

Annex A – Extracts from briefings and submissions sent to or from Scottish Ministers in relation to the A83 Rest and Be Thankful from the 27th September 2025 to the 27th October 2025

Extract from briefing sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport dated 30 September 2025

	Details required
Date and time of engagement	<p>Date: Wednesday 1 October 2025</p> <p>Time: 12:30 – 13:30</p> <p>[Note Part 2 of the meeting will be from 13:30 to 14:00, but the Cabinet Secretary will depart at 13:30.]</p>
Where	<p>A83 Taskforce Meeting</p> <p>MS TEAMS ONLY</p>
Key message	<p>I can assure you that the Scottish Government is absolutely committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.</p> <p>It is a clear sign of that ongoing commitment that we were able to publish draft Orders for both the long-term solution and future phases of the medium-term solution for the diversionary route along the Old Military Road on 13 December 2024. Transport Scotland is considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders with a view to resolving these if possible.</p> <p>If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. As a Public Local Inquiry may be required it would be inappropriate for the Scottish Government to comment further on any representations received to the published draft Orders.</p> <p>As part of the ongoing ground investigation work for the long-term solution, daytime diversions of traffic from the A83 onto the Old Military Road (OMR) were required on occasion over the summer. These ground investigation works were absolutely essential in gaining a greater understanding of the ground composition, the nature and depth of superficial deposits and the strength and depth of rockhead in order to design the foundations for the proposed scheme. The works involved large cranes, ancillary equipment and a large number of personnel to lift specialist drilling equipment on to the hillside. During these works the cranes were required to occupy the full width of the A83 carriageway. Due to the nature of these works, it was not possible to carry out these</p>

	<p>essential planned works at night. This operation was required to ensure the safety of the workforce and members of the travelling public. The final lifting operations were completed on 27 August 2025, with site works for the LTS Ground Investigation also approaching completion.</p> <p>On Monday 1 September 2025, a total of 11 areas of movement were noted on the hillsides along the A83, nine at the Rest and Be Thankful and the others at Glen Kinglas and Butterbridge. The worst affected areas where material reached the roadside are Glen Kinglas and Butterbridge, leading to the closure of a 12.5 mile section of road in both directions. The affected route subsequently reopened at 9:30am on Tuesday 2 September 2025 after the clear up operation and continuous monitoring and inspection.</p> <p>I recognise the impacts that landslides and the current works have on the local community and businesses and I am committed to developing a response as quickly as we are able. The situation is being treated with the seriousness and urgency it deserves, with measures to maintain connectivity on a short, medium and long-term basis being implemented.</p> <p>I am committed to building on the positive engagement undertaken to date with this Taskforce group.</p> <p>See Annex B for top lines, Hot Topics and Expected Questions</p>
Who	<p>A83 Taskforce</p> <p>The A83 Taskforce consists of a number of stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MSPs; - Argyll and Bute Council members and officials; - Transport Scotland; - Local freight haulage industry representative; - Tourist Representative; - Chamber of Commerce; - Operating Company; - Forestry Commission; - Timber Transport Group; - Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park; - Rest and Be Thankful (RaBT) Campaign Group. <p>See Annex D for full list of those invited to the A83 Taskforce meeting.</p>

Why	<p>A83 Taskforce</p> <p>The A83 Taskforce was set up in 2012 and consists of a number of stakeholders, as listed in Annex D. The Taskforce aims to meet every three months and has historically been chaired by the Minister/Cabinet Secretary for Transport.</p> <p>Taskforce meetings provide an opportunity to engage with stakeholders and to discuss the challenges and solutions to the landslides at the Rest and Be Thankful. This meeting, like previous Taskforce meetings, will be split into two parts.</p> <p>The first part of the meeting will look to present on and discuss the works being undertaken in relation to the short, medium and long term and progress made since the last A83 Taskforce meeting held on 29 May 2025.</p> <p>The second part of the meeting will look to provide an update on the ongoing road operation and maintenance along the wider A83 trunk road.</p> <p>The Cabinet Secretary for Transport will only be required to attend and chair the first part of the meeting. Part 2 will be chaired by Transport Scotland officials.</p> <p>See Annex A for the agenda, Annex C for background information, Annex E for recent correspondence received from [REDACTED] of National Farmers' Union (NFU) Scotland, in relation to the traffic management and congestion issues in the area in August 2025; and Annex F for correspondence received from [REDACTED] of NFU Scotland in relation to further concerns regarding BBC Scotland's communication regarding the operational status of A83 and diversions onto OMR.</p>
Official support required	<p>Lawrence Shackman, Director Major Projects - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] TS Major Projects - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] TS Major Projects - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] TS Roads Directorate – [REDACTED] [REDACTED] TS Roads Directorate - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] TS Roads Directorate - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] TS Roads Directorate - [REDACTED]</p>
Media handling	<p>Communications officials are not required, this is not a public meeting.</p>
Dress code	<p>No special clothing required, recommend business attire.</p>

Greeting party and specific meeting point on arrival (if event is at a non SG building)	N/A, meeting via MS Teams Main contact – [REDACTED], TS Major Projects - [REDACTED]
Specific entrance for ministerial car/parking arrangements	N/A
Agenda	Please refer to Annex A

Briefing contents

Annex	Details
Annex A	Agenda
Annex B	Top Lines, Hot Topics and [REDACTED]
Annex C	Background Information Long Term Solution Short term mitigation Medium Term Solution
Annex D	Attendees
Annex E	Correspondence received from [REDACTED] (National Famer's Union Scotland) 4 August in relation to traffic management and congestion issues in the area following incidents on the A82 in August 2025, including BEAR Scotland's response.
Annex F	Correspondence received from [REDACTED] (NFU Scotland) 11 September in relation to BBC Scotland communications regarding the operational status of the A83 and diversions onto OMR. [REDACTED]
Annex G	Medium Term Solution Options previously assessed
Annex H	Correspondence received from [REDACTED], A83 Campaign Group, 24 September with questions regarding Roundtable discussions and traffic management. [REDACTED]

Annex A

Agenda

30th A83 Taskforce Meeting

Part 1

1. 12:30 – 12:40 (10 mins) – Introduction and apologies – including opportunity for the Chairperson/Cabinet Secretary to make an introductory statement – see separate speaking note. [REDACTED] to provide any apologies.
2. 12:40 – 12:45 (5 mins) – Actions from previous minutes (Chairperson/Cabinet Secretary to pass to [REDACTED] of Transport Scotland to lead on actions).
3. 12:45 – 12:55 (10 mins) – A83 Roundtable Meetings (Cabinet Secretary to introduce roundtable meetings and pass over to Jenni Minto MSP to provide update) – followed by questions
4. 12:55 – 13:05 (10 mins) – BEAR Scotland update on current mitigation and current conditions of the hillside ([REDACTED], BEAR Scotland to lead on this agenda item)
5. 13:05 – 13:10 (5 mins) – Update on progress of Medium and Long-Term Solutions ([REDACTED], to lead on this agenda item with input from technical advisors Atkinsréalis WSP Joint Venture)
6. 13:10 – 13:25 (15 mins) – General discussion
7. 13:25 – 13:30 (5 mins) – Summary and date of next meeting (Cabinet Secretary to lead on this agenda item).

CABINET SECRETARY TO LEAVE MEETING and pass to Scott Lees to chair.

Part 2

8. 13:30 – 13:40 (10 mins) – BEAR Scotland update on current ongoing road operation and maintenance along the wider A83 route followed by open discussion ([REDACTED], BEAR Scotland to lead on this agenda item)
9. 13:40 – 13:45 (5 mins) - Points raised by [REDACTED] in email of 4 September 2025:
 - Traffic management contingency planning in the event of a major incident on the wider road network e.g. on the A82, A85 & A819 and which has a knock-on impact on traffic volume on the A83, as occurred on Friday 1 August 2025.
 - Traffic management on the A83 and other associated roads when the A83 is closed and the longer diversion route has to be used e.g. at the junction with the A815 and A819.

10.13:45 – 14:00 (15 mins) – General discussion and AOB

Annex B

Top Lines

The Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.

The Scottish Government recognises the impacts that this has had on the local community and businesses and we are committed to developing a response as quickly as we are able. The situation is being treated with the seriousness and urgency it deserves, with measures to maintain connectivity on a short, medium and long-term basis being implemented.

Following detailed design and assessment work, a debris flow shelter was announced on 2 June 2023 as the preferred option for the long-term solution. This option involves constructing a debris flow shelter over a length of approximately 1.4km with an additional 180m of catch pit and protection wall to protect the road and road users from future debris flow events. The identification of the preferred route option through the Glen Croe valley is a very important milestone in finding a solution to this long-standing problem.

The publication of draft Orders for both the medium and long-term solutions on 13 December 2024 marks a significant milestone and shows our commitment to tackle the landslide issues at the Rest and Be Thankful.

Transport Scotland is considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders and will work at pace to resolve these if possible.

If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. As a Public Local Inquiry may be required it would be inappropriate for the Scottish Government to comment further on any representations received to the published draft Orders.

It is estimated that construction of the debris flow shelter will take three to four years for the long-term solution including an allowance for possible standdown time due to bad weather. As the preferred route option is predominantly on the existing A83 road, there will be a requirement for temporary traffic management for road users during the construction period.

This is likely to include traffic light operation and periods of full closures where traffic will be diverted to the OMR for extensive periods of time, which will be upgraded as part of the medium-term solution to increase the resilience of the temporary diversion route.

