

Briefing/Discussion	Type	Scottish Government Staff in attendance	Ministerial Staff/MSP's in attendance
Briefing 1	First Minister Questions on 17 and 26 of September in for use in First Minister's Questions (FMQ's)	None	One - The First Minister
Meeting/Discussion 1	Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting Transport Scotland as part of routine engagement	One - Director for Strategy & Analysis at Transport Scotland	None
Meeting/Discussion 2	Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity with regard to telephone discussions on various issues	One - Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	None
Briefing 2	Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity with regard to telephone discussions on various issues	One - Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	None
Meeting/Discussion 3	Discussion between Permanent Secretary for Scotland and Northern Irish counterpart to discuss connectivity between the two nations	One - Permanent Secretary for Scotland, no other staff have been recorded as attending	10(4)(a) - The number of requests for which all of the information was not held. No record of MSP/MSP staff in attendance
Briefing 3	Briefing on current situation of a Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed link as part of discussions Discussion between Permanent Secretary for Scotland and Northern Irish counterpart	One - Permanent Secretary for Scotland, no other staff have been recorded as attending	10(4)(a) - The number of requests for which all of the information was not held. No record of MSP/MSP staff in attendance

Briefing 1

Issued in response to scheduled First Minister Questions on 17 and 26 of September in for use in First Minister's Questions (FMQ's), this is shown below:

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.
-

Discussion/Meeting 1

On 12 February 2020, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting Transport Scotland as part of routine engagement. This was attended by the head of Transport Strategy and Analysis at Transport Scotland [Redacted] who mentioned Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed link, the other attendees are out of scope of the EiR request. The agenda shown below:

Agenda for [Redacted] visit to Scotland 12 February 2020

7:30 onwards	[Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted] from DfT arriving from London	
09:30 - 10:00	Meet with [Redacted] from Low Carbon	Room – 8N05
10:00 – 10:30	Meet with Director for Strategy & Analysis	Room – 8N05
10:30 - 11:00	Meet with Director for Roads	Room – 8N05
11:00 - 12:30	Meet with [Redacted] from Rail in Bill's absence & discuss EGIP and visit Queens street station project.	
12:30 – 13:20	Travel to Edinburgh & Lunch	Overlap lunch and meet with [Redacted]
13:00 – 15:00	Meet Director Bus, Accessibility & Active Travel & attend Sustrans meeting in Edinburgh	
15:00	End of the day	

Guests

[Redacted] – Director Regions, Cities & Devolution
[Redacted] – Deputy Director for North & Devolution
[Redacted] – Head of Devolution & National Casework Team

Discussion/Meeting 2

On 13th Feb, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure discussed issues with the Minister for Infrastructure Northern Ireland the content of the letter to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport seeking discussions between officials on the subject. No minutes were recorded.

Mr Matheson subsequently wrote to the SoS on Friday 14 February setting out the Scottish Government view on the matter and requesting further immediate discussions. As did the NI Minister.

Briefing 2 – The second briefing is in relation to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity with regard to telephone discussions as outlined in **Discussion/Meeting 2** with Northern Irish counterpart on 13 February 2020. This is shown below:

Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

ISSUE: In December it was reported that the Prime Minister had 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. This week, this was repeated with The PM stating officials were undertaking a piece of work on this. The story has seen further significant coverage in the UK mainstream media since that date, with the suggested cost of between £15-20 billion. Many people (reported as experts in the media) have spoken out about the impracticalities of this naming Beaufort's Dyke (submarine trench containing tonnes of Second World War munitions), weather conditions and the vessels which currently use the on this stretch of sea. Transport Scotland have not undertaken an analysis of their own.

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 it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such a project in the first instance.
- SG currently has no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The Scottish Government has not investigated or undertaken any feasibility for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland and has no current plans to do so.
- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals, or to be engaged in any piece of work.

Note: on 12th Jan, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting TS as part of routine engagement. TS officials asked if they were aware of the work being done, as mentioned by the PM. They shared

very little detail other than saying it was 'high level' and more akin to a feasibility of a feasibility study. TS asked when the developed administrations (in Scotland and NI) would be engaged given the project spans between two. They were not able to say.

Priorities

- In both Scotland and Northern Ireland, budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have for a number of years restricted necessary investment in public transport and vital infrastructure and held back progress for our communities.
 - Going forward we believe infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost our economy and connectivity, support communities and crucially work to end our contribution to climate change.
 - If we had £15-20 billion to invest, we could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.
 - These projects have been identified through consideration of a robust analysis of evidence and engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
 - We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to the South of Scotland (South West Study and Borders Study). Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
 - We published, last week, the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing.
 - The NTS, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.
 - Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) will appraise potential transport interventions, to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers for investment in transport in Scotland.
 - In this context, Transport Scotland officials continue to have positive discussions with the Northern Ireland officials on STPR.
 - Similar discussions are also on-going with Dept for Transport officials on cross-border travel between Scotland and England.
 - A fixed link to NI has not been raised as a priority throughout the course of STPR so far, nor as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland.
 - 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.
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Discussion/Meeting 3

A discussion between Permanent Secretary for Scotland and Northern Irish counterpart to discuss connectivity between the two nations on 17 February 2020.

Briefing 3 – The third briefing is in relation to discussions between Permanent Secretary for Scotland and the Permanent Secretary for Northern Ireland on 17 February 2020 outlined in **Discussion/Meeting 3**, a background was provided by way of a briefing on the current situation of a Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed-link.

Background:

- On 12th Feb, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting TS as part of routine engagement. TS officials asked if they were aware of the work being done, as mentioned by the PM. They shared very little detail other than saying it was 'high level' and more akin to a feasibility of a feasibility study. TS asked when the devolved administrations (in Scotland and NI) would be engaged given the project spans between two. They were not able to say.
- On 13th Feb, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure discussed with the Minister for Infrastructure Northern Ireland, writing to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport to seek discussions between officials on the subject. Mr Matheson subsequently wrote to the SoS on Friday 14 February setting out the Scottish Government view on the matter and requesting further immediate discussions. As did the NI Minister.

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 it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such a project in the first instance.
- SG currently has no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The Scottish Government has not investigated or undertaken any feasibility for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland and has no current plans to do so.
- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals, or to be engaged in any piece of work.
- If there is work taking place on this, we would ask that the devolved administrations, where this project spans between, are engaged as a priority.

Priorities

- In both Scotland and Northern Ireland, budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have for a number of years restricted necessary investment in public transport and vital infrastructure and held back progress for our communities.

- Going forward we believe infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost our economy and connectivity, support communities and crucially work to end our contribution to climate change.
- If we had £15-20 billion to invest, we could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.
- These projects have been identified through consideration of a robust analysis of evidence and engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
- We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to the South of Scotland (South West Study and Borders Study). Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
- We published, last week, the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing.
- The NTS, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.
- Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) will appraise potential transport interventions, to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers for investment in transport in Scotland.
- A fixed link to NI has not been raised as a priority throughout the course of STPR so far, nor as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland.

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.

3. Enclosed below is some of the correspondence between Scottish Government official, MSP's and relevant staff:

Annex A – Response to member of the public regarding Irish Sea Rail Tunnel, reference made to Bridge in the body of the correspondence – 5 August 2019

Annex B – Press Enquiry - Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge Questions surrounding Channel 4 News article – 10 September 2019

Annex C – Request received by Department for Transport asking if Transport Scotland can deal with FoI – Relating to the building of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland – 11 September 2019

Annex D – FMQ Briefing – Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge – 17 September 2019

Annex E – FMQ Briefing – Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge – 26 September 2019 (Note briefing issued is same as Annex D)

Annex F – Letter from Ards and North Down Borough Council to the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon – 26 September 2019

Annex G – Email correspondence between Transport Scotland and Department for Transport officials – 14 October 2019

Annex H – Response to Ards and North Down Borough Council – 23 October 2019

Annex I – Letter from member of the public regarding a potential Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge – 22 October 2019

Annex J – Response from Transport Scotland officials to member of the public regarding a potential Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge – 18 November 2019

Annex K – Press Enquiry from Rail Magazine on various transport issues including the potential of a bridge being built from Portpatrick to Northern Ireland Council – 23 October 2019

Annex L – Press Enquiry from Australian Broadcasting Corporation on a Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge – 24 October 2019

Annex M – Press Enquiry from Daily Mail regarding the idea of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland – 27 December 2019

Annex N – Response to member of the public in relation to Scotland to Northern Ireland road/rail bridge – January 2020

Annex O – Internal Scottish Government email surrounding the allocation of correspondence relating to Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge – 7 January 2020
(i) – Attachment – Correspondence from member of public regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge dated 6 January 2020

