

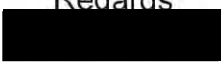
Cameron C (Craig)

From: PS/Transport Scotland
Sent: 23 February 2017 07:33
To: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Cc: PS/Transport Scotland; Graham A (Alasdair)
Subject: FW: Office of Gillian Martin MSP: To arrange a meeting at Holyrood regarding dualling of A96
Attachments: A96 Inverness to Aberdeen Dualling - Briefing for Gillian Martin MSP Meeting on 23 February 2017 - 22 February 2017.docx
Importance: High

Natalie

Please find attached a one page note as requested.

Regards



Business Manager | Chief Executive's Office

Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF

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From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Sent: 22 February 2017 14:48
To: PS/Transport Scotland
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Subject: FW: Office of Gillian Martin MSP: To arrange a meeting at Holyrood regarding dualling of A96

PS/Transport Scotland

I was passed this email yesterday and asked to set up a meeting this week so Mr Brown is meeting Gillian Martin tomorrow at 14.15 for 15 minutes.

Would it be possible to get a one pager covering the dualling of the A96, possible routes and the Save Bennachie campaign, as raised in the original email from Ms Martin's office?

We don't require it tonight – tomorrow morning would be great. Apologies for the short notice!

Thanks



Assistant Private Secretary

Keith Brown MSP - Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
2N.08 | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: [Redacted]
CabSecEJFW@gov.scot

A96 Dualling Inverness to Aberdeen Briefing for Gillian Martin MSP Meeting – 23rd February 2017

Gillian Martin MSP has written to Transport Scotland once in recent years regarding the A96 Dualling. In October 2016 she wrote asking for the contact details of those leading the project but no further correspondence has been received (MACCS Case 2016/0030779).

Ms Martin has made mentioned of the Save Bennachie Campaign who have stated they are “working to protect and defend Bennachie and its surrounding area from any encroachment by the new A96 dual carriageway”. The Bennachie Massive is an area of land to the west of Inverurie and as such falls within the area of the A96 Dualling Eastern Section.

The Campaign produced a “preliminary report” into Transport Scotland’s work in May 2016 and this, along with all other feedback received following exhibitions held in May 2015, will be carefully considered during the next stage of design and assessment. In their “preliminary report” Save Bennachie Campaign highlight potential impacts on ecology, history, recreational use and tourist impacts along with local opposition to any potential routes infringing on the hills and prefer an option to the east side of Inverurie.

Top Lines

- The Scottish Government has given a **commitment to completing the dualling of the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen by 2030**. This significant undertaking requires careful, in-depth planning and design so we deliver the right scheme and help tackle congestion, make journey times more reliable and, crucially, improve road safety for all along the route.
- Route options will be developed at the next stage of the design and assessment process, which for the section between east of Huntly to Aberdeen is expected to start later this year following the procurement of Consultants.
- The **overall timetable** for the dualling programme is set by the Scottish Government’s commitment to **complete the dualling between Inverness and Aberdeen by 2030**. The phasing for individual elements will take shape during the future stages of design.

Eastern Section (Huntly to Aberdeen) including the area of interest to Save Bennachie

1. Transport Scotland is currently at the very early stages of the dualling design and assessment process for the section of the A96 east of Huntly to Aberdeen with no route options having been developed at this stage. We have completed preliminary engineering and strategic environmental assessment work along the A96 with the outcome presented to the public at a series of exhibition in May 2015

2. This preliminary assessment is the first stage in a multi-stage development process where Transport Scotland has examined high level Improvement Strategy Options. It is important to note that the Improvement Strategies (Options B, C, D and N) are different high level approaches to providing a dual carriageway, for example a bypass north or south of towns along the existing A96. These improvement strategy options are illustrations of what such choices may mean and do not represent specific corridors or route alignments.

3. Route options will be developed at the next stage of the design and assessment process, which for the section between east of Huntly to Aberdeen is expected to start later this year following the procurement of Consultants (procurement process to appoint a consultant commenced in January 2017). We currently expect that this work will take approximately 2 years to complete and will include an engineering, environmental, traffic and economic assessment of the potential impacts of each option developed to inform a preferred option.

4. The output of the preliminary work, including the feedback received following the exhibitions held in May 2015 will be carefully considered during the next stage in the design and assessment process. This will include feedback received from the Save Bennachie Campaign. As Transport Scotland progress to this next stage of development further public consultations will be undertaken as part of their rolling programme of engagement to ensure that communities, businesses and individuals affected by the work are kept fully informed and their vital feedback taken into account.