The current estimated cost for the permanent, long-term solution is between £408 million and £510 million at Q4 2024 prices. At this stage we present a range as there remain a number of unknowns (e.g. ground conditions), so as we gather more information and develop the design in greater detail, we will be able to more accurately estimate the cost of the scheme.

Transport Scotland continues to explore methods to reduce the timescales to bring forward both the medium term and long-term routes as soon as possible, whilst continuing to maximise the availability of the A83 and the OMR.

As part of the ongoing ground investigation work for the long-term solution, daytime diversions of traffic from the A83 onto the Old Military Road (OMR) were required over the summer months. The ground investigation contractor had written to stakeholders in advance of these planned diversions and sought comment.

These ground investigation works were absolutely essential in gaining a greater understanding of the ground composition, the nature and depth of superficial deposits and the strength and depth of rockhead in order to design the foundations for the proposed scheme.

The works involved large cranes, ancillary equipment and a large number of personnel to lift specialist drilling equipment onto the hillside. During these works the cranes were required to occupy the full width of the A83 carriageway. The timing of these works was planned to make better use of the increased daylight hours as the works are not possible to be undertaken at night for safety reasons. This is to ensure the safety of the workforce and members of the travelling public.

At the same time, improvements to the existing OMR through the Glen Croe corridor are being made to make it a more resilient diversion route until the long-term solution is in place.

These improvements will also reduce journey times and are the quickest to implement, of relatively lower cost, and would have the least impacts overall across the range of criteria assessed of the medium-term options under consideration.

These include debris catch fences, temporary bunds, drainage improvements and widening and discrete realignment to improve bends and avoid flooding.

These works will be carried out on a phased basis and construction of the first phase, realigning the southern end of the route, commenced in December 2023 and became operational in Spring 2024.

We are committed to building on the positive engagement undertaken to date with stakeholders through the A83 Taskforce.

Operational

The ground investigation work for the LTS is anticipated to complete around end of September. After that, the A83 will continue be operated under traffic management to accommodate the permanent remedial and maintenance works around the upper and lower slopes of the A83 and along the verge. The OMR is being brought into use as required, in response to weather forecasts and localised monitoring. Updates are then issued to stakeholders and via the Traffic Scotland website when appropriate. BEAR Scotland, acting on behalf of Transport Scotland, continues to have a presence on site assessing and monitoring conditions at the hillside daily.

For over 15 years, the Scottish Road Network Landslide Study has guided how landslide risks are managed across the whole of the trunk road network, including the wider A83 trunk road outwith the Rest and Be Thankful. Depending on the records and location-specific issues, this has seen risk reduction measures implemented such as warning signage erected, mitigation schemes constructed or regular monitoring. This approach continues and the October 2023 events, when heavy and persistent rainfall caused major impacts on the trunk and local roads networks, with significant disruption across Argyll, feed into ongoing work for the safe operation of the A83.

We are also progressing a programme to establish a native woodland on the hillside above the road to help reduce the risk of landslides in the area whilst also enhancing local biodiversity and habitat connectivity. The project required Transport Scotland to acquire the necessary land before working in partnership with Forestry & Land Scotland to plant native trees of local provenance on the steep hillside. Deer fencing was installed in 2021 and the tree planting commenced in March 2022. The planting is now complete and longer-term monitoring and management operations are underway.

Hot Topics

A83 Roundtable meetings – 12 September 2025

On 12 September Jenny Minto MSP chaired a series of roundtable meetings further to a discussion at the last A83 Taskforce meeting held on 29 May 2025. The purpose of these meetings was for stakeholders, across a range of industry sectors, to set out any concerns they had in relation to potential disruption during construction of the Long Term Solution (LTS) and also suggest possible mitigation measures for Transport Scotland to consider.

The general feeling amongst stakeholders was that the current proposals are unacceptable, stakeholders did not accept using the Old Military Road (OMR) for three to four years with convoy working during construction of the LTS. It was made clear by stakeholders that Transport Scotland should reconsider proposals for the MTS and provide a two way road with no traffic lights or convoy during construction of the LTS.

Ms Minto wrote to you on 19 September outlining the views of her constituents and strong feeling against use of the Old Military Road with convoy working for three to

four years during construction of the long-term solution, noting the significant economic impact it would have on the businesses in Argyll and Bute. Brendan O'Hara MP also wrote to you on 25 September 2025, signed by Roundtable attendees including Jackie Bailie MSP, seeking work is halted on the project and Transport Scotland consider alternative options for the MTS which do not include traffic lights or convoy working.

Draft Orders were published December 2024 and this commenced the statutory authorisation process for the proposed MTS and LTS to address the landslip risks at the Rest and Be Thankful. Documentation was published in draft, triggering an eight week formal consultation period when objections could be lodged, which concluded on 7 February 2025. Four objections (one statutory and three non-statutory objections were received although none of these were from Taskforce members) were received during the statutory consultation period.

Transport Scotland is now considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders with a view to resolving these if possible. If objections cannot be resolved from statutory objectors that will automatically trigger a Public Local Inquiry (PLI). Other, non-statutory objections, may also be heard at an inquiry if one is called.

Suggested lines to take:

"Thank you to all who attended the A83 Roundtable meetings and provided valuable input. I am aware of the discussions held and strong feeling from stakeholders regarding use of the Old Military Road for extensive periods during Construction of the Long Term Solution as well as the economic concerns. I have received a letter and minutes from the Roundtable meetings from Jenni Minto MSP along with a letter from Brendan O'Hara seeking that Transport Scotland considers alternative options during construction of the long term solution which do not include traffic lights or convoy working.

"The preferred route for the medium term solution to upgrade the Old Military Road was published in December 2022 following detailed assessment of various options, including two way options. Transport Scotland also met with the A83 Campaign group for a roundtable meeting to discuss the medium term solution and explain why options had been sifted out. Transport Scotland also provided a paper to the Campaign Group on 6 September 2024 summarising the two way options which were considered and sifted out of the assessment for a medium term solution, well in advance of draft orders and the formal objection period. The medium term solution is a proportionate programme of improvements to the OMR which will not only improve its safety and resilience as a diversion route, but also improve the operation by extending the length of two-way operation, reducing the journey times.

"I would note that both the medium and long term solutions are progressing through the statutory process. Everyone had the opportunity to submit representations or formally object to either the medium term or long term solution, or both, when the draft orders were published in December 2024.

“Transport Scotland did receive objections during the formal objection period and the project team are working hard to resolve these, where possible. If objections cannot be resolved then it may be a Public Local Inquiry is necessary.”

Traffic diversions onto the Old Military Road for Ground Investigation works

As part of the ongoing ground investigation work for the long-term solution, daytime diversions of traffic from the A83 onto the Old Military Road (OMR) were required over the summer months. The ground investigation contractor had written to stakeholders advising them of the proposed diversions and responses to feedback received has been issued.

These ground investigation works are absolutely essential in gaining a greater understanding of the ground composition, the nature and depth of superficial deposits and the strength and depth of rockhead in order to design the foundations for the proposed scheme.

The works involve large cranes, ancillary equipment and a large number of personnel to lift specialist drilling equipment on to the hillside. During the works, the cranes are required to occupy the full width of the A83 carriageway.

The timing of these works have been planned to make better use of the increased daylight hours as it is not possible to undertake them at night for safety reasons. This is to ensure the safety of the workforce and members of the travelling public.

We recognise the impacts the current work has on the local community, businesses and road users and we are therefore committed to deliver the works as quickly as possible to minimise disruption.

Further information on the planned diversions can be found in the briefing *A83 Rest and Be Thankful - Long Term Solution Ground Investigation Traffic Management* issued to the Cabinet Secretary on 12 May 2025.

These operations have now been completed and I am pleased to report that this work was a success, with the detailed information gathered now being examined for use in the detailed design.

Draft Orders, Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)

Draft Orders, CPO and EIAR for the Medium-Term solution (MTS) and Long-Term Solution (LTS) schemes were published on 13 December 2024. This commenced the statutory authorisation process for the proposed MTS and LTS to address the landslip risks at the Rest and Be Thankful. Documentation was published in draft, triggering an 8-week formal objection period when those who oppose the MTS, LTS or both schemes can submit a formal objection. The formal objection period concluded on 7 February 2025.

Transport Scotland is now considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders with a view to resolving these if possible. If objections cannot be resolved from statutory objectors that will automatically trigger a Public Local Inquiry (PLI). Other, non-statutory objections, may also be heard at an inquiry if one is called.

As this A83 Taskforce meeting is being held during the statutory objection period, and ultimately Scottish Ministers will be decision makers should one or both of the schemes be subject to a PLI, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport should refrain from appearing to defend the scheme against objectors. Transport Scotland officials will seek to manage any queries accordingly and advise the Cabinet Secretary for Transport if required.

Disruption During Construction

As the preferred route is predominantly on the existing A83 road, there will be a requirement for temporary traffic management for road users during the full construction period, which will include traffic light operation and potentially extensive periods of full closures where traffic will be diverted to the OMR, which will be upgraded as part of the medium-term solution.

The table below highlights the current OMR showing the length of two-traffic and length of convoy along with the updated lengths once the OMR is upgraded as part of the MTS. The OMR in total is 3.8km / 2.36 miles long.