Annex P – Press Enquiry from Architect's Journal regarding Celtic Crossing Proposals – 9 January 2020

Annex Q - Response to member of the public with regard to Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge proposals - 17 January 2020

Annex R – Email from member of the public regarding £20 Billion Bridge - 10 February 2020

Annex S - Email from Member of the Public regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge and Sectarianism - 11 February 2020

Annex T - Email exchange between A83 Taskforce and Transport Scotland regarding infrastructure and Northern Ireland bridge -12 February 2020

Annex U - Response to Argyll & Bute correspondent regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge - 12 February 2020

(i) – Attachment – Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) – Progress in Argyll & Bute [Redacted – Out of Scope]

Annex V - Internal Transport Scotland email surrounding briefing for Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson - Bridge

between Northern Ireland and Scotland -13 February 2020

(i) – Attachment - Transport Scotland briefing for Michael Matheson

Annex W - Email from Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure copying in letter to UK Secretary for State for Transport - 13 February 2020

(i) – Attachment – Letter from Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure to UK Secretary for State for Transport, copied to Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson for Info

Annex X - Email to confirm that Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson has sent letter regarding potential Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge to the Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps - 14 February 2020

(i) – Attachment – Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson regarding potential Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge to the Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps

Annex Y - Parliamentary Question S5O-04128 from Anne Wells MSP To ask the Scottish Government whether it has explored the possibility of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland - 14 February 2020

(i) – Attachment – Background Note for S5O-04128

(ii) – Attachment – Supplementary Q&A for S5O-04128

(iii) – Attachment – Published Parliamentary answer for S5O-04128 to Anne Wells

Annex Z - Correspondence from member of the public regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge - 14 February 2020

Annex AA – Email Exchange regarding Perm Sec meeting briefing with Northern Irish counterpart – 17 February 2020

(i) – Attachment – Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson regarding potential Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge to the Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps

(ii) – Attachment – Letter from Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure to UK Secretary for State for Transport, copied to Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson

Annex AB - Email to Parliamentary office regarding Anne Wells Oral PQ - 19 February 2020

(i) – Attachment - Parliamentary Question S5O-04128 Response to Anne Wells MSP

(ii) – Attachment – Background Note for S5O-04128

Annex AC - Correspondence from member of the public regarding Potential Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge - 24 February 2020

Annex AD - Email from member of the public regarding a Hyperloop alternative for Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge – 25 February 2020

Annex AE - Response to member of the public for correspondence as detailed at Annex AC – 5 March 2020

Annex AF - Response to member of the public for correspondence detailed at Annex R – 9 March 2020

Annex AG – Email with Letter from Beatrice Wishart MP regarding Shetland inter-island tunnels which also mentions the possibility of Scotland to Northern Ireland tunnel – 10 March 2020

(i) – Attachment - Letter from Beatrice Wishart MP

Annex AH - Response to member of the public regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge as detailed at Annex Z – 18 March 2020

Annex AI - Response to member of the public regarding a Hyperloop alternative for Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge as detailed at Annex AD – 20 March 2020

Annex AJ - Email from member of the public with suggestion on a Scotland to Northern Ireland crossing – 23 March 2020

(i) – Attachment – Diagram from member of the public that outlines preferred route of his suggestion of Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge

Annex AK – Links to previous Fol requests in relation to a Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed link

Transport Strategy and Analysis

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

Thanks [Redacted]

As discussed the earlier version was approved by SPADs and has issued but we can hold this against anything in future.

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:

“The Scottish Government are keen to discuss opportunities to strengthen relations between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland which includes connectivity. There are an obvious number of 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. Any decisions on future funding of strategic transport infrastructure in Scotland will be informed by the outcomes of STPR2 and through the normal cycle of government spending reviews.”

To note - we have not been approached by the UKG regarding this proposal.

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

Can confirm that we would just use general STPR lines to respond.

[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

Maybe STPR lines

A Transport Scotland spokesperson said:

“Work is now underway to consult on the draft National Transport Strategy (NTS2) to establish the strategic direction for the network in Scotland over the next 20 years and wider matters of connectivity are being considered as part of this.

“Once completed, the NTS2 will inform the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) in identifying the transport interventions required to provide Scotland with a transport network fit for the 21st Century.

“Any decisions on future funding of strategic transport infrastructure in Scotland will be informed by the outcomes of STPR2 and through the normal cycle of government spending reviews.”

ENDS

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

They're just looking for a basic line apparently, ie have we had any contact of late from UK Govt?

Think our previous lone would suffice if it can be located.

[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/>

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/17666916.nicola-sturgeon-doesnt-rule-out-bridge-between-scotland-and-northern-ireland/>

FM's previous comment on this.

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

I've found this in a letter from March 2018 but this is all I can see ...

There have been various ideas for bridges or tunnels between Scotland and Ireland over the years although to date there has been no robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such proposals. It is clear that the delivery of any fixed link would be complex and present significant challenges and we are at the very early stages of thinking on our approach. With this in mind, the Minister for Transport and the Islands, Humza Yousaf MSP has instructed Transport Scotland officials to initiate discussions around exploring the potential of improving connectivity between our two islands.

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

Hi all,

Do we have previous lines on the idea of a bridge between Scotland and Ireland?

Sorry - we need the info ASAP as we can't find anything in our previous lines.

K

C4 are doing this story – for this evening’s bulletin as far as I’m aware – so we’ll need a line asap.

I’ve had a look to see if I have our previous lines on this but can’t find anything (I’m assuming we haven’t been contacted by UKG.)

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
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.

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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
www.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



[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~~ ^{received}

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

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/Seip, and ensure the plan goes ahead, as London, and the HRS² project, is too expensive. So tap into transport into GB budget, and £190 billion ^{TRASURY} austerity savings.

Also I have never wanted a railway through the borders, mooted by Christine Grahame / and originally proposed by Lib/Dem, "LOP" Jeremy Purves - ^{FOR VOTES} the savings ^{should have} gone 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, to soften 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 port, to ^{Belfast} Dublin bridge instead. ~~the~~
Move ASAP, before Indy Ref 2, and add to
election/referendum, vote winner. YES!
Expect a Tory/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?

SpAds have cleared the following and, as there is nothing new in this, I will issue shortly. Can they be passed to Mr [Redacted] for info please?

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]

Chief Executive's Office

[Redacted]

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

Direct Line: [Redacted]

ceo@transport.gov.scot



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Mr [Redacted]

Burnside

Vellore Road

Maddiston

Falkirk

Fk2 0AS.

By email: [Redacted]

Our ref:

2020/0000189

Date:

January 2020

Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 26 December 2019 to Scottish Ministers regarding a feasibility study into a new road/rail bridge connecting Scotland and Northern Ireland. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland, I have been asked to reply.

You may wish to note the Scottish Government have no current plans to pursue the proposal of a fixed-link between Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, there has been significant recent interest surrounding the potential of a Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed link, with media reports emanating from Westminster which suggest the UK Department for Transport are looking at the feasibility of such a proposal. No discussions between the Scottish, Eire and UK Governments have taken place on this matter to date.

There have been various ideas for bridges or tunnels between Scotland and Ireland over the years although to date there has been no robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such proposals. However, it is clear that the delivery of any fixed link would be complex and present significant challenges. Transport Scotland officials have noted your correspondence.

Going forward, any decisions on such a large capital project as a Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed link would take place as part of the second Strategic Transport Planning Review (STPR2) appraisal. This multi-modal review is currently underway and will consider 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.

In the meantime, the Scottish Government always welcome constructive dialogue on how we can strengthen connections between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

[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],

Our team has been assigned a MiCase concerning the construction of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland. Please find a copy of the original correspondence attached. As the letter focuses entirely on infrastructural and logistical aspects, I was wondering whether one of the teams or units in your area would better-placed to deal with this case. My understanding is that your area has already dealt with similar cases.

Very grateful for your help and advice.

Best
[Redacted]

Best
[Redacted]

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

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 vehicles 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 vehicles.

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 Celtrac 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 Celtrac 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 Celtrac 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 Varadakar 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]

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



Mr [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
By email: [Redacted]

Our ref:
2020/0000189

Date:
17 January 2020

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 26 December 2019 to Scottish Ministers regarding a feasibility study into a new road/rail bridge connecting Scotland and Northern Ireland. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland, I have been asked to reply.

I have noted your comments on the potential benefits and challenges of a combined road/rail bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland. I would further note that 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 the concept of such a link and it would require a robust assessment of the costs and benefits of such a project in the first instance.

