

Dear reg 11(2) ,

6<sup>th</sup> March 2022

I am writing to you on behalf of the Birnam and Dunkeld Junction Action Group. For some time we have been highlighting the dangers of the junctions at Birnam, Dunkeld, the Hermitage and Dalguise and would like to bring you up to date with the junction issues affecting our local communities.

Since the completion of the dualling of the A9 road section between Luncarty and the Pass of Birnam, it is now possible to drive all the way from Plymouth to Birnam on dual carriageways or motorways. The same applies to all the visitors coming from the central belt.

The very first single carriageway going northbound you would come across is at the bottom of the Pass of Birnam just before the joint Birnam and Bankfoot Junctions. If you wanted to go to Birnam you would have to sit in the middle of the road to turn right hoping that the traffic speeding past you on the inside lane will remember that they are no longer on a dualled section of road and will not hit you. There is a sign on your approach to the Birnam junction warning you of the dangers of being tired but very little to warn you of the changes in the road layout from dual carriageway to single carriageway.

Unfortunately there will be very little to make you feel safer while you sit in the middle of the road waiting to turn right and local residents are in constant fear trying to negotiate these junctions. There are also problems for people going from Birnam to Bankfoot and vice versa.

There are similar problems at the Dunkeld Junction exacerbated by the fact that it is the junction between the A9 and two different A class roads and is very busy at weekends especially in the summer. This leads to major frustration for locals and visitors alike and is the cause of many near misses. There are similar issues at the Dalguise Junction.

Some minor changes have been made. The bollards are now lit (albeit still barely visible in poor weather conditions of mist/rain). The cats'

eyes and road markings do make the junctions clearer. The "Give Way" markings are now a welcome improvement at the Dunkeld and Inver junctions. We welcome these changes but they are not enough.

We wonder why more has not been done to make us safer because we are at the tail end of the proposed road improvements? When the section to the north is completed we will truly be piggy in the very dangerous middle of major dual carriageway sections.

We do not have any choice. We have to use and cross the A9 road. We need to shop, work, visit the local surgery and our children need to get to school safely

In a letter to **reg 11(2)** , **reg 11(2)** , Chief Executive Transport Scotland, wrote that:

"Road safety remains of paramount importance to the Scottish Government " He then went on to say in the letter that "they had reviewed the personal accident history up to 3 May 2021 and as result a detailed accident investigation and prevention study cannot be justified at this time".

We wonder how the following motorists and their families using this stretch of the A9 feel about this decision during the last year.

- The family of the 18 year old girl killed on 2nd August 2021
- The families of people involved in an accident on Sunday 22nd August 2021
- The people involved in a four car pile up by the railway station besides the A9 between Birnam and Dunkeld on 14 or 15th July 2021
- The driver of the overturned van on the Bankfoot junction last Autumn
- The people involved in the 3 car pile up on the morning of 1st March 2022 at the Birnam Bankfoot junction, the ambulance fire brigade and police who had to attend.

I do know how members of the community feel, we need to feel safer and require more done to make these junctions less dangerous.

Three examples of one of the many recent near misses:

“I was cycling down the A9 between the Hermitage and the Birnam North turn off at about 11.45am heading for Birnam, when I was at the lowest point in the road (as it crossed the Braan), I was confronted with two HGVs completely filling the carriageway, heading north bound. The overtaking artic had crossed the staggered junction at the Braan turn off in the middle of the road having driven over the chevroned areas and over the double white lines. The driver seemed to think this was a handy overtaking lane and ignored the nice new white lines and road marking. The artic was from a firm of refrigerated transport contractors from Wick, who use this road daily. I was further surprised to see a white Audi saloon car tucked tightly in behind the overtaking artic. The driver could not possibly have seen what was coming as he was so close to the artic's tailgate. He was also on the wrong side of the double white lines!”

“I think the new markings and reflectors at Dunkeld junction have improved the situation, but not enough to make it really safe at busy times. I myself missed the right point to turn into Dunkeld when coming up from Perth a few weeks ago on a dark wet night with headlights coming at me from the north. It was a bit scary when I realised what I'd done and had to go on to Hermitage to turn round.”

“The time a late night northbound road user simply roared out and overtook me, using the SOUTHbound carriageway, which happened to be empty, while I was clearly indicating and sitting in the hatches in the middle lane preparing to turn right in to Dunkeld. It was unbelievable and I am only glad I had a passenger as a witness.”

The first consultation on the Dualling of this section took place in 2012, and 10 years later we still do not have a route agreed.

In the letter of the 29th March 2021 **reg 11(2)**, Transport Scotland states that it is hoped a preferred route announcement will be made

later on this year (2021). At a meeting between the then Transport Minister, local groups, officials and **reg 11(2)** it was again stated that it was anticipated that the preferred route decision would be made before the end of the year.

This has not happened and we are again faced with an extremely long time line before the works around this section will be completed. Transport Scotland at public meetings have stated that from the date of the preferred route going to the Minister, it could be five years before the Dualling works commence and another five years before the road is completed. This leaves us in a dangerous position facing difficult challenges every time we use the A9.

We request a comprehensive risk assessment of the dangers of the road taking into account not only these accidents, but also the risks we now face from the impacts of the new and proposed dualling sections. Prevention of accidents is an important element of any approach to road safety.

We would be delighted to meet with you to show you the real dangers and to discuss the problems and possible solutions.

These range from a temporary roundabout at Dunkeld, a 40 mph speed limit through the single carriageway section (the example at Laurencekirk on the dualled A90 is a good one), lighting of the junctions (similar to the Auchterader junction on the A9), much improved signage warning of the end of the dual carriageway and fixed cameras at each junction.

We would also welcome any suggestions you may have on improving the safety of these junctions and the likely timescales for the dualling work to be undertaken if that is still the intention.

Doing nothing is no longer an option.

We work closely with the local Community Council and with the support of the Birnam to Ballinluig A9 Community Group.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Kind regards,

reg 11(2) on behalf of the Birnam and Dunkeld Junctions Action Group.

reg 11(2) Chair of the Dunkeld and Birnam Community Council

reg 11(2)

reg 11(2)

reg 11(2)

LETTERS TO reg 11(2) MSP Deputy First Minister

reg 11(2) MSP Minister for Transport

Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
Direct Line: 0141 272 7100  
reg 11(2) @transport.gov.scot



reg 11(2)  
reg 11(2) @btinternet.com

Your ref:

Our ref:  
202200287293

Date:  
4 April 2022

Dear reg 11(2) ,

## **A9 Junctions at Dunkeld and Birnam**

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 March 2022.

I acknowledge your previous correspondence on this matter and note the range of work undertaken by Transport Scotland in recent times to improve matters at the junctions in question. Complete resurfacing, remarking and installation of illuminated bollards and cat eyes at Dunkeld junction, remarking and installation of illuminated bollards and cat eyes at Bankfoot/Birnam junction, and installation of illuminated bollards at the other junctions have all been completed. Traffic signs were replaced and updated to reflect the junction layout and improve the safety of vehicle occupants in the event of a collision. The junctions are now marked with double white lines to maximise protection of traffic using the right turn lane and travelling in the opposite direction. Drivers must not cross the double white line except in very specific circumstances.

