

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 09 January 2019 13:29:12
To: Public Engagement Unit
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
Subject: FW: Ardentinny / Loch Long Bridge

Attachments: Scotland NI Link Email.pdf, Ardentinny Bridge - Michael Matheson MSP Briefing Nov '18 V1.pdf

AO – [Redacted]
Please place on MACCS as a diary case. thanks
[Redacted]
Deputy Private Secretary
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity 0131 244 7734

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 09 January 2019 12:55
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
<CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>> Cc: Michael Russell MSP
<Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot>>; [Redacted]

Subject: Ardentinny / Loch Long Bridge

Mr Matheson

I am Chair of the Cowal Fixed Link Working Group and am writing to you at the recommendation of Michael Russell MSP. I believe Mr Russell's office provided you with a briefing paper on the subject of the Ardentinny / Loch Long Bridge (copy attached) late last year as a follow up to your meeting with the A83 Task Force in November. I also attach a copy of an email on the same subject from Michael Russell to your predecessor Humza Yousaf dated 9 May 2018.

The purpose on my email is to ask if we can have short meeting, so that we can have a discussion on how to move this project forward. There are several crucial reasons why an investment in West Coast transport infrastructure should be considered at this time. These include providing an economic life-line to communities in South Argyll such as Dunoon, Rothesay, Lochgilphead and Campbeltown; building a modern alternative to the Rest and Be Thankful / A83 to provide access for tourism, business and residents to the Western Highland and Islands; opening up the eventual possibility of a fixed link from Scotland to Northern Ireland and the massive benefits that might deliver.

The basic research has been done. Together with the Fraser of Allander Institute, we have derived a model for how a feasibility study could be structured and implemented. This would put some real facts and numbers in front of Scottish and other political leaders so that sensible decisions, within an overall strategic vision, could be taken.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you.

Regards

[Redacted]

Chair, Cowal Fixed Link Working Group

Tel: [Redacted]

Mbl: [Redacted]

[Attachments – Out of Scope- Not Within Timeframe of FoI]

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and
Connectivity

Michael Matheson MSP

T: 0300 244 4000

E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

[Redacted]
Cowal Fixed-Link Working Group
[Redacted]

Our ref: 2019/0000888
29th January 2019

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 09 January inviting the Cabinet Secretary Mr Matheson to meet with you regarding the feasibility of an Ardentenny/Loch Long Bridge as part of a fixed-link connection between Scotland and Northern Ireland. Unfortunately due to diary pressures Mr Matheson is not able to meet with you at this time.

Regional engagement will be a key part of the next steps in taking forward both the review of the National Transport Strategy Review (NTS2) and the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). Transport Scotland has recently written to local authorities and regional partners to begin the process of engagement and the recent appointment of consultants Jacobs / Aecom, to undertake STPR2, will allow this key area of work in the near future.

At this time the Regional Transport Working Groups are the most appropriate forum to initiate discussions at officer level about strategic transport problems, opportunities and potential options, to further inform NTS policy development and STPR2.

Consultation and engagement with elected officials will form part of these groupings in due course, and stakeholders such as Cowal Fixed-Link Working Group will also have the opportunity to outline their proposals.

In the meantime should you wish to discuss this process further please contact [Redacted], Head of Transport Forecasts and Infrastructure Planning, Transport Scotland at [Redacted].

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Private Secretary

Annex C

From: Central Enquiry Unit
Sent: 22 January 2019 09:01:38
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: MPO - Irish Sea Road & Railway Bridge – [Redacted]

Good morning,

The email enquiry below was received at the Central Enquiry Unit today.

I would be grateful if you would deal with this or forward it to the appropriate person/area of business.

You may wish to acknowledge receipt of this email to the enquirer.

Thank you

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Sent: 21 January 2019 19:40
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Irish Sea Road & Railway Bridge

Dear Economy & Infrastructure Minister,

I write to you to provide you with information about Construction of an Irish Sea Road & Railway Bridge.

A bridge between Scotland-Northern Ireland, economic growth for both nations. With Brexit dominating the national headlines, it's very clear to all, that when voting out of the European Union (EU) we forgot about the Good Friday Agreement. Northern Ireland will need Britain more once no-deal is officially declared on 29th March.

So construction of a dual bridge between the two will make both economies (Northern Ireland's especially) greater, Republic of Ireland will feel the worse as isles of Ireland/Great Britain are each others biggest supplier(s) something needs to give, yet NI will need this bridge.

Tourism to/from Northern Ireland-Scotland, it's there to explore the Scottish islands on their way to Ayrshire or Glasgow.

Add a cycling path to bridge like Wales's M48 Seventh Bridge Crossing.

Cost is extortionate for this build, especially with a railway connection, but I believe it'll work, it'll be paid off by the amount of tourism generated crossing the bridge.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course

Kind Regards

[Redacted]

Transport Strategy and Analysis

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow
G4 0HF
Direct Line: [Redacted]
[Redacted]



By Email:

Mr [Redacted]
[\[Redacted\]](#)

Our ref:
2019/0002295

Date:
12 February 2019

Dear Mr [Redacted],

Thank you for your email dated 21 January 2019 to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure and Connectivity, regarding the potential economic benefits of the construction of an Irish Sea Road & Railway bridge. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland I have been asked to respond.

The Scottish Government is keen to explore opportunities for improving connectivity to and within Scotland and this forms part of our review of the National Transport Strategy. However, I can confirm that we currently have no plans to take forward proposals for a fixed link between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Transport Scotland have recently initiated the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) to identify potential transport investment as part of a Scotland wide appraisal of strategic transport options, this is intended to inform investment priorities for the next 20 years.

Moving forward, Transport Scotland has recently written to local authorities and regional partners to begin the process of engagement and this will be supported by the recent appointment of consultants Jacobs / Aecom, to undertake STPR2. Initial engagement on STPR2 will be focused on Scotland's local authorities and regional transport partnerships with the establishment of Regional Transport Working Groups.

This will be followed by wider engagement with representative transport and stakeholder groups, community councils and the general public after this initial phase of work. Further details of how you can get involved will be available on the [Transport Scotland website](#) in due course.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours Sincerely
[Redacted],
Project Administrator

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 08 February 2019 09:09:15
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Attachments: u441233_29-01-2019_14-58-59_1.pdf, Ardentiny Bridge - Michael Matheson MSP Briefing Nov '18 V1.pdf

Hi

For MACCS please- MR, I have also attached an email from Mr Russell following on from [Redacted]'s email

Many thanks

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 07 February 2019 06:44
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity <CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>>
>> Cc: Michael Russell MSP <Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot>>; Donald Cameron MSP <Donald.Cameron.msp@parliament.scot>>; Brendan O'Hara MP <brendan.ohara.mp@parliament.uk<mailto:brendan.ohara.mp@parliament.uk>>;

[Redacted]

Subject: Letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Dear Mr Matheson

I do hope you will personally at least read this mail as well as your officers! I refer to your letter to me dated 24th January 2019

(attached).

