

Annex A - Extracts of correspondence sent to and from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity from March 2021 to May 2021



T : 0300 244 4000
E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Murdo Fraser MSP
murdo.fraser.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202100152875
Your Reference: A9 Dualling

4 March 2021

Dear Murdo,

A9 Dualling Perth to Inverness

Thank you for your letter of 8th of February regarding the A9 Dualling Perth to Inverness.

I can confirm that the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) is considering in detail where we will need to invest in our strategic transport network for the next 20 years to achieve the vision, aims and outcomes of our National Transport Strategy. This is different to our current committed infrastructure programme, which continues to include the A9 Dualling programme.

We are the first administration to commit to dualling the A9 and we remain absolutely committed to completing this programme. This ambitious programme is a significant undertaking which requires careful, in-depth planning and design to ensure that we deliver the right scheme and keep impacts on the environment to the absolute minimum. The Scottish Government continues to invest in this programme with work well underway.

It is particularly pleasing to confirm that Transport Scotland has now started procurement of the construction contract for the next section of A9 Dualling between Tomatin to Moy. Once complete, the scheme will provide nearly 20 miles of continuous dual carriageway to the south of Inverness, allowing safer, more reliable and shorter journey times. More immediately, this investment will provide a vital boost to the construction industry as we support its recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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It is expected that following a robust procurement process, the contract will be awarded in the second half of 2022. Meanwhile, ground investigation works, which are a key step towards construction of this section, are planned to commence as soon as possible over the coming months.

Turning to the remainder of the A9 programme. Although the design and development process has been somewhat protracted by the impacts of COVID-19, we are continuing to ensure that local communities have their chance to input into the final design. We are also engaging with stakeholders and the construction industry to help finalise a procurement strategy that will allow us to progress the remaining sections. We expect this process to conclude in summer 2021 when we will be able to provide an update on next steps towards delivery of this important programme.

Contrary to some media reporting which has unfortunately misunderstood the position, this market consultation is a very clear demonstration of our full commitment to the A9 Dualling and our equally strong commitment to good governance and responsible use of public funds.

It is imperative that we continue to explore opportunities to take forward elements of the route as they become ready to construct, as we have recently confirmed. However, we must do so in a way that allows the market to deliver these complex schemes whilst managing impacts to the travelling public and providing good value for money. The ongoing engagement exercise is therefore crucial to our next stages of programming and will allow us to determine the most efficient delivery model for the programme.

Dualling the A9 underlines our commitment to connecting Scotland's cities with a high quality transport system that will generate economic growth. When complete this ambitious programme will bring many benefits to local communities, businesses and road users living, travelling and working along the route including reduced journey times, improved journey time reliability, improved road safety and opportunities for active travel.

I trust this clarifies our position.

[Redacted]

Michael Matheson

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Douglas Ross MP
[Redacted]

Our Reference: 202100152834
Your Reference: DR/DM/4975

25 March 2021

Dear Douglas

A9 Dualling Perth to Inverness and A96 Dualling Inverness to Aberdeen

Thank you for your email dated 08 February 2021 in relation to the A9 and A96 Dualling programmes.

We are the first administration to commit to dualling both the A9 and A96 and we remain absolutely committed to completing both programmes. These ambitious programmes are a significant undertaking which require careful, in-depth planning and design to ensure that we deliver the right schemes and keep impacts on the environment to the absolute minimum. The Scottish Government continues to invest in both of these programmes with work well underway.

It is particularly pleasing to confirm that Transport Scotland has now started procurement of the construction contract for the next section of A9 Dualling between Tomatin to Moy. Once complete, the scheme will provide nearly 20 miles of continuous dual carriageway to the south of Inverness, allowing safer, more reliable and shorter journey times. More immediately, this investment will provide a vital boost to the construction industry as we support its recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is expected that following a robust procurement process, the contract will be awarded in the second half of 2022. Meanwhile, ground investigation works, which are a key step towards construction of this section, are planned to commence as soon as possible over the coming months.

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Turning to the remainder of the A9 programme. Although the design and development process has been somewhat protracted by the impacts of COVID-19, we are continuing to ensure that local communities have their chance to input into the final design.

I can confirm that the Scottish Ministers have now given the go-ahead to completing the statutory procedures for four more schemes. The work to prepare Made Orders for these four schemes totalling over 35 km is well underway with publication expected over the coming months. The schemes are: Tay Crossing to Ballingluig; Pitlochry to Killiecrankie; Glen Garry to Dalwhinnie; and Dalwhinnie to Crubenmore.