As you may be aware, there has been significant recent interest surrounding the potential of a Scotland to Northern Ireland fixed link, with media reports emanating from Westminster which suggest the UK Department for Transport are looking at the feasibility of such a proposal. However, you may wish to note the Scottish Government have no current plans to pursue the proposal of a fixed-link between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours Sincerely
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Project Administrator

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 February 2020 19:08:41
To: scottish.ministers@gov.scot
Subject: A Spare ?20 Billion?

I heard on the News today about a Boris Johnston proposed ?20 Billion Bridge to N.Ireland?

Nicola Sturgeon says that money could be better spent?

Well, I'd like to suggest spending it on the A82/A83 so we can drive up the West Coast as easily as everyone can drive up the East Coast.

Before any of this pie in the sky amount squirrels its way into Edinburgh, the Trams, Parliament, or the East Coast like all the rest of our cash.

Just a thought.

I hope this finds you well, hale and hearty.

Sent from my Huawei Mobile please excuse my brevity.

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 11 February 2020 15:42
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Sectarianism and proposed bridge Scotland/Northern Ireland

Dear First Minister,

I was most concerned to hear the subject of a proposed bridge linking Scotland and Northern Ireland raised again by the Boris Johnson government. I think this is a bad proposal which the Scottish government should oppose. Although there may be a case for some advantages eg increased trade or tourism, I feel they are outweighed by the spectre of increased sectarianism.

[Redacted - Out of Scope]

Thus I would not wish the proposed bridge to be built as I feel it would make it physically and metaphorically easier for the evils in Northern Ireland (in the shape of sectarianism) to be imported to Scotland. We have enough such problems as it is and we should do everything we can to ensure it does not, at the very least, get worse. I ask you therefore to please take a lead in opposing this proposal.

Best wishes,
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 February 2020 14:40
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Kintyre > TS position re A83+

Hi [Redacted] – see below.

Yes content for you to share the task force briefing with [Redacted] but we have an outstanding action to provide her with specific briefing for the Summit. I will send you another email to ask you to collate that please (plus another briefing for CabSec appearance at Petitions Committee on 5th March on the subject).

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

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 February 2020 13:16
To: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Kintyre > TS position re A83+

All,

Please see email below from [Redacted] at SG enquiring about our position wrt the A83 and bridge options to NI.

A83: I presume I can share the A83 Taskforce briefing paper with [Redacted]?
Bridge options to NI:

- Are we “in discussions” with UKG about this? *No. There has been no approach to engage with us on it.*
- Are we doing any scoping work re options?

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 the concept of a Bridge, and it would require a robust assessment of the costs and benefits of such a project in the first instance. There is no work being undertaken by SG/ TS on this. We are undertaking the STPR2 which will identify Scotland’s transport investment priorities to deliver against our new National Transport Strategy. The South West Scotland Transport Study was published recently. It considered a number of transport improvements however does not recommend a fixed link to Ireland.

Regards
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 February 2020 10:10
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Kintyre

[Redacted]

I am now leading on the Campbeltown working group meeting on the 2 March.

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

Last couple of times I've met [Redacted], and today at a meeting with HIE, I've been asked about the 'Boris Bridge' as Kintyre one of the 2 options if such a bridge were to go ahead.

I've been asked if we are in discussions with the UKG on this and if we're doing any scoping work to establish which would be the best option.

Is this something TS is looking at / in discussions with UKG about?

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 February 2020 17:50
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Kintyre

Hi [Redacted],

In response to your queries about discussions with UKG re bridge options to NI: no, there has been no approach to engage with us on this.

Our position would be that 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 around the concept of a bridge, and it would require a robust assessment of the costs and benefits of such a project in the first instance. There is no work being undertaken by SG/ TS on this. We are undertaking the STPR2 which will identify Scotland's transport investment priorities to deliver against our new National Transport Strategy. The South West Scotland Transport Study was published recently. It considered a number of transport improvements, however, it does not recommend a fixed link to Ireland.

I trust this is helpful.

Can you please copy us into the circulation list for your briefing note when complete?

Kind regards
[Redacted]

**STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PROJECTS REVIEW (STPR2) –
PROGRESS IN ARGYLL & BUTE**

[Redacted –Out of Scope] – Nothing to do with Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 February 2020 09:51
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
<CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]; Chief Executive Transport Scotland
<ceo@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FW: FMQ - Bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland - 13 Feb 2020

[Redacted] - Briefing as requested for Mr Matheson in advance of his call with his NI counterpart this morning.

Let me know if you need anything more.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Transport Strategy and Analysis
Transport Scotland
Tel [Redacted]
Mob [Redacted]

If you receive this email outside your standard working hours please do not feel obliged to respond immediately

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 February 2020 09:45
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: FMQ - Bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland - 13 Feb 2020

Hi [Redacted] – As discussed. Let me know if you need anything further. Or if you wish me to send to PO.

Bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland

ISSUE: In December it was reported that the Prime Minister had 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. This week, this was repeated with The PM stating officials were undertaking a piece of work on this. The story has seen further significant coverage in the UK mainstream media since that date, with the suggested cost of between £15-20 billion. Many people (reported as experts in the media) have spoken out about the impracticalities of this naming Beaufort's Dyke (submarine trench containing tonnes of Second World War munitions), weather conditions and the vessels which currently use the on this stretch of sea. Transport Scotland have not undertaken an analysis of their own.

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 it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such a project in the first instance.
- SG currently has no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The Scottish Government has not investigated or undertaken any feasibility for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland and has no current plans to do so.
- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals, or to be engaged in any piece of work.

Note: on 12th Jan, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting TS as part of routine engagement. TS officials asked if they were aware of the work being done, as mentioned by the PM. They shared very little detail other than saying it was 'high level' and more akin to a feasibility of a feasibility study. TS asked when the devolved administrations (in Scotland and NI) would be engaged given the project spans between two. They were not able to say.

Priorities

- In both Scotland and Northern Ireland, budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have for a number of years restricted necessary investment in public transport and vital infrastructure and held back progress for our communities.
- Going forward we believe infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost our economy and connectivity, support communities and crucially work to end our contribution to climate change.
- If we had £15-20 billion to invest, we could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant

benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.

- These projects have been identified through consideration of a robust analysis of evidence and engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
- We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to the South of Scotland (South West Study and Borders Study). Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
- We published, last week, the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing.
- The NTS, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.
- Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) will appraise potential transport interventions, to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers for investment in transport in Scotland.
- In this context, Transport Scotland officials continue to have positive discussions with the Northern Ireland officials on STPR.
- Similar discussions are also on-going with Dept for Transport officials on cross-border travel between Scotland and England.
- A fixed link to NI has not been raised as a priority throughout the course of STPR so far, nor as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland.
- 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.

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 February 2020 12:49
To: ; [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Scotland-NI Bridge (letter from NI)

For info and filing

A

[Redacted]

Transport Strategy and Analysis
Transport Scotland
Tel [Redacted]
Mob [Redacted]

If you receive this email outside your standard working hours please do not feel obliged to respond immediately

From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
Sent: 13 February 2020 09:28
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
<CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Subject: Scotland-NI Bridge (letter from NI)

[Redacted] | Private Secretary to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | Web:
www.gov.scot
Tel: [Redacted] | Mob: [Redacted] | Email: CabSecTIC@gov.scot

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 12 February 2020 11:45
To: Michael.Matheson.msp@parliament.scot; Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity <CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Cc: DfI Private Office <Private.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]
Subject: Scotland-NI Bridge

Further to my email to CabSecTIC@gov.scot advising this letter shall issue and requesting a brief telephone call between Minister [Redacted] and Minister

Matheson, please find attached letter from Minister [Redacted].

Kind regards

[Redacted] | Private Secretary | Department for Infrastructure

Contact: * [Redacted] | (DD: [Redacted])

[Redacted] MLA

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure

Secretary of State for Transport
5/13 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Room 708
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone: (028) 9054 0105
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference: XXXX
Our reference: PS/MIN 13/02
12 February 2020

Dear Secretary of State for Transport

Scotland-NI Bridge

I am writing in my capacity as Minister for Infrastructure, following the announcement from the Prime Minister that he has asked UK officials to look into the feasibility of a bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland, to express my surprise and disappointment that such an announcement was made without any prior discussion with my Department, given transport is a devolved matter. Having spoken directly with my counterpart in Scotland, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, I understand he shares my disappointment and concern.

I want to make it clear that a lack of investment by successive British Governments has, for a number of years, restricted the necessary investment in vital infrastructure and public transport here. This has held back progress for our communities in Northern Ireland. I am clear that infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost connectivity and our economy, enhance our communities and work to address the climate crisis.

I am requesting clarity on exactly what is proposed by British Government Ministers and I would also welcome an explanation as to why Ministers and officials here have not been contacted or consulted in advance of the announcement. I also want to make clear that significant investment is needed in our infrastructure and the *New Decade: New Approach* document makes several

key commitments on behalf of the British Government, which I also expect to see honoured.