These junctions are of a design that is standard across the national road network. There are no further enhancements without completely reconfiguring the road, which is the purpose and intention of the A9 Dualling programme.

The signage at the end of the dual carriageway at Pass of Birnam is programmed to be renewed and enhanced to highlight more clearly the change from dual to single carriageway. This is expected to be completed by the end of April, subject to availability of materials. Arrow markings on the road surface to remind drivers are provided throughout the single-carriageway section.

We are aware that queuing to use the junctions at peak summer and weekends is a cause of frustration for some drivers and this can be particularly challenging when fair weather brings more drivers out onto the road network. This is fairly common across many picturesque and visitor friendly areas of Scotland and there is unfortunately no quick and simple means to mitigate these challenges. If there was, please be assured that it would have been implemented already.

A temporary roundabout has been considered previously, however we remain of the view that this would require substantial land-take to accommodate an appropriate design that could be used effectively until the A9 dualling works commence. Furthermore, a roundabout with imbalanced traffic flows, as the A9 is

conveying more traffic than the two side roads, is unlikely to allow vehicles to enter the A9 with significantly less difficulty than at present. We previously offered to install signage to direct drivers heading south on the A9 to the Birnam junction, which is expected to reduce demand at the A9/A923 junction. Whilst the Community Council was not in favour of this proposal at the time, we can still progress this improvement if thought beneficial locally.

In regards to the request for a reduced speed limit, it is unlikely that acceptable levels of compliance would be realised, as the existing road is designed for the national speed limit. This presents significant risks of drivers assuming other vehicles are travelling at the speed limit. A reduction in speed limit can actually result in platooning of vehicles, resulting in fewer safe opportunities to exit the minor road junctions. The accident history at the junctions, prior to the improvements being carried out, indicates that drivers injudiciously emerge into the path of approaching vehicles. There have been no reported personal injury accidents at the A822 & A923 junction since improvement works commenced in early 2020.

The speed limit is already enforced by an average speed camera system and it is unlikely that a fixed safety camera will have any alternative effect on driver behaviour, since the same speed limit is being enforced.

Recorded personal injury accidents between 1 January 2018 and 7 January 2022, the most recent date to which data is available, show that there is no trend of accidents during darkness at junctions on this section of the A9. Justification for the installation of street lighting cannot therefore be made based on the projected accident savings. Street lighting will reduce the prominence of vehicle headlights, as well as create hazards for errant vehicles to collide with and cause greater light pollution. In recognition of the concerns previously raised around driving in darkness, although not significantly different to elsewhere on the trunk road network, we installed solar powered illuminated bollards are currently installed at four junctions, with illuminated road studs installed at the Dunkeld/Inver junction.

We have sought further information from Police Scotland on the accidents reported in your letter, and should the circumstances of these require further investigation then this will be progressed. As prosecutions may be ongoing, we cannot comment further at this time. More generally, please bear in mind that accidents can happen for many reasons and it should not be assumed that they are always as a result of the road.

The three further examples you give are either of criminal driving behaviour or as a result of driver error. The road markings and signs indicating overtaking prohibitions and the locations of junctions were recently renewed in accordance with current standards. Thankfully these drivers are a small minority. We must be clear however that drivers with that attitude are also not likely to respond appropriately to any engineering measures we have or could introduce. It is suggested that any episodes of unlawful or inconsiderate driver behaviour are reported to Police Scotland by telephoning 101.

This Government remains firmly committed to completing the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness which is both a national and a local priority. Work is continuing across the A9, with road users already benefiting from the dualled sections between Kincaig and Dalraddy (operational since September 2017) and between Luncarty and the Pass of Birnam, which opened fully to traffic on 28 August 2021.

The section between Tomatin and Moy is currently in procurement and it is expected the construction contract will be awarded in the second half of this year.

As for the programme overall, design work is progressing well with the statutory process well underway for seven of the remaining eight schemes; with made orders published for four schemes recently. The

exception of course is Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing project that you refer to which was subject to a Co-creative process. It is anticipated that a preferred route will be announced later this year.

A market consultation exercise was undertaken in 2021 to inform assessment of procurement options for the remaining sections when the statutory process is complete. Determination of the optimal procurement option is a complex exercise which is considering a pipeline of work in a form that can be delivered by the industry, supports the economic recovery post COVID and minimises disruption to users of this lifeline route. It is expected this assessment will be completed in the coming weeks and will inform decision making on our procurement approach.

We will continue to monitor road safety at this location.

I hope this is helpful.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely.

**reg 11(2)**

reg 11(2)  
**Road Safety Manager**



Your Reference:

redacted 11(2) ,

redacted 11(2)

BERRIEDALE and DUNBEATH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2) redacted 11(2) redacted 11(2)

Transport Scotland

Roads-Development Management,

Buchanan House,

58 Port Dundas Road. Date 3/11/2021

Glasgow,

G4 OHF.

Dear Sir/Madam.

Speed Limit on A9 Traffic passing through the Village of Dunbeath, Caithness.

At a recent Community Council Meeting the matter was raised about the speed and amount of traffic heading North and South on the A9 through our Village and would ask if you to consider putting a speed limit on the A9 before any accidents happen, we are part of the Route 500 and has seen a big increase in the number of vehicles on the road this summer.

Yours Faithfully

redacted 11(2) .

Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

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Direct Line: redacted 11(2)  
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redacted 11(2)  
Berriedale and Dunbeath Community Council  
redacted 11(2)

Your ref:  
  
Our ref:  
202200304495

Date:  
9 June 2022

Dear redacted 11(2) ,

## **A9 Dunbeath**

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 November 2021 on behalf of Berriedale and Dunbeath Community Council. I have made enquiries with colleagues in Development Management regarding the letter you sent to them, however they have no record of receiving it. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

The speed limits applied to any section of the Trunk Road network are determined by a number of criteria, set out in Circular ETLLED (2006). These are intended to provide consistency in speed limits and this Circular was used as the basis for the Trunk Road speed limit review, which was completed in 2012.

In applying the criteria, we draw on the evidence available and seek to make our decisions based on an assessment of that. Where relevant criteria exist within the Circular, this assessment will include considerations of how best to support wider Scottish Government Policy outcomes, including, for example, opportunities for promoting active travel.

The Speed Limit Review, published in 2012, concluded that, given the character, mean speed and accident rates, the national speed limit was appropriate for the A9 at Dunbeath. We are not aware of any change in the accident rate, mean speed, or the number of junctions and accesses in the area, or other material change since the review was undertaken that would lead us to revisit the findings of the Speed Limit Review. However, we will continue to monitor road safety of the A9 at Dunbeath.

Whilst we recognise the benefits lower speed limits can have in specific settings, lowering trunk road speed limits to low levels which are not consistent with the road environment and are not self-enforcing is not desirable as it undermines the wider consistency of speed limit application, risks reducing compliance with speed limits more generally and can introduce risk where compliance is assumed by road users and not achieved. Any speed limit reduction would require the support of Police Scotland and limits not appropriate for the road environment and road users risk undermining the credibility of established enforcement regimes.

