

ANGUS COUNCIL

ROADS COMMITTEE

23 AUGUST 2001

RAIL PROPERTY LTD – PITSCANDLY ROAD BRIDGE

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ROADS

ABSTRACT

An assessment of the Pitscandly Road Bridge, owned by Rail Property Ltd, has indicated that it has a sub-standard carrying capacity. This report proposes the implementation of short to medium term preventative measures and the progression of a permanent solution, at the Council's cost.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee agree:-

- (i) to note that Pitscandly Road Bridge has a sub-standard carrying capacity due to the possibility of vehicles mounting the footway/verge;
- (ii) to approve expenditure in the current financial year to provide a short to medium term preventative measure in the form of a metal barrier;
- (iii) to note that further expenditure will be required in future years to provide a permanent solution to this issue.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Members will be aware that Angus Council has entered into agreement with Rail Property Ltd to undertake an assessment programme for Rail Property Ltd's bridges carrying public roads in Angus.
- 2.2 As a result of these assessments, Pitscandly Rail Bridge, situated on the B9134, Forfar to Lunanhead road, has been identified as having a reduced carrying capacity. The low capacity is confined to the external beams carrying the verge/footway and is only an issue if a vehicle were to mount the verge/footway. These beams are capable of carrying normal footway traffic.

3 DETAILS

- 3.1 The possibility of the footway being subject to vehicle loading is relatively remote as it would require an accident or a driver deliberately parking on the bridge. However, the current standards for bridge assessment requires the case to be considered, and given the low capacity of the beams (7.5t GVW) and the high use of the route by HGV's (main route to Lairds Aggregates/Laird Bros Precast) the risk cannot be ignored.
- 3.2 The imposition of a weight restriction of 7.5t GVW is considered inappropriate for this route.
- 3.3 Rail Property Ltd (along with Railtrack plc) maintain that their legal responsibilities for assessing and strengthening bridges is limited to the requirements of the Transport Act 1968 only. The recent assessment is to the more onerous loadings now applied to bridges since the introduction of the 40/44t vehicle in January 1999. It is accepted that under a Transport Act 1968 assessment the bridge would be above the required standard.
- 3.4 There is no legislation requiring the Council to undertake any preventative measure or repairs, and the liability for such measures has not to date been the subject of any legal proceedings which would establish case law.
- 3.5 There is insufficient width of footway to erect a fully effective barrier (solid concrete containment barrier). It is feasible to erect a partially effective barrier (metal barrier) for the short to medium term. The cost of such works is estimated at £5000. A metal barrier will prevent deliberate over-riding or parking on the verge/footway. It would probably not however prevent a vehicle which was out of control from reaching the verge/footway. There will also be a reduction in the footway width. The metal barrier therefore offers a cost-effective solution to the manageable risk.
- 3.6 In the long term a permanent solution on the basis of either strengthening of the external beams or infilling of the disused rail cutting would be required at an estimated cost of £40,000. Rail Property Ltd may be prepared to contribute to the latter option.

- 3.7 The Committee is asked to approve the erection of the ‘partially effective barrier’ at an estimated cost to the Council of £5000.
- 3.8 The Committee is also asked to approve the progression in future years of the permanent solution in consultation with Rail Property Ltd.

4 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Capital

There would be a capital cost estimated at £5000 for the erection of the barrier which can be met from the Roads Department Bridge Strengthening Budget in the current financial year.

There would be a capital cost for the long term permanent solution estimated at £40,000, although there may be a contribution from Rail Property Ltd which would reduce the net cost to the Council. Programming of this work will be subject to available budgets and prioritisation against other necessary projects. Detailed proposals would be the subject of a further report to a future Committee.

Revenue

Given the anticipated short/medium term nature of the proposed barrier there would be no financial implications for revenue expenditure in respect of on-going maintenance. The loan charges associated with the proposed £5000 capital expenditure would amount to £750 per annum over 10 years.

5 **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

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

6 **CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 **CONCLUSION**

Pitscandly Road Bridge has been assessed as having a reduced carrying capacity. The bridge is owned by Rail Property Ltd. It is proposed to implement temporary short/medium term preventative measures pending permanent strengthening/infilling in the longer term.

Bob McLellan
Director of Roads

NOTE:

No 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.

IAC/JSG
31 July 2001
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