Furthermore, I am extremely concerned that pursuit of this project, costing £20 billion, will be a waste of significant money and resource that could be put to better use by addressing pressures and deliverable projects here in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. By spending just a fraction of the reported cost of this bridge, I am of the view that we could bring significantly more benefits to people across the North by investing in infrastructure here and making a real difference to improving the lives of citizens across Northern Ireland.

Given that transport is a devolved matter, I would like assurances that engagement on this proposal and any future proposals will fully respect the devolved settlements and will be discussed and explored with us in advance.

I am copying this letter to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport in Scotland, and to my Executive colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

[Redacted] MLA Minister for Infrastructure

CC Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport
CC All Executive Colleagues

From: [Redacted] > **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
Sent: 14 February 2020 09:55
To: [Redacted]; Dfl SpAd <SpAd@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk>; Private.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk; [Redacted] ; [Redacted]; [Redacted]; [Redacted];
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
Subject: (ISSUED) Letter from Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity

All,

For Info

Letter has been issued as per below.

Many Thanks
[Redacted]

[Redacted] | Private Secretary to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | Web: www.gov.scot
Tel: [Redacted] | Mob: [Redacted] 07817 949 264 | Email: CabSecTIC@gov.scot

From: [Redacted] > **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
Sent: 14 February 2020 09:52
To: 'TransportSecretary@dft.gov.uk' <TransportSecretary@dft.gov.uk>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity <CabSecTIC@gov.scot>; Private.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk
Subject: Letter from Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity

Good Morning,

Please find attached correspondence from Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity for the attention of the Secretary of State for Transport.

Many Thanks
[Redacted]

[Redacted] | Private Secretary to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | Web: www.gov.scot
Tel: [Redacted] Mob: [Redacted] | Email: CabSecTIC@gov.scot

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

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road London
SW1P 4DR

14 February 2020

Dear Grant,

Further to the Prime Minister's announcement that he has asked UK officials to look into the feasibility of a bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland, I have had the opportunity to discuss the matter with Minister Nichola Mallon - my counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive – and I am writing to you to express my concerns about these proposals.

Firstly, I was surprised to hear the Prime Minister's announcement, without any prior discussion, given that transport is devolved to both Scotland and Northern Ireland. This is despite regular requests for information from your officials at the Department for Transport over the course of the last few months.

In both Northern Ireland and Scotland, budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have for a number of years restricted necessary investment in public transport and vital infrastructure and held back progress for our communities.

Going forward I believe infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost our economy and connectivity, support communities and crucially work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero.

I strongly believe that if £20 billion is available for investment in infrastructure in Scotland and Northern Ireland that rather than indulging the Prime Minister with this vanity project, such funding should be made available to our respective governments so it could be better spent on meeting the priorities of the people we represent.

I therefore request immediate discussions with your officials on releasing to us the £20bn of funding you have identified so it can be invested in the priorities of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

There are a number of proposals already on the table which would improve connectivity between the North of Ireland and Scotland, without the technical and

logistical challenges involved in your proposal, and which we could develop if there is £20bn available to us.

By spending just a fraction of the cost of this bridge, I believe we could bring significantly more benefits to the people of Scotland and Northern Ireland, making a real difference to improving lives.

I am concerned that pursuit of this in light of the already identified technical, logistical and safety challenges such as the Beaufort's Dyke munitions dump could waste significant money and resource that could be put to better use on practical, deliverable projects.

Given transport is devolved to both the Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive, I look forward to hearing from you on the availability of the £20bn to us, and to assurances that in future, any such proposals will be discussed with us first and will fully respect the devolved settlements and the role of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament.

I look forward to your response

I am copying this letter to Nichola Mallon MLA, Minister for Infrastructure.

Yours sincerely

Redacted

Michael Matheson

Annie Wells MSP
Due with P/O: 12 noon – 14 February
S5O-04128

Question Text: To ask the Scottish Government whether it has explored the possibility of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Answer:

The Scottish Government has not undertaken any feasibility for a bridge to Northern Ireland and has no plans to do so.

Last week, I wrote to the UK Secretary of State for Transport, setting out my views on their lack of engagement on this matter.

Budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have restricted investment in public transport and vital infrastructure in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We believe infrastructure investment should focus on projects that improve lives, boost our economy, support communities and work towards Net Zero. That is how we are planning Scotland's future infrastructure investment.

(96 words / word limit 97)

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

BACKGROUND NOTE FOR S50-04128

Annie Wells is a Scottish Conservative MSP for Glasgow.

She has not previously asked any parliamentary questions about transport links to Northern Ireland.

On 12th February 2020, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting TS as part of routine engagement. TS officials asked if they were aware of the work being done, as mentioned by the PM. They shared very little detail other than saying it was 'high level' and more akin to a feasibility of a feasibility study. TS asked when the devolved administrations (in Scotland and NI) would be engaged given the project spans between two. They were not able to say.

On 13th February, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure discussed with the Minister for Infrastructure Northern Ireland, writing to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport to seek discussions between officials on the subject. You subsequently wrote to the SoS on Friday 14 February setting out the Scottish Government view on the matter and requesting further immediate discussions.

If funding of the scale required for the Bridge was made available, TS could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.

We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to the South of Scotland (South West Study and Borders Study). Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.

On the 5 February 2020, we published the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing.

The NTS, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.

Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) will appraise potential transport interventions, to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers for investment in transport in Scotland. In this context, Transport Scotland officials continue to have positive discussions with the Northern Ireland officials on STPR. Similar discussions are also on-going with Dept for Transport officials on cross-border travel between Scotland and England.

A fixed link to NI has not been raised as a priority throughout the course of STPR so far, nor as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland.

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.

Comments have been made in the media, drawing comparisons to the Garden Bridge project (across the Thames) proposed by Boris Johnston. It has been reported that £37M was spent on the design development and feasibility of the bridge before being scrapped by Sadiq Khan who called it a waste of tax payers money: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/aug/14/london-garden-bridge-project-scrapped-sadiq-khan>

There are many other schemes which were once the responsibility of Boris Johnston (in his time as Mayor of London) dubbed “vanity” projects in the media, including Routemaster buses and Emirate Cable Car: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/aug/18/bridge-940m-bill-boris-johnsons-mayora-vanity-projects-garden-bridge-routemaster-bus>

Contact Name: [Redacted]
Ext: [Redacted]

Supplementary Q & A.

Q. There have been reports in the media that UK Government is looking seriously at the challenges of building a bridge. Has the Scottish Government had any discussions about this with their UK counter-parts?

A. There have been no discussions with Scottish Government prior to this announcement by the Prime Minister. This is despite my officials at Transport Scotland asking the Department for Transport for updates over the course of the last few months. If the UKG is looking into this project seriously, I suggest they would have involved the two devolved administrations. I have written to the Secretary of State for Transport to express my concerns.

Q. Would the Cabinet Secretary not agree that a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland would surely bring significant economic benefits to both countries?

A. I have seen no evidence of this. 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. I and my counter-part in NI have asked the UK Government, that the £20 billion is made available for investment in infrastructure in Scotland and Northern Ireland. That way for example, we could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.

These projects have been identified through consideration of a robust analysis of evidence and engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.

Q. Scottish Ministers were recently at the Convention of South of Scotland, would this type of investment not be transformational to that region?

A. The issue of a new link to Northern Ireland was not raised at the recent meeting of the convention, members were focused on the transport challenges across the South of Scotland and the range of interventions that could make a real difference to people's lives.

We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to that region. Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area. That is how we plan our future infrastructure investment.

Q. If this isn't a priority for Scotland, what is?

A. We have published last week the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing. This, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future

plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.

INTERNAL COMMS

Question S5O-04128: Annie Wells, Glasgow, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, Date Lodged: 12/02/2020

To ask the Scottish Government whether it has explored the possibility of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Answered by Michael Matheson (19/02/2020):

The Scottish Government has not undertaken any feasibility for a bridge to Northern Ireland and has no plans to do so.

Both I and the Northern Ireland Minister for Infrastructure, have written to the UK Secretary of State for Transport, stating this is not a priority for either Government and the UK Government's lack of engagement does not respect devolution in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We believe infrastructure investment should focus on projects that improve lives, boost our economy, support communities and work towards Net Zero. That is how we are planning Scotland's future infrastructure investment.

Current Status: Answered by Michael Matheson on 19/02/2020

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 14 February 2020 15:14:15
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Scotland - Northern Ireland Bridge

Hi

For MACCS please- OR.