Clearly, I was disappointed in your response but also I was somewhat incredulous. The topics I outlined in my email of 9th January (also attached), and which I wished to discuss with you, were those formulated by a concerned group of responsible individuals who had thought long (over 5 years) and hard about these issues and potential solutions. The response was almost indecipherable ? I clearly have problems distinguishing my NTS2 from my STPR2. After reading the response a few times, I concluded that this was officialese for ?We are once more kicking even the first elements of any discussion into the long grass.?

I have not had the pleasure of meeting you yet, but have met and have had positive discussions regarding our ideas with colleagues in Holyrood ? Michael Russell MSP, Donald Cameron MSP, Jackie Baillie MSP and John Finnie MSP. I have also had positive discussion on these topics with Brendan O'Hara MP and with Michael Russell's predecessor [Redacted].

These individuals are, to a greater or lesser extent, familiar with my background before I was involved in many Argyll based projects including the Cowal Fixed Link Working Group. It might be helpful if I gave you a quick resume as it could put my request to you in context.

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 11(1)]

We are at the 'toyshop' stage with the notion of a fixed link to Argyll from the central belt with a potential onward connection to Belfast and, possibly, Dublin. At this stage, the project needs a visionary leader (I hope you) and some seed funding to run the economic and engineering feasibility study. In the great scheme of infrastructure projects, the funding for this study will be relatively small, particularly as it could be expected to be shared by three administrations. Once complete, the numbers, and the reaction of the public, business and political leaders, will determine if it is fit to join the mainstream. I ask you to reconsider your decision about a meeting.

Regards

[Redacted]

Tel: [Redacted] Mbl: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>

Sent: 29 January 2019 23:05

To: [Redacted]

Cc: CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>

Subject: letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

REFERENCE: 2019/0000888

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

Best wishes.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Assistant Private Secretary to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity

The Scottish Government | Web: www.gov.scot

Tel: 0131 244 2435 | Email:

CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>

___Begin forwarded message:

From: "Russell MW (Michael), MSP"

<Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot>>

Date: 7 February 2019 at 15:59:00 GMT

To: [Redacted]

Subject: Re: Letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

[Redacted]

Thanks for copying me into this.

I am restricting this reply to Michael, at his Parliamentary as opposed to

Ministerial address, but I support the idea of a meeting as I think he and the Government would benefit from hearing about the immense amount of thought and work that has gone into the fixed link idea which includes possibility of an Ardentiny Bridge, a project which I have indicated to Michael would provide an innovative solution to the problems of the Rest & Be Thankful.

As ever

[Redacted]

[Redacted] for Argyll and Bute

From: [Redacted] On Behalf Of
CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Sent: 29 January 2019 23:05
To: [Redacted]>
Cc: CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Subject: letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
REFERENCE: 2019/0000888
Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter from Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

Best wishes. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Assistant Private Secretary to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity

The Scottish Government | Web: www.gov.scot<http://www.gov.scot/>

Tel: [Redacted]

Email: CabSecTIC@gov.scot<mailto:CabSecTIC@gov.scot>

[Further Emails – Out of Scope - Outwith Timeframe]

(i)

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

See Annex B

Transport Strategy and Analysis

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4
0HF
Direct Line: [Redacted]
[Redacted]



[Redacted]
Cowal Fixed-Link Working Group
[Redacted]

Our ref:
2019/0004436

Date:
12 March 2019

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 07 February 2019 to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure and Connectivity, regarding a meeting request to discuss the feasibility of an Ardentiny / Loch Long Bridge. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland I have been asked to respond.

As I outlined in my response of 29 January 2019, Transport Scotland are forming Regional Transport Partnerships with Local Authorities, as part of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). In addition, wider engagement with representative transport and stakeholder groups, community councils and the general public will take place.

This engagement will offer the opportunity to community groups such as the 'Cowal Fixed Link Working Group' to outline any proposals that you have and to assist in developing the necessary evidence base required to inform the STPR2 process. The appraisal process will identify key strategic problems and opportunities around transport in your region and will help inform the development of a set of regional transport planning objectives. The proposed engagement is expected to start in the Spring of 2019, although specific dates have yet to be confirmed.

I am therefore happy to confirm that you will receive an invite to a stakeholder workshop which is currently being planned our consultants. The workshop will be located in a venue in Argyll & Bute and will offer you the opportunity to hear about their initial evidence gathering undertaken by the consultant. The workshop format will additionally offer the you an opportunity to present your proposals.

In the meantime, should you wish to discuss STPR2 further you can contact [Redacted], Head of Forecasts and Infrastructure Planning, Transport Scotland: - [Redacted] or alternatively on [Redacted].

Yours Sincerely
[Redacted]
Project Administrator

Sent: 17 July 2019 12:47:52
To: Transport Scotland Secretariat
Subject: FW: Proposed Tunnel Between Scotland and Northern Ireland
Attachments: The Celtic Crossing - Proposal.pdf
From: [Redacted]
Sent: 16 July 2019 09:52
To: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Proposed Tunnel Between Scotland and Northern Ireland

Hi [Redacted],

Could you put the email below on the maccs system as an OR please with [Redacted] as action officer?

Thanks
[Redacted]
Briefing Officer T:
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 16 July 2019 08:59
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Micheal Matheson
<Michael.Matheson.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Michael.Matheson.msp@parliament.scot>>;
David Mundell
<david@davidmundell.com<mailto:david@davidmundell.com>>;
Jake Berry
<jake.berry.mp@parliament.uk<mailto:jake.berry.mp@parliament.uk>>;
[Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: Proposed Tunnel Between Scotland and Northern Ireland Celtic Crossing

Proposed Rail Tunnel between Scotland and Northern Ireland
[Redacted] [Redacted]

Dear Michael

Recently I sent you my outline desktop study of a proposal for a rail tunnel between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

I now copy that proposal to the signatories to the Borderlands Growth Deal as the Scottish approaches to the proposed tunnel will have major interfaces with their planned developments across the South of Scotland and North of England.

The Heads of Agreement of the Borderlands Growth Deal importantly state that 'Transport connectivity is vital for joining up communities and maximising the economic potential of the Borderlands region'. The proposed Scotland - N.I. rail tunnel will require approaches which might be integrated with Borderlands rail developments including the Carlisle gateway station developments. The tunnel and its railway infrastructure generated in the Borders region, and in Northern Ireland provide a vision of connectivity of a region with great historic connections.

Who am I?

