

Berryden Corridor Improvement Project

Demolition Statement

Aberdeen City Council

March 2020

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Demolition Statement

The document describes proposed demolition and alterations to structures which require conservation area consent or listed building consent in association with the Berryden Corridor Improvement Project.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of the applications for conservation area consents for 1 to 3 Caroline Place, 6 Caroline Place and 7 – 49 Berryden Road/ Royal Cornhill Hospital/ Westburn Gardens development all of which sit within the Rosemount and Westburn conservation area. It also supports, the applications for listed building consent for The Fathers House (formerly Rosemount Parish Church) and the March Stone ABD55. The demolitions and alterations to these structures are necessary for the delivery of the Berryden Corridor Improvement Project. The purpose of this statement is to provide justification for the demolitions and alterations in line with national level to local level plans and policies. Reference is made throughout this document to the “Berryden Corridor Improvement Project Heritage Statement, February 2020” (the “Heritage Statement”) which should be read in conjunction with this statement.
- 1.2 The Berryden Corridor Improvement Project (“the Project”) involves widening the existing road and junction improvements between Skene Square and Ashgrove Road, and constructing a new section of road between Ashgrove Road and Kittybrewster roundabout.

2. The Project

- 2.1 The Project can be described in two main sections, these being:
 - Road Widening - From the junction of Skene Square with Rosemount Place following the route of the B986 then C156C Berryden Road generally in a north west direction until it meets the junction of the C156C Ashgrove Road/Back Hilton Road; and
 - New Road Construction – From the junction of the C156C Berryden Road/ Ashgrove Road/ Back Hilton Road generally in a northerly direction running between the residential developments of Picktillum Place and Kittybrewster Square and to the rear of properties lying to the east of the A96 Great Northern Road until it meets with the A96 Kittybrewster Roundabout. Included is an

additional link road from the proposed new road, to tie in with the C156C Back Hilton Road at its junction with the U308C Cattofield Terrace.

- 2.2 Aberdeen City Council, as the Roads Authority, has a duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to keep under review the local road network in the Aberdeen City area and to manage and maintain the system of routes, including where appropriate, ensuring the provision of a safe and efficient network of roads.
- 2.3 The existing Berryden corridor facilitates journeys between the city centre, the north of Aberdeen and beyond. The corridor represents a pinch point in the city road network. It is identified as a route operating beyond its capacity leading to significant congestion and journey time delays, particularly at peak times. The effect on traffic flow extends beyond the immediate corridor impacting on the A96 Great Northern Road, to the north, through to the B986 Skene Square, to the south.
- 2.4 The section of road to be widened, which includes Skene Square, Caroline Place and Berryden Road, is considered permitted development for the Local Roads Authority under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992. However, as 1 - 3 Caroline Place, 6 Caroline Place and the wall at 7 – 49 Berryden Road/ Royal Cornhill Hospital/ Westburn Gardens development are within the Rosemount and Westburn conservation area, conservation area consents are needed for the required demolition and alterations to boundary walls and buildings. Listed building consent is also required for proposed demolition and alterations to the boundary wall of the Category C listed The Father's House (formerly known as Rosemount Parish Church) and the Category B listed March Stone ABD55 which is to be relocated.

3. Purpose of the Project

- 3.1 The purpose of the Project is to improve the efficiency of the public network by relieving congestion and improving journey time reliability while also improving infrastructure for walking and cycling.
- 3.2 An option appraisal has been undertaken to identify transport improvements required along the Berryden Corridor and involved public consultation, economic and environmental exercises. The appraisal also included a traffic modelling exercise which formed the main part of the option development. The modelling incorporated

committed developments and assessed the impact of predicted future traffic levels upon the corridor and surrounding road network.