Many thanks

[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>>

From: Matheson M (Michael), MSP <Michael.Matheson.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 14 February 2020 15:02
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
<CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Subject: Fwd: Scotland - Northern Ireland Bridge

Sent from my iPhone Begin

forwarded message:

From: [Redacted]

Date: 14 February 2020 at

13:53:01 GMT

To: "Matheson M (Michael), MSP"
<Michael.Matheson.msp@parliament.scot<<mailto:Michael.Matheson.msp@parliament.scot>>>

Subject: Scotland - Northern Ireland Bridge
?

Michael,

I note you consider a bridge a vanity project. I am not a politician, just a normal bloke

from NI. Very briefly, as a family man with a wife and two young kids we have much less opportunities being isolated in NI than you would experience in Scotland. Few examples:

1. I cannot take my family and simply drive to centre parcs for a holiday, like you. I would need to pay an additional ?300 to take my car across on the ferry. Incidentally, a similar ferry travelling from Dover to Calais, a similar distance operated by the same company would cost about ?80. Crossing the Irish Sea is ?300 because options so limited.
2. The new and recently opened Centre Parcs in Longford, Ireland, may be seen as a solution to this issue but it isn't. A weekend stay costing ?400 in Whinell costs ?680 in Ireland. Why? Well for N. Irish families to go Whinell via the ferry costs ?700 (when ferry cost is added) hence the Irish Centre Parcs pitch the price notionally cheaper at ?680.

I accept this is no reason in itself for a bridge but this is just a snippet of difficulties N.Irish families face day and daily. When you can travel to mainland Europe on a train or book summer holidays from various airports, you have much more choice. I can therefore understand why you see no need for a bridge but perhaps it is to benefit us?

3. I cannot book last minute ski holidays I currently see advertised for ?300-400 from Glasgow and Gatwick etc. but have to pay ?800 for the same holiday flying out of Belfast. The only difference is aircraft fuel and the flight distance is almost the same. Flying from Europe to Belfast compared with Glasgow or Manchester is practically the same distance but costs are discriminate.
4. Summer holidays that cost me ?3k can be booked for ?2k from anywhere between Edinburgh to Gatwick. Why the extra ?1k for me? Hopping across on Easyjet would cost me ?800, there lies the answer.

If our government, the British Government, are considering improving our links to GB and the European mainland for that matter, is it really fair for someone currently living 'on the mainland' to trash the idea? There are 3 bridges beside each other crossing the Forth, NI has no such luxuries.

What harm would a bridge do you? I completely appreciate the benefits to Scottish people may not be that significant, but nor would any harm. Please do not actively set out to limit the options of your neighbours in NI when no harm would be caused to yourself. I cannot imagine the bridge ever becoming a reality but that is because we are all too narrow minded. How much is HS2 costing and will it considerably change peoples lives

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 17 February 2020 13:37
To: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Cc: [Redacted]; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Perm Sec/[Redacted] meeting briefing

[Redacted]

Here are the current lines. It may be useful for you to add that [Redacted] also spoke to his counterpart last week (I don't have the details).

Note – we haven't been asked for an FMQ yet but have one prepared.

Background:

- On 12th Feb, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting TS as part of routine engagement. TS officials asked if they were aware of the work being done, as mentioned by the PM. They shared very little detail other than saying it was 'high level' and more akin to a feasibility of a feasibility study. TS asked when the devolved administrations (in Scotland and NI) would be engaged given the project spans between two. They were not able to say.
- On 13th Feb, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure discussed with the Minister for Infrastructure Northern Ireland, writing to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport to seek discussions between officials on the subject. Mr Matheson subsequently wrote to the SoS on Friday 14 February setting out the Scottish Government view on the matter and requesting further immediate discussions. As did the NI Minister. Letters attached.

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 it would require a robust assessment of the costs or benefits of such a project in the first instance.
- SG currently has no plans to take forward proposals for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The Scottish Government has not investigated or undertaken any feasibility for a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland and has no current plans to do so.
- We have not been approached by UK Government for our view on any such proposals, or to be engaged in any piece of work.
- If there is work taking place on this, we would ask that the devolved administrations, where this project spans between, are engaged as a priority.

Priorities

- In both Scotland and Northern Ireland, budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have for a number of years restricted necessary investment in public transport and vital infrastructure and held back progress for our communities.
- Going forward we believe infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost our economy and connectivity, support communities and crucially work to end our contribution to climate change.
- If we had £15-20 billion to invest, we could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.
- These projects have been identified through consideration of a robust analysis of evidence and engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
- We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to the South of Scotland (South West Study and Borders Study). Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.
- We published, last week, the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing.
- The NTS, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.
- Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) will appraise potential transport interventions, to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers for investment in transport in Scotland.
- A fixed link to NI has not been raised as a priority throughout the course of STPR so far, nor as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland.
- 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.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

T: [Redacted] M: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 17 February 2020 13:11
To: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Perm Sec/[Redacted] meeting briefing
Importance: High

To see below.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]/[Redacted]

From: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Sent: 17 February 2020 13:03
To: [Redacted]
Cc: DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Chief Executive Transport Scotland <ceo@transport.gov.scot>; Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Perm Sec/[Redacted] meeting briefing
Importance: High

[Redacted]

See below, can you provide something today?

[Redacted]

From: DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>
Sent: 17 February 2020 13:02
To: [Redacted]; Chief Executive Transport Scotland <ceo@transport.gov.scot>
Cc: DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Perm Sec/[Redacted] meeting briefing

Hi [Redacted],

Please see below from Perm Sec's office. Please can you send on any bullets / short background on the UKG NI-Scotland bridge proposal as it will come up in Perm Sec's meeting with Perm Sec NIO this week? Also to note they are looking for this today if at all possible.

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted] | DG Economy and DG Scottish Exchequer| Room 1N.01, St Andrew's House | [Redacted] | [Redacted]

From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Permanent Secretary
Sent: 17 February 2020 12:56
To: DG Economy <[DGEconomy@gov.scot](mailto:DGEEconomy@gov.scot)>
Cc: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Perm Sec/[Redacted] meeting briefing

Hi Alan

Please see note below from Ken. Perm Sec is meeting with [Redacted] on Wednesday. I'd be grateful if you could send on any bullets on UKG's Scotland-NI bridge proposal - today if at all possible.

Many thanks,
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary
[Redacted] | [Redacted]



From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** [Redacted] (Director-General)
Sent: 17 February 2020 12:33
To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; DG Constitution and External Affairs <dgcea@gov.scot>
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: Perm Sec/[Redacted]meeting briefing

Good Afternoon

Had a word with Ken about this – he advised to flag [Redacted] office that Perm Sec should raise the UKG's Scotland-NI bridge proposal, on which Transport Scotland is leading.

Hope this helps.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted] | Assistant Private Secretary to [Redacted] | DG Constitution and External Affairs | Room 1E 16, St Andrew's House | [Redacted] Email: dgcea@gov.scot

From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Permanent Secretary
Sent: 17 February 2020 09:53
To: DG Constitution and External Affairs <dgcea@gov.scot>
Cc: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; [Redacted]
Subject: Perm Sec/ [Redacted] meeting briefing

Hi [Redacted]

Perm Sec is meeting with [Redacted] (new Perm Sec NIO) on Wednesday while on London. UK relations is providing some briefing bullets but Perm Sec has mentioned [Redacted] may want to input into this as well. She would now like to see this today if possible so she can determine if she needs more/different briefing.

I'd be grateful if you and [Redacted] could liaise and coordinate the comments.

[Redacted] – Apologies for quicker turnaround I know we have previously agreed tomorrow.

Many thanks,
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary
[Redacted] | [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

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road London
SW1P 4DR

14 February 2020

Dear Grant,

Further to the Prime Minister's announcement that he has asked UK officials to look into the feasibility of a bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland, I have had the opportunity to discuss the matter with Minister Nichola Mallon - my counterpart in the Northern Ireland Executive – and I am writing to you to express my concerns about these proposals.

Firstly, I was surprised to hear the Prime Minister's announcement, without any prior discussion, given that transport is devolved to both Scotland and Northern Ireland. This is despite regular requests for information from your officials at the Department for Transport over the course of the last few months.

In both Northern Ireland and Scotland, budget constraints from successive UK Governments, have for a number of years restricted necessary investment in public transport and vital infrastructure and held back progress for our communities.

Going forward I believe infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost our economy and connectivity, support communities and crucially work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero.

I strongly believe that if £20 billion is available for investment in infrastructure in Scotland and Northern Ireland that rather than indulging the Prime Minister with this vanity project, such funding should be made available to our respective governments so it could be better spent on meeting the priorities of the people we represent.

I therefore request immediate discussions with your officials on releasing to us the £20bn of funding you have identified so it can be invested in the priorities of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

There are a number of proposals already on the table which would improve connectivity between the North of Ireland and Scotland, without the technical and

logistical challenges involved in your proposal, and which we could develop if there is £20bn available to us.