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 11(1)]

Type of Crossing between Scotland and Northern Ireland

Our Victorian engineering ancestors (Luke Livingston McAssey etc.) proposed a 34 km long rail bridge or tunnel on an alignment generally from Stranraer to Belfast. My preliminary studies support their alignment. Amongst various considerations is obviously the depth of water in Beaufort's Dyke, which seems to be over 300 metres deep and was reportedly used as a WW2 surplus ammunition dump and the volume of shipping in the North Channel. These, similar Channel Tunnel, point to a rail tunnel as the best

solution although for some of the route maybe a floating tunnel, whose engineering is currently being pioneered by the Norwegian's for some of their fjord crossings might be possible. Massive floating structures were also engineered in Scotland (and Norway) for the North Sea oil production and much can be learned from the oil industry about floating tunnel engineering.

The Northern Irish shores section could consist of causeway/bridge/ viaduct /immersed tube type structures. The Scottish land approaches would be in tunnel from a disused airport.

The locations of the terminals at either end will obviously influence the alignment. At the Belfast end, the terminal could be constructed on tunnel spoil. At the Stranraer end much space is available which could connect in with a revived Stranraer - Dumfries railway and the Borderlands development.

Choice of name for Crossing.

This is unbelievably important. Choosing something with bridge or tunnel in the title promotes a long useless debate on tunnel versus bridge? many experts out there on both sides. Also, choosing to nominate specific terminal points before completion of a feasibility study, other than indicative areas like Belfast and Stranraer, will promote further useless time wasting debate. General descriptive definitions to be used for the project need to be incorporated in the title. What more appropriate than? Celtic Crossing?. There is no doubt such a crossing will lead to massive development in Ireland, Scotland and England including the Borders planned development.

Political Case. ?The victory is not gained by men at arms who manage the pike and sword; but by trumpeters and drummers and musicians of the army? David Hume 1738.

With the UK now about to leave Europe the imperatives of a more joined up UK has become an important matter. The British public, so dissatisfied by the Brexit negotiations being conducted through what seems like ill-informed media and press, are desperately seeking an idea they understand and can focus on. Instead of the British public continually waking up to the disastrous Brexit predictions, time to give them a dream they all understand. Time to bring in the trumpeters and drummers.

With a rail tunnel under the North Channel passengers and goods would be able to travel many places in UK and Eire; Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, Edinburgh Manchester, London etc. including through the Channel Tunnel to Europe. The reopening of the Dumfries ? Stranraer and possibly other abandoned rail lines linking in with this crossing needs consideration in any feasibility. This North Channel crossing will promote political, economic and social cohesion. It will mirror the influences the Channel Tunnel had on the national pride when it was being built. All that is required of any Government is to give the British public this dream.

Engineering Technology

We have, within these shores an abundance of technical knowledge and construction experience capable of undertaking such a project. We have all the North Sea oil experience. We were the first to build railway tunnels, by building this tunnel we will reconfirm our engineering ability to undertake such projects.

Regards
[Redacted]
email: [Redacted]

The Celtic Crossing – 1

Preliminary Proposals for Rail Tunnel between Scotland and Northern Ireland

GSC/SK/01 - Contents and Main UK Rail Connections

GSC/SK/02 – Two Potential Tunnel Alignments

GSC/SK/03 – Northern Ireland Terminal Concepts

GSC/SK/04 - Tunnelling Concepts

GSC/SK/05 – Preliminary Recommendations

GSC/SK/06 - References



The Celtic Crossing - 2

Two Potential Tunnel Alignments on the Portpatrick/Belfast Corridor

Two Potential Corridors: Mull of Kintyre/ Antrim and Portpatrick/Belfast. Terrain, costs and time to provide roads and railways on the approaches to the Mull of Kintyre/ Antrim corridors exclude it from further consideration. The main physical/geotechnical obstacle to be overcome on the Portpatrick/Belfast corridor is Beaufort's Dyke.

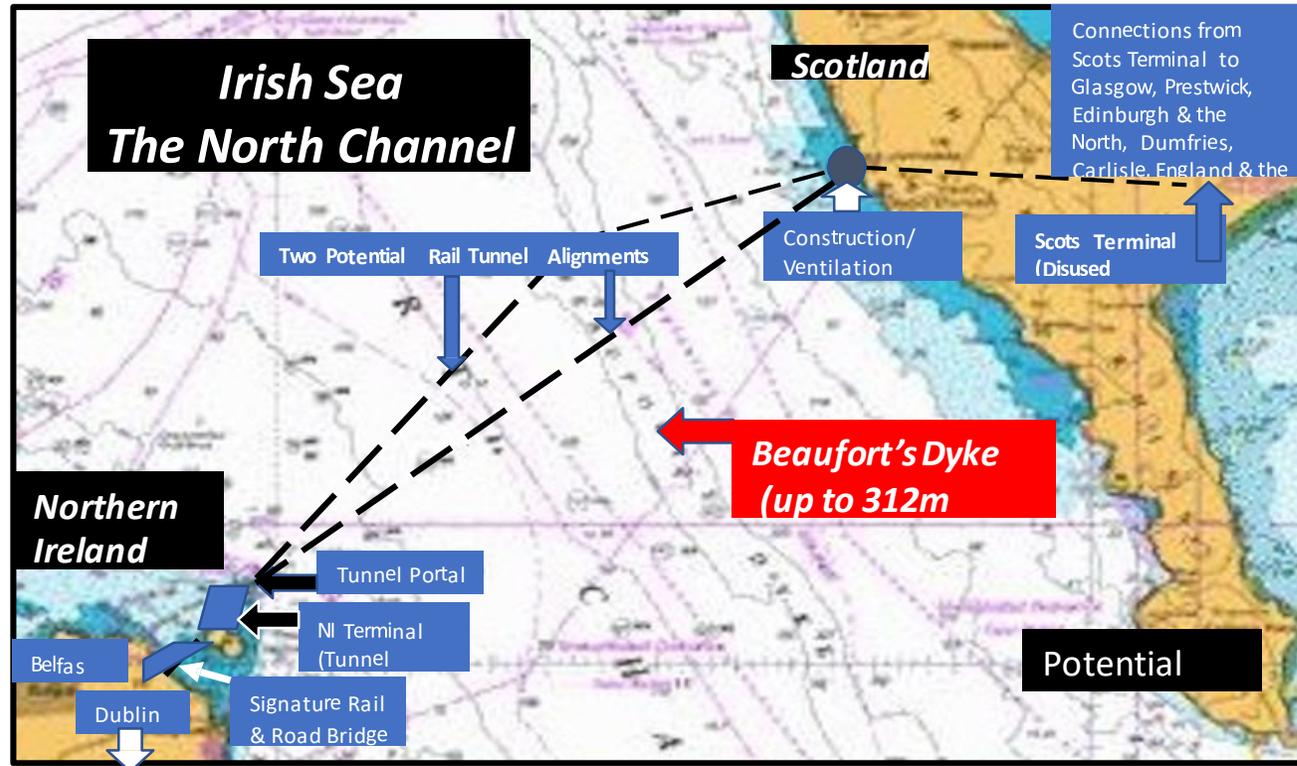
Type of Crossing – Tunnel or Bridge ? The geotechnical and physical obstacles favour a tunnel for the main crossing of the Portpatrick/Belfast corridor.