I hope you find this information useful.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

**Road Safety Manager**

redacted 11(2)

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**From:** redacted 11(2) >  
**Sent:** 26 May 2022 12:00  
**To:** Transport Scotland Info <info@transport.gov.scot>  
**Subject:** A9 /B9161 Munloch Junction

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are conscious of the ongoing report on this junction and indeed the installation of the lighting at the junction.

Following numerous concerns raised by members of the public and eye witness accounts of innumerable near misses witnessed by myself & my Community Council colleagues we would respectfully request that this junction is closed to Right Turns from the Munloch road end North.

It is our considered opinion that there should be no right turns what so ever at this junction as we find it unacceptable to cross a Trunk Road Dual Carriageway in this day and age.

I look forward to your comments in due course.

Thanks & Regards,

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

Knockbain Community Council

Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

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redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)

Your ref:  
  
Our ref:  
202200303783  
  
Date:  
15 June 2022

Dear redacted 11(2),

### **A9/B9161 Munloch Junction**

Thank you for your correspondence of 26 May 2022.

Following publication of the Preliminary Appraisal report for the A9 North Kessock to Tore Study in December 2021, we have been working with Highland Council and our Operating Company, BEAR Scotland, to progress the necessary legal orders and engineering measures to prohibit the right turn from the B9161 to the northbound A9 carriageway. As the movement being prohibited commences on the B9161, the Highland Council are promoting the Order as the road authority for this route. We have liaised closely with Police Scotland as part of this process. A prohibition on right turns from the Allangrange junction, north of the B9161, is also being progressed in order to prevent drivers using this as an alternative route to reach the A9.

A public consultation is required as part of the statutory procedure to make the Order prohibiting the right turn. This allows anyone adversely affected by the proposal to formally object. Any objections received will then be considered by the Highland Council before deciding if the Order should be made. As a result, we cannot confirm at this stage if this right turn prohibition Order will be made, however please be assured that it remains a priority for both Highland Council and Transport Scotland.

We are also working with Highland Council to confirm any new or altered signage that may be required on the surrounding road network should the prohibition come into force. These will be progressed, along with physical changes to the junction layout to enforce the prohibition, as soon as possible if it is confirmed that the Order will come into force.

I hope you will find this information useful.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

**Road Safety Manager**



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

reg 11(2)

## Caithness, Sutherland & Ross

Dear redacted 11(2)

Thank you for your detailed letter dated 23 February. I am responding to you today in my capacity as MSP for Caithness, Sutherland & Ross.

On Tuesday 5 April I held a public meeting in Latheronwheel to discuss the community's campaign for a further speed limit reduction from 50mph to 40mph on the A9 stretch through the village. On discussion with the community, there are a number of areas I would welcome further clarity from Transport Scotland on.

Firstly, in earlier correspondence from redacted 11(2) on the 15 September 2021, redacted 11(2) informs me that recent surveys concluded that average speeds on the A9 through Latheronwheel are in the region of 45mph to 50mph. From my experience driving this road regularly, I find this estimate surprising. I would be grateful if you could confirm how exactly this average speed was calculated and if it included road users slowing down to enter Latheronwheel via the junctions? If so, I feel this may be an underestimation of the speed vehicles are travelling along the A9. I would also be interested to know the timeframe in which the data was collected and the conditions.

redacted 11(2) goes on to state:

*"Whilst a 40mph speed limit was considered, "Setting Local Speed Limits" also states that in addition to considering the road environment, a lower speed limit should 'align the speed limit so that the original mean speed is at or below the new posted speed limit for the road'. As a result it was concluded that, based on the speed survey results and wider considerations, a 40mph speed limit would not be appropriate."*

From my understanding, this means that if vehicles were travelling above 45–50mph at say a mean speed of 60mph, then a 50mph speed limit would not have been considered as the new speed limit would not align with the original mean speed?

You will be aware that 1.1 miles north of Latheronwheel is the village of Latheron, centred on the junction of the A9 with the A99. Latheron has a speed limit of 40mph. Are you able to provide the reasoning behind this speed limit?

I appreciate the points made throughout Transport Scotland's correspondence in relation to speed limits and self-enforcement. I am aware that a 40mph speed limit may not be the only solution to slow vehicles down and I welcome Transport Scotland's commitment in correspondence dated 29 November to look at additional road safety measures to increase driver's awareness of the junctions and the presence of active travel facilities. Now that we have entered the new financial year, I would be grateful if you could provide an update on the additional road safety measures that are being

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considered. For example, are Speed Indicator Devices under consideration? I would welcome thought being given to a junction warning sign to remind road users to slow down and to be aware of possible pedestrians crossing.

To follow up on the issue of heavy goods vehicles travelling above 40mph, I am still deeply troubled by the revelation that professional HGV drivers are wilfully risking their livelihood and the lives of pedestrians and road users by choosing to ignore the speed limits set for their vehicle. I would be grateful if you could provide a further update on your discussions with Police Scotland in relation to Transport Scotland's speed data findings.

Lastly, are you able to provide further information on the 50mph speed limit and where exactly the reduced speed limit will start and begin?

I would welcome a written response that I could share with the Latheronwheel community, but I would also be grateful for an opportunity to meet to discuss this further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

**reg 11(2)**

reg 11(2)

Caithness, Sutherland & Ross

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Roads Directorate  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
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reg 11(2)  
reg 11(2) @parliament.scot

Your ref:  
A9 Latheronwheel

Our ref:  
202200308058

Date:  
22 July 2022

Dear reg 11(2) ,

## **A9 Latheronwheel**

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 June 2022 and I apologise that you did not receive a response to your letter dated 7 April 2022.

To collect speed data that informed the speed limit review, automatic traffic counters were used at Latheronwheel to measure vehicle speeds between 4 and 10 February 2020. Three different sites were chosen to ensure a robust data sample and prevent unrepresentative results through turning traffic slowing down. Due to the nature of the survey equipment, it is necessary to attach this to existing roadside furniture. The average traffic flow on this part of the A9 was recorded as 2,478 vehicles per day and it is expected that the likely number of turning vehicles would have had a minimal impact on the average speed results.

The southernmost survey was carried out approximately 40 metres south of the Smerral junction and recorded a mean speed of 50.1mph. The second survey was undertaken at the existing southern village gateway signage and recorded a mean speed of 48.2mph. The third site approximately 70 metres north of the Harbour Road (main access) recorded a mean speed of 47.5mph.

The figures quoted above are mean speeds calculated using data recorded from vehicles travelling in both directions. There is little difference in northbound and southbound speeds, with the greatest variance being 1.1mph at the site north of Harbour Road.

The setting of speed limits takes account of many factors to ensure that specific circumstances of each location are taken into account. As you have recognised, it is imperative the speed limits are self-enforcing and self-explaining, and a key consideration is how drivers respond to the road environment, which would not change simply through altering the speed limit. Another factor is the presence of active travel or public transport facilities, which are present on the A9 at Latheronwheel. A measured mean speed higher than those stated in the paragraph above may have indicated that the national speed limit could be more appropriate, however would not automatically have led to that outcome.

