Abstract: This report outlines and comments on the responses arising from consultation on the South Montrose Strategic Review and draft Development Masterplan which was undertaken during September/October 2011 and also establishes planning guidance that will assist the regeneration of this part of Montrose.

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

1. note the responses to the consultation on the Strategic Review and draft masterplan prepared by the Consultants and set out in Appendix 1.

2. agree the planning guidelines set out Appendix 2; and

3. agree to take forward the project through an informal steering group.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Infrastructure Services Committee at their meeting of 23 August 2011 (Report 552/11 refers) agreed to:-

(i) note the completion of the South Montrose Strategic Review and the draft Development Masterplan by consultant Ironside Farrar Ltd;

(ii) note the economic and physical regeneration opportunities for the South Montrose area and the potential to deliver significant economic development opportunities to Angus generally;

(iii) agree to publish the draft Development Masterplan for public consultation purposes;

(iv) authorise the Director of Infrastructure Services to recruit a part time temporary officer to facilitate early co-operation amongst key stakeholders to regenerate the South Montrose area; and

(v) note that a further report, on the outcome of the public consultation together with possible options for investment funding and delivery models, will be submitted to a future Infrastructure Services Committee.
2.2 The South Montrose Strategic Review and draft Development Masterplan were published on the Council web page in early September 2011, inviting comments on the contents of the consultants draft proposals. The period for consultation extended until 28 October 2011. In addition information was sent to the funding partners, a wide range of national and local interest groups including Montrose business groups, community councils, SEPA, SNH and Historic Scotland. Residents directly affected by the emerging proposals were also contacted. A press release was carried by local newspapers. A public exhibition and discussion day was hosted at the George Hotel on Thursday 13 October by Council officers and attended by 63 members of the public. In addition 25 members of the public submitted comments through the available questionnaire and 15 agencies/members of the public submitted comments by letter/e-mail. A late response was received from The Montrose Society and this has also been accepted. A summary of all the responses is set out in Appendix 1.

2.3 This report summarises the public reaction to the draft proposals, and establishes a broad planning framework for the South Montrose area. The report also highlights that additional detailed investigation and assessment is required on a number of matters before commitment can be given to the new road. It also re-emphasises the need for the various land owners and key stakeholders to work together through a partnership approach to deliver the potential benefits of economic development and physical regeneration.

3 RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

3.1 Arising from the consultation period, 41 responses have been received. A schedule of the comments received is set out in Appendix 1.

3.2 In broad terms there was a very positive response to the draft Development Masterplan for South Montrose recognising that redevelopment and improvement within the area would benefit both the economy and the environment. There were however concerns by some residents to the impact on their property values and amenity from the proposed new short stretch of roadway; to problems currently experienced by residents from seagulls and existing vehicles – lorries, car parking etc.

3.3 In terms of statutory consultees responses were received from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), SEPA, Historic Scotland and Health & Safety Executive. In addition response was received from CTC Right to ride network, RSPB, GlaxoSmithKline, Montrose Port Authority and from seven individuals.

3.4 SEPA have raised concerns with regard to potential flood impact and sustainable urban drainage. This will require further detailed discussion with SEPA.

3.5 Historic Scotland has noted the draft proposals, highlighting the importance of the existing listed buildings.

3.6 SNH have highlighted the importance of Montrose Basin and River South Esk and that the project take cognisance of the heritage value.

3.7 HSE have noted that cognisance has been taken of the consultation zones associated with Reid Fertilisers and GSK; they have also made reference to the safeguard zone associated with Port and that these may have implications for development proposals.
3.8 Cycling Touring Club have requested that cognisance of cycling requirement is taken fully into account in developing the project.

3.9 Both GSK and Montrose Port Authority are broadly supportive.

3.10 The balance of the additional submissions from residents generally reiterates issues relating to the impact of the proposals on individual property/amenity.

3.11 While The Montrose Society broadly support the project aims they have registered concern at the possible loss of the Customs House and adjacent Warehouse building. They consider that the former has the potential to be incorporated into a quadrangle type development which might provide office space and opportunity for an offshore operations and maintenance centre.