I also expect Public Local Inquiry Reports to be submitted to Scottish Ministers for a further three schemes in the coming months. Subject to positive decisions from the public local inquiry process on these three schemes this would pave the way for completing the statutory processes for approximately 92% of the programme.

At the same time, we are also engaging with stakeholders and the construction industry to help finalise a procurement strategy that will allow us to progress the remaining sections. We expect this process to conclude in summer 2021 when we will be able to provide an update on next steps towards delivery of this important programme.

Contrary to some media reporting which has unfortunately misunderstood the position, this market consultation is a very clear demonstration of our full commitment to the A9 Dualling and our equally strong commitment to good governance and responsible use of public funds.

It is imperative that we continue to explore opportunities to take forward elements of the route as they become ready to construct, as we have recently confirmed. However, we must do so in a way that allows the market to deliver these complex schemes whilst managing impacts to the travelling public and providing good value for money. The ongoing engagement exercise is therefore crucial to our next stages of programming and will allow us to determine the most efficient delivery model for the programme.

It is important to remember this is an incremental programme, which is already starting to deliver with the section between Kincaig and Dalraddy already complete and construction of the section between Luncarty and Pass of Birnam is well on target to be completed in the winter.

We are also continuing to progress our ambitious plans to dual the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen, delivering around 88 miles of upgraded road. Following a Public Local Inquiry and recommendations made by the Reporters, Scottish Ministers have recently given the go-ahead for completing of the statutory procedures for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme.

This significant decision now clears the way for us to publish Made Orders for this scheme and we are pushing forward with the necessary preparatory work to achieve publication by this summer. Subject to there being no challenge to Made Orders this would complete the statutory process for the scheme and allow us to acquire land required to build the scheme.

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At the same time preparatory work is also underway to bring forward advance works, for example invasive archaeological survey work, following completion of the statutory process and acquisition of land.

This huge milestone for the programme leads the way for other sections of the route to follow as we continue to advance the detailed development and assessment of the preferred options for the Hardmuir to Fochabers and East of Huntly to Aberdeen schemes. Delivery of each section of the A96 programme can only commence if approved under the relevant statutory procedures and thereafter a timetable for progress can be set.

Dualling the A9 and A96 underlines our commitment to connecting Scotland's cities with a high quality transport system that will generate economic growth. When complete these ambitious programmes will bring many benefits to local communities, businesses and road users living, travelling and working along the routes including reduced journey times, improved journey time reliability, improved road safety and opportunities for active travel.

I hope this is of assistance.

[Redacted]

Michael Matheson

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Councillor Chris Ahern
cahern@pkc.gov.uk

Our Reference: 202100154673
Your Reference: CA/LJC

25 March 2021

Dear Chris

A9 Dualling Perth to Inverness

Thank you for your letter of 16th of February regarding the A9 Dualling Perth to Inverness.

I can assure you that the Scottish Government remains committed to completing the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness. This ambitious programme is a significant undertaking which requires careful, in-depth planning and design to ensure that we deliver the right scheme and keep impacts on the environment to the absolute minimum. The Scottish Government continues to invest in this programme with work well underway.

It has been particularly pleasing to confirm that Transport Scotland has now published Made Orders and started procurement of the construction contract for the next section of A9 Dualling between Tomatin to Moy. Once complete, the scheme will provide nearly 20 miles of continuous dual carriageway to the south of Inverness, allowing safer, more reliable and shorter journey times. More immediately, this investment will provide a vital boost to the construction industry as we support its recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is expected that following a robust procurement process, the contract will be awarded in the second half of 2022. Meanwhile, ground investigation works, which are a key step towards construction of this section, are planned to commence as soon as possible over the coming months.

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Turning to the remainder of the A9 programme. Design and development is progressing well and we are continuing to ensure that local communities have their chance to input into the final design despite the challenges posed by Covid restrictions.

I can confirm that the Scottish Ministers have now given the go-ahead to completing the statutory procedures for four more schemes. The work to prepare Made Orders for these four schemes totalling over 35 km is well underway with publication expected over the coming months. The schemes are: Tay Crossing to Ballingluig; Pitlochry to Killiecrankie; Glen Garry to Dalwhinnie; and Dalwhinnie to Crubenmore.

I also expect Public Local Inquiry Reports to be submitted to Scottish Ministers for a further three schemes in the coming months. Subject to positive decisions from the public local inquiry process on these three schemes this would pave the way for completing the statutory processes for approximately 92% of the programme.

At the same time we are also engaging with stakeholders and the construction industry to help finalise a procurement strategy that will allow us to progress the remaining sections. We expect this process to conclude in summer 2021 when we will be able to provide an update on next steps towards delivery of this important programme.