The extents of the proposed 50mph speed limit is from 100 metres south of the C1065 Latheronwheel

to Braehungie Road junction to 19 metres west of the Latheron House access road. This is a total distance of approximately 610 metres.

A speed limit review was also carried out at Latheron, where it is proposed to make the temporary 40mph speed limit permanent. Speed surveys were also carried out at this location during the same period as at Latheronwheel, and the temporary 40mph speed limit was not in force at this time.

The speed profile at a number of locations in Latheron indicated that mean speeds were approximately 40mph which supported the introduction of a lower speed limit from the existing national speed limit. In addition, the village of Latheron also has a junction between 2 trunk roads, the A99 and the A9 which results in increased turning manoeuvres. Latheron is also more densely populated (with more access points) along the frontage of the A9 when compared to Latheronwheel, which is consistent with a 40mph speed limit at the former location and a 50mph speed limit at the latter.

Accordingly, we are promoting a permanent 40mph speed limit at Latheron to match the extents of the temporary speed limit currently in force. A consultation with stakeholders has been completed, and it is expected that the public consultation on the proposed permanent speed limit will commence as soon as possible. As this allows anyone who believes they may be adversely affected by the proposal to object, we cannot guarantee that the 40mph speed limit at Latheron will come into force.

BEAR Scotland has also been commissioned by Transport Scotland to review the existing signing and permanent traffic management arrangement at Latheronwheel to identify potential measure(s) that could be introduced to reduce vehicle speeds and improve road safety, including for pedestrians crossing the A9. This is programmed for the current financial year and as part of that work we have asked BEAR to consider the suggestion of a junction warning sign.

With regard to your point on HGV speeding, I can advise that we are continuing to discuss the location with the North Safety Camera Unit. We have also provided the speed survey results to Police Scotland who have advised that these have been shared within their Road Policing division.

I would invite you to note that safety cameras are deployed through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme primarily where they have the greatest potential to reduce injury collisions and where there is evidence of both collisions and speeding. To ensure national consistency when selecting new safety camera sites a set of criteria is in place. You may be interested to view the criteria which is available at: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-safety-camera-programme-handbook/> .

The annual site selection process involves a range of partners including the three regional Safety Camera Units, all thirty-three road authorities and Police Scotland. The 2022 site prioritisation process, determining new safety camera sites across the road network, is now underway having commenced in April 2022. While it is too early to advise on the outcomes of this process, the A9 at this location is currently under consideration in respect of both collisions and speeding and, if warranted, consideration will be given as to whether safety cameras would be an appropriate solution for the location.

I hope you find this helpful. If you wish to discuss the speed limit proposal for Latheronwheel further, please contact redacted 11(2), Road Safety Manager, by e-mail: redacted 11(2)@transport.gov.scot to make arrangements for a meeting.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)  
**Interim Director of Roads**

**From:** redacted 11(2)  
**To:** redacted 11(2)  
**Cc:** redacted 11(2); redacted 11(2); redacted 11(2); redacted 11(2); redacted 11(2)  
**Subject:** RE: Trauma on the A9  
**Date:** 12 July 2022 09:15:48  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi redacted 11(2)

Thank you for your response and sorry for the delay in replying to you.

Any reply can be sent by email to redacted 11(2) (Senior programme manager for STN) (redacted 11(2)) and redacted 11(2) (National Clinical Lead) redacted 11(2).

We would also appreciate it if you could Cc us into any correspondence, as we have regular meetings with them, and it may come up.

Please let me know if you need any further information.

Kind regards,

redacted 11(2)

**redacted 11(2) | Policy Manager – Collaborative Services and Technologies for Health Team| National Services and Specialist Healthcare Unit| Healthcare Quality and Improvement Directorate - Currently working from home**

Scottish Government | GER | St Andrew's House, 2 Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | Tel: redacted 11(2) (redirected to mobile)



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**From:** redacted 11(2) @transport.gov.scot>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2022 18:25  
**To:** redacted 11(2) @gov.scot>  
**Cc:** redacted 11(2) >; redacted 11(2) redacted 11(2) >; redacted 11(2) redacted 11(2) >  
**Subject:** RE: Trauma on the A9

redacted 11(2)

This will sit across a couple of teams here. Is this to be dealt with as normal correspondence and if so who are we to write back to as the email below is an internal NHS email.

Best Regards

redacted 11(2)

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**From:** redacted 11(2) >  
**Sent:** 07 July 2022 16:46

**To:** redacted 11(2) [transport.gov.scot](mailto:transport.gov.scot)>  
**Cc:** redacted 11(2) [@gov.scot](mailto:@gov.scot)>; redacted 11(2)  
[gov.scot](mailto:gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** FW: Trauma on the A9

Hi redacted 11(2)

I hope this email finds you well.

This morning we received an email from the Scottish Trauma Network (STN), highlighting the increased number of injuries and deaths on the A9.

Part of the STN remit is to flag potential for prevention of major trauma. This issue was raised first to them by the clinical lead for the Pre-hospital Immediate Care & Trauma team. He also made some recommendations for reducing the risk on the A9. His email can be seen below.

I was wondering whether this is best placed with your policy team? If not, could you suggest who I should contact?  
STN are also keen to support any further work in relation to this matter, particularly in terms of clinical expertise.

Kind regards,  
redacted 11(2)

**redacted 11(2) | Policy Manager – Collaborative Services and Technologies for Health Team| National Services and Specialist Healthcare Unit| Healthcare Quality and Improvement Directorate - Currently working from home**

Scottish Government | GER | St Andrew's House, 2 Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | Tel: redacted 11(2) (redirected to mobile)



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**From:** redacted 11(2) [@nhs.scot](mailto:@nhs.scot)>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2022 09:47  
**To:** redacted 11(2) [@nhs.scot](mailto:@nhs.scot)>; redacted 11(2)  
[@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)>  
**Subject:** Trauma on the A9

Hello redacted 11(2) and redacted 11(2),

I was wondering, motivated again by recent deaths on the A9, whether as part of Trauma Prevention there should be more road signs on the A9 flagging changes from dual carriageway to A road with clear signage of the change and "drive on the left" instruction. These should be at every interface between Dual Carriageway and A road. Further in Australia there are deterrents such as signage with the silhouette of a crashed car with an updated number of fatalities due to RTC's on the road. Too dark? Any hoo, Scotland want tourists that drive on the opposite side of the road for the economic benefit, so this problem is unlikely to go away. I will be driving up and down the A9 next week to my son's

graduation and later to my sister's art exhibition. I will count the signs and get back to you. I'm sure the signage is inadequate. Hope all is well in the southern counties,

Cheers,

redacted 11(2)

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This email is intended for the named recipient only. If you have received it by mistake, please (i) contact the sender by email reply; (ii) delete the email from your system; . and (iii) do not copy the email or disclose its contents to anyone.  
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Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
Direct Line: redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)@transport.gov.scot



redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)

Your ref:

Our ref:  
202200311004

Date:  
27 July 2022

Dear redacted 11(2),

### **Trauma on the A9**

Thank you for your correspondence of 7 July 2022 on behalf of redacted 11(2) at NHS Highland.