- 3.3 The appraisal determined that the option which provided two lanes for all traffic in both directions with further additional lanes on the approaches to junctions provided the most significant network benefits with the predicted traffic volumes. It identified this infrastructure improvement as the preferred option, complemented by the addition of walking and cycling infrastructure in line with the Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy, as best meeting the option appraisal objectives. Due to the constrained urban nature of the area there is limited scope for alternative routing options involving significant alterations to the alignment of the existing road and junctions with the exception of the northern section routing through safeguarded land.
- 3.4 The need for the Berryden corridor improvement has been acknowledged for some time, the Project as it currently stands has also been identified as being required to facilitate the delivery of the Union Street Pedestrianisation project (the “USP”). More recently the scope of the USP has evolved to transform the wider transportation network in the city centre as part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (the “CCMP”).
- 3.5 Promotion of the Project is consistent with or complementary to other transport projects and strategies currently being promoted in Aberdeen City, including; A90/A96 Haudagain Improvement (Transport Scotland), and the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (Aberdeen City Council). The completion of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (Transport Scotland) in 2019 and ‘Access from the North - Third Don Crossing’ scheme in 2016 provide significant new links within the transport network. The Project will further improve connectivity to these new links as well as the surrounding infrastructure.
- 3.6 The Project is predicted to provide a significant economic benefit to the city and will provide significant public benefits across the north of the city and beyond including:
- Improved journey times and connections;
 - Reduced congestion; and
 - Improved pedestrian and cycle provision.

As detailed within the traffic modelling report accompanying the applications. Traffic flow analysis through Berryden Road and associated parallel routes shows that the

Project will allow significantly more traffic to route through the corridor, reducing traffic flow on other parallel routes. Although carrying more traffic, model journey time analysis collated through the Berryden Corridor, indicates peak period journey times reducing by up to 40% when the proposals are in place. Traffic queue analysis collated over the area bounded by Westburn Drive, St Machar Drive, King Street and Rosemount Place shows that the levels of traffic queueing are consistently lower when the Berryden Corridor Improvements are in place, with peak period queueing reduced by up to 20%.

- 3.7 The project will provide more than 10 new controlled crossings, approximately 1.3km of additional footways for pedestrians and 4km of new cycle tracks; representing a step change in the current provision for these modes.

4. Policy Context

- 4.1 The Aberdeen Local Development Plan (the “LDP”) adopted in 2017, supports the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014) and takes cognisance of the Aberdeen City Council Local Transport Strategy (2016-2021), Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (refreshed 2013) and National Transport Strategy (refreshed 2016). The LDP allocates land and promotes planning policies to enable the growth of Aberdeen over the plan period and to “ensure that all communities have access to a comprehensive and effective transport network”. Good transport connections are seen as “essential to the economic prosperity of Aberdeen and the quality of life of people living and working in the city”.
- 4.2 The Aberdeen City Council Local Transport Strategy (the “LTS”) for the period 2016 to 2021 sets out the policies and interventions adopted by the Council to guide planning and improvement of the local transport network over the next five years. The LTS vision is to develop “a sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21st Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment”. The LTS sets an objective to support improvements to the road network and states that the Council will support the principle that “priority investment should be determined in order to reflect all day demand relative to capacity”. The Berryden Corridor is specifically identified as being “a strategic route used both by traffic accessing or travelling through the city centre and as a direct access route to a number of large retail developments along the corridor itself and has been identified as operating beyond capacity, leading to significant congestion and journey time delays”, thus highlighting the need for the Project. The LTS supports the aims and

visions of the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy, in which part of the Berryden Corridor Improvement is highlighted as a 'strategic road improvement' as part of the 'Internal Connections – Aberdeen Area' proposals.

- 4.3 The Aberdeen Strategic Infrastructure Plan (the "SIP") which was published in 2013, focuses "on the development of the enabling infrastructure needed to realise the city's aspirations" The SIP identified the Central Aberdeen Transport Infrastructure (the "CATI") project and states that "...road improvements are required to provide sufficient capacity within the network to allow interchange between north/south and east/west traffic". The Berryden Corridor forms part of the CATI.
- 4.4 Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme which was published in June 2015 outlines a 20-year development strategy for Aberdeen City Centre. A range of projects are identified to facilitate and support future economic growth with the intention that such growth will secure more benefits and opportunities for the communities of Aberdeen City and Shire. The Berryden Corridor Improvement is a committed project that supports the delivery of the CCMP by accommodating traffic routing changes, resulting from reduced city centre permeability.
- 4.5 Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) which was published in 2019 sets out the principles and policies that help work towards a shared vision of a historic environment which is "...understood and valued, cared for and protected, enjoyed and enhanced." The policies for managing the historic environment which are most relevant to the Project are;
- HEP4 "If detrimental impact on the historic environment is unavoidable, it should be minimised. Steps should be taken to demonstrate that alternatives have been explored, and mitigation measures should be put in place."
 - HEP5 "Decisions affecting the historic environment should contribute to the sustainable development of communities and places."
 - HEP6 "Decisions affecting the historic environment should be informed by an inclusive understanding of the potential consequences for people and communities. Decision-making processes should be collaborative, open, transparent and easy to understand."
- 4.6 The Historic Environment Scotland document "Interim Guidance on the designation of Conservation Areas and Conservation Area Consent" published in April 2019, does