	Two-way Free Flow Length			Convoy Length		
	Km	Miles	% of OMR	Km	Miles	% of OMR
Existing OMR	0.86	0.53	23%	2.94	1.83	77%
Improved OMR	2.26	1.40	59%	1.54	0.96	41%

The table below also shows the journey times on the current and upgraded OMR in comparison to the A83 without traffic management. Please note the below journey times are based on an average 24 hour period, as such, it is acknowledged there will be periods when times will be longer than that stated below. This is standard industry practice.

Journey times for peak period during the day, 8am to 6pm with a peak at 2-3pm is currently being modelled and will be available in due course.

Route	Variation to typical journey time (Inverary to Tarbet) for 2024 baselines traffic flows
Existing A83 with no traffic management	0
Existing OMR with convoy	+ 21 mins
MTS upgraded OMR with convoy	+ 11 mins
Full diversion via A819/A82/A85	+ 38 mins

See also above text for A83 roundtable meetings.

Funding

The RaBT Campaign Group along with the Campbeltown Courier and Argyllshire Advertiser have in the past questioned the availability of budget to deliver the long-term solution.

The current estimate for the long-term preferred route option is between £408 million and £510 million, at Q4 2024 prices.

Funding from the Scottish Budget 2024-25 provided allocation to continue delivery of the medium-term improvements, which started in a phased manner in December 2023, along with progressing the ongoing necessary preparatory work on the long-term solution, including the commencement of the Statutory process. For 2025-26, funding is included in the Budget published in December to continue to progress both the medium and long-term solutions.

Funding to progress the construction stage of the medium and long-term solutions to the landslip risks will be determined annually as part of the annual Scottish Budget setting exercises. However, this scheme is a priority for Scottish Government, noting it is a key recommendation in STPR2 and is included in our published Programme for Government 2025-26.

Rest and Be Thankful (RaBT) Campaign Group

The RaBT Campaign Group has been setup and represents some 1,500 businesses in Argyll and Bute and are pushing for a long-term solution to be completed as soon as possible as well as two-way traffic to be maintained at all times.

Transport Scotland officials have met the Campaign Group on several occasions, including as part of the A83 Taskforce. In June 2024 Transport Scotland officials, along with the technical advisors, held a round table meeting with the Campaign Group in Inveraray to discuss options considered and concerns from the Campaign Group. [REDACTED], Campaign Group, regularly writes to Ministers.

[REDACTED] was also heavily involved in organising and influencing the A83 Roundtable meetings held in Inveraray on 12 September 2025 and chaired by Jenni Minto MSP.

Stakeholder Engagement – BBC Communications

An email from [REDACTED] (National Farmer's Union) was received on 11 September 2025 (see Annex F) raising concerns that BBC travel news, via Radio Scotland, stated traffic had to take turns on the A83 because of a landslip between Cairndow and the 'Helensburgh turning' which was incorrect and misleading. Transport Scotland's Operating Company BEAR Scotland have followed up with Traffic Scotland and INRIX Media, who delivers real-time traffic news to BBC. It was

found that the error was due to the pre-determined messages on INRIX's system and the incorrect message has now been removed to avoid confusion.

Future planned works

Following completion of the ground investigation work for the LTS, further permanent remedial and maintenance works are planned around the upper and lower slopes of the A83 and along the verge, including drainage improvement, catch fence repair and emptying and slope remediation, as well as near Loch Restil to avoid erosion of the road embankment. Traffic management will continue to be in place to facilitate the works into Summer 2026.

September 2025 Landslides

Following a landslide on 1 September morning, debris had fallen onto the A83 at Butterbridge and Glen Kinglas near Rest and Be Thankful (R&BT), leading to the closure of a 12.5 mile section of the A83 trunk road in both directions. In total, 11 areas of movements have been noted on the hillsides, 9 at the RaBT and the others at Glen Kinglas and Butterbridge. The worst affected areas where material made it to the roadside were at Glen Kinglas and Butterbridge. Traffic was diverted onto A82/A85/A819 during the closure period and the affected A83 route was subsequently reopened at 09.30am on 2 September 2025 after the clear up operation and continuous monitoring and inspection. Landslide interventions are currently under consideration.

Annex C

Background Information

The 98-mile A83 Trunk Road is one of only two east-west strategic trunk network connections between Argyll and Bute and the Central Belt. The road originates at Tarbet, at its junction with the A82 Trunk Road on the western side of Loch Lomond and terminates in Campbeltown at the southern tip of the Kintyre peninsula (see Figure 1).

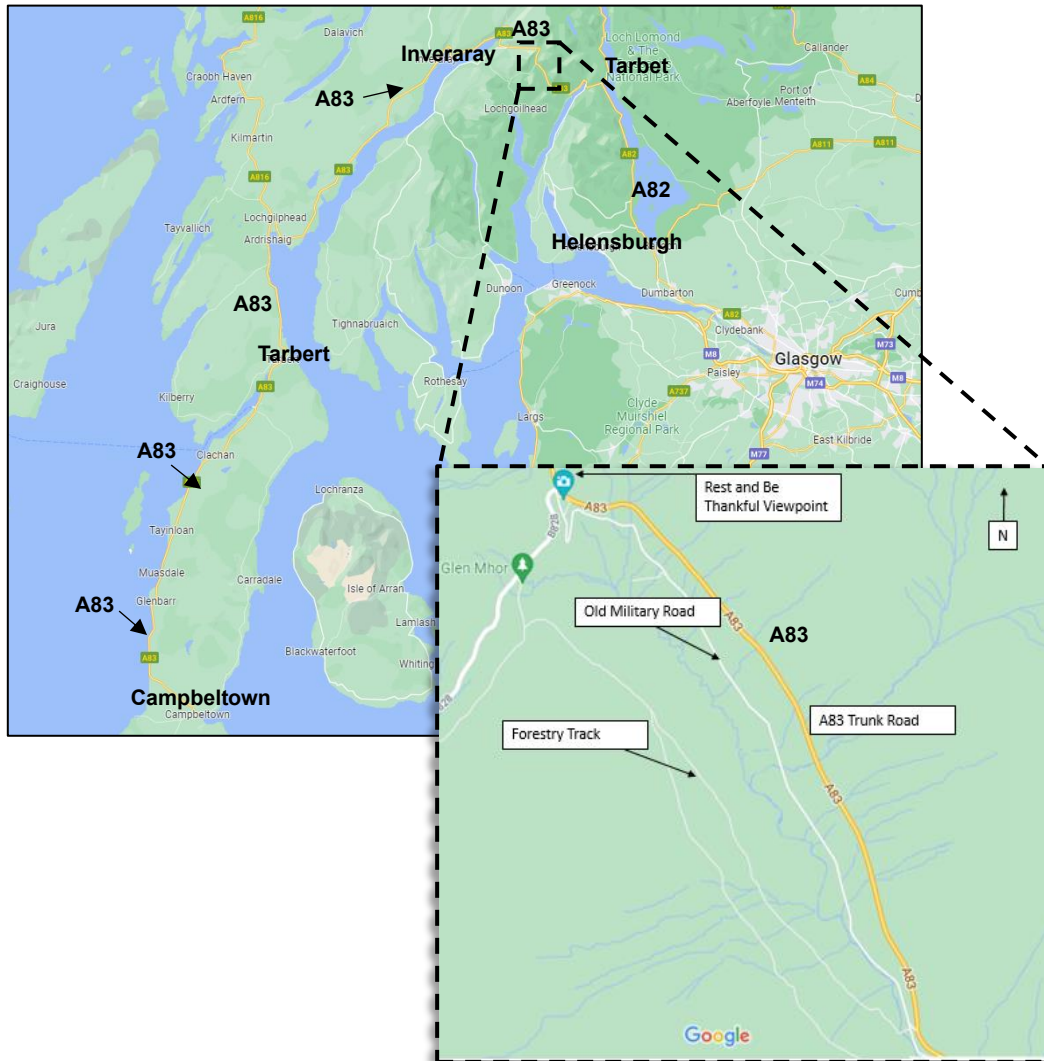


Figure 1: A83 Access to Argyll and Bute Location Plan

The section through the Rest and Be Thankful pass, also known as Glen Croe, is increasingly affected by landslides. In 2004 the road was affected by landslides, with further events in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023, 2024 and most recently September 2025. The most significant recorded landslides at the Rest and Be Thankful occurred in August and September 2020 (See Figures 2 and 3) with 10,000 tonnes of material deposited on both occasions.



Figure 2: Photograph showing extent of August 2020 Landslip across A83

The hillside stability and ground saturation are monitored daily, which shows if the hillside is active, with movement recorded above the A83 trunk road.

Running parallel to and below the A83 is the Old Military Road (OMR) which is used as a diversion route when the A83 is closed to landslides or when there is an increased risk of a landslide. This is operated via a private agreement with the OMR's landowner. When a landslide results in the closure of both the A83 and the OMR, traffic is diverted via a much longer diversion to the north of the area using A82/A85/A819. Travelling from Tarbet to Inveraray, this adds 26 miles onto a 23 mile journey and can take approximately 60 to 70 minutes, i.e. an additional 25 to 35 minutes longer than when the A83 is fully open to traffic. For journeys between Cairndow and Tarbet it adds 46 miles onto a 13 mile journey and a considerable increase in time.

As a consequence of the landslides in August and September 2020, the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson MSP asked Transport Scotland to commence work on the development of a new access to Argyll and Bute as a long term sustainable and resilient alternative to the



Figure 3: Aftermath of Landslides on A83 in August/September 2020

A83 Rest and Be Thankful and committed to announcing a preferred route corridor by March 2021.