In regards to the tragic fatal accident on 5 July on the A9 at Slochd we met with Police Scotland and our Operating Company, BEAR Scotland, to obtain more information on the incident. This meeting took place on 22 July however as Police Scotland's investigations are ongoing, it would be inappropriate to comment further at this time. Our sympathies remain with the family and friends of those affected by the accident.

Due to the A9 between Perth and Inverness currently alternating between dual and single carriageways, signs indicating two way traffic are provided at the end of dual carriageways in accordance with traffic signs standards. The legislation relating to traffic signs is very specific and the 'two-way traffic' sign is considered the most appropriate of all signs currently prescribed by law. These signs are also provided at regular intervals through single carriageway sections to act as a reminder to drivers and are supplemented by road markings. The A9 is regularly inspected to identify any damaged or missing signs and these are replaced on a prioritised basis.

We have analysed personal injury accidents recorded on the A9 between Perth and Inverness in the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019, to reflect the reduced numbers of overseas visitors in 2020 and 2021. Six accidents were recorded where 'inexperience of driving on the left' was attributed as a contributory factor by Police Scotland. Of these six, one occurred as a result of an overtaking manoeuvre on a single carriageway, with a further four accidents involving vehicles turning at junction and one collision on a dual carriageway section remote from a junction. Improvements have been made, or are programmed, at the locations where three of these four junction accidents occurred to clarify the road layout.

As part of our ongoing casualty reduction programme, in recognition of the numbers and different nationalities of overseas visitors to Scotland, BEAR Scotland are developing a specific 'drive on the left' sign that could be deployed at locations where there are known issues caused by inexperience of driving on the left. Careful independent assessment and specific authorisation would be required for use of this sign, since it is not prescribed by legislation, so we cannot confirm if these signs will be

deployed currently.

Whilst signage indicating the number of accidents has been used elsewhere, this requires regular maintenance to ensure an accurate and relevant message, which places roadworkers in a position of greater risk. There is little evidence of these signs having any beneficial effect. Furthermore any roadside furniture will increase the collision risk to the occupants of vehicles leaving the carriageway, particularly motorcyclists.

The Scottish Government is keen to attract visitors from overseas and recognises the difficulties some may encounter when driving on the left. This is especially true when road are quiet and guidance from other vehicles is lacking. Road Safety Scotland (RSS) is responsible for the strategic high-profile campaigns addressing the main contributory factors which cause death and injury on our roads. However, RSS also undertakes more tactical campaigns in those areas which do less harm, are less prominent in casualty statistics, but are worthy of activity. 'Drive on the Left' is one such initiative and RSS has worked alongside the BVRLA and the major rental companies to develop a dedicated webpage, leaflet, windscreen sticker and wristbands (very visible when arms are reaching towards a steering wheel) in a number of languages. Further information can be found here: [Driving in Scotland - UK - Road Safety Scotland](#). In addition, we have also produced reservoir gaiters for visiting motorcyclists giving a similar message, 'Ride on the Left'.

The Scottish Government is committed to improving road transport infrastructure throughout Scotland to crucially improve road safety and bring economic benefits to users and local communities alike. This includes completing the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness, which is both a national and a local priority.

Work is continuing across the route which will upgrade almost 130km of road from single to dual carriageway, with road users already benefiting from the dualled stretch between Kincaig and Dalraddy and between Luncarty and the Pass of Birnam, which opened fully to traffic on 28 August 2021. The third section to be dualled between Tomatin and Moy is currently in procurement and it is expected that the construction contract will be awarded later this year.

Work is also on-going to determine the most suitable procurement options for delivering the remaining sections of the A9 dualling once the statutory process is complete. This is a complex exercise which looks at a number of factors including how the project can be delivered most efficiently by the industry, whilst minimising disruption to road users and helping to support economic recovery post-COVID.

I hope you find this helpful.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

**Road Safety Manager**



Your Reference:

redacted 11(2),

redacted 11(2)

From: redacted 11(2) )  
Sent: 28 July 2022 08:22  
To: redacted 11(2))  
Subject: RE: A9 1885 Dunbeath - 220526 - Noise Surveys - redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

I did thanks.

TBH I am not absolutely certain. It might be easier if you cut out the middle man liaised directly with redacted 11(2) if you are agreeable her email address is redacted 11(2) . She has previously confirmed that she is happy for her email to be shared if it helps move matters along.

I happy to discuss further if you wish and I am available all morning today and all of tomorrow.

Regards

redacted 11(2)

From: redacted 11(2))  
Sent: 27 July 2022 17:16  
To: redacted 11(2)  
Subject: RE: A9 1885 Dunbeath - 220526 - Noise Surveys - redacted 11(2)  
Hi redacted 11(2) – hope you enjoyed your time off?

I've had a discussion with BEAR about this one – there's possibly merit in looking further north at Dunbeath but not at the bridge as the housing is off the A9 at that point. Is redacted 11(2) asking for a speed limit as a means of reducing noise from the bridge? Her reasoning for the 40mph at Latheron isn't far off.

Thanks

redacted 11(2)

Please see our privacy policy to find out why we collect personal information and how we use it

From: redacted 11(2) )  
Sent: 07 July 2022 13:55  
To: redacted 11(2))  
Cc: redacted 11(2) )  
Subject: RE: A9 1885 Dunbeath - 220526 - Noise Surveys - Tredacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

Yes this is the bridge she is complaining about.

She has two points:

1 Noise – BEAR are planning to do surveys in August and we will see what comes of that.  
I have attached the latest dialogue on that FYI

2 Speed Limit – You wrote recently to <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> of Berriedale and Dunbeath Community Council explaining why a speed limit could not be applied here. I think <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> is asking – ‘how come Latheron gets a speed limit and we don’t’. You did this via MiCase <https://erdm.scotland.gov.uk:8443/documents/A39007142/details> – sorry I don’t know how MiCase works yet so I can’t send a link.

Regards

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

Bridge Manager – North West Unit | Roads Directorate

M: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

Transport Scotland, the national transport agency  
Còmhdhail Alba, buidheann nàiseanta na còmhdhail

From: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>  
Sent: 07 July 2022 12:53  
To: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> )  
Cc: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> )  
Subject: RE: A9 1885 Dunbeath - 220526 - Noise Surveys - <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

Hi <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> the 40mph at Latheron is being looked after by <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>, but I assume the query is about the large bridge over the river – i.e. this one: A9 - Google Maps

I’m a bit perplexed as Dunbeath is off the trunk road, being bypassed by the A9. There are some similarities with Latheron further north, but not at the bridge.

Thanks

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

Please see our privacy policy to find out why we collect personal information and how we use it

From: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>  
Sent: 07 July 2022 10:51  
To: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>  
Cc: <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> )  
Subject: FW: A9 1885 Dunbeath - 220526 - Noise Surveys - <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> has come back again about noise surveys and the speed limit.

Can you address the speed limit query?