Potential Alignments

Two potential alignments are shown on GSC/SK – 02. The northern one dog legs to a shallower depth under Beaufort's Dyke. The southern one provides a direct and shorter tunnel. Other potential alignments exist terminating north and south of the Belfast Lough.

The Scottish land approaches are mostly in environment friendly tunnels from the disused West Freugh Airfield where the Scottish Terminal could ideally be located. Road and rail connections to nearby existing ones to Glasgow, Prestwick, Edinburgh and the north could also be made. Links to the planned Dumfries Railway are also feasible.

The NI Terminal, GSC/SK/03, could be constructed on tunnel spoil placed between Mew and Copeland islands. A signature road/rail bridge could connect the NI Terminal to the NI mainland. Transport connections from here to Belfast and Dublin, including to the planned High Speed Rail link between them could be made.



Beaufort's Dyke

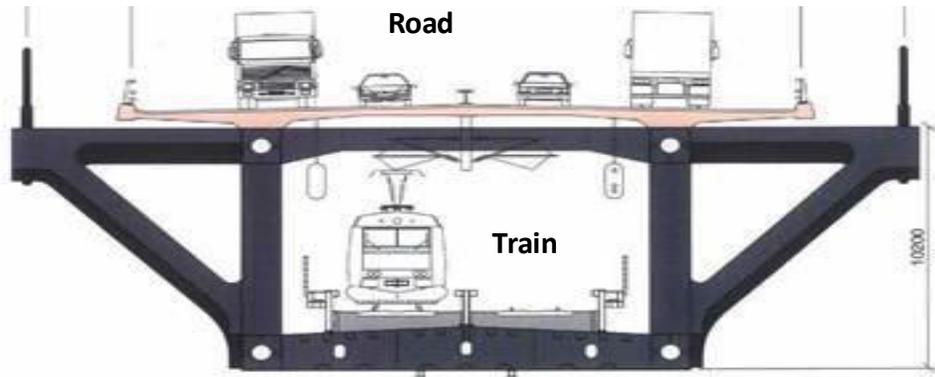
Beaufort's Dyke is a submarine depression with a maximum depth of 312 metres making it one of the deepest areas within the European continental shelf. Surplus war time ammunition was dumped in this depression.

The exact location of the dumping and the quantity is not recorded. Reports of explosions, presumably emanating from this dumped ammunition have been made. The safe assumption has to be made therefore that any crossing would have to pass under the Dyke, and its potential lethal contents, at a sufficiently safe distance.

This would lead to tunnelling at a depth never achieved before. The World's leading tunnel boring machine (TBM) manufacturer and operator has confirmed that a TBM can be made to tunnel up to 475 metres deep below sea level as he has proposed for the Gibraltar Straits tunnel.

The Celtic Crossing – 3

Northern Ireland Terminal Concept



Deck Cross Section – Signature Bridge

NI Terminal Concept

The schematic shown is based on an alignment from NI south of the Belfast Lough shown on GSC/SK/02. It incorporates a signature double decked bridge from mainland NI some 2.5 km long to near Copeland Island. The bridge would then link to an artificial island created from tunnel spoil disposed of near Copeland Island and the Mew/Lighthouse Islands where the railway would go into tunnel. The important historic natural aspects of these small islands could be protected. The best alignment may be south of Copeland Island and not north as shown. Needs detailed investigation. Similar to the Channel Tunnel only trains carrying passengers, goods, cars and lorries would pass through the tunnels. It is highly unlikely that a shuttle service similar to the one provided in the Channel Tunnel would be required.

Provisions could be made for all tunnel operational facilities on the terminal site. Access to the Copeland Islands, various commercial developments, on the terminal reclamation, could also be accommodated. Usually the disposal of tunnel spoil is one of the major problems associated with tunnelling works. Under this proposal it becomes a major asset. An added bonus is that no terminal development except road and rail connections are needed on the NI mainland.



The Celtic Crossing – 4

1. Tunnelling Concepts based on the Channel Tunnel.

Two separate single track Running Tunnels with a Service Tunnel between provide safe operation for trains. Cross passages at regular intervals connect Running and Service Tunnels and would carry tunnel equipment and be used for emergency evacuation.

The Service Tunnel allows emergency evacuation, maintenance of tunnels and carries underground ventilation.

A Crossover midway between the undersea tunnels would allow trains to cross from one track to the other permitting maintenance work on tunnel tracks and services. It would also provide emergency evacuation.

Underground Pumping Stations as necessary would be provided.

Tunnels Construction

The Service Tunnel would be driven ahead of the Running Tunnels acting as a pilot tunnel. Ground treatment if required could be carried out from the Service Tunnel ahead of Running Tunnels construction.

The construction of the Running and Service tunnels would either be by Tunnel Boring Machines (TBM) with precast concrete linings or NATM - could be a mixture of both. Crossover, Cross Passages, Pump Stations etc. constructed by the NATM method of tunnelling.

Tunnelling could be carried out simultaneously at 9 faces namely: From the Construction/Ventilation shaft on the Scottish coast in two directions, undersea towards NI and landwards towards the Scottish terminal. Tunnelling on the Irish side, from the NI portal near Mew Island. The spoil from these tunnels can be used to create the platform for the NI terminal. Up to 9 TBMs could be used simultaneously.

Construction Programme (Feasibility Study to consider a PPP type contract) Tunnel

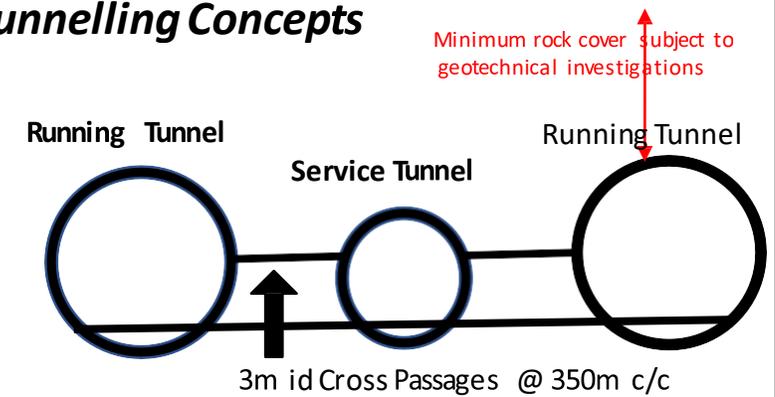
Excavations – 3 years

Tunnel Services E&M Fit Out – 3 years

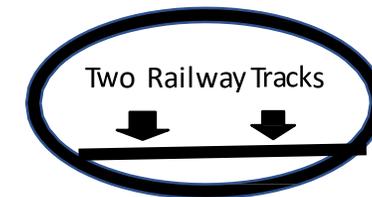
Commissioning including testing Rolling Stock – 2 years

Total Construction Programme Including raising Funding, at best 8 years.