The Second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) includes the A83 Access to Argyll and Bute (including Rest and Be Thankful) project as one of its key recommendations. STPR2 recommends work continues on developing a more reliable route with speed of delivery a key criterion for assessment. It also meets the key objectives:

- Improves safety and resilience;
- Tackles climate change; and
- Supports sustainable economic growth.

On 18 March 2021, the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson MSP, announced the preferred route corridor and as part of that announcement stated Transport Scotland would also take forward design work on medium term improvements to improve the resilience of the diversion route through the Glen Croe.

It should also be noted that there is cross party support for improvements to the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful.

Long Term Solution

Five possible route options within the Glen Croe route corridor were published in March 2021, these options ranged from traditional roads with localised structural protection, to full tunnel options. The range of engineering structures reflects the challenge of building resilience into the route.

Following a thorough assessment of these five route options, a debris flow shelter was identified as the preferred option for the long-term solution, see Figure 4 below. This option closely follows the alignment of the existing A83 Trunk Road for 2.4km from the Croe Water heading north to the Rest and Be Thankful car park and involves constructing a debris flow shelter over a length of approximately 1.4km with an additional 180m of catch pit and protection wall to protect the road and road users from future debris flow events.



Figure 4: Preferred Route Option – Debris Flow Shelter

The key benefits of the preferred route option are:

- Improved resilience and operational safety of the trunk road network by reducing the impact of disruption for travel to, from and between Argyll and Bute and the Central Belt of Scotland.
- The greatest potential to be delivered quickly.
- Most favourable performance across a broad range of environmental criteria, including; cultural heritage, visual, population and human health, climate and materials and waste.
- The greatest opportunity to encourage sustainable travel.

Debris flow shelters are akin to a tunnel with one open side and are a recognised means of protecting transport infrastructure and its users from falling rock and debris in areas susceptible to debris flows or landslides. They have been successfully used across Europe and beyond for many years.

Draft Orders and Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the LTS were published on 13 December 2024 for formal consultation. The objection period ended on 7 February 2025.

Transport Scotland are considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders and will continue work at pace to resolve these if possible. It should be noted that some 19 representations were received along with four objections (one statutory objection and three non-statutory)

If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. As a Public Local Inquiry may be required it would be inappropriate for the Scottish Government to comment further on any representations received to the published draft Orders.

However, the typical timescale for delivering a project of this size and complexity is around 7-10 years from the announcement of a preferred route corridor in March 2021 (subject to completing the necessary statutory processes). This is to a point when the road would be open to traffic so includes scheme preparation stages, statutory processes and then the subsequent procurement and construction period.

The diagram below shows typical timescales for the various stages of a large infrastructure project, such as this scheme, and was presented at previous Taskforce meetings. The project has now commenced the statutory process as indicated pink in the image below.



The current estimated cost of the preferred option is approximately £408 million - £510 million (at Q4 2024 prices). The broad range reflects the stage of development of the scheme and gives a truer picture of the inherent risks and uncertainties associated with planning and constructing such a major piece of infrastructure. We will continue to develop and assess the scheme proposals in order to deliver the best value for taxpayers' money.

Funding to take forward the construction stage of the long-term solution to the landslip risks will be determined as part of the annual Scottish Budget setting process and subsequent capital spending reviews (CSR).

Short term mitigation

In terms of the ongoing short-term work since 2007, over £16 million has been invested in landslide mitigation works at the Rest and Be Thankful, to help keep Argyll open for business by reducing the impact of landslides on the road.

Following the events in August 2020, Engineers have installed additional landslide mitigation measures to enable the use of the A83 including debris fences, roadside pits and material barriers. Hillside drainage paths have also been diverted to help stabilise the material with the landslide scar area.

The construction of a further debris fence following hillside movement detected in February 2024 between two catch pits in the hillside above a retaining wall was completed in June 2025. Following completion of the ground investigation work for the LTS, further permanent remedial and maintenance works are planned around the upper and lower slopes of the A83 and along the verge, including drainage improvement, catch fence repair and emptying and slope remediation, as well as near Loch Restil to avoid erosion of the road embankment. Traffic management will continue to be in place to facilitate the works.

We are also progressing a programme to proactively plant trees on the hillside to help reduce the risk of landslides in the area. Land purchase at the Rest and Be Thankful has been concluded and Transport Scotland is working with Forestry & Land Scotland to reintroduce the required local provenance native vegetation on the hillside. Deer fencing was installed in 2021 and a planting trial was successfully completed in December 2021. The hillside planting commenced in March 2022 and is now complete with ongoing maintenance and monitoring taking place.

Operational Management of the A83

The ground investigation works for the LTS is anticipated to complete by end of September, weather dependant. After that, the A83 will continue be operated under traffic management to facilitate permanent remedial and maintenance works. A bespoke operational strategy is implemented to facilitate the safe use of the A83 corridor at the Rest and Be Thankful. Implementation of this strategy requires a range of information to be collected and considered such that safe operation of the route can be planned, implemented, and maintained for road users. BEAR Scotland, through the use of innovative technology, remotely collects and reviews a range of detailed information including:

- Expert weather forecasting data;
- Highly detailed timelapse photography showing hillside condition and watercourse flows which allows comparison with previous images;
- Local weather station data recording recent rainfall and road conditions; and
- Ground saturation estimates.

This information is reviewed daily to consider the best mode of road operation over the next 24 hours and over the next five days thereafter. These daily reviews can lead to one of the following decisions:

- A precautionary site inspection, over and above the remote monitoring at various frequencies, plus the precautionary regular patrolling of the road to check for signs of hillside movement. (This happens regularly)
- The use of the Old Military Road local diversion at night under a traffic convoy arrangement. (*Used occasionally.*)
- The use of the Old Military Road 24 hours a day. (*Occasionally.*)
- The use of the long diversion via the A82, A85 and A819. (*Very rarely, normally only once a landslide has occurred.*)

During periods of very inclement weather and/or when there have been many days of wet weather and the hillside is judged to be very saturated, traffic will be diverted onto the Old Military Road local diversion. When the Old Military Road local diversion is being used traffic signs will divert traffic onto the diversion route at the south end. The south section of the route is two-way with speeds restricted to 15mph. Traffic signals cover the extents of the north section of the diversion route which operates under convoy due to the width and bendiness of the road. A vehicle travelling at 10mph escorts vehicles through this narrow section, one direction at a time. The Old Military Road local diversion is similar in length to the A83 but as it is operated under a convoy, it normally takes 15 to 20 minutes to drive as opposed to 3 to 6 minutes on the A83. A dedicated recovery service will be stationed on site to attend to any incident or breakdown free of charge.

Communications with stakeholders has been maintained with the main focus on operational updates, but also by making it clear that Argyll remains open for business. Specific focus was also given to keeping Taskforce members updated, who have been asked to share this locally.

Table 1 shows a summary of closures at of the A83 since 2011.

Year	A83 Closed (days)	OMR closed (days)	Both Closed (days)	OMR in operation (days)	OMR in operation (nights)
2011-12	5	5	5	0	0
2012-13	4.5	4.5	4.5	0	0
2013-14	6	1	1	5	5
2014-15	5	0	0	5	7
2015-16	5	1.5	1.5	3.5	0
2016-17	0	0	0	0	0
2017-18	0	0	0	0	0
2018-19	9	5.5	5.5	3.5	2
2019-20	2.5	0.5	0.5	2	2
2020-21	130 days	16.5 days	16.5 days	115.5	173.5

	193 nights	44.5 nights	44.5 nights		
2021-22	13 days 51 nights	0 days 1 night	1 nights	19	26
2022-23	29 days 25 nights	0	0	29	25
2023-24	13 days 20 nights	0	5 days 4 nights	9	16
2024-25	34 days 32 nights	0	1 day 1 night	33	31
2025-26	21 days 6 nights	0	1 day 1 night	20	5

Table 1: A83 Closures as of 18 September 2025

Medium Term Solution

Further to the announcement on 18 March 2021 for the preferred route corridor, the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson MSP announced a commitment to develop a medium-term solution as a proportionate response to improve resilience of the temporary diversion route for when the A83 is closed at the Rest and Be Thankful due to landslides or risk of a landslide. It is expected the medium-term solution will be in place until the completion of the long-term solution.

As part of a medium term solution and taking cognisance of the varied suggestions by the campaign group we assessed three route options: (i) upgrade the forestry track, (ii) a new two lane road on the same side of the valley as the forestry track and (iii) possible interventions/improvements to the existing Old Military Road. Details of the three medium term solution options assessed can be found in Annex G.

The preferred route for a medium-term solution, consisting of improvements to the Old Military Road, was announced on 23 December 2022.

These improvements will improve the resilience of the diversion route, reduce journey times, and are the quickest to implement, of relatively lower cost and would have the least impacts overall across the range of criteria assessed of the medium-term options under consideration.

Improvements include debris catch fences, temporary bunds, drainage improvements and widening and discrete realignment to improve bends and avoid flooding.

The programme of improvements to the Old Military Road will not only improve its safety and resilience as a diversion route but also improve the operation by extending the length of two-way operation, reducing the journey times. However, a length of the single lane OMR will remain unchanged at the western end, including the hairpin bends. These improvements will mean more certainty for locals and road

users if the A83 has to shut due to adverse weather conditions or when the A83 is shut during construction of the long-term solution.