I have contacted BEAR regarding the noise surveys she is clearly frustrated as BEAR has not been in contact. I have been pressing BEAR to contact her for a few weeks so she does not feel forgotten. I have asked them to contact her today.

Regards

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

Bridge Manager – North West Unit | Roads Directorate

M: redacted 11(2)

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

From: redacted 11(2)

Sent: 07 July 2022 09:20

To: redacted 11(2) )

Subject: RE: A9 1885 Dunbeath - 220526 - Noise Surveys - redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2) - it is now a year since we first got in touch with BEAR and yourselves. Can you please get someone to attend to this problem. We do not see the sense of anyone coming here to do more surveys - we can hear and see the unrelenting noise from the expansion joints and vehicles racing and overtaking on the bridge. redacted 11(2) from Berriedale & Dunbeath Community Council has complained about the speed of traffic and the overtaking. We are getting complaints from the guests in our self catering cottage and further a potential buyer of a property right next door to us has declined to put in an offer strictly because of the noise. This has gone on far too long. The noise has increased since the tarring was done. Why has speed limits been installed at Latheron, a village north of us where there is no speeding traffic? Do we have to now head to the media? The Government are not interested in the far north so we need to bring this to the attention of someone who will listen. I am personally now at the end of my tether. redacted 11(2)

Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
Direct Line: redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)@transport.gov.scot



redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)

Your ref:

Our ref:  
202200313572

Date:  
1 August 2022

Dear redacted 11(2),

### **A9 Road Bridge at Dunbeath**

Thank you for your correspondence of 7 July to my colleague, redacted 11(2) As Road Safety Manager, I am responding to your query relating to the speed limits on the A9 at Dunbeath and Latheron.

Whilst the 40mph speed limit at Latheron is a temporary measure that will expire on 1 September 2022, we are progressing the legal processes to make the lower speed limit permanent. The purpose of the lower speed limit is to reflect the number of frontages on the A9, the presence of bus stops requiring pedestrians to cross the carriageway and also the presence of active travel measures, which have recently been constructed. As part of the assessment to support the permanent speed limit reduction, BEAR Scotland undertook speed surveys on the A9 at Latheron prior to the introduction of the temporary 40mph speed limit. The results of these surveys indicated that average speeds were approximately 40mph. The guidance for road authorities in Scotland, "Setting Local Speed Limits" advises that any lower speed limit should be consistent with average speeds prior to the reduction in speeds.

It may be useful to note the publication of Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 last year. The new framework sets out a vision for Scotland to have the best road safety performance in the world by 2030 and includes Safe Speeds as one of five strategic outcomes to be delivered. It has also committed to undertaking a National Speed Management Review, which has now commenced. The review will consider what appropriate speeds mean within a Scottish context and recommend changes to national speed limits accordingly. The new framework can be read in full here: [scotlands-road-safety-framework-to-2030.pdf \(transport.gov.scot\)](#)

Once the findings of the National Speed Management Review are available, we will consider these in the context of trunk road speed limits and any potential changes arising as a result. Whilst we recognise the benefits lower speed limits can have in specific settings, lowering trunk road speed limits to low levels which are not consistent with the road environment and are not self-enforcing is not desirable as it undermines the wider consistency of speed limit application, risks reducing compliance with speed limits more generally and can introduce risk where compliance is assumed by road users and not achieved. Any speed limit reduction would require the support of Police Scotland and limits not appropriate for the road environment and road users risk undermining the credibility of established

enforcement regimes. Speed limits should be evidence-led, self-explanatory and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should be seen by drivers as the maximum speed rather than as a target speed at which to drive irrespective of conditions. That said, there remains a very small percentage of drivers who will choose to ignore restrictions regardless of the level at which they are set. It is suggested that any episodes of speeding or other illegal or inconsiderate driver behaviour is reported to Police Scotland by calling 101.

I hope this is helpful.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

**Road Safety Manager**

**From:** redacted 11(2) [@parliament.scot](mailto:redacted 11(2)@parliament.scot)  
**To:** redacted 11(2)  
**Cc:** [TS Corporate Correspondence Support Team](#)  
**Subject:** (Case Ref: reg 11(2))  
**Date:** 08 July 2022 14:12:33

---

Dear <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

I hope you are well. <sup>redacted 11(2)</sup> has had a constituent asking for an update on the retained options from the A9 North Kessock to Tore STAG Part 1 Appraisal.

Would it be possible for you to provide an update that we can share with the constituent around the retained option “E2 - Convert the B9161 Munloch and Artafallie Junctions into a single roundabout”?

Thank you for giving this your attention and we welcome your response.

Kind regards

<sup>redacted 11(2)</sup>

redacted 11(2)  
Caseworker for **reg 11(2)**  
Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch  
12 High Street  
Dingwall  
IV15 9RU  
Tel: redacted 11(2)  
Web Twitter Facebook

Roads Directorate  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
Direct Line: redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)@transport.gov.scot



reg 11(2)  
reg 11(2) .msp@parliament.scot

Your ref:  
KF15114

Our ref:  
202200310325

Date:  
3 August 2022

Dear reg 11(2)

## **A9 North Kessock to Tore STAG Part 1 Appraisal**

Thank you for your correspondence of 8 July 2022.

The Preliminary Appraisal (Part 1) Report for the A9 North Kessock to Tore STAG study, published in December 2021, carried out a high-level multi-criteria assessment of the various improvement options. These options were identified in conjunction with local stakeholders, including community councils and The Highland Council. The assessment considered a large number of options against the objectives of the study and other important criteria, such as safety and accessibility, and recommended a short-list of options that could be subject to further, more detailed, assessment.

At this time, we are focussing on progressing the shorter term options which can be delivered from existing budgets. These include the recently completed lighting at the A9/B9161 junction, active travel improvements and a review of the speed limit at Tore Roundabout and design of the measures to reinforce the prohibition on right turns from the B9161 to the northbound A9 being promoted by The Highland Council. This will allow for tangible enhancements to be made to the A9 between the B9161 junction and Tore Roundabout whilst considering the findings of the Preliminary Appraisal Report.

Option E2, converting both the B9161 Munloch and Artafallie Junctions to a single roundabout, was designated as an option for further consideration as part of the next stage of the appraisal process. This option would be significant in terms of both value and complexity due to its scale and potential impacts on traffic using the A9. As a result, it is considered as a long term option at this time. Progression of higher value projects is subject to future availability of funding to undertake further assessment and design work and, potentially, construction. The second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) will inform the Scottish Government's future spending for the next 20 years (2022 – 2042) as part of the overall transport investment programme, funding for options within existing projects, as well as potential new work streams over this time, will be considered in the context of delivery of STPR2's recommendations.

I hope you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

**Interim Director of Roads**



# LATHERON LYBSTER & CLYTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Email: [latheronlybsterclythcc@outlook.com](mailto:latheronlybsterclythcc@outlook.com)

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redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

23 February 2022

reg 11(2)  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh

Dear reg 11(2)

We as Latheron, Lybster and Clyth Community Council are disappointed that Transport Scotland are only proposing reducing the speed limit on the A9 through Latheronwheel to 50 mph, not the 40 mph that has been campaigned for by the local residents over the last six years. This is doubly disappointing as the A9 / A99 at Latheron has had its speed limit reduced to 40 mph with no request from or consultation with the local residents.