Tunnelling Concepts



Cross Section of TBM Tunnels



Cross Section of Crossover (165m Long)

Initial Construction Lining NATM
Permanent Lining Reinforced Concrete

Tunnelling Concepts
GSC/SK/04

The Celtic Crossing - 05

Preliminary Recommendations

Worldwide at least 2 major undersea tunnels are under development

A1. Europe- Africa, Spain / Morocco Tunnel

A 38 km long rail tunnel, 27 km below the Mediterranean Sea at a maximum depth of 475 metres below sea level.

A2. Finland (population 5.5 million) – Estonia (1.3 million) Tunnel

Undersea rail tunnel (at 92 km the world's longest) crossing of the Gulf of Finland, linking Helsinki and Tallinn. The agreement to construct has been signed by Helsinki and Tallinn. The travel time is 30 minutes. A PPP model of contract will be used.

The Feasibility Study (FS) was financed and carried out jointly by the Finnish/Estonian Governments (FinEst Link). The cost of the project was estimated to be 15 billion Euros. The European Union grant will cover 40% of this cost.

Tunnel excavation costs 4 billion Euros.

Ticket revenue will cover tunnel annual operation and maintenance costs.

Train operation to rely on subsidies from Finland and Estonia of 280 million Euros/year for 40 years. Direct profits, are mostly time saved money of 5 billion Euros, indirect effects 7 billion Euros

B. Preliminary Recommendations for Celtic Crossing - Scotland (population 5.9 million) / Northern Ireland (1.8 million) Tunnel.

B1. Similar to the Feasibility Study recently completed by the Finnish and Estonian governments for crossing of the Gulf of Finland, a Feasibility Study needs to be undertaken by the Scottish and Northern Ireland governments. The Terms of Reference need to be carefully considered particularly the geotechnical investigations in the area of the Beaufort's Dyke. Much can be learned from the the Finnish/Estonian experience which is relevant and recent. It is interesting to note that the populations of the countries are similar.

The cost of a FS will depend on the model of contract to be used for the project and the perceived seriousness of the intent of the Governments. No change should be expected from 5 million Euros guesstimated for the FS.

The cost of the Scottish/NI project based, on the Finnish/ Estonian estimate, could be of the order of 8.3 billion Euros of which tunnel excavation could be 2 billion Euros. These can only be considered at best a guesstimate.

A timescale, from the Preliminary Preparations, Feasibility Study to Commissioning, could of the order of 10+ years. The PPP model of contract is suited to this type of work.

The opportunity does exist for third party services to be carried in the tunnel and for commercial operations to be undertaken on both terminals.

The Celtic Crossing – 7

References

- Tunnel Talk
- The Channel Tunnel, Tunnel Design - *G. S. Crighton, L. Leblond*
- Ordnance Survey Maps
- i-Boating Fishing Maps
- PhD Thesis, The Benthic Ecology of Beaufort's Dyke – *A D Callaway*
- North Channel (Great Britain And Ireland) - *Wikipedia*
- Oresund Crossing

Annex H

Transport Strategy and Analysis

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow G4 0HF
Direct Line: 0141 242 7119
[Redacted]



Mr [Redacted]
[Redacted]

Our ref:
2019/0021001

Date:
5 August 2019

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 17 July 2019 to [Redacted] regarding your proposal for a Scotland to Northern Ireland rail tunnel. As [Redacted] has moved role within Transport Scotland, I have been asked to respond.

Since your last correspondence, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson confirmed in response to a Parliamentary Question on the 14th December 2018 that the Scottish Government currently has no plans to pursue the proposal of a fixed-link between Scotland and Northern Ireland. As such Transport Scotland will not be taking forward any work in relation to this proposal. However, Transport Scotland officials will continue to speak to counterparts in Northern Ireland on improving connectivity between the two countries.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

Transport Scotland

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 18:57
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted];
Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

Thanks [Redacted]

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

Appreciate the help, [Redacted]

[Redacted]
Communications Manager
Transport Scotland

Mob: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 18:51
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

Ok, how about:

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

Kind regards
[Redacted];
T: [Redacted] M: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 18:30
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Head of Strategy and Integration
Transport Strategy and Analysis Directorate
Transport Scotland, Scottish Government

NTS2 consultation open until 23 October
#NTSHaveYourSay at www.transport.gov.scot/NTS2

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
transport.gov.scot

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 18:01
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>;
[Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

Kind regards,
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 17:53
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>;
[Redacted]; [Redacted]
; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]

Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 Sep 2019 17:36
To: [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted];
[Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: "[Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed
<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17666916.nicola-sturgeon-doesnt-rule-out-bridge-between-scotland-and-northern-ireland/>

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 17:32
To: [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted];
[Redacted]; [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]

Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

Additional question just in:

One final question to add:

Within the documents it is acknowledged that the governance of this project would involve the Devolved Administrations.

It states that "the responsibility for any bridge is devolved" and that "it would be necessary to either nominate the Northern Ireland Executive (which is still vacant) or Scottish Govt (whose position is unclear) to undertake and deliver the study."

There is a suggestion that if the devolved administration is not forthcoming that the Dept for Transport would need to establish whether primary legislations and potentially a Legislative Consent Motion from the devolved administrations, is needed to take control

Question 4: Would the Scottish Govt consider handing over this control to the UK Govt?

Thanks,
[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Communications Manager
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
Glasgow
G4 0HF

Email: [Redacted]
News Desk: media@transport.gov.scot
Tel: [Redacted]
Mobile: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 17:31
To: Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

From: Press Transport Scotland On Behalf Of Press Transport Scotland
Sent: 10 September 2019 17:21
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]

Cc: Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions - Response Needed

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 September 2019 16:13
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Channel 4 News - Bridge questions

Dear [Redacted],

We have seen documents being circulated around the UK Government showing No.10 is re-exploring the idea of building a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland with some urgency. Within these documents we can see that No.10 has asked the treasury and transport departments for advice about the cost and risks attached to building the bridge and whether a feasibility study should be commissioned.

Question 1 - Have the Scottish Govt had any contact from the UK Government about a feasibility report?

Question 2 - Have the Scottish Government had any contact about the bridge building project between Scotland and Northern Ireland?

Further to this, within the documents, we have seen that the Dept for Transport has been able to provide a factual paper on the bridge build project that was drawn up earlier this year after conversations between the DUP and the then Secretary of State Chris Grayling.

Question 3 - Did the Scottish Government have any involvement in the aforementioned discussions about a major infrastructure that would directly impact Scotland?