The first phase of improvements to the Old Military Road, realigning the southern end of the route, commenced in December 2023 and became operational in Spring 2024.

Draft Orders and Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the MTS were published on 13 December 2024 for formal consultation, with an estimated cost of £24m - £34m (at Q2 2024 prices). The objection period ended on 7 February 2025.

Transport Scotland are considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders and we will continue work at pace to resolve these if possible.

If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. As a Public Local Inquiry may be required it would be inappropriate for the Scottish Government to comment further on any representations received to the published draft Orders.

Construction of the medium-term solution can only commence if approved under the relevant statutory authorisation process and thereafter a timetable for progress can be set.

Rest and Be Thankful (RaBT) Campaign Group

The RaBT Campaign Group has been setup to represent some 1,500 businesses in Argyll and Bute and are pushing for a long-term solution to be completed as soon as possible.

Transport Scotland officials have met the Campaign Group on several occasions, with one meeting being attended by the then Minister for Transport, Graeme Dey MSP, and then in March and November 2022 with former Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP. You met with the Campaign Group on 3 October 2023 and regularly at the A83 Taskforce meetings held since. Transport Scotland officials have also had several one-to-one discussions with the [REDACTED] Campaign Group [REDACTED], and he regularly writes to the Ministers pressing for progress. In June 2024 Transport Scotland officials, along with the technical advisors, held a round table meeting with the Campaign Group in Inveraray to discuss options considered and concerns from the Campaign Group.

[REDACTED] was also heavily involved in organising and influencing the A83 Roundtable meetings held in Inveraray on 12 September 2025 and chaired by Jenni Minto MSP.

Annex D

Attendees – A83 Taskforce Invitation List

Cabinet Secretary for Transport – Fiona Hyslop MSP (FH) - Chair

Jackie Baillie MSP (JB) – Scottish Parliament
Jenni Minto MSP (JM) – Scottish Parliament
Ariane Burgess MSP (AB) – Scottish Parliament
Tim Eagle MSP (TE) – Scottish Parliament
Daniel McCroskrie (DMcC) – Scottish Parliament
Rhoda Grant MSP (RG) – Scottish Parliament
Brendan O’Hara MP (BOH) – UK Parliament
Douglas Ross (DR) – Scottish Parliament
Edward Mountain MSP (EM) – Scottish Parliament
Emma Roddick (ER) – Scottish Parliament
Jamie Halcro Johnston – Scottish Parliament

Cllr John Armour (JA) – Argyll & Bute Council
Cllr Dougie Philand (DP) – Argyll & Bute Council
Cllr Maurice Corry (MC) – Argyll & Bute Council
Cllr Jennifer Kelly (JK) – Argyll & Bute Council
Cllr Jim Lynch (JL) – Argyll & Bute Council
Cllr William Sinclair (WS) – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] – Argyll & Bute Council

[REDACTED] – West Coast Motors
[REDACTED] – Ardkinglas Estate
[REDACTED] – Inverary Estate
[REDACTED] – A&L McCrae
[REDACTED] – Inveraray Jail
[REDACTED] – Western Ferries
[REDACTED] – Calmac Ferries
[REDACTED] – Argyll Timber Transport Group
[REDACTED] – Lochgoil Community Council
[REDACTED] – RaBT Campaign Group Chair
[REDACTED] – Ridings Sawmills
[REDACTED] – Highlands and Islands Enterprise
[REDACTED] – Highlands and Islands Enterprise
[REDACTED] – Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership
[REDACTED] – Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership
[REDACTED] – Wild About Argyll
[REDACTED] – Loch Lomond & Trossachs
[REDACTED] – Mid Argyll Chamber of Commerce

[REDACTED] - National Farmers Union Scotland
[REDACTED] – National Farmers Union Scotland
[REDACTED] – Portavadie Spa and Hotel
[REDACTED] - B.Mundell Ltd
[REDACTED] – Road Haulage Association
[REDACTED] – Road Haulage Association
[REDACTED] – Arrochar, Tarbet and Ardlui Heritage Group
[REDACTED] Forestry and Land Scotland
[REDACTED] – Mull of Kintyre Hauliers
[REDACTED] – Argyll Timber Transport Group
[REDACTED] – Logistics UK
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] - Representative from Freight Transport Association
Representative from Cairndow Community Council
[REDACTED] – Inveraray Jail

Transport Scotland

Lawrence Shackman (LS) – Transport Scotland
Hugh Gillies (HG) – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland
[REDACTED] – Transport Scotland

[REDACTED] – AtkinsRealis WSP Joint Venture
[REDACTED] – AtkinsRealis WSP Joint Venture
[REDACTED] – BEAR Scotland
[REDACTED] – BEAR Scotland
[REDACTED] – BEAR Scotland

Annex E

Correspondence received from [REDACTED] (National Famer's Union Scotland) 4 August 2025 in relation to the traffic management and congestion issues in the area in August 2025. Includes BEAR Scotland response

From: [REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk>
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 17:33
To: [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>; [REDACTED] (Transport Scotland) <[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>; John Armour (Argyll and Bute Council) <John.Armour@argyll-bute.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@btopenworld.com>; [REDACTED] (Transport Scotland) <[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: Traffic disruption on Friday 1 August

Dear [REDACTED] & John
Cc [REDACTED]

I am writing in relation to the traffic management of the A83, A82 and A819 on Friday 1 August, following the closure of the A82 between Crianlarich and Tyndrum as a result of a serious RTI that afternoon.

I fully appreciate that the Police must follow the correct procedure following a fatality and must undertake all necessary investigations, therefore the road closure was unavoidable.

However, what was avoidable was the ensuing chaos that then ensued on the diversion route. What was very apparent was that there was no contingency plan in place to manage the resulting high volume of traffic that was diverted on to the A83 and A819. This was particularly acute given that it was the start of the bank holiday weekend.

I was returning from Glasgow that afternoon and I queued for 1.5 hours to travel from the Tarbet Hotel junction with the A82 to the top of the Rest & Be Thankful. What was somewhat surprising was on eventually reaching the top of the Rest the queue of traffic heading south through the lights was only as far back as the cutting in the rock just before the top.

The queue of traffic heading south on the A82 and trying to turn right onto the A83, to follow the diversion route was also long, with people being unable to turn right due to the volume of traffic on the A82 coming north from Glasgow. I heard reports of people giving up and turning around to travel back to the A85.

I have also heard of reports of people taking 2 hours to get from the top of Cladich hill to Inveraray on the A819. It took my husband over an hour to get through Inveraray on his way back from Campbeltown. He also reported that vehicles heading south on the A83 were queuing from Strone Point back to the lights at the bridge at Inveraray. This situation was exasperated by traffic being blocked at the junction with the A819 at the arch in Inveraray; traffic from Dalmally blocking the arch meant that vehicles were unable to turn off the A83, thereby blocking it further – particularly problematic for busses and HGVs.

In past times, when there were local police stations in both Arrochar and Inveraray, the police would have been out managing the traffic or they would have called in the local roads department to assist. However, with this lack of local knowledge and resource nothing was put in place.

The disruption and economic impact that this incident resulted in should not be underestimated – both in the short and long-term.

Can I ask that BEAR, Transport Scotland and Argyll & Bute Council learn from this incident and, in consultation with Police Scotland, put in place a contingency plan to better manage the traffic when there are closures on the A82 which then impact on the A83 and A819, which there inevitably will be.

There needs to be traffic management in place at the following locations:

- Junction of the A83 & A82 at Taret
- At the lights on the RABT
- At the lights at Inverary bridge
- At the junction of the A83 and A819 at the Arch in Inverary

If the OMR had been in operation, I suspect the queues for the RABT would have been even longer! If/when we ever get to the point when the OMR is the route for all traffic during the construction phase of the debris flow shelter then it will be even more necessary to have a contingency plan in place.

If you require further feedback from other members of the taskforce on the impact of this incident maybe it can be added to the agenda of the next Taskforce meeting.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Best regards [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – Argyll & the Islands

NFU Scotland [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [\[REDACTED\]@nfus.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk) | Website:

<http://www.nfus.org.uk/>

[REDACTED]

BEAR Scotland Response

From: [REDACTED][@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>

Sent: 07 August 2025 16:52

To: [REDACTED][@nfus.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk)>; [REDACTED](Transport Scotland)

<[\[REDACTED\]@transport.gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot)>

Cc: [REDACTED]<[\[REDACTED\]@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>;

john.gurr@btopenworld.com; [REDACTED](Transport Scotland)

<[\[REDACTED\]@transport.gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot)>; [REDACTED]<

[\[REDACTED\]@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>

Subject: RE: Traffic disruption on Friday 1 August

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email regarding the disruption experienced on the A83, A82 and A819 on Friday 1 August.

As you rightly note, Police Scotland must be given the time and space to carry out full investigations following serious road traffic incidents. On this occasion, the closure of the A82 between Crianlarich and Tyndrum lasted around eight hours (from 12:00 to 20:00), and a second serious incident near Bridge of Orchy occurred shortly after 16:00, compounding the challenges in the region later in the day.

We understand the concerns raised about pressure points at certain junctions and acknowledge how frustrating delays can be during incidents of this scale. While every effort is made to manage traffic flow under challenging conditions, there are occasions, particularly during simultaneous incidents, where resource limitations can affect what is feasible on the ground.