The letter of 29th November, from Transport Scotland, signed by redacted 11(2), proposed the reduction of the speed limit to 50 mph. This letter used misleading and erroneous statements in an attempt to justify the reduction of the speed limit to only 50 mph.

We would appreciate if you would take the comments on the Transport Scotland letter given below, forward to Transport Scotland to get a detailed response, not as been happening recently, for Transport Scotland to do nothing and hope we will go away.

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It is noted that in the letter that there is no significant acknowledgement of the petition that was signed by virtually all the residents in the Latheronwheel area, supporting the reduction of the speed limit to 40 mph. Transport Scotland have stated in previous communication that they take the views of the local community into consideration, but clearly not in this case.

The letter states that ETLCD Circular No 1/2006 : Setting Local Speed Limits has been used setting the speed limits on the A9 at Latheronwheel.

In the section 6.1 of this document, "Single Carriageway Rural Roads and the Speed Limit Assessment Framework", paragraph 97 defines the speed limits for different qualities of "Upper Tier A and B Roads", and it states the 40 mph speed limit is appropriate for the road quality as follows:-

*"40 mph : where there is a high number of bends, junctions or accesses, substantial development, where there is a strong environmental or landscape reason, or where the road is used by a considerable numbers of vulnerable road users"*

The section of the A9 in the Latheronwheel area meets virtually all these criteria.

1. There is a significant blind bend to the south of the village road junction.
2. There are 11 accesses on to the A9 within 500 m of the village road access.
3. Due to the landscape in the area of the blind bend, the visibility splay is only 85 m at the village road junction, vastly less than the modern road design requirement of 160 m for a 50mph road and does not even meet the visibility splay requirement of 120 m for 40 mph.
4. There are numerous school pupils and the elderly crossing the road to catch busses and local residents crossing the road to go for exercise on the local paths.

It is clear that Transport Scotland, in proposing changing the speed limit on the A9 in the Latheronwheel area to 50 mph is contrary to the Scottish Government guidelines for setting speed limits, that they stated in their letter that they were following. The speed limit should therefore be reduced to 40 mph for the reasons detailed above.

If Transport Scotland do not agree that the speed limit should be reduced to 40 mph, can they please provide a detailed explanation why they are not following the government guidance on setting speed limits.

Later in the letter the 50 mph limit is justified by the following statement *"a speed limit of 50 mph as proposed is supported by the evidenced speeds observed at Latheronwheel which were between 47.5 mph and 50.1 mph"*, the source of this speed data is not given. In June 2017 a speed survey was conducted at Latheronwheel over a period of seven days by Transport Scotland or their representatives. A total of 23,246 vehicles were recorded with 34% exceeding 50 mph, up to a maximum of 82 mph, the percentage exceeding 50 mph would be higher but for the slowing effect on the general flow of traffic of the vehicles entering and leaving the village access. So the Transport Scotland stated justification for the 50 mph speed limit based on evidenced speeds is clearly not justified by the facts.

The letter notes that the road layout does not comply with the current design standards, as detailed above, the layout would have been adequate for the speeds and volume of traffic when the road was realigned in the early nineteen sixties. So the obvious mitigating action is to reduce the speed limit to match the road layout inadequacies, ie 40 mph.

Additionally, the letter does not take into account the recent Highway Code changes giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists at junctions, of which there are eleven in the Latheronwheel area. A consequence of this will be vehicles having to stop in the carriageway with little warning, risking potential rear end vehicular collision, which will be more severe at 50 mph compared to 40 mph.

So to sum up, due to the limitations of this section of the A9 at Latheronwheel detailed above, of blind bend, accesses, visibility splay and pedestrians crossing and the excessive speeds of the

vehicles on the road, it is clear that a 40 mph speed limit is required, defined by 40 mph speed limit signs and supported by vehicle activated, speed indication signs.

Yours sincerely

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
Direct Line: redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)@transport.gov.scot



redacted 11(2)

LATHERON LYBSTER & CLYTH COMMUNITY  
COUNCIL  
latheronlybsterclythcc@outlook.com

Your ref:

Our ref:  
202200315382

Date:  
6 September 2022

Dear redacted 11(2) ,

## Latheronwheel

Thank you for your correspondence dated 23 February 2022, which we received from Maree Todd MSP as part of recent discussions regarding the A9 at Latheronwheel.

Firstly in regards to the speed limit reduction at Latheron, this was promoted as part of a range of accessibility improvements in the community, including the provision of new footways and crossing points. It was also consistent with the average speeds measured through surveys on the A9 and A99.

It is important to recognise that, whilst we aim to take account of the views of local communities wherever possible, the decision to change a speed limit has to be based on specific evidence and consideration of national policies. As part of the proposal to permanently reduce the speed limit at Latheron, a consultation was carried out with Police Scotland, The Highland Council and stakeholders in January this year. This included the Community Council. Proposals for the permanent 40mph speed limit at Latheron are expected to be published and made available for public consultation in the coming month. The current temporary 40mph speed limit will remain in place until 1 March 2023, by which time it is hoped the permanent speed limit order will be in operation.

The trunk road speed limit review, which was finalised in 2012, recommended retention of the national speed limit between Berriedale and Latheron. Through subsequent discussions with Transport Scotland officials, we recognised that the community desire was for a reduction in speed limit, ideally to 40mph, at Latheronwheel.

Accordingly we instructed BEAR Scotland to carry out speed surveys and review of the speed limit, using Setting Local Speed Limits, to take account of changes at Latheronwheel since 2012. This review was completed in spring 2021 and whilst a 40mph speed limit was considered, this was not supported by evidence. However a 50mph speed limit was found to be justified and it remains our intention to progress this following completion of planned signage and road marking works which are programmed for later this financial year. It is intended that these works will improve drivers' awareness of the presence of the junction to Harbour Road and the pedestrian crossing point. The expectation is that this increased awareness should result in moderation of speeds.

In considering the application of Setting Local Speed Limits, it is important to recognise that the A9, as a trunk road, is a strategic route to communities and ferry terminals in the far north. Setting Local Speed Limits recommends 50 mph speed limits for A- and B-class roads that are *“lower quality strategic roads which may have a relatively high number of bends, junctions or accesses”*. Setting Local Speed Limits also recommends that *“mean speeds should be used to determine local speed limits as this reflects what the majority of drivers perceive as an appropriate speed to be driven on the road”*.

Taking the above points into account, we are content that the proposal for a 50mph speed limit at Latheronwheel is consistent with established policy. Whilst Setting Local Speed Limits contains a degree of flexibility to take account of specific situations, applying a speed limit that appears inconsistent with the road environment is likely to be ineffective and lead to possible disrespect for speed limits more generally. Therefore, simply installing an unsuitable speed limit in the expectation that all drivers will comply is unrealistic.