not define the categories of projects that demolition may be considered for explicitly, although the previous guidance for both conservation areas and listed building demolition has been retained within the newer listed building guidance (see 4.7). Where buildings are proposed to be demolished as part of the proposals, the Heritage Statement identifies their significance both as individual structures and as part of wider groupings.

4.7 Within the Historic Environment Scotland guidance document 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Demolition of Listed Buildings', reference is made to the section titled; "Is the demolition of the building essential to delivering significant benefits to economic growth or the wider community?" This section of the document goes on to say that "some projects may be of such economic or public significance that their benefits may be seen to outweigh the strong presumption in favour of retaining a..." historic building... "Often these projects form part of wider strategies at national or regional level. Examples may include major transportation schemes or significant regeneration projects." Although 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Demolition of Listed Buildings' document is specifically written for listed buildings, the presumption would be that the test to demolish a listed building would be as, if not more demanding than that for an unlisted building. It is considered Berryden Corridor Improvement Project to be a major transportation scheme with significant economic and public benefits. These include:

- Improved journey times and connections;
- Reduced congestion;
- Improved pedestrian and cycle provision;
- Supporting the sustainable development of the city; and
- Encouraging sustainable travel.

4.8 The Project is therefore supported by and consistent with plans and policies from national to local level.

5. Route Alignment

5.1 Due to the constrained urban nature of the area there is limited scope for alternative routing options involving significant alterations to the alignment of the existing road and junctions. By widening the existing road corridor along Skene Square, Caroline Place and Berryden Road the impact on the urban fabric has been minimised. Had the Project been routed further east to avoid the boundary wall of The Fathers House,

there would have been an increase in the number of residential properties on Caroline Place requiring demolition. Had the Project been routed further west to avoid demolition on Caroline Place (east) and Hutcheon Street, the demolition of tenement blocks on the corner of Westburn Road and Berryden Road and alterations to the building of The Fathers House would be required plus additional impact to the front gardens and access to residential properties on the west side of Caroline Place/ Skene Square would have been unavoidable.

5.2 To achieve the Project objectives, 2 lanes in both directions for vehicular traffic must be provided on Caroline Place. The complementary pedestrian and cycle provision required for the project has been incorporated into the design to appropriate design standards. This contributes to sustainable development of the city and aims to encourage sustainable travel. The design has been optimised to ensure the project is effective whilst minimising the impact on adjacent properties. Design standards could not be relaxed further without the operational performance of the road being negatively impacted to a degree that would detrimentally reduce the effectiveness of the Project, user safety and its ability to meet the objectives.

5.3 At the Royal Cornhill Hospital/ Westburn Gardens Housing Development, 2/3 lanes of vehicular traffic in both directions are required to achieve the Project objectives. In order to avoid the wall at the Royal Cornhill Hospital/ Westburn Gardens Housing Development the road would have had to be located substantially further to the east. This would have significantly impacted on the operations of the retail park due to the increase in land required, both from the current car park and the southwestern most retail unit. A more easterly alignment would also have been negatively impacted the residential properties at 1 - 6 and 49 - 54 Bob Cooney Court.



Photos: Alterations to existing boundary wall at Royal Cornhill Hospital and Westburn Gardens Housing Development

- 5.4 As the current wall and the surrounding land within the conservation area have been substantially altered and further major alterations are underway, the more westerly alignment with demolition of the wall is considered the less detrimental option.