By spending just a fraction of the cost of this bridge, I believe we could bring significantly more benefits to the people of Scotland and Northern Ireland, making a real difference to improving lives.

I am concerned that pursuit of this in light of the already identified technical, logistical and safety challenges such as the Beaufort's Dyke munitions dump could waste significant money and resource that could be put to better use on practical, deliverable projects.

Given transport is devolved to both the Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive, I look forward to hearing from you on the availability of the £20bn to us, and to assurances that in future, any such proposals will be discussed with us first and will fully respect the devolved settlements and the role of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament.

I look forward to your response

I am copying this letter to Nichola Mallon MLA, Minister for Infrastructure.

Yours sincerely

Redacted

Michael Matheson

(ii)



[Redacted]

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure

Secretary of State for Transport
5/13 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Room 708
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone: (028) 9054 0105
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference: XXXX
Our reference: PS/MIN 13/02
12 February 2020

Dear Secretary of State for Transport

Scotland-NI Bridge

I am writing in my capacity as Minister for Infrastructure, following the announcement from the Prime Minister that he has asked UK officials to look into the feasibility of a bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland, to express my surprise and disappointment that such an announcement was made without any prior discussion with my Department, given transport is a devolved matter. Having spoken directly with my counterpart in Scotland, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, I understand he shares my disappointment and concern.

I want to make it clear that a lack of investment by successive British Governments has, for a number of years, restricted the necessary investment in vital infrastructure and public transport here. This has held back progress for our communities in Northern Ireland. I am clear that infrastructure investment should be focused on projects that will improve lives, boost connectivity and our economy, enhance our communities and work to address the climate crisis.

I am requesting clarity on exactly what is proposed by British Government Ministers and I would also welcome an explanation as to why Ministers and officials here have not been contacted or consulted in advance of the announcement. I also want to make clear that significant investment is needed in our infrastructure and the *New Decade: New Approach* document makes several key commitments on behalf of the British Government, which I also expect to see honoured.

Furthermore, I am extremely concerned that pursuit of this project, costing £20 billion, will be a waste of significant money and resource that could be put to better use by addressing pressures and deliverable projects here in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. By spending just a fraction of the reported cost of this bridge, I am of the view that we could bring significantly more benefits to people across the North by investing in infrastructure here and making a real difference to improving the lives of citizens across Northern Ireland.

Given that transport is a devolved matter, I would like assurances that engagement on this proposal and any future proposals will fully respect the devolved settlements and will be discussed and explored with us in advance.

I am copying this letter to Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport in Scotland, and to my Executive colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

[Redacted] MLA Minister for Infrastructure

CC Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport
CC All Executive Colleagues

From: s0678a@gov.scot <s0678a@gov.scot>
Sent: 19 February 2020 14:39
To: [Redacted]
Subject: ORAL PQ Answers

Please find attached, the answers to the ORAL PQs processed on 19/02/2020:-

S5O-04128

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

ORAL ANSWER

19 February 2020

Index Heading: Transport Scotland

Annie Wells (Glasgow) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has explored the possibility of a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

S5O-04128

Michael Matheson: The Scottish Government has not undertaken any feasibility for a bridge to Northern Ireland and has no plans to do so.

Both I and the Northern Ireland Minister for Infrastructure, have written to the UK Secretary of State for Transport, stating this is not a priority for either Government and the UK Government's lack of engagement does not respect devolution in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We believe infrastructure investment should focus on projects that improve lives, boost our economy, support communities and work towards Net Zero. That is how we are planning Scotland's future infrastructure investment.

BACKGROUND NOTE FOR S50-04128

Annie Wells is a Scottish Conservative MSP for Glasgow.

She has not previously asked any parliamentary questions about transport links to Northern Ireland.

On 12th February 2020, Dept. for Transport (DfT) officials with responsibility for devolved administrations, were visiting TS as part of routine engagement. TS officials asked if they were aware of the work being done, as mentioned by the PM. They shared very little detail other than saying it was 'high level' and more akin to a feasibility of a feasibility study. TS asked when the devolved administrations (in Scotland and NI) would be engaged given the project spans between two. They were not able to say.

On 13th February, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Infrastructure discussed with the Minister for Infrastructure Northern Ireland, writing to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport to seek discussions between officials on the subject. You subsequently wrote to the SoS on Friday 14 February setting out the Scottish Government view on the matter and requesting further immediate discussions.

If funding of the scale required for the Bridge was made available, TS could invest in all 23 projects identified in the recently published South West Scotland Transport Study. By spending just a fraction of the cost of a bridge, approx. £6.5 billion, we could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and make a real difference to improving lives in the South West of Scotland.

We have undertaken an assessment of the types of interventions which would make a difference to the South of Scotland (South West Study and Borders Study). Identified during a robust analysis of evidence, engagement and collaboration with the people and businesses in the area.

On the 5 February 2020, we published the new National Transport Strategy, which sets out the role of transport in delivering the priorities of reducing inequalities and taking climate action while helping deliver inclusive economic growth and improving health and wellbeing.

The NTS, along with consideration of the recommendations made by the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, the Climate Change Plan Update, National Planning Framework 4, Infrastructure Investment Plan, will all help shape our future plans for transport infrastructure, being undertaken through the second Strategic Transport Projects Review.

Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) will appraise potential transport interventions, to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers for investment in transport in Scotland. In this context, Transport Scotland officials continue to have positive discussions with the Northern Ireland officials on STPR. Similar discussions are also on-going with Dept for Transport officials on cross-border travel between Scotland and England.

A fixed link to NI has not been raised as a priority throughout the course of STPR so far, nor as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland.

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.

Comments have been made in the media, drawing comparisons to the Garden Bridge project (across the Thames) proposed by Boris Johnston. It has been reported that £37M was spent on the design development and feasibility of the bridge before being scrapped by Sadiq Khan who called it a waste of tax payers money: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/aug/14/london-garden-bridge-project-scrapped-sadiq-khan>

There are many other schemes which were once the responsibility of Boris Johnston (in his time as Mayor of London) dubbed “vanity” projects in the media, including Routemaster buses and Emirate Cable Car: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/aug/18/bridge-940m-bill-boris-johnsons-mayora-vanity-projects-garden-bridge-routemaster-bus>

Contact Name: [Redacted]
Ext: [Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 24 February 2020 13:53:00
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: The Power Bridge

[Redacted] | Public Engagement Officer
T: [Redacted]
E: [Redacted]
Room 1E.10 | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG
|
Public Engagement Unit
Ministerial Private Office

From: [Redacted] On Behalf Of First Minister Sent: 10 February 2020 09:27
To: Public Engagement Unit <CorrespondenceUnit@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: The Power Bridge

MACCS case please for OR

[Redacted]
Office of the First Minister
Scottish Government
5TH floor/St Andrews House/Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG
Tel [Redacted]

From: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP
<Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>>
Sent: 09 February 2020 17:38
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot<mailto:firstminister@gov.scot>>
Subject: Fwd: The Power Bridge

Nicola Sturgeon MSP Glasgow
Southside
Constituency Office (constituent enquiries only)
Unit 3
Govanhill Workspace 69
Dixon Road
G42 8AT
Tel: 0141 424 1174
nicola.sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:nicola.sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2020 5:10:46 PM
To: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP
<Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot<mailto:Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>>
Subject: The Power Bridge

Dear Madam:

I would like to submit to you the exciting Power Bridge in response to your desire to link Port Patrick and Larne.

Our concept is to combine a complete transportation infrastructure with a wind turbine farm. The foundations of the bridge are extended upwards into pylons each supporting a 1,5 MW wind turbine. 140 of these pylons placed along the length of the bridge will carry an equal amount of turbines producing 210 000 kWh of electricity, about 1 800 Million kW per year. The estimated yearly electric energy consumption of a UK citizen is on average 4000 kWh, this means that the Power Bridge would be able to supply energy to 450 000 inhabitants in the near region. Regarding transportation the bridge will boast 4 car lanes on the upper level separated by a service lane dedicated to the wind turbines' maintenance as well as 2 train lanes on the lower level.

This innovative work defines an ecological and sustainable design for future bridges and should the UK go ahead with this idea it could become the number one instigator in this field.

We would be delighted to provide more information on the subject should you wish to develop this project further.

[Redacted]Architects is a Stockholm based architectural office known for its innovative solutions to diverse tasks in infrastructure, planning and design. Please find more information on our website

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 25 February 2020 12:19:17
To: [Redacted]; TS Rail Directorate Communications, Public Engagement Unit
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat, [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TS - Alternative High-Tech solution to the "Boris Bridge" to Ireland - [Redacted] (TS2020/962)

Dear All,

Given the detailed nature of this correspondence it should be logged on the Maccs system as an OR?