Our teams were actively working to support the response across the network, with manual traffic management in place at the Rest and be Thankful to help keep vehicles moving as safely and efficiently as possible. This operation can often result in one queue appearing longer, as the opposite flow has recently been 'flushed' through. Despite these efforts, the volume of traffic ultimately led to saturation across the diversion route.

We agree that lessons can be taken from this incident and will continue to work with Transport Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council and Police Scotland to review the response and identify potential improvements for future contingency planning. The next A83 Taskforce meeting may indeed offer a useful opportunity to explore this further.

Thank you again for your ongoing engagement and for recognising the difficult circumstances faced on the day.

Regards

[REDACTED] email sent to [REDACTED] of Transport Scotland on 4 September 2025

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk>
Sent: 04 September 2025 14:48
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@btopenworld.com>
Subject: RE: A83 Taskforce - Meeting

Hello [REDACTED]

Re the agenda for the taskforce meeting can I request that the following two items are added to the agenda please:

1. Traffic management contingency planning in the event of a major incident on the wider road network e.g. on the A82, A85 & A819 and which has a knock-on impact on traffic volume on the A83, as occurred on Fri 1 August 2025.
2. Traffic management on the A83 and other associated roads when the A83 is closed and the longer diversion route has to be used e.g. at the junction with the A815 and A819.

Any questions on the above please let me know.

Best regards [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – Argyll & the Islands

NFU Scotland | [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED] | **Email:** [\[REDACTED\]@nfus.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk) | **Website:** <http://www.nfus.org.uk/>

Transport Scotland Lines

We understand the concerns raised about congestion in certain areas and we acknowledge delays can be frustrating during incidents of this nature.

Whilst every effort is made to manage traffic flow under challenging conditions, there are occasions, particularly during simultaneous serious incidents, as occurred on 1 August, where resource limitations can affect what is feasible on the ground.

BEAR Scotland were actively working to support the response across the trunk road network in this area, with manual traffic management in place at the Rest and be Thankful to help keep vehicles moving as safely and efficiently as possible. Despite these efforts, the volume of traffic ultimately led to saturation across the diversion route.

Police Scotland and other emergency services, where required, must be given the time and space to carry out full investigations following serious road traffic incidents.

Lessons have been taken from the incidents in early August and BEAR Scotland will continue to work with Transport Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council and Police Scotland to review the response and identify potential improvements for future contingency planning.

Annex F

Correspondence received from [REDACTED](NFU Scotland) in relation to BBC Scotland communication regarding operational status of A83 and diversions onto OMR. Includes BEAR / Transport Scotland response

From: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk>
Sent: 11 September 2025 09:28
To: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@btopenworld.com>

Subject: Radio Scotland traffic report

Morning [REDACTED]

I went over the Rest this morning at about 7.30am in heavy rain, but glad to see no problems. I was surprised therefore to hear the Radio Scotland traffic report at about 8.10am saying that the traffic was having to take turns on the A83 because of a landslip between Cairndow and the 'Helensburgh turning' - the first was incorrect and the second misleading.

Are you able to raise this again with the BBC please, it is yet again highly unhelpful to put out traffic reports like that and continues to be damaging to the Argyll economy.

Many thanks - [REDACTED]

BEAR response

From: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>

Sent: 18 September 2025 17:09

To: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>; [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Radio Scotland traffic report

[REDACTED],

We have investigated the matter, including reaching out to BBC on the day of the complaint.

It would seem that the traffic information feed which BBC relied on to populate their news bulletins had retained a historic reference to the earlier landslide which they then incorporated.

We have reached out again to BBC, and indeed other news providers, with an offer of me presenting a brief summary of the management of the A83 RabTh to their staff which will hopefully allow them to better reflect the actual situation in future news bulletins.

Regards
[REDACTED]

Response from [REDACTED] on 18 September 2025

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@nfus.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nfus.org.uk)>
Sent: 18 September 2025 17:16
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@transport.gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot)>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@bearsotland.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@bearsotland.co.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@transport.gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot)>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][@transport.gov.scot](mailto:[REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot)>

Subject: RE: Radio Scotland traffic report

Many thanks [REDACTED]

That is much appreciated. As [REDACTED] will know this was also discussed at the RABT Roundtable event that Jenni Minto MSP hosted in Inveraray last week. With several people, particularly in the hospitality trade, being very disgruntled about it.

Along with being inaccurate re the non-landslip the reference to the 'Helensburgh' turning i.e. the A814 is totally misleading, and they should avoid making any reference to it as such.

Best regards [REDACTED]

Annex G

Medium Term Solution Options

Upgrade the single lane forestry track

This option generally follows the route of the existing Glen Croe Lower Forestry Track. It commences at the original A83 Trunk Road/Old Military Road (OMR) junction and ends at the B828 Glen Mohr local road/ A83 Trunk Road junction.

Due to safety concerns around the operation of the route: the steep inclines along the route, the steepness of the hillside above and below the road and dense tree coverage, convoy working – single file traffic being led by a safety vehicle at 10 mph – would be required, as is currently used when traffic is diverted along the OMR.



To bring the existing forestry track up to a safe standard for a single lane public road would cost approximately £21M to £28M (at Q4 2021 prices).

This option does not include any landslide mitigation and therefore there is a high likelihood of closure should a landslide or debris flow occur in the vicinity of the route. Any such closures could be of potentially significant duration.

Single Lane Forestry Track Upgrade Operating in a loop with the Old Military Road

We have also assessed an option of upgrading the existing forestry track (same upgrade as the option above) and operating it in parallel with the OMR. This would allow traffic travelling westbound to use the forestry track and traffic travelling eastbound to use the OMR.

Operation of the forestry track in a loop with the OMR would offer a reduced journey time for eastbound traffic compared to the existing OMR, with no journey time benefit for traffic travelling westbound. The diagram below shows direction of traffic.



As above the cost to upgrade the forestry track is approximately £21M to £28M (at Q4 2021 prices).

An additional convoy vehicle and resources will be required for the loop option which have not been costed.

This option does not include any landslide mitigation and therefore there is a high likelihood of closure should a landslide occur. Any such closures could be of potentially significant duration.

New Two-way Road in Proximity to Existing Forestry Track

This option generally follows the Long Term Solution (LTS) Green Route option on the south western slopes of Glen Croe. It consists of a 7.3m wide, two-way, single carriageway with 2.5m wide verges with significant lengths of deep cutting, up to 27m in height, with no additional landslide mitigation measures provided.

This option would not require a convoy operation and would operate under 30mph free flow conditions. This results in an improvement on journey times when compared to the existing OMR arrangement.

Journey times would be broadly similar to the existing A83.

Considerable works will be required to construct this option. Earthworks are expected to be challenging due to the significant height of cuttings, volume of rock excavation, and the difficulties of managing surface water run off from the hillside.

This option would lead to the loss of a large area of plantation forestry (albeit FLS have plans to fell woodland in this area), reprofiling of the slope and introduction of significant embankments and cuttings.

The loss of plantation forestry and slope reprofiling may also increase the potential for landslides, due to removal of trees which may be having a stabilising effect on the hillside.

The south western slopes of Glen Croe are susceptible to a variety of forms of instability. No specific landslide mitigation measures have been provided in the design or costed at this stage.

It is estimated this options would cost in the region of £85M to £113M at 2021 prices. Significant works would be required and construction timescale would be approximately 2 to 2½ years.

Interventions to the existing Old Military Road

This option generally follows the route of the existing Old Military Road (OMR). It commences at the existing A83 Trunk Road /OMR junction and ends at the existing B828 Glen Mhor local road /A83 Trunk Road junction.

The OMR option consists of a number of discrete interventions to improve the operation and resilience of the OMR when used as a diversion route. Works would have to be programmed to fit in with the required use of the OMR.

Interventions would include extending the length of two way working providing a shorter length of convoy, constructing landslide mitigation measures such as bunds, barriers and catch fences, as well as widening of bends and improved drainage.

It would reduce journey times compared with the current OMR and increase the resilience of the diversion route, making it less susceptible to closure due to landslide and making it more likely to be available as a diversion should there be an issue on the A83.

The table below highlights the current OMR showing the length of two-traffic and length of convoy along with the updated lengths once the OMR is upgraded as part of the MTS. The OMR in total is 3.8km / 2.36 miles long.

	Two-way Free Flow Length			Convoy Length		
	Km	Miles	% of OMR	Km	Miles	% of OMR
Existing OMR	0.86	0.53	23%	2.94	1.83	77%
Improved OMR	2.26	1.40	59%	1.54	0.96	41%

We estimate the cost for this option between £24M to £32M (at Q4 2021 prices).

	Cost (Q4 2021)
Existing OMR	-
Forestry Track	£21M - £28M
Forestry Track in loop with OMR	£21M - £28M
New 2 Lane Road	£85M - £113M
OMR Interventions	£24M - £32M

medium term options costs

On the basis of the assessments undertaken, the OMR Interventions was announced as the preferred option for the medium term solution for the following reasons:

- The OMR interventions will increase resilience through the reduction of the likelihood of landslides impacting the OMR or flooding events closing it.
- The OMR interventions are smaller scale, discrete improvements in comparison to the other options, so the technical engineering, environmental and constructability impacts of the scheme are less significant and complex than the other options overall.
- The journey times expected are less than when the existing OMR is in operation due to the longer length of two lane operation.
- As these are online improvements, it is significantly less costly than the two lane offline Option 2, but slightly more costly than upgrades to the single lane forestry track Option 1.
- The OMR interventions do have limited lengths of steep and narrow sections at the western end but this will operate under convoy, mitigating safety risks, as is currently the case for the majority of the OMR diversion.
- As the OMR interventions are smaller scale discrete improvements, works can implemented in a phased manner allowing flexibility depending on budget.