Many thanks,

[Redacted]
Channel 4 News
[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Scotland Producer, Channel 4 News
Channel 4 News Scotland Bureau The Schoolhouse 101 Portman Street Glasgow
G41 1EJ
Glasgow
G41 1EJ
United Kingdom
T [Redacted]
M [Redacted]

E [Redacted]
www.channel4.com/news

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 September 2019 15:32
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted];
[Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: RE: FOI - TS - building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland
- [Redacted]

Thank [Redacted]

Regards
[Redacted]

[Redacted]
[Redacted] / [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 September 2019 15:05
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted];
[Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: RE: FOI - TS - building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland
- [Redacted]

[Redacted], I agree but also spoke to [Redacted] to verify.

Suggest TSS respond to say:

As the request is directly to DfT and DfT may hold the information requested, we suggest it is for DfT to handle the FOI request. However DfT may wish to include in the response that the Scottish Government / Transport Scotland may also hold information and the requestor may also wish to put a request to us.

Copying Comms for their info.

Kind regards
[Redacted]
T: [Redacted] M: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 September 2019 14:28
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: FOI - TS - building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland
- [Redacted]

[Redacted],

I would appreciate your advice on this potential FOI request, please see below details which were sent to DfT.

In my view we shouldn't take this as given the timing of this immediately follows the Channel 4 News piece last night and the fact this referred to work being done by DfT and Treasury I believe the requester is seeking these documents. Therefore I would propose that we decline DfT's request.

Thanks

[Redacted]

From: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Sent: 11 Sep 2019 13:59
To: "[Redacted]" **Cc:** Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FW: FOI - TS - building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland - [Redacted]

[Redacted]
As discussed

Regards
[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Transport Scotland Secretariat
T: [Redacted]
[Redacted]
Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF

From: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Sent: 11 September 2019 12:22
To: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FOI - TS - building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland - [Redacted]

The email enquiry below was received at the Central Enquiry Unit today.
I would be grateful if you would deal with this or forward it to the appropriate person / area of business.

You may wish to acknowledge receipt of this email to the enquirer.

Thank you
[Redacted]

[Redacted] Deputy Manager | iTECS: Central Enquiry Unit | Digital Directorate | Scottish Government | Ext: [Redacted] | Tel: [Redacted] Email: [Redacted]

From: FOI-ADVICE-TEAM-DFT <FOI-ADVICE-TEAM-DFT@dft.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 September 2019 12:09
To: Transport Scotland Info <info@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FOI request re the building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

Dear colleagues

The Department for Transport have received a Freedom of Information Act request regarding the building of a Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland. I've pasted the request wording below:

"Please provide content of all reports, analysis, documents and correspondence, relating to the building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland".

I'd be grateful if you could confirm whether Transport Scotland would be in a position to answer this request. If you are, I'll inform the requester to submit a request directly to your department.

Many thanks for your help.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

 Department for Transport

[Redacted]
Freedom of Information Adviser,
Group Assurance
4/32, Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P
4DR
[Redacted]

Bridge between Scotland & Northern Ireland

ISSUE: Channel 4 News carried a story on the 10th September that the UK Prime Minister had reportedly asked UK Treasury / Dept for Transport officials for advice on how a bridge between NI and Scotland could be paid for and the risks of such a project. The story has seen further significant coverage in the UK mainstream media since that date, with the suggested cost of between £15-20 billion.

Top Lines

- We are always keen to talk about how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- There are an obvious number of practical obstacles and challenges to such a concept, and in the first instance it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits.
- The Scottish Government currently have no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals.

We are keen to explore opportunities for improving connectivity to and within Scotland

- National Transport Strategy (NTS) will set the policies and priorities for the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR).
- In this context, Transport Scotland officials continue to have positive discussions with the Northern Ireland officials.
- Similar discussions are also on-going with Dept for Transport officials on cross-border travel between Scotland and England.
- STPR will look at how best to influence the demand for travel, how to better maintain and make best use of existing assets, what new capacity is needed and what may or may not need to be built.
- The NTS and STPR also provides clear alignment with Scotland's national plans, policies and strategies, including the Government's Economic Strategy, the forthcoming National Planning Framework (NPF4), the Climate Change Plan and the next Infrastructure Investment Plan.

The outcomes from STPR will help make Scotland more accessible for residents, visitors and business,

- Creating better connectivity with sustainable, smart and cleaner transport options, highlighting the vital contribution that transport investment can play in enabling and sustaining Scotland's economic growth.

See Annex K

Our Ref: CX214 I REG56
Your Ref: 2018/0026785

26 September 2019



Mr Michael Matheson MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Dear Mr Matheson

BRIDGE BETWEEN NORTHERN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND

I wrote on behalf of Ards and North Down Borough Council to the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, on 23 July 2018 seeking an indication of the Scottish Government's position on the building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland. I also advised that the Council had formally requested that the east coast of Ards and North Down be considered in any Feasibility Study or Business Case as a connection point for any proposed bridge.

You kindly replied on 27 August 2018 and advised that you were keen to explore the issues around improving connectivity and that this was an important element of your ongoing review of Scotland's National Transport Strategy. With regard to the possibility of a bridge, you advised that this would be a complex task and that it would be premature to speculate on options, but that Transport Scotland officials had been instructed to initiate discussions around exploring connectivity issues between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

As you will be aware, recent media reports suggested that the UK Government had commissioned work to explore the feasibility of a bridge, with connections between Portpatrick and Larne or near Campbeltown to the Antrim coast being suggested. It was also recently reported locally in Northern Ireland that talks to consider the issue had taken place between Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Dumfries and Galloway Council. In light of these recent reports, I would be grateful if you could provide an update in respect of any further consideration or work undertaken by the Scottish Government to explore the issue of connectivity between Scotland and Northern Ireland since you last wrote in August 2018 and specifically the request from this Council that Ards and North Down be considered as a connection point for any bridge.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Chief Executive

Ards and North Down Borough Council
Town Hall, The Castle
Bangor, BT20 4BT

0300 013 3333
enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
w ww.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

[Redacted] Chief Executive

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 14 October 2019 09:57
To: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

Morning [Redacted],

The PM recently spoke of his support for infrastructure projects that increase connectivity for people and particularly those that strengthen the Union. UKG regularly commissions work to examine the feasibility of potential projects and a scoping exercise was first carried out under the previous government and again in August in relation to a potential feasibility study. However, no business case is currently under consideration for this proposal nor has DfT further progressed this work.

Thanks,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Department for Transport
2/17 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR
Tel: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 October 2019 17:51
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

[Redacted],

Many thanks.

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted] / [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 October 2019 17:12
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

Hi [Redacted]

I have passed this on to [Redacted] in our Devolution team who will ensure someone gets back to you.

