructures Services Committee – 3 June 2008

Report No. 820/08 - A92 Arbroath Lower North Water Bridge, Route Action Plan - Infrastructure Services Committee 26 August 2008.



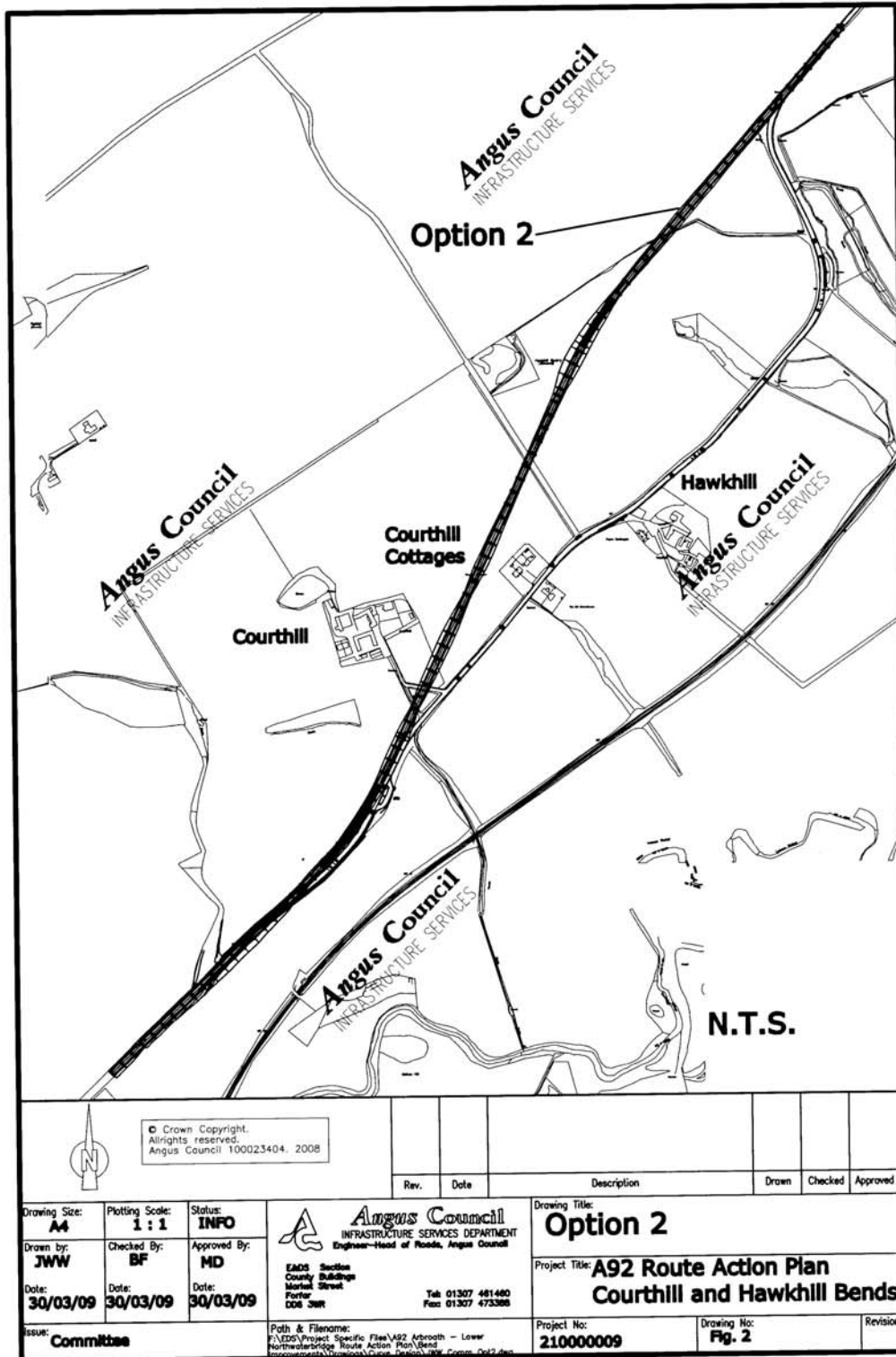
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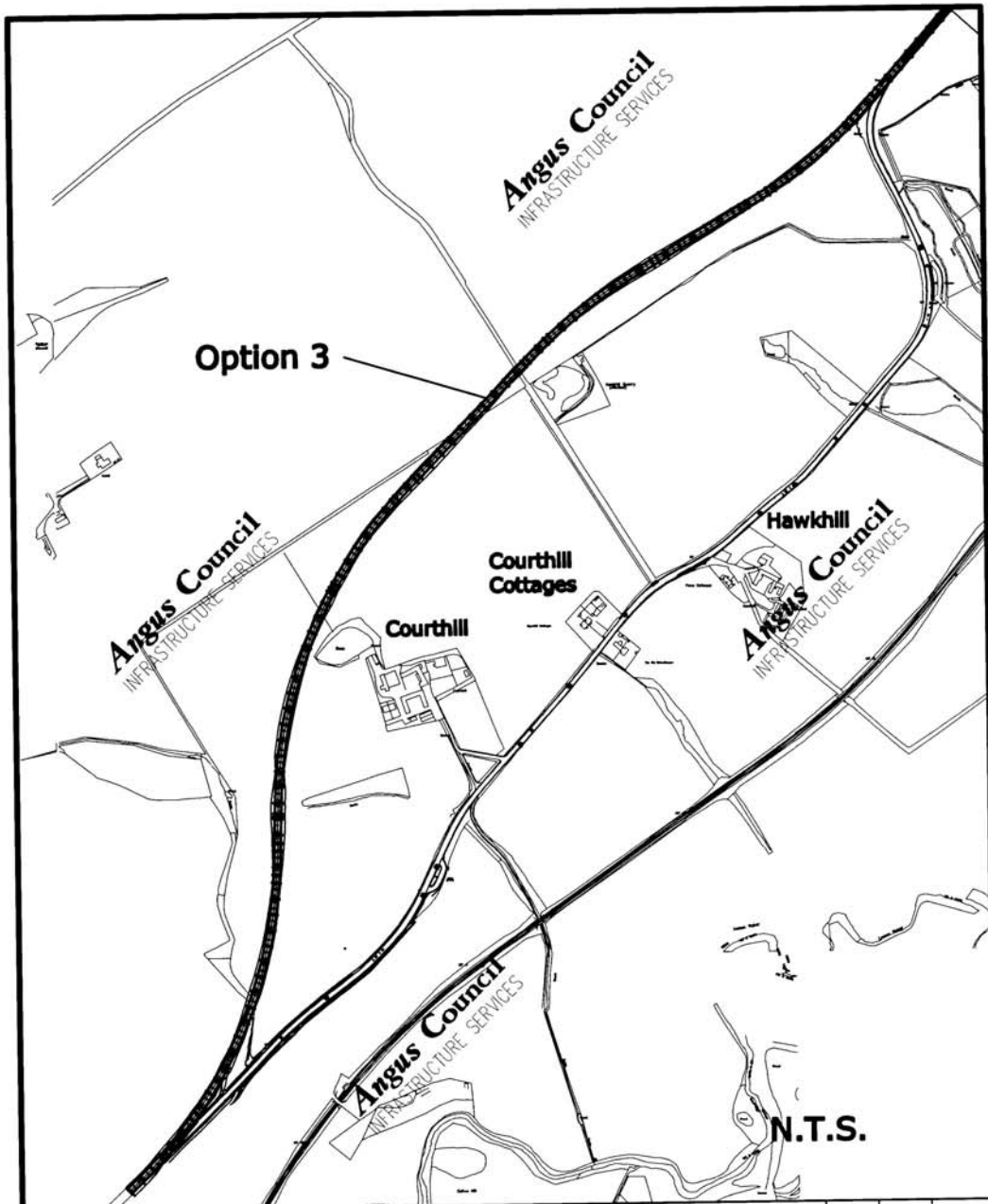