6. Demolition proposal and project proposal for individual buildings

- 6.1 The impact of the Berryden Corridor Improvement Project on individual buildings, the significance of the buildings to the conservation area, along with the mitigation proposals are set out within the Heritage Statement. An outline description of the demolition and project proposals is provided below.

1 and 2 Caroline Place

Demolition proposal

- 6.2 1 and 2 Caroline Place are unlisted residential properties which sit within the Rosemount and Westburn conservation area. It is proposed that these buildings and boundary walls to their front and sides be demolished to enable the required road widening to be formed, comprising additional carriageway, cycle track, footway and verge areas.



Photos:

Left - Façade of 1 Caroline Place

Right - Façade of 2 Caroline Place

Project proposal

- 6.3 Following demolition, to maintain a boundary line of the walls along the east side of Caroline Place, a low wall around 0.7m in height will be formed to the rear to the new footway. Two gaps of approximately 2m wide will be provided to allow access to the land behind. This remaining land to the rear of the new wall will be landscaped to form a pocket park, creating a space for use by the local community and enhancing the natural environment. The boundary walls to properties will be reinstated on the south side of 1 Caroline Place and the north side of 2 Caroline Place, tying into the new

boundary wall at the front. Further detail on landscaping proposed is shown within the landscape drawings accompanying the applications. They include hedging to the sides and rear of the pocket park to soften the visual influence of hard boundary treatments. Where practicable materials from the demolition of both walls and buildings will be reused within the new wall and pocket park.

3 Caroline Place

Demolition proposal

- 6.4 The boundary wall to the front and part of the boundary wall to the south side of the property are required to be demolished to enable the required road widening to be formed, comprising additional footway and verge areas. The building is unlisted but sits within the Rosemount and Westburn conservation area. It is not proposed to make any alterations to the building itself.



Photo: 3 Caroline Place (in centre)

Project proposal

- 6.5 Following demolition, to maintain a boundary line of the walls along the east side of Caroline Place, a low wall around 0.7m in height will be formed to the rear to the new footway. The new wall will tie-in with the existing section at 4 Caroline Place and then be extended past the site of 1 & 2 Caroline Place. The current gap permitting access to a driveway will not be maintained. The boundary wall to the side property will be tied into the wall at the front reinstating the formal boundary of the property. Where

practicable materials from the demolition of both walls and adjacent buildings will be reused within the new wall.

6 Caroline Place

Demolition Proposal

- 6.6 6 Caroline Place is an unlisted building forming half of a regency style double villa, together with 5 Caroline Place. It is not proposed to make any alterations to 5 Caroline Place. Unlike 5 Caroline Place, 6 Caroline Place has a one-storey brick extension to the north of the building. It is proposed that this extension, front & side boundary walls and adjoining outhouses be demolished to enable the required road widening, comprising additional footway and verge areas.



Photo: Façade of 6 Caroline Place



Photos: Rear of 6 Caroline Place

Project proposal

- 6.7 Following demolition of the extension of 6 Caroline Place, the slapping in the original gable will be closed and a new window installed beneath an existing window pertaining to the first floor flat. Internally the flat to which the extension pertains will be remodelled to form a functional one-bedroom flat. To preserve the symmetrical façade of 5 and 6 Caroline Place, the wing abutting 6 Caroline Place will be retained with the original opening reinstated. To maintain a boundary line of the walls along the east side of Caroline Place, a low wall around 0.7m in height will be formed to the rear of the new footway on Caroline Place and for a short distance on Hutcheon Street until it meets the wing. To provide a formal boundary, privacy and security to the rear garden, a random rubble wall around 2m in height is proposed to the rear to the new footway on Hutcheon Street from the wing to the garage and will include a gap to provide gated access to the garden. Where practicable materials from the demolition of both walls and adjacent buildings will be reused within the new walls and gable reinstatement.