Thanks

[Redacted]

**[Redacted] | Senior Planning and Investment Manager, Rail Infrastructure
North - North Team, Department for Transport | [Redacted]**

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 October 2019 16:19
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

Good Afternoon Gents,

I hope you are able to assist with my request.

I understand from my colleague [Redacted] that back in the summer he provided an update on the work that Transport Scotland has done in connection with the Borders Transport Corridors and South West Scotland Transport Studies. This was in advance of the signing of the Borderlands Growth Deal on the 1 July.

I wondered if you could now provide an update and details on work that DfT have done into investigating the feasibility, cost or likewise of a bridge / tunnel connection between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Apologises in advance if you are not the relevant or responsible official but I would appreciate if you could either re-direct this email or let me know who they are so that I can forward this request directly to them.

Thanks in advance for your assistance.

Best Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Head of Infrastructure Planning
Strategic Transport Planning
Transport Strategy and Analysis Directorate

T: [Redacted]
M: [Redacted]

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and
Connectivity

Michael Matheson MSP

T: 0300 244 4000

E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

[Redacted]
Chief Executive
Ards & North Down Borough Council
Town Hall
The Castle
Bangor
BT20 4BT
enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Our ref: 2019/0029336
23rd October 2019

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your letter of 26 September 2019 regarding an update on any feasibility work surrounding a bridge between Scotland to Northern Ireland.

As you have outlined in your correspondence, there has been significant recent media interest surrounding the potential of a Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge. Media reports emanating from Westminster have suggested that the UK Department for Transport are looking at the feasibility of such a proposal. However, there has been no discussions between the Scottish and UK Governments on this matter to date.

The Scottish Government always welcome constructive dialogue on how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Nonetheless, I would note that the Scottish Government have no plans to pursue the proposal of a fixed-link between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Our recent focus has been centred on the South West Scotland Transport Study (SWSTS), with the draft report published in June this year; 23 multi-modal recommendations form part of this study, these include proposals to improve both the A75 and A77 that serve the Ports at Cairnryan. It is anticipated that the final document be published in late 2019. Thereafter, transport interventions will then be taken forward as part of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review. The scope of this multi-modal review will consider Scotland's strategic road and rail networks and will consider national infrastructure investment to support active travel, island connectivity, buses and ferries. STPR2 is currently expected to report in winter 2020.

I hope this is helpful.

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

An Independent Scotland, YES!

Subject - Transport Links to Eire/N.Ireland.

Dear, Nicola Sturgeon, and "Think ~~Frank~~"

Dear, Transport Minister, Opportunity Knocks!

Recent Brexit developments, have created

a great opportunity, for Scotland, to have a bridge built across the Irish/Scottish Sea, to Northern Ireland, and Eire - says LEO VARADKA (IRISH PM)

Irish P.M. ^{says} an opportunity exists, that Boris (Yes)! the GB prime minister, suggested a £15 Billion link.

The Taoiseach confirmed, serious interest in progressing with the plan, we must move ASAP.

"So pull the finger-out, Scottish Parliament/ SNP, and ensure the plan goes ahead, as London, and the HRS² project, is too expensive. So "tap" into transportation GB budget, and £190 billion ^{treasury} austerity savings.

Also I have never wanted a railway through the borders, mooted by Christine Grahame / and originally proposed by Lib/Dem, "LORD" Jeremy Purves - the ^{should have} savings ~~goes~~ towards cruise ship, dock, at Cockenzie.

The ~~Big~~ "Big" project, of an export/import bridge, to our Irish friends, and call Boris's "Bluff", which

/which is probably a political move, do soft on the
Irish back/stop, and persuade ~~the~~ ^{NOT!} DUP/and nationalists?
do vote against, staying in Europe? A Bridge carrot!!
So stop high-cost, other projects, and concentrate
on a bridge "over troubled waters", and Stranraer -
to Belfast/Dublin link - Watch out! however, for
England part, to ^{Belfast} Dublin bridge instead.
Move ASAP, before Indy Ref 2, and add to
election/referendum, vote winner. YES!
Expect a Tony/withdrawal of plan, for bridge, as
Boris can lie through his teeth, frequently.

Yours in transport, etc,



Transport Strategy and Analysis

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow G4 0HF
Direct Line: [Redacted]
[Redacted]



Mr [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

:
Our ref:
2019/0031586

Date:
18 November
2019

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your letter of 22 October to First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon and Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson regarding a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland I have been asked to respond.

As you have outlined in your correspondence, there has been significant recent interest surrounding the potential of a Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge. Media reports emanating from Westminster have suggested that the UK Department for Transport are looking at the feasibility of such a proposal. However, there has been no discussions between the Scottish, Eire and UK Governments on this matter to date. The Scottish Government always welcome constructive dialogue on how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Nonetheless, I would note that the Scottish Government have no plans to pursue the proposal of a fixed-link between Scotland and Northern Ireland at this time.

However, any decisions on such a large capital project as the one proposed would take place as part of the second Strategic Transport Planning Review (STPR2) appraisal. This multi-modal review is currently considering public transport, road, rail, ferry, air and fixed link options as part of transport connectivity across Scotland and will set out a 20 year plan for transport investment.

Yours Sincerely
[Redacted]

Project Administrator

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 October 2019 11:08
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
<CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Cc: Chief Executive Transport Scotland <ceo@transport.gov.scot>; Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted] [Redacted]
Subject: Lines for info - Bridge to Northern Ireland

[Redacted]/[Redacted]

We've received a query from a freelance journalist writing for Rail Magazine and Irish on the potential impact of the Glasgow-Stranraer railway, and the possibility of re-opening the Dumfries to Stranraer line, of a bridge being built from Portpatrick to Northern Ireland. He has asked the following questions, the answers to all of which are 'No':

- Has a survey of the Stranraer- Portpatrick closed railway trackbed been carried out either by yourselves, Network Rail or another contractor, to determine its suitability to carry trains to and from the bridge if it were to be built?
- Has Transport Scotland been asked for outline costings for the bridge either by the Scottish Government, The Scottish Office, Dumfries and Galloway Council, or The Northern Ireland Office?
- Has Transport Scotland been asked for a view on the bridge, its feasibility or engineering considerations, from any of the bodies mentioned in question 2?
- Has Transport Scotland been in touch with or responded to contacts from either Translink or the Government of the Republic of Ireland in regard to the bridge project?

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“We are always keen to talk about how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. There are an obvious number of practical obstacles and challenges to such a concept, and it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such a project in the first instance. “The Scottish Government currently have no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.”