PEU can you log and allocate to me please.

Kind Regards

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Transport Strategy & Analysis
Transport Scotland
T: [Redacted]
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 24 February 2020 09:36
To: TS Rail Directorate Communications
<TS_Rail_Directorate_Communications@transport.gov.scot>
Cc: Transport Scotland Secretariat <TSS@transport.gov.scot>;
[Redacted] ; [Redacted]
Subject: RE: TS - Alternative High-Tech solution to the "Boris Bridge" to Ireland - [Redacted] (TS2020/962)

TS Rail Colleagues,

Given that we have dealt with other NI bridge related correspondence ? I am happy that we deal with this case.

If you can confirm that you are content, we will take this forward.

Thanks

[Redacted]/[Redacted]

From: Transport Scotland Secretariat
<TSS@transport.gov.scot<mailto:TSS@transport.gov.scot>>
Sent: 24 February 2020 09:21
To: TS Rail Directorate Communications
<TS_Rail_Directorate_Communications@transport.gov.scot<mailto:TS_Rail_Direc
to_rate_Communications@transport.gov.scot>>
Cc: [Redacted]
Transport Scotland Secretariat
<TSS@transport.gov.scot<mailto:TSS@transport.gov.scot>> Subject:
FW: TS - Alternative High-Tech solution to the "Boris Bridge" to Ireland -
[Redacted] (TS2020/962) Please see email below received today from
the Central Enquiry Unit.

Grateful if you could respond to the enquirer directly and cc TS Secretariat into the reply.

There is a reference number added to the subject line. Please keep this on your response.

Regards
[Redacted]
Transport Scotland Secretariat
T: [Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot<mailto:CEU@gov.scot>>
Sent: 24 February 2020 09:06
To: Transport Scotland Secretariat
<TSS@transport.gov.scot<mailto:TSS@transport.gov.scot>>
Subject: TS - Alternative High-Tech solution to the "Boris Bridge" to Ireland -
[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 February 2020 12:49
To: Transport Scotland Info
<info@transport.gov.scot<mailto:info@transport.gov.scot>>
Subject: Alternative High-Tech solution to the "Boris Bridge" to Ireland
to : Public Transport Planning Dept.

The "Boris Bridge" plan to Ireland is as fatally flawed as the Thatcher's "Cross-Channel bridge" plan was, and why the Channel Tunnel was built in the end.

However - with superfluous Tunnel Boring Machines nearing the end of their duties under London, and that the rail gauges are different in Ireland to that on the mainland UK - I suggest a look at this (Google translated) announcement of a study from Italy.

Hyper-loop Maglev study for Milano Cadorna - Malpensa Airport - reduction of travel time from 43 minutes (conventional rail) to 10 minutes.
Separate travel pods for passengers and freight should be able to be accommodated.

Given the proposed routes Scotland - NI, I am sure that, wind and/or wave power could provide sufficient electricity for it.

[Redacted]
Italian Railways Society

----- Forwarded message -----

To: European Rail Discussion <european-rail-discussion@groups.io>
Sent: Sunday, 23 February 2020, 12:17:00 GMT
Subject: [ERG-D] Hyper-loop Maglev study for Milano Cadorna - Malpensa Airport

Feasibility study on the Hyperloop Milano Cadorna - Malpensa route is underway
Press release FNM and Hyperloop Italia

FNM and Hyperloop Italia will launch, for the first time in Italy, an engineering and technical-economic-legal feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of creating a passenger and freight transport system, from Milan Cadorna station to Milan Malpensa station, which involves the use of passive magnetic levitation technology. The aim is to study the advantages regarding the reduction of traditional rail transport times which, according to a first hypothesis, could go from the current 43 minutes to 10 minutes. The energy consumption linked to the new system and the costs associated with the entire operation will also be investigated. The terms of the agreement between FNM and Hyperloop Italia are contained in a letter of intent that the parties will sign, anticipated by the joint press conference that was held today in Milan on 20 February.

?The new forms of mobility, especially if based on environmental sustainability and zero impact - comments the President of FNM, Andrea Gibelli - are a frontier that we want to explore and an opportunity that we want to seize. In this initiative, the engineering and infrastructural skills that have always characterized FNM can team up with the most innovative transport technologies to create a new and futuristic mobility model ?.

?The opportunity for Lombardy and for Italy - adds Gibelli - is to join, as a protagonist, a network that unites universities, businesses, researchers and engineers from all over the world who are studying innovations related to "vacuum" technology. This means developing the culture of open technological districts and platforms on which anyone can contribute experience. The advantage for a group like FNM is to be "contaminated" by all the technological innovations that will be necessary for the development of this idea from a constructive, environmental mitigation and integration of services point of view ?.

?We are entering the fourth industrial revolution - says the CEO of Hyperloop Italy, Gabriele "Bibop" Gresta - and the door is opened from here, from Lombardy, the first Italian economic region. The decade 2020-2030 will lead man towards new economic, social and industrial models. Climate change requires the immediate transition to an economic model based on resilient and sustainable systems. This transition of humanity will be something extraordinary, comparable only to the transition from agriculture to industrial society. Hyperloop is an intelligent and sustainable infrastructure that brings together all the scientific advances in exponential technology. It is designed as a huge renewable energy infrastructure, a broadband communication network and an efficient transport system ?.

?Today - continues Gresta - we announce the start of the first feasibility study in Italy. The collaboration between the various developers begins, but only we can boast the right to the exclusive use of the brand and technologies, including passive magnetic levitation and VIBRANIUM, which allow us to fully operate the system. It will be an opportunity to show the incredible potential of Italian industry and talents. We will work with FNM and the best Italian partners in close contact with institutions, citizens and with prestigious universities.

Full Italian Text :- <http://www.ferrovie.it/portale/articoli/9212>

Transport Strategy and Analysis

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



Mr [Redacted]
By Email:
[Redacted]

Our ref:
2020/0001098

Date:
5 March 2020

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 9 February 2020 to Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland regarding your proposals for a road/rail/power bridge that would span the North Channel of the Irish Sea between Scotland and Northern Ireland. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland, I have been asked to respond.

I have noted your proposals around a bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland. We are always looking at ways that we can strengthen connections between Scotland and Northern Ireland, however, the Scottish Government have no plans to pursue a fixed-link between the two countries.

There has been 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 dialogue between the Scottish and UK Governments on this matter to date.

I hope this has been helpful in clarifying the Scottish Government position on this matter.

Yours Sincerely
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Project Administrator

Transport Strategy and Analysis

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



[Redacted]
By Email:
[Redacted]

Our ref:
2020/0000883

Date:
9 March 2020

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email to Scottish Ministers dated 10 February 2020 regarding a Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland, I have been asked to respond.

As you have noted, there has been 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. Although the Scottish Government are always looking at ways that we can strengthen connections between Scotland and Northern Ireland, we have no plans to pursue a fixed-link between the two countries.

It may be helpful to know that consideration of strategic improvements to the trunk road network including those relating A82 and A83, are being assessed as part of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). This review will help to deliver the vision, priorities and outcomes for transport set out in the National Transport Strategy (NTS2). The scope of this multi-modal review will extend to the strategic road and rail networks and will consider national infrastructure investment to support active travel, island connectivity, buses and ferries and will be delivered in the lifetime of this Parliament (2021).

Further details on STPR2 can be found on Transport Scotland website, including the recently published draft *Case for Change* reports at:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/strategy/strategic-transport-projects-review-2/>

I hope this response has been helpful.

Yours Sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Project Administrator

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 March 2020 17:28:34
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Correspondence from Beatrice Wishart MSP (re: fixed links)

Attachments: 100320 BW to M Matheson (fixed links).pdf

Hi

For MACCS please - MR Many

thanks

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 10 March 2020 14:02
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity
<CabSecTIC@gov.scot>
Subject: Correspondence from Beatrice Wishart MSP (re: fixed links)

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter from Beatrice Wishart to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity regarding the Government's position on fixed links.

I would be grateful for confirmation of receipt of this letter.

Regards,

From: [Redacted] Parliamentary Assistant
Beatrice Wishart MSP for Shetland

P: [Redacted]

E: [Redacted]

A: MG.11, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Beatrice Wishart MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Shetland

Michael Matheson MSP
Cab Sec for Transport, Infrastructure & Connectivity
Scottish Government
St. Andrews House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

10 March 2020
Our ref:BW0276

Dear Michael,

You will be aware that on 5 March the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee took evidence from the Secretary of State for Scotland, Alister Jack MP.