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Drawn by: JWW	Checked By: BF	Approved By: MD		Project Title: A92 Route Action Plan Courhill and Hawkhill Bends		
Date: 30/03/09	Date: 30/03/09	Date: 30/03/09		Project No: 210000009	Drawing No: Fig. 1	Revision:

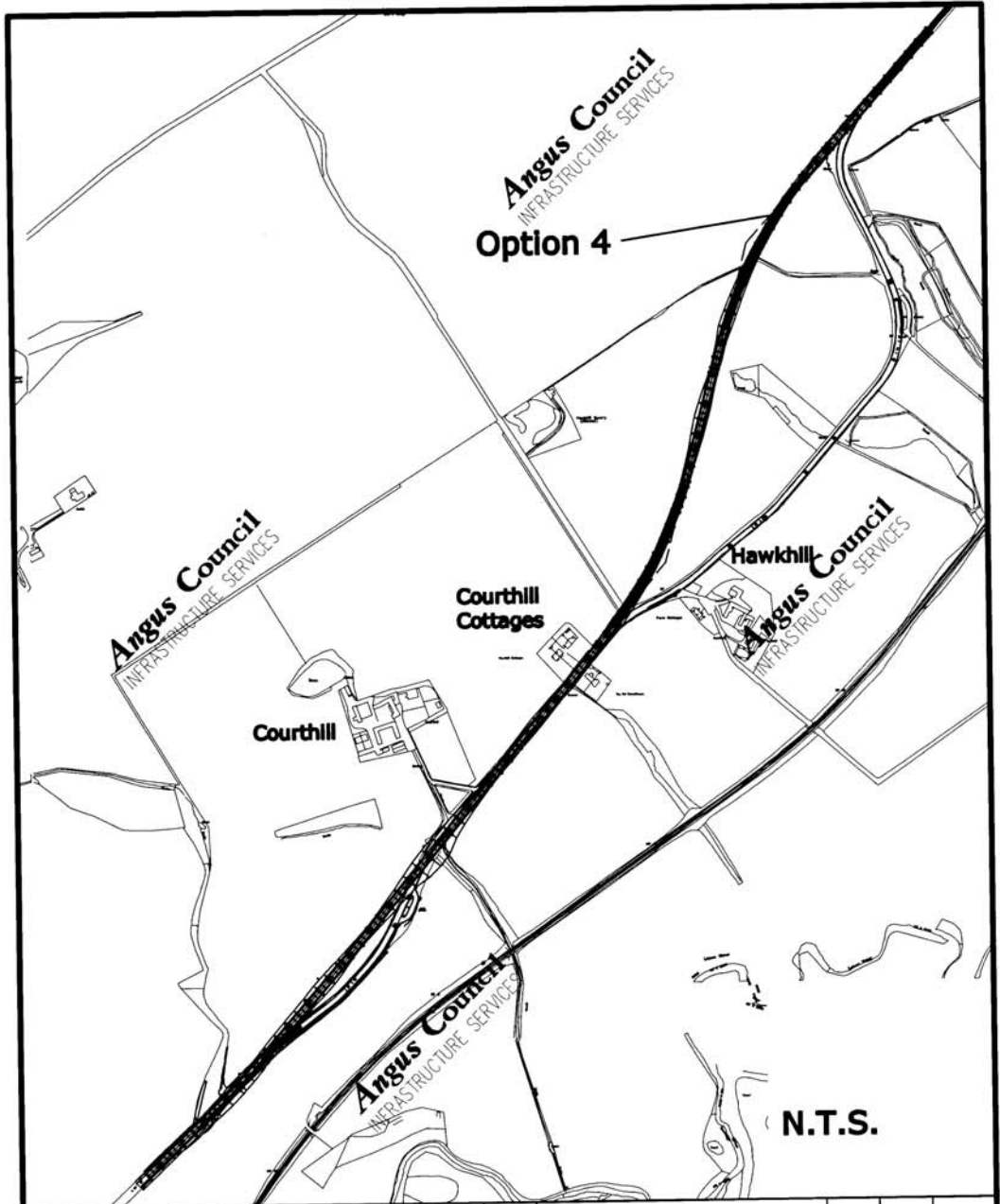
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Committee



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Drawn by: JWW	Checked By: BF	Approved By: MD		Project Title: A92 Route Action Plan Courthill and Hawkhill Bends					
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Drawn by: JWW	Checked By: BF	Approved By: MD		Project Title: A92 Route Action Plan Courthill and Hawkhill Bends					
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