Photo: Extension and wing of 6 Caroline Place

7 - 49 Berryden Road/ Royal Cornhill Hospital/ Westburn Gardens Development
Demolition Proposal

- 6.8 A boundary wall sits on the edge of the Rosemount and Westburn conservation area on the west side of Berryden Road, forming the boundary between Berryden Road and the flats of 7-49 Berryden Road/ Royal Cornhill Hospital/ Westburn Gardens Housing Development. The boundary wall is required to be demolished to enable the required road widening to be formed, comprising additional carriageway, cycle track, footway and verge areas. It is predominantly of random rubble construction with varying cope styles and some lengths of roughcast concrete block with metal railings. At the existing Royal Cornhill Hospital site, the wall was subject to localised collapse. It is understood that the wall was partially demolished to make it safe. Over time the wall has been

significantly altered along its length to provide an access for pedestrian and vehicular traffic to adjacent land. In addition, along its boundary with the Westburn Gardens Housing Development it has been substantially reduced in height along its length. A further wall is in place between the gardens of 7-49 Berryden Road and the Royal Cornhill Hospital which abuts the aforementioned wall. Part of this wall will require demolition.



Photos:

Left - Wall at Westburn Gardens prior to development of the site (Google, 2009)

Right - Wall at Westburn Gardens during development of the site (Google, 2019)



Photos:

Left - Wall at Royal Cornhill Hospital prior to collapse (Google, 2015)

Right - Wall at Westburn Gardens following collapse (Google, 2019)

Project proposal

- 6.9 Following demolition, to maintain a boundary line of the walls along the west side of Berryden Road, a low wall around 1m in height will be formed to the rear of the new footway. This is in keeping with height of the wall which has been taken down by the as part of the housing development or was subject to collapse. The new wall will tie-in with the existing section at 7-49 Berryden Road and then extend passed the Royal

Cornhill Hospital and the Westburn Gardens Housing Development sites to tie-in with the wall at 77 Berryden Road. The current gaps permitting access to adjacent land will be replicated at slightly adjusted configurations. The boundary walls between the adjacent properties will be tied into the new wall at the front reinstating the formal boundaries. The wall will be re-built to the west of its current location using, where practicable, locally sourced random rubble and existing coping stones.

The Father's House (formerly Rosemount Parish Church), Caroline Place

Demolition Proposal

- 6.10 The Father's House is a Category C listed building within the Rosemount and Westburn conservation area, sited on land which is bound by Caroline Place, Westburn Road and Rosemount Terrace. It is not proposed to make any alterations to the building itself. The curtilage of the Church and adjoining hall has not been described within the listing description. The church is bound by a random rubble granite wall with pointed coping stones. In the past the wall has been partially demolished to create a vehicular access. The Caroline Place boundary wall, including gates, and a section of wall at the junction of Westburn Road and Rosemount Terrace where it forms a corner are required to be demolished to enable the required road widening to be formed, comprising additional carriageway, cycle track, footway and verge areas.



Photos: The Father's House, Caroline Place

Project proposal

- 6.11 Following demolition, to maintain a boundary line of the walls along the west side of Caroline Place, a low wall around 1m in height will be formed to the rear to the new footway. To the façade the wall is to be replaced set-back in line with the buttress at

the outer face of the church. Where the vehicular access was previously created through the wall, this is to be closed off with a wall reinstated across this length. The proposed wall will be the same height as existing. For the wall at the junction of Westburn Road and Rosemount Terrace, it is to be set back further into the grounds of the church with a wall of larger radius put back in its place. The wall will tie in with the existing boundary walls along Westburn Road and Rosemount Terrace. Where practicable, locally available granite copes and rubble will be used in the construction.

March stone ABD55

Demolition Proposal

- 6.12 March stone ABD55 currently lies at the junction of Back Hilton Road and Cattofield Terrace within the running carriageway of the proposed new road. As a result, the stone is to be relocated. Records show that work was previously carried out on the stone in the late 1970's with the stone set into a random rubble wall during this time. The stone is category B listed.



Photos: March stone ABD55 at the junction of Back Hilton Road and Cattofield Terrace

Project proposal

- 6.13 It is proposed to reinstall the March Stone close to the line of the historic boundary and within Council controlled land. The proposed location would keep the march stone publicly visible while placing it on the wider section of footway, this would mean it does not form an obstruction to pedestrians and would be more protected from any vehicular traffic mounting the footway.