Background

- The South West Scotland Transport Study includes as one of its 23 draft recommendations for further consideration under STPR2 the re-opening of the rail line between Stranraer and Dumfries. This will be subject to more

detailed appraisal as part STPR2 next year. Further details can be found in: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/45046/initial-appraisal-case-for-change-south-west-scotland-transport-study.pdf>

- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals

Kind regards
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 24 October 2019 11:06
To: [Redacted]; Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity <CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; Chief Executive Transport Scotland <ceo@transport.gov.scot> [Redacted]
[Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
[Redacted]
Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Request for comment: ABC Australia

[Redacted]/[Redacted]

We've had a further query, this time from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, about building a bridge to Northern Ireland. I plan to issue the previously agreed lines below shortly.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“We are always keen to talk about how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. There are an obvious number of practical obstacles and challenges to such a concept, and it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such a project in the first instance.

“The Scottish Government currently have no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.”

Background

- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals

Kind regards
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 24 October 2019 05:34
To: First Minister
Subject: Request for comment: ABC Australia

Hi there,

My name is [Redacted], and I'm a journalist here at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

At the moment I'm writing a story looking at the speculative visions of what a bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland could be. It would be great to get Ms Sturgeon's official input for this story. Questions below:

- Does Ms Sturgeon support a fixed bridge link between Northern Ireland and Scotland?
- What concerns would Scotland have over the link?
- What could a fixed link bridge mean for inter-union relations, and that of the UK's with Ireland?

I will need written responses by 10pm Thursday 24 (BST).

A

[Redacted]

Journalist, Asia Pacific Newsroom

M: [Redacted]

E: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 27 December 2019 13:45
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; Transport Scotland Directors <DLECONPTSD@transport.gov.scot>; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Media query - for input - Scotland - NI bridge - Daily Mail

Ah sorry [Redacted]– realised this is an SG one so just go with first para as [Redacted] suggested

[Redacted]
Special Advisor to the First Minister
Rural Economy and Connectivity
[Redacted]/ [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 27 December 2019 13:35
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; Transport Scotland Directors <DLECONPTSD@transport.gov.scot>; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: Media query - for input - Scotland - NI bridge - Daily Mail
Importance: High

Hi [Redacted] & [Redacted],

We have an enquiry in from the Daily Mail regarding the idea of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

They have asked for our response to comments from architect [Redacted] quoted in *The National* today as calling for Nicola Sturgeon to 'put politics aside' and work with Boris Johnson to explore the feasibility of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Our standard lines on the subject are below, can I ask if you content for this to issue please and if there anything you wish to add regarding the specific question for FM to 'put politics aside' on this matter?

Thanks, [Redacted]

A Scottish Government spokesman said:

"We are always keen to talk about how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. There are an obvious number of practical obstacles and challenges to such a concept, and it would require a robust assessment of the costs and benefits of such a project in the first instance.

“The Scottish Government currently have no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.”

[Redacted]

*Communications Manager
Transport Scotland*

Mob: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 27 December 2019 12:45

To: [Redacted]

Subject: Bridge

Hi [Redacted],

As mentioned, it would be great if you could send over a government response to the [Redacted – Out of Scope].

I was also hoping you could respond to comments from architect [Redacted] who is in The National today calling for Nicola Sturgeon to ‘put politics aside’ and work with Boris Johnson to explore the feasibility of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It would be great if you could get back to me on this.

Kindest,

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 07 January 2020 09:19
To: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: MiCase - Northern Ireland Bridge

As discussed

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 06 January 2020 18:36
To: [Redacted]
Subject: MiCase - Northern Ireland Bridge

Dear [Redacted],

[Redacted - Exemption – under regulation 10(4)(e)]

Best
[Redacted]

[Redacted] Arctic Policy Lead | Directorate for External Affairs | Scottish
Government | Victoria Quay (2H-South) | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ
email: [Redacted] | telephone: [Redacted]

(i)

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 26 December 2019 21:12
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: Combined road rail Bridge connection to Ireland

Dear Minister, There are future proposals for a road bridge to connect Scotland with Northern Ireland.

We could have a road and railway combined bridge like The Oresund Bridge between Denmark and Sweden . If the combined road and rail bridge started at Port Patrick and finished at Larne there could be a direct rail passenger service from Glasgow to Northern Ireland and the future proposals to open up The Port Road Railway line between Carlisle and Stranraer could go to Port Patrick as well to give passengers from England and Europe the opportunity to travel virtually carbon neutral as well

Trains using the rail line on a combined bridge would have to use The UK 4ft 8inch or 1435 mm gauge as Ireland has a larger gauge 5ft 3 inch or 1600mm so passengers travelling forward would have to change to trains using the Irish gauge to travel forward to their destination

As we have a Climate Change Emergency a combined road and rail bridge would be a way forward to combat global warming give the travelling public the option to use trains rather than vechicals with internal combustion engines that would cause congestion on the roads leading to it on both sides and at some point due to weather this bridge could be closed to road vechicals.

As there is a lot of food produce moved between Great Britain and Ireland intermodal freight train could be a low carbon alternative to get food to rail freight yards at Grangemouth and Mossend to distribution centres at Asda Grangemouth and Tesco at Livingston as examples.

Yours Sincerely

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 09 January 2020 10:14
To: [Redacted]; Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Press inquiry about the Celtrix crossing proposals

Thanks [Redacted] – it's a TS lead.

[Redacted] – the last set of lines from 29/12 are below, can't imagine they've changed since then.

R.

A Scottish Government spokesman said:

“We are always keen to talk about how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. There are an obvious number of practical obstacles and challenges to such a concept, and it would require a robust assessment of the costs and benefits of such a project in the first instance.

“The Scottish Government currently have no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.”

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 09 January 2020 10:10
To: Press Transport Scotland <media@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted] ; News Desk <Newsdesk@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Press inquiry about the Celtrix crossing proposals

Hi all,

Please see query below – not sure if similar enquiries have been handled by TS in the past? Please let us know if this is a TS or SG lead!

Thanks
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 09 January 2020 10:06
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Press inquiry about the Celtrix crossing proposals

Hi [Redacted]

Thanks for your time on the telephone.

As mentioned, I am looking for a comment from the Scottish government about different proposals for infrastructure linking Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Architect [Redacted] first came up with the idea for the bridge last year, and since then the [Leo Varadkar has said it should be looked at](#), [Boris Johnson has asked for a feasibility report on it](#) and the [DUP put it in their manifesto](#) last month. Earlier this week, a new proposal for a tunnel between Scotland and Ireland was unveiled.

I wondered whether the Scottish government:

- agrees with the principle of infrastructure connecting the two nations?
- has a view on whether a bridge or a tunnel would be preferable?
- has committed any staff into looking the possibility of connecting infrastructure?
- is talking to its UK counterparts about the possibility of a bridge or tunnel?

I would really appreciate a response by the end of the day, if at all possible.

All the best,

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Reporter
The Architects' Journal
[Redacted] | [LinkedIn](#)
DL: [Redacted]
Mob: [Redacted]

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your EIRs request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to Roy Brannen, Chief Executive, Transport Scotland, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF, TSS@transport.gov.scot .

Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

COLIN KERR

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND