

Aberdeen Low Emission Zone – Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)

STEP ONE – DEVELOP A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR OBJECTIVES

In accordance with the Scottish Government’s Programme for Government, Aberdeen City Council (ACC) is preparing to declare a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in 2022. This will be an area of Aberdeen City Centre where the most polluting vehicles (specifically pre-Euro IV petrol vehicles and pre-Euro VI/6 diesel vehicles) will be prohibited from entry. If a non-compliant vehicle enters the LEZ, the registered keeper will be issued with a fine in the form of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

LEZs are new in Scotland, with powers for a local authority to introduce a LEZ provided in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. A LEZ is a public health measure, introduced in response to dangerous levels of air pollution in certain areas, attributable to road traffic, which can have disproportionately negative impacts on the most vulnerable members of society, particularly the young, the elderly and those suffering from certain chronic illnesses.

Aberdeen is the main ferry terminal for connections from mainland Scotland to the northern isles, Orkney and Shetland, with the terminal located in the City Centre. This provides lifeline connections for island residents, visitors and businesses. Should the ferry terminal fall within the LEZ area, then all island residents and business representatives travelling to Aberdeen on the ferry and using their own vehicle for onward trips would have no option but to enter the LEZ. They would therefore be forced to purchase a LEZ-compliant vehicle to continue making these trips or be issued with a PCN whenever such trips are made. This would have a disproportionate impact on dwellers of the Orkney and Shetland islands as they, unlike other visitors to the City Centre, would be unable to avoid the LEZ.

This issue, of a potentially disproportionate impact on island dwellers and businesses, was raised during initial consultation on the 8 possible LEZ options which took place in September and October 2020, given that some of these options included the access/egress point of the ferry terminal within the LEZ boundary.

STEP TWO – GATHER YOUR DATA AND IDENTIFY YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Data for Serco Northlink Ferries (2019):

- Number of vehicles carried – 77,100
- Number of passengers – 347,600

Source: *National Transport Statistics No. 39 (2020 Edition)*

STEP 3 - CONSULTATION

A non-targeted consultation (open to all stakeholders and members of the public) on the pros and cons of the 8 options was undertaken in autumn 2020. A series of stakeholder workshops were also undertaken in autumn 2020 and spring 2021, including engagement with Aberdeen Harbour Board.

This highlighted potential concerns with those options that had the ferry terminal within the LEZ boundary, namely that all those travelling from the northern isles by ferry and making an onward journey using their own or a business vehicle would of necessity have to travel through the LEZ (and hence be in a compliant vehicle or face a penalty), whatever their onward destination might be.

This has therefore been one of the many factors that has influenced the choice of a preferred LEZ option. In the preferred option, the LEZ boundary does not cover access / egress to / from the ferry terminal meaning that passengers making an onward journey in a non-compliant vehicle can leave the terminal area and travel southbound along Market Street to access their destination. There will

be appropriate signage and diversionary routes in place to advise drivers of the restrictions at suitable points to enable them to make alternative route choices. Although this may require a slight deviation from usual route choices, this is not specific to this population group, but will be required of all residents, visitors and businesses travelling in a non-compliant vehicle.

Those travelling to Aberdeen from the northern isles will therefore face the same LEZ access restrictions as all other population groups with no differential impacts on any specific groups or sectors.

The preferred LEZ option was subject to a second period of public and stakeholder engagement during summer 2021, and the outcomes of this have informed the final proposed LEZ boundary taken forward for publication.

STEP FOUR – ASSESSMENT

Given that the preferred option does not include the main access / egress point to / from the ferry terminal, island residents and businesses travelling to Aberdeen will be subject to the same LEZ restrictions and diversionary options as the rest of the population, with no differential impact.

For this reason it is considered that a full ICIA is not required.

STEP FIVE – PREPARING YOUR ICIA

For the reasons identified in Step 4, a full ICIA is not required.

STEP SIX – MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO YOUR WORK

Based on the preferred LEZ option, no adjustments to account for the impacts on island communities needs to be undertaken at present as there are no impacts unique to island communities that are not shared across the general population. This ICIA may have to be revisited should the final LEZ boundary change, and the ferry terminal fall within the boundary.

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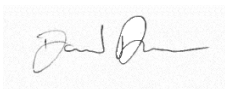
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Date completed: 06/10/21

ICIA approved by: David Dunne

Position: Chief Officer

Signature:



Date approved: 6 October 2021