Responding to questions from the Committee, Mr Jack suggested that a tunnel could be built across the Irish Sea. He made the point that construction of such infrastructure is well developed in Faroe and Norway.

I understand that in Faroe the investment combination of fixed links and broadband for all has contributed significantly to retaining and growing the population. There has been a significant increase since 2013 in the population to around 51,000 today. Many young people want to stay in Faroe because connectivity enables them to have a good life there.

There are parallels between Shetland's aspirations and Faroe's achievements. The lifeline inter-island ferries currently used in Shetland contribute significantly to the Council's carbon footprint and the costs of running the service are increasing year on year, as you know.

I would welcome your views on the issue of fixed links and an indication of what consideration the Government has given to this kind of infrastructure for Shetland for the future.

[Redacted]

Beatrice Wishart MSP

The Scottish Parliament, MG. 11, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP Tel: [Redacted]
Shetland Parliamentary Office, 171 Commercial Street, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 OHX Tel: [Redacted]
Email: Beatrice.Wishart.msp@parliament.scot

Transport Strategy and Analysis

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



Mr [Redacted]
By Email:
[Redacted]

Our ref:
2020/0000994

Date:
18 March 2020

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 14 February 2020 to Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson regarding the benefits of a Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge. As this matter is delegated to Transport Scotland, I have been asked to respond.

I have noted the points that you have raised in your email with regards to the improved connectivity that a fixed link between Scotland and Northern Ireland could bring. We are always looking at ways that we can strengthen connections between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Scottish Government continues to be clear that transport investment decisions need to be supported by a robust evidence base. The work recently completed and published on the South West Scotland Transport Study (<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/south-west-scotland-transport-study-initial-appraisal-case-for-change/>), sets out the evidence and lists a series of 23 interventions that have emerged as potential priorities for this region which connects to Northern Ireland.

Stakeholders, from both sides of the Irish sea, have put access to the Ports at Cairnryan at the top of their priority list, given their continued importance to the economies of both countries in a post Brexit world. I would also note that a fixed link to Northern Ireland has not been raised through this study, nor as a priority throughout the course of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (<https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/strategy/strategic-transport-projects-review-2/>) so far, or as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland. Which have all included extensive stakeholder and public engagement.

By spending just a fraction of the cost of any proposed bridge on the priorities identified from the South West Study and second Strategic Transport Projects Review, this could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and those travelling to Northern Ireland whilst making a real difference to improving connectivity for those people living in the South West of Scotland.

I hope this has been helpful in clarifying the Scottish Government position on this matter.

Yours Sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Project Administrator

Transport Strategy and Analysis

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



Mr [Redacted]
By Email:
[Redacted]

Our ref:
2020/0001121

Date:
20 March 2020

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 23 February 2020 to Transport Scotland regarding your Hyperloop proposal as an option for fixed link between Scotland and Ireland. I have been asked to respond.

I have noted the points that you have raised in your email with regards to a possible hyper loop system to improve connectivity between Scotland and Northern Ireland. We are always looking at ways that we can strengthen connections between Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Government continues to be clear that transport investment decisions need to be supported by a robust evidence base. The work recently completed and published on the South West Scotland Transport Study (<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/south-west-scotland-transport-study-initial-appraisal-case-for-change/>), sets out the evidence and lists a series of 23 interventions that have emerged as potential priorities for this region which connects to Northern Ireland.

Stakeholders, from both sides of the Irish sea, have put access to the Ports at Cairnryan at the top of their priority list, given their continued importance to the economies of both countries in a post Brexit world. I would also note that a fixed link to Northern Ireland has not been raised through this study, nor as a priority throughout the course of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (<https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/strategy/strategic-transport-projects-review-2/>) so far, or as part of the recommendations from the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland. Which have all included extensive stakeholder and public engagement.

By spending just a fraction of the cost of any proposed bridge on the priorities identified from the South West Study and second Strategic Transport Projects Review, this could bring significant benefits to the people of Scotland and those travelling to Northern Ireland whilst making a real difference to improving connectivity for those people living in the South West of Scotland.

I hope this has been helpful in clarifying the Scottish Government position on this matter.

Yours Sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Project Administrator

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 March 2020 12:45
To: Transport Scotland Info <info@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: Celtic crossing scotland

Good day

I along with a few of my structural/civil engineering colleagues took great interest in the suggestion of a proposed Celtic crossing mooted by the PM Boris Johnson. Needless to say we are all a bit sceptical to say the least but it is technically possible and does have some merit to it .

After some discussion and analysis on the matter and given the current volume of traffic we envisage a high speed rail link between Edinburgh and Belfast stopping at a few stations on route eventually leading to a tunnel under the Irish sea (north channel) along with a few bridges on route .As per our brief sketch attached.

This could be a huge boost for both tourism and industry also for the construction industry. It could also lead to competition with the airlines say Edinburgh/ Belfast just under 2 hours not as fast as air travel but you are city to city direct and you can relax in comfort along the way .

Apart from air travel the route is also served by several large fast and sophisticated ferries carrying well over millions of passengers and cars not to mention huges volumes of freight so the demand is possibly there, also you must consider the c02 emissions generated by these vessels which can easily top several hundred tonne annually so the high speed rail would indeed be very green in comparison . We did look at other routes even dunoon /Campbell town direct but that would lead to a very long bridge in exposed conditions not to mention deep waters , therefore our proposed route is much closer to the shore and in shallower waters which could lead to much of the piers constructed ashore then towed out and sunk in position with the deck structure lifted into place by floating crane or shearlegs .

As mentioned previously the project is technical possible and would be welcomed in many quarters , however due to its high costs may be impossible to justify along with the required maintainance.

Had we still been in the EU it may have been a different outcome???

We look forward to you comments .

Best regards [Redacted]

Naval architect /structural engr

Dundee

Previous FoI Requests relating to a fixed link between Scotland and Northern Ireland:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-20-00061/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-202000018055/>

Documents not provided

- (i)** - Briefing Requests emails - Internal Communications documents information in draft form which needs further work – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications (Shown Annex D) - 17 September 2019
- (ii)** - Internal Communications - Internal Communications - Draft correspondence clearance – Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 14 January 2020
- (iii)** - Internal Communications - Regarding media enquiry regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge – Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion (Duplication of lines issued at Annex M) - 2 February 2020
- (iv)** - Internal Communications - Handling media enquiry regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge (email 1) – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications (Shown Annex W) - 10 February 2020
- (v)** - Internal Communications - Handling media enquiry regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge (email 2) – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications (Shown Annex W) - 10 February 2020
- (vi)** - Internal Communications - Handling media enquiry regarding Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge (email 3) – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications (Shown Annex W) - 10 February 2020
- (vii)** - Internal Communications - Correspondence regarding A82 A83 and Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications (Response Shown Annex AD) - 12 February 2020
- (viii)** - Internal Communications - Email regarding allocation of Parliamentary Question – Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 12 February 2020
- (viiii)** - Internal Communications - Automated PQ allocation acknowledgement - Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications - 12 February 2020
- (x)** - Internal Communications - Email regarding Parliamentary Question - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 12 February 2020
- (xi)** - Internal Communications - Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge letter to Grant Shapps sent for internal clearance – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications (Response Shown Annex Xi) - 14 February 2020
- (xii)** - Internal Communications - PQ Clearance Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge (Email 1) - Section 27 (i) exemption planned to publish it within the next 12 weeks - 17 February 2020
- (xiii)** - Internal Communications - Scotland to Northern Ireland Bridge – Internal Clearance (email 1) - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 18 February 2020
- (xiv)** - Internal Communications - PQ Clearance Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge (Email 2) - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 18 February 2020
- (xv)** - Internal Communications - PQ Clearance Scotland to Northern Ireland bridge (Email 3) - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 18 February 2020
- (xvi)** - Internal Communications - Internal Communications - PQ Clearance sent to TS Secretariat for information email final version shown at AB (i) - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 19 February 2020
- (xvii)** - Internal Communications - Oral PQ Answers email final version shown at AB(i) - 19 February 2020

(xviii) - Internal Communications - PQ Clearance sent to TS Secretariat for information email final version shown at AB (i) - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - 19 February 2020

(xviii) - Internal Communications - Portfolio Supplementary PQ Clearance sent to TS Secretariat for information email final version shown at AB (i) - Exception 10(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion - - 19 February 2020

(xx) - Internal Communications - Portfolio Supplementary Road Traffic accidents Scotland to NI Bridge mentioned in body of email final version shown at AB (i) email 1 – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications - 19 February 2020

(xxi) - Internal Communications - Portfolio Supplementary Road Traffic accidents Scotland to NI Bridge mentioned in body of email final version shown at AB (i) email 2 – Exception 10(4)(e) - Internal communications - 19 February 2020