Annex H

Correspondence from [REDACTED], A83 Campaign Group, 24 September 2025

From: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@btopenworld.com>

Sent: 24 September 2025 15:42

To: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@transport.gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@ardkinglas.com>; [REDACTED]@almccrae.com;
[REDACTED]< [REDACTED]@inveraray-castle.com>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@westcoastmotors.co.uk>

Subject: A83 Task Force 1st October

Hi [REDACTED],

Following the round table sessions on the 12th September our group would like to add a number of questions for the first half of the meeting next week.

- In light of the information presented by businesses on the 12th of September which highlighted over £500m of direct impact and a similar level of investment and business risk, how does this change Transport Scotland's assessment of providing unrestricted 2 way access into Argyll throughout the construction of a permanent solution?
- What are the results of the ground investigation works and are there any implications on the long term solution?
- We have now passed the 5th anniversary of the major landslide which closed the A83 to 2 way traffic on the 4th August 2020. Now the ground investigation work has been completed, can the road now be allowed to operate 2 way without restrictions?

Also would it be possible to send an invitation to those of our group who are not currently members as they are keen to hear any updates first hand, I have included their email addresses above.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]"

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Extract from briefing sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport dated 29

September 2025

ANNEX F: A83 Rest and Be Thankful

ISSUE:

Operational

The ground investigation works for long term solutions (LTS) is anticipated to complete around end of September. After that, the s will continue be operated under traffic management to accommodate the permanent remedial and maintenance works around the upper and lower slopes of the A83 and along the verge. The Old Military Road (OMR) is being brought into use as required, in response to weather forecasts and localised monitoring. Updates are then issued to stakeholders and via the Traffic Scotland website when appropriate. BEAR Scotland, acting on behalf of Transport Scotland, continues to have a presence on site assessing and monitoring conditions at the hillside daily.

For over 15 years, the Scottish Road Network Landslide Study has guided how landslide risks are managed across the whole of the trunk road network, including the wider A83 trunk road outwith the Rest and Be Thankful. Depending on the records and location-specific issues, this has seen risk reduction measures implemented such as warning signage erected, mitigation schemes constructed or regular monitoring. This approach continues and the October 2023 events, when heavy and persistent rainfall caused major impacts on the trunk and local roads networks, with significant disruption across Argyll, feed into ongoing work for the safe operation of the A83.

We are also progressing a programme to establish a native woodland on the hillside above the road to help reduce the risk of landslides in the area whilst also enhancing local biodiversity and habitat connectivity. The project required Transport Scotland to acquire the necessary land before working in partnership with Forestry & Land Scotland to plant native trees of local provenance on the steep hillside. Deer fencing was installed in 2021 and the tree planting commenced in March 2022. The planting is now complete and longer-term monitoring and management operations are underway.

Future planned works

Following completion of the ground investigation work for the LTS, further permanent remedial and maintenance works are planned around the upper and lower slopes of the A83 and along the verge, including drainage improvement, catch fence repair and emptying and slope remediation, as well as near Loch Restil to avoid erosion of the road embankment. Traffic management will continue to be in place to facilitate the works into Summer 2026.

September 2025 Landslides

Following a landslide on 1 September morning, debris had fallen onto the A83 at Butterbridge and Glen Kinglas near Rest and Be Thankful (R&BT), leading to the closure of a 12.5 mile section of the A83 trunk road in both directions. In total, 11 areas of movements have been noted on the hillsides, 9 at the RaBT and the others at Glen Kinglas and Butterbridge. The worst affected areas where material made it to the roadside were at Glen Kinglas and Butterbridge. Traffic was diverted onto A82/A85/A819 during the closure period and the affected A83 route was subsequently reopened at 09.30am on 2 September 2025 after the clear up operation and continuous monitoring and inspection. Landslide interventions are currently under consideration.

TOP LINES:

- The Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.
- The Scottish Government recognises the impacts that this has had on the local community and businesses and we are committed to developing a response as quickly as we are able. The situation is being treated with the seriousness and urgency it deserves, with measures to maintain connectivity on a short, medium and long-term basis being implemented.
- Following detailed design and assessment work, a debris flow shelter was announced on 2 June 2023 as the preferred option for the long-term solution. This option involves constructing a debris flow shelter over a length of approximately 1.4km with an additional 180m of catch pit and protection wall to protect the road and road users from future debris flow events. The identification of the preferred route option through the Glen Croe valley is a very important milestone in finding a solution to this long-standing problem.
- The publication of draft Orders for both the medium and long-term solutions on 13 December 2024 marks a significant milestone and shows our commitment to tackle the landslide issues at the Rest and Be Thankful.
- Transport Scotland is considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders and will work at pace to resolve these if possible.
- If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. As a Public Local Inquiry may be required it would be inappropriate for the Scottish Government to comment further on any representations received to the published draft Orders.
- It is estimated that construction of the debris flow shelter will take three to four years for the long-term solution including an allowance for possible standdown time due to bad weather. As the preferred route option is predominantly on the existing A83 road, there will be a requirement for temporary traffic management for road users during the construction period.

- This is likely to include traffic light operation and periods of full closures where traffic will be diverted to the OMR for extensive periods of time, which will be upgraded as part of the medium-term solution to increase the resilience of the temporary diversion route.
- The current estimated cost for the permanent, long-term solution is between £408 million and £510 million at Q4 2024 prices. At this stage we present a range as there remain a number of unknowns (e.g. ground conditions), so as we gather more information and develop the design in greater detail, we will be able to more accurately estimate the cost of the scheme.
- Transport Scotland continues to explore methods to reduce the timescales to bring forward both the medium term and long-term routes as soon as possible, whilst continuing to maximise the availability of the A83 and the OMR.
- At the same time, improvements to the existing OMR through the Glen Croe corridor are being made to make it a more resilient diversion route until the long-term solution is in place.
- These improvements will also reduce journey times and are the quickest to implement, of relatively lower cost, and would have the least impacts overall across the range of criteria assessed of the medium-term options under consideration.
- These include debris catch fences, temporary bunds, drainage improvements and widening and discrete realignment to improve bends and avoid flooding.
- These works will be carried out on a phased basis and construction of the first phase, realigning the southern end of the route, commenced in December 2023 and became operational in Spring 2024.

Extract from briefing sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport dated 7

October 2025

A83 Rest and Be Thankful (and spend to date)

The current total scheme cost estimate for the long term preferred route option is between **£408 million and £510 million**, at **Q4 2024 prices**.

The current total scheme cost estimate for the medium term improvements is between **£24m and £34m**, at **Q4 2024 prices**.

To date **£36.65 million** has been spent on the medium and long term solutions to the A83 Rest and Be Thankful.

A83 Rest and Be Thankful

Top Lines

The Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority, and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.

We are delivering a range of measures in the short, medium and long term to reduce the risk of impact of landslides on the A83.

In the **short term**, landslide mitigation measures, such as debris and rockfall fences and catchpits, have been implemented on the hillside above the A83.

The **medium term** solution consists of a series of improvements to the Old Military Road that is used as a diversion route when the A83 is closed.

The proposed **long term solution** consists of a 1.4km debris flow shelter to provide a permanent solution to landslide challenges at the Rest & Be Thankful.

The delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority and we will continue to seek ways to achieve this as quickly as possible.

The publication of draft Orders for both the medium and long term solutions on 13 December 2024 marks a significant milestone and shows our commitment to tackle the landslide issues at the Rest and Be Thankful.

Transport Scotland is considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders and will work at pace to resolve these if possible.

If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. As a Public Local Inquiry may be required it would be inappropriate for the Scottish Government to comment further on any representations received to the published draft Orders.

Construction of the long-term solution can only commence if it is approved under the relevant statutory authorisation process and thereafter a timetable for construction can be determined.

Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement

We continue to engage with stakeholders via the A83 Taskforce meetings chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport. We are committed to building on the positive engagement undertaken to date with stakeholders through the A83 Taskforce. The latest A83 Taskforce meeting was held via Teams on 1 October 2025, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport.

On 12 September Jenny Minto MSP held roundtable meetings with a range of businesses and other stakeholders to look at the potential impacts of using the upgraded Old Military Road for extensive periods of time during the construction of the Long Term Solution. The meetings also considered options for mitigating the potential impacts of this work and will report back findings to the Taskforce.

The Cabinet Secretary for Transport has instructed Transport Scotland to review two-way options for the medium term solution previously assessed in parallel with progressing the statutory process. Transport Scotland will continue to engage with the A83 Campaign Group and Roundtable attendees on this matter.

Following the meeting on 25 September Bendan O'Hara MP wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, which was cosigned by Jackie Baillie MSP and other stakeholders, noting that while they are relieved a long term solution has been identified, they are requesting that the medium term solution is reconsidered to one which guarantees two way traffic flow.

Extract from briefing sent to the First Minister dated 10 October 2025

A83 Rest and Be Thankful

The Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority, and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible. It is a sign of that ongoing commitment to progress the long-term solution that we were able to publish draft Orders for both the long-term solution and future phases of the medium-term solution for improving the diversionary route along the Old Military Road on 13 December 2024.