Contrary to some media reporting which has unfortunately misunderstood the position, this market consultation is a very clear demonstration of our full commitment to the A9 Dualling and our equally strong commitment to good governance and responsible use of public funds.

It is imperative that we continue to explore opportunities to take forward elements of the route as they become ready to construct, as we have recently confirmed. However, we must do so in a way that allows the market to deliver these complex schemes whilst managing impacts to the travelling public and providing good value for money. The ongoing engagement exercise is therefore crucial to our next stages of programming and will allow us to determine the most efficient delivery model for the programme.

It is important to remember this is an incremental programme, which is already starting to deliver with the section between Kinraig and Dalraddy already complete and construction of the section between Luncarty and Pass of Birnam is well on target to be completed in the winter.

This ambitious programme will bring many benefits for road users, communities and businesses who live along it including those in Perth and Kinross and I can also confirm that our plans for the A9 dualling will not impact your local plans for the Tay Crossing Link Road.

I hope this is of assistance.

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[Redacted]

Michael Matheson

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] on behalf of Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Sent: 26 May 2021 15:01
To: TS Corporate Correspondence Support Team
Cc: Minister for Transport
Subject: FW: (Case Ref: KF6315)
Attachments: Deltix Rail for All Final Report Nov 2020.pdf

Categories: MiCase

For Micase please MR

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Assistant Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport – Michael Matheson
Scottish Government | St Andrews's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Email: CabSecNetZET@gov.scot

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From: Kate Forbes MSP <Kate.Forbes.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 26 May 2021 14:52
To: Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport <CabSecNetZET@gov.scot>
Subject: (Case Ref: KF6315)

Dear Michael,

Congratulations on your re-appointment.

I am writing on behalf of a number of constituents who have written to me regarding the dualling of the A9 [Redacted]

A9 Dualling

A number of constituents have contacted me to ask for an update on the progress being made towards dualling the A9 and completing the Scottish Government's aim of connecting Scotland's cities by a dual-carriageway standard road network.

I am writing to ask if you could provide me with an update on the dualling of the A9?

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Thank you for giving this your attention and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Kate

Kate Forbes MSP
Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Kate Forbes MSP
Kate.Forbes.msp@parliament.scot

Our ref: 202100207102
Your Reference: Case Ref: KF6315

9 June 2021

Dear Kate,

A9 Dualling Perth to Inverness

Thank you for your email dated 26 May addressed to the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport, Michael Matheson MSP regarding the dualling of the A9 [Redacted]. Mr Matheson has passed your letter to myself to respond in my capacity as Minister for Transport.

I would like to reassure you and your constituents that the Scottish Government is committed to dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness [Redacted], underlining our commitment to connecting Scotland's cities with a high quality transport system that will generate economic growth. Taken together, the A9 Dualling [Redacted] will provide a step-change in connectivity to and between the cities of Inverness and Perth and the central belt.

Regarding progress on the A9 Dualling Programme, I can confirm that work continues along the route, with road users already benefiting from the dualled stretch between Kincaig and Dalraddy which was operational from September 2017. Construction is well underway on the second section to be dualled between Luncarty and Birnam which is expected to be completed in winter 2021 and we have signalled the start of procurement for the third section to be delivered between Tomatin to Moy with the publication of a Prior Information Notice in February 2021. It is expected that the construction contract for this section will be awarded in the second half of 2022.

Design work is also progressing well with the statutory process well underway for seven of the remaining eight schemes. The Scottish Ministers recently gave the go-ahead to complete the statutory procedures for four of these schemes, totalling over 35km. Public Local Inquiry Reports have also recently been submitted to Ministers for a further two

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schemes with the remaining report expected shortly. Subject to positive decisions, this would pave the way for completing the statutory processes for approximately 92% of the programme.

The design work for the remaining scheme between Pass of Birnam and Tay Crossing is also continuing following the co-creative process with the local community and we expect to share the preferred option for this stretch of the route later this year.

We are committed to securing a strong delivery model which delivers the A9 Dualling Programme efficiently and within budget, and in this regard Transport Scotland is currently preparing a procurement strategy that will allow the remaining sections to progress. Transport Scotland anticipates being able to provide an update on next steps towards delivery of this important programme later this summer. This ambitious programme will bring many benefits for road users, communities and businesses who live along or use this vital route to the Highlands and Islands.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

In addition, the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) currently underway will determine the Scottish Government's future transport investment priorities [Redacted]

I hope this is helpful in responding to your constituents.

[Redacted]

Graeme Dey

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