4 PLANNING GUIDELINES

4.1 Appendix 2 sets out the draft planning guidelines for the area. Although the Consultants Reports established more detailed guidance and some principles of design there remains a number of aspects where further investigation and design work is required. In some matters, further discussions and consultation with statutory agencies, local businesses and residents on the points raised during the early consultation process are required. Action on some of these matters has commenced; in particular various discussions (at officer level) have been held with landowners and business interests and a consultancy study is now underway to consider detailed design issues on the section of new road and impact on property.

4.2 At this stage therefore only the broad vision for the south Montrose area and outline planning guidelines can be established. As the various elements of the project are pursued by land owners, business interests and the Council through individual actions and also through the Steering Group more detailed projects and planning applications will emerge.

4.3 Although the original study area excluded the Wharf Street roundabout the Consultants had set out some options for possible changes to the junction layout. This committee report is recommending no immediate action on this matter other than the performance of the junction will continue to be monitored.

4.4 Similarly the section of Wharf Street alongside the river was not included in the original study. There are now emerging ambitious plans for a community quayside project for this area and therefore reference to an environmental project has been made in the Planning Guidelines.

Delivery mechanisms

4.5 Delivery of both business development and environmental improvement in this area lies principally in the hands of the private sector (existing businesses and landowners) with the Council having both a regulatory and supporting role; improvements to the road network would be a key role for the Council.

4.6 The work to date has been overseen by an informal Steering Group comprising the Council and a number of key partners and it is considered that this group should continue to progress the delivery of the project, investigating funding sources and developing an action plan.
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5 RISK

5.1 The risk of not having a land use planning framework in place and continuing to develop delivery mechanisms to encourage and support economic investment and development is that little change takes place and the potential opportunity presented by the offshore renewable sector is missed. There are several significant matters to finalise including the design and funding for the road improvements as well as resolving the future of the listed buildings in the area particularly the Customs House. These will continue to be investigated and addressed as the project moves forward.

5.2 Establishing an action plan with realistic timetable and with finance in place particularly for the improvements to the road network is also important. The risk of not progressing to a fully tested road alignment and costed work programme could lead to issues of planning blight.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations in this report.

6.2 However, as outlined in report 552/11 while the preparation of planning guidance does not commit the Council to any future capital spend, it is recognised that there will an expectation among key stakeholders and other interested parties that the Council will have a key role to play in the development and delivery of the road improvements proposed in the study. It is unlikely that there will be any significant progress on the delivery of the regeneration project unless the Council takes the lead on this particular aspect. There is currently no specific provision for funding any aspects of this project and this is being considered as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process. Any proposals for funding specific projects will be the subject of future reports to this committee, as necessary.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 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 has been undertaken.

9 ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

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

COMMUNITIES THAT ARE PROSPEROUS AND FAIR

1. We have a sustainable economy with good employment opportunities
2. Angus is a good place to live in, work in and visit
COMMUNITIES THAT ARE SUSTAINABLE

10. Our communities are developed in a sustainable manner
11. Our natural and built environment is protected and enjoyed
12. Our carbon footprint is reduced

10 CONSENTATION

10.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Law & Administration and the Head of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

11 CONCLUSION

11.1 The consultation undertaken on the Consultancy Study has stimulated an increasing desire and support to see physical and economic regeneration of this part of the town. There is no doubt willingness by existing businesses to engage and be part of a project team that would result in environmental improvements and business development taking advantage of the existing port and business infrastructure. There is also the potential opportunity for investment from the renewable offshore sector. The endorsement of the planning guidelines will provide support for the principles of regeneration while allowing opportunity to undertake additional consultation on a number of matters raised and also allow work to continue to develop specific projects and actions.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

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 552/11 South Montrose Strategic Review and Draft Development Master Plan to Angus Council Infrastructure Services Committee 23 August 2011;

P&T/GWC/GDP/IAL
4 January 2012