

Murdo Fraser MSP,
Control Tower,
Perth Airport,
Perth. PH2 6PL

Dear Murdo,

The Cross Tay Link Road and other Scone Planning Matters

You have been corresponding with Martin Rhodes for some time regarding the above matter and have been most helpful in your responses, through the offices of Councillor Melloy.

Martin has been co-opted onto the Scone Community Council and has provided details of your previous correspondence so that we can pursue the matter further.

You will be aware that we have written to a number of senior officers of Perth & Kinross Council of our concerns regarding the conflicting, variable, confusing and inaccurate responses we have previously received from Council officers. These responses have been misleading and we wished to meet senior officers of the Council in an endeavour to obtain clear and categorical clarifications.

Despite these letters being sent a number of weeks ago, to date we have not received the courtesy of any response and would again seek your assistance in promoting a way forward.

As a basis of clarification we would propose to comment on the response you received from Perth & Kinross Council on 21st November 2016.

The term “**committed project**” was introduced to the proposed plan, by Perth & Kinross Council in 2012.

Since 2012 to date (some 4 years) despite repeated requests from Developers, Community Council and the general public, Perth & Kinross Council have failed to clearly define the meaning of the term “committed project”.

In January 2016, in response to an FOI enquiry, Scone Community Council were issued with a “definition”, which stated ***“The CTRLR will only become a committed project when the project is developed to an appropriate level of design and the required package of funding has been assembled. The project will also require to have the requisite planning consents and statutory Orders/requirements all in place and will ultimately require formal approval by the full Council”***.

A resident of Balbeggie, Mr Ian Cantwell, raised an FOI enquiry regarding his similar concerns in respect of the definition of “Committed Project”.

Mr Cantwell received a response in October 2016, which stated that *“This was a phrase that was inserted by the Scottish Ministers Reporter into the current adopted Local Development Plan. It is appreciated that this phrase can be interpreted differently by parties. However it is intended that the Council will clarify and agree the exact meaning of this at its meeting in December”*.

You will see from the above response that:-

- Apparently the phrase “committed project has NOT yet been defined.
- Perth and Kinross Council are incorrectly stating that the phrase was inserted by the Scottish Ministers Reporter and **NOT** by themselves.

It is obvious that the current situation, regarding the CTLR, is such that it fails to comply with the **“definition”** issued in January 2016 and obviously cannot comply with a definition currently not **“clarified”**.

Despite this however, clear statements have been issued by Perth & Kinross Council officers, both in Planning and in Roads, that **“the CTLR is a committed Project”**.

The Perth & Kinross Local Plan, which was adopted in 2014, placed great significance on the statement *“To prevent a reduction in Air Quality and increased congestion in the Bridgend area of Perth, there will be an embargo on further planning consents for housing for sites of 10 or more, until such time as the construction of the CTLR is a committed project”*.

If the CTLR was indeed a **“committed project”** this would immediately remove this embargo on potentially over 870 houses in areas of North Scone, Glebe School, Perth Airport, Balbeggie, Burrelton, Kinrossie and Wolfhill.

In respect of the funding of the CTLR we would make the following points:-

- The estimated costs of the A9/A85 section were £17million in April 2016, subsequently the contract for these works was issued at a value of £35 million. (+105%)
- The estimated costs of the A9 to the A94 section was estimated in April 2016 as £88 million, subsequently in November 2016 the estimated costs are given as £115 million. (+31%)
- The CTLR is currently only being **processed through the DMRB Stage 2 process** and during that process the costing of each scheme option will be promoted, prior to a decision being made.
- The costs of the link from Bertha Park to the A9 has not yet been ascertained.
- As such a final costing of the “Project” cannot possibly be ascertained.
- It would therefore be impossible to determine the sum of 61% required to be provided by Developers.
- The number of properties required to make “Developer Contributions” (approx. 25,000 – 30,000) would be far in excess of those currently provided in the Local Development Plan.
- The Tay Cities Deal has not yet been applied for and the consequent value of the Perth proportion of any award can at best be described as uncertain. It would seem therefore unusual to base statements regarding funding of the CTLR on such a basis.

In respect of the **“encouragement to take part in structured discussions”** we were in actual fact invited to participate in a **“mediation event”**.

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process where people involved in conflict are helped by a neutral third party (the mediator) to resolve their problems collaboratively.

In order to do this the parties must be prepared to compromise in order to meet somewhere in the middle. In mediation the parties are represented by a single person who has the written authorisation of their party to agree all matters in the dispute.

Mediators are non-judgmental and may not express an opinion on the substantive matters in dispute.

As Community Councillors we have, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Community Councillors, a duty to act in the interests of the local community and to represent the views of the community. We do not however have any mandate to make any binding agreements on behalf of the community.

As such we are unable to attend a “**mediation event**”, however we have expressed a willingness to meet with Council senior officers, in order clarify the apparent numerous occurrences of misleading and potentially incorrect statements.

Despite writing some weeks ago, to date none of the senior officers have responded to our questions nor agreed to meet with ourselves.

We have grave concerns regarding the consultation process for the LDP as we have discovered that the consultation process, used by Perth & Kinross Council, during the consultation in 2012 was flawed. The underhand tactics used at that time appear to be in train to be repeated for the current consultation.

The letter you received makes statements such as “The area which is proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt is **not for proposed development**” and “It is **not a tactic** to develop this area in the future”, which refer to the MIR consultation returned in March 2016.

In June 2016 Perth and Kinross Council issued a document regarding “Perth Transport Futures”. In that document they enclose a plan stating “Releases development potential east of the Tay”.

This statement is positioned directly over the land designated as being taken out of the Green Belt.

In light of the litany of inaccurate and potentially incorrect information emanating from Perth & Kinross Council, you may well understand our desire to meet with Council senior officers.

We would appreciate if you could use your good offices to facilitate the arrangement of such a meeting

Yours faithfully
For Scone & District Community Council

Hazel MacKinnon
Secretary