The speed survey data used to review the speed limit at Latheronwheel was carried out between 4 and 10 February 2020 at three locations on the A9. This later speed survey was commissioned following the extensive works carried out on the A9 by Transport Scotland at Latheronwheel following the concerns raised by the community. New and improved footways were built, new pedestrian crossing points and signage were installed. As well as the direct improvements for pedestrians the works were aimed at providing a more obvious urban feel to the A9 as it passed through the area so that driver behaviour in relation to speed might be improved. These surveys showed that average speeds were between 47.5mph and 50.1mph across the three locations. The nature of junctions and accesses at Latheronwheel combined with varying driver behaviour makes selecting a location that is completely unaffected by all turning traffic very challenging. Please be assured that the survey sites were selected by experienced traffic and road safety engineers and are considered to be as representative as possible.

Whilst some traffic will be reducing speed to make turning manoeuvres, this is very likely to be the minority of traffic using the A9 and unlikely to have a significant effect on the average speeds. If the effects of turning traffic were discounted, these would likely increase the average speed and consequently reduce the justification to reduce the speed limit, even to 50mph.

Rule H2, which has recently been introduced to the Highway Code, is applicable to drivers, motorcyclists, horse drawn vehicles, horse riders and cyclists turning in or out of a junction. Motorists, including HGV drivers, will likely be required to reduce their speed in advance in order to safely make this turn in a controlled manner. It is unlikely that drivers will need to make an emergency stop from their maximum permitted speed to make such a manoeuvre, particularly if the junction is clearly signed, which is one of the aspects we are planning to enhance, as described above. Rule H2 does not apply in situations where drivers, motorcyclists, horse drawn vehicles, horse riders and cyclists are not turning. The Highway Code’s requirements on this point (and also maintaining a safe distance from the vehicle ahead) have not changed in the recent update.

I hope this letter offers some reassurance that we have taken into consideration the points raised when reviewing the speed limit at Latheronwheel and provides further detail on how we have arrived at the decision to progress a 50mph speed limit.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

# redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

**Road Safety Manager**

**From:** redacted 11(2) >  
**Sent:** 18 September 2022 19:18  
**To:** reg 11(2) gov.scot>  
**Subject:** A9

Hi <sup>reg 11(2)</sup>,

Firstly can I say I have supported the SNP government and party for years now, although I'm now a bit uncertain of how we will achieve independence under the current rules and regulations, but I'll leave that to you.

What I want to ask about is the supposed dualling of the A9 from Perth to Inverness which I believe was originally stated to happen by 2025.

It is obvious that this will not be achieved with no dualling work having taken place for over 2 years. I believe that there has been mention of the small gap north of Tomatin, but this will have only a small benefit.

I am concerned about the crashes which there has been in the recent months, along with the loss of lives involved.

When I first started driving up the A9 from Hawick to Caithnes in 1970, it was dubbed "a killer road" and that has not really changed. The road is now totally different to the old windy one, but lives are still being lost.

There is never a full explanation of exactly where or how the accidents occur and who was to blame, and I understand that this is done in respect of the families of those killed.

But, on face value, it seems that there are some notable "black spots" and in particular where the north bound dual carriageway starts and south carriageway finishes at the top of Slochd.

I believe that in the past few months there have been 3 fatal accidents here with the loss of about 6 lives, and others over the past 2-3 years.

This is a point on the A9 which is screaming out for improvements! The death rate alone highlights this.

I know that Slochd is the worst pinch point in any improvement plans, but something needs to be done to improve the safety at this location.

Drivers heading south are accelerating on the dual carriageway to get past as many vehicles as possible, before the end of the dual carriageway and then finding they are running on dual carriageway.

Similarly drivers heading north know that there is the dual carriageway in front of them and are accelerating over 60 mph as they have passed the last average speed camera. The result is all too

common, too fast, running out of road, accidents!

I would welcome your comments on your thoughts on this along with a revamped timetable for completion of this work, and if possible any thoughts your government and the police may have to improve this situation.

I moved up to Inverness 12 years ago and travel the A9 regularly, and to be honest I hate driving it and wonder when I may be involved in an accident because of the restrictions of this road.

Many thanks and best wishes,  
Yours Aye,

redacted 11(2),  
redacted 11(2),

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)

redacted 11(2)



Roads: Operations  
Transport Scotland

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF  
Direct Line: redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)@transport.gov.scot



redacted 11(2)  
redacted 11(2)

Your ref:  
A9

Our ref:  
202200321254

Date:  
4 October 2022

Dear redacted 11(2) ,

### **Dualling of the A9 from Perth to Inverness**

Thank you for your correspondence of 18 September 2022 to the First Minister. As this is an operational matter for Transport Scotland I have been asked to reply.

The Scottish Government is clear that one life lost on our roads is one too many and our sympathies are with family and friends of those affected by recent fatal accidents on the A9. As standard policy with all fatal accidents, Transport Scotland arrange to meet at the accident locus with Police Scotland and our Operating Company to obtain more information on the incident and to identify if there is a need for a further road safety investigation. Until these meetings have taken place, and Police Scotland's investigations have been completed, it would be inappropriate to comment further at this time. Please be assured that any outcomes arising from these meetings that require further investigation into improvements to the A9 would be progressed as a matter of priority.

Each year Transport Scotland, through its Operating Companies, undertakes a review of collisions on the trunk road network to identify cluster sites, or routes with recorded collisions that may be worthwhile of further investigation. The screening process, together with a detailed understanding of collision trends around the network, results in a prioritised programme of sites that will be investigated further. This evidence led approach ensures that resources can be targeted at locations where the greatest potential for casualty reduction is available.

In regards to the A9 at Slochd, the annual assessment of the network, based on injury accidents recorded in the three years 2019 to 2021, did not highlight this location for further investigation. This was due to the injury accident rate being significantly below the average for similar roads in Scotland, with a single injury accident (of serious severity) recorded in this period between the A938 junction and the start of the dual carriageway north of Slochd.

Given the recent fatal accidents, we have asked our Operating Company, BEAR Scotland, to identify potential road safety measures that could be deployed on the A9 between Perth and Inverness in the short-term until construction works in the A9 Dualling commence. The recommendations made by BEAR Scotland will be considered and those supported by evidence will be progressed as soon as

possible.

I can confirm that the Scottish Government remains firmly committed to completing the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness.

Work is continuing to progress the A9, with road users already benefiting from the dualled stretch between Kincaig and Dalraddy (operational since September 2017) and between Luncarty and the Pass of Birnam, which opened fully to traffic on 28 August 2021. Procurement of the construction contract for the next section between Tomatin to Moy is underway with contract award expected later this year.

With regards to the status of the remainder of the A9 Dualling Programme, I can confirm that design work is progressing well with the statutory process well underway for seven of the remaining eight schemes. The only section not to have started the statutory process is the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing project and we plan announcing a preferred route for this section later this year.

Work to determine the most suitable procurement options for the remaining sections of the A9 dualling is ongoing. This is a complex exercise which looks at a number of factors including how the project can be delivered most efficiently by the industry, whilst minimising disruption to road users and helping to support economic recovery post-COVID.

An update on the outcomes of this complex piece of work will be provided when the work is completed.

I hope you find this helpful.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

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**Road Safety Manager**