Transport Scotland is considering all representations received, including objections, to the published draft Orders and is working at pace to resolve these if possible. If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required to consider objections received and not withdrawn. Construction of the medium and long-term solutions can only commence if approved under the relevant statutory authorisation process and thereafter a timetable for construction can be determined. We are committed to building on the positive engagement undertaken to date with stakeholders through the A83 Taskforce. The latest A83 Taskforce meeting was held via Teams on 1 October 2025, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport.

Extract from briefing sent to the Permanent Secretary dated 16 October 2025

A83 Rest and Be Thankful

The Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority, and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.

Following a thorough assessment of five route options, a debris flow shelter was identified as the preferred option for the long-term solution in June 2023. This option closely follows the alignment of the existing A83 Trunk Road for 2.4km from the Croe Water heading north to the Rest and Be Thankful car park and involves constructing a debris flow shelter over a length of approximately 1.4km with an additional 180m of catch pit and protection wall to protect the road and road users from future debris flow events.

At the same time, improvements to the existing Old Military Road through the Glen Croe corridor are being made to make it a more resilient diversion route until the long-term solution is in place. These include debris catch fences, temporary bunds, drainage improvements and widening and discrete realignment to improve bends and avoid flooding. These works, known as the medium-term solution, will be carried out on a phased basis and construction of the first phase, realigning the southern end of the route, commenced in December 2023 and became operational in Spring 2024.

Draft Orders for both the long-term solution and future phases of the medium-term solution for improving the diversionary route along the Old Military Road were published on 13 December 2024. A number of objections were received and Transport Scotland is considering all representations and is working at pace to resolve the objections if possible. If it is not possible to resolve objections a Public Local Inquiry may be required.

Construction of the medium and long-term solutions can only commence if approved under the relevant statutory authorisation process and thereafter a timetable for construction can be determined.

We are committed to building on the positive engagement undertaken to date with stakeholders through the A83 Taskforce. The latest A83 Taskforce meeting was held via Teams on 1 October 2025, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport.

On 12 September Jenny Minto MSP held roundtable meetings with a range of businesses and other stakeholders to look at the potential economic impacts of using the upgraded Old Military Road for extensive periods of time during the construction of the Long Term Solution. The meetings also considered options for mitigating the potential economic impacts of this work and will report back findings to the Taskforce.

The Cabinet Secretary for Transport has instructed Transport Scotland to review two-way options for the medium term solution previously assessed in parallel with progressing the statutory process.

Transport Scotland will continue to engage with the A83 Campaign Group and Roundtable attendees on this matter.

Annex B – Correspondence sent to or from Scottish Ministers in relation to the A83 Rest and Be Thankful from the 27th September 2025 to the 27th October 2025



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Jenni Minto MSP
Member of The Scottish Parliament for Argyll & Bute

Fiona Hyslop MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Transport
By Email: CabSecForTransport@gov.scot

19/09/2025

Dear Cabinet Secretary

As you know on Friday 12th September I chaired a series of round table meetings with members of the Argyll & Bute community to ensure that Transport Scotland heard directly from them about the negative impact the intermediate solution for the Rest and Be Thankful – the main artery into Mid Argyll - will have on their lives and businesses.

I know you have received a letter from Brendan O’Hara MP and Jackie Baillie MSP, counter signed by those attending, regarding the outcome of these discussions.

I would like to acknowledge the attendance of [REDACTED] and colleagues from Transport Scotland. I believe they got a true sense of the economic and wellbeing impact of the current proposed intermediate solution.

I enclose the draft summary notes from the meeting.

Everyone in attendance was pleased that a long-term solution had been agreed and ground work had commenced.

However, in summary, my constituents argued strongly that the proposed four year solution of traffic lights and convoy on the Old Military Road will damage the economy of Argyll & Bute. They have prepared an economic impact paper which will be shared with Transport Scotland.

I would therefore request that as a matter of urgency you reconsider this intermediate proposal and that any work which would require the closure of existing carriageways is reviewed by Transport Scotland. I would also request that given the information shared by my constituents regarding the economic and wellbeing impacts that work does not commence until an alternative solution is modelled and costed, ideally one which allows for the free flow of traffic into and out of Argyll, preferably without recourse to either convoys or traffic lights.

Finally, I would request a meeting with yourself to discuss the above.

With Best Wishes,

[REDACTED]

Jenni Minto MSP Argyll & Bute

RABT Round Table event 12th September 2025

Attendees at all sessions:

- Jenni Minto MSP – Argyll and Bute
- Jackie Baillie MSP - Dumbarton
- Brendan O’Hara MP – Argyll, Bute and South Lochaber
- [REDACTED]– RABT Campaign Group
- [REDACTED]– Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Cllr John Armour - Argyll and Bute Council
- [REDACTED]– Argyll and Bute Council
- [REDACTED]– Transport Scotland
- [REDACTED]– Transport Scotland
- [REDACTED]– AWJV
- [REDACTED]– AWJV

At the outset of each session Jenni Minto MSP gave introductions and explained the background of these roundtable meetings. She then outlined that the sessions would give the invited attendees the opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns and for Transport Scotland and the other full day attendees to listen and ask questions of clarification where appropriate.

Below is a summary of the contributions made by those who attended.

Session 1 – Transport

Additional Attendees:

- [REDACTED]– West Coast Motors
- [REDACTED]– Western Ferries
- [REDACTED]– Peter McKerral & Co Ltd
- [REDACTED]– Road Haulage Association
- [REDACTED]– B. Mundell Ltd
- [REDACTED]– A&M Transport

[REDACTED]:

- Concerned that there has been little to no progress on this issue in the last 15 years.
- The current situation of a single carriageway with traffic lights has left us worse off.
- The only solution that should be considered for the medium term solution is a two way road with the Old Military Road (OMR) in use for one direction and a refurbished Forestry road in the other. Understands there are a number of locally based civil engineering firms who would deliver the necessary work to this road for a fraction of the costs being discussed.
- On volume of trucks, he has on average 35 loads per day and the OMR at present adds at least half an hour to each journey which adds very significant costs.
- Clear message is that whatever solution is in place has to deliver a two way road at all times otherwise impact will be devastating.

[REDACTED]:

- Agrees fully with [REDACTED].
- Currently running 6,200 HGVs per year over the RABT in a 24hr operation – around 85% of this is linked to whisky.
- A two way road with no traffic lights is central to this operation
- Also feels that OMR one way and upgraded forestry track the other is the best solution.

- Time delays linked to current proposals could cost company £130-308k per year.
- Would also need to factor in costs around impact to drive time and steps that would need to be taken to meet drive time regulations.
- One possible diversion route of going via Dalmally would cost £138-£196 per load each way. Have had discussions with Western Ferries to look at areas which could be adjusted for goods going to Ayrshire but don't yet have figures on what this would cost.
- Also have to factor in limitations with ferry times as this has significant impact

[REDACTED]:

- Extra mileage and time will have a big impact
- Highlighted need to consider other roadworks throughout the network. Drivers can be stuck at the lights on the RABT only to miss amnesty periods at other works and this can have catastrophic impact.
- Understand roadworks are essential but need to be better communicated and coordinated.
- Knowing this is coming has been speaking to customers to ensure they are aware.

[REDACTED]:

- Campbeltown to Glasgow is the main line route for West Coast Motors and so RABT crucial. This is a lifeline route for Kintyre but also connections to islands.
- Feels very strongly that we cannot go down to a single track OMR for 3-4 years as this would be catastrophic for Argyll.
- Human element that can't be quantified should also be considered. Current situation has huge impact on staff and is making recruitment which is already challenging worse. Also starting to lose staff due to stress and increasing anxiety.
- Regulatory issue due to level of compliance – have to explain to traffic commissioner why we can't always meet 1 minute early/5 minute late requirements.
- Many people use this service for healthcare appointments including cancer care at the Beatson.
- Feels that if this way a railway line it would be given much higher priority and would have been resolved long ago.
- Highlighted issues on the wider road network such as accidents on the A82 and the overall lack of resilience on the network locally.
- Agreed with point raised on overnight amnesties during roadworks and the issues that can be caused.

[REDACTED]:

- Driver hours a serious factor – highlighted the working time directive.
- Also highlighted the sanctions that can be put on coaches of £1500 per vehicle when they run services late or early. These road closures often aren't deemed an acceptable excuse.
- Delays can cause drivers to be unable to complete deliveries and steps having to be taken to change driver at huge cost.
- Most operators working at a 2% margin and cannot afford the additional costs needed to deal with these delays. There is a huge knock on effect to the Scottish economy if we lose hauliers.
- Agree completely that any solution must deliver a two way road – it is the main artery in and out of Argyll and whisky, timber, agriculture and renewables rely on it wholly.

[REDACTED]:

- Western Ferries is of course a transport provider not user but the service is there and can provide an alternative route that can deal with some of the congestion.
- Not a solution for everyone – no dangerous goods license
- Have been in discussion with the Cabinet Secretary regarding possible resilience funding to mitigate costs for users and have spoken to some hauliers directly and understand there would be an appetite.
- Roadworks on the M8 will pose an issue
- Good awareness already there for car drivers that WF is a suitable alternative – saw an extra 800 cars use the ferry last Monday during the closure.
- Have the capability to increase the service and could increase speed to deliver 12 sailings per hour.
- Highlighted that new vessels are coming and if they perceive an increase in demand could reservice two older vessels to increase the overall fleet.

[REDACTED]:

- Clear that two way road is key – the permanent solution does deliver that.
- Appreciate the concerns about the period of construction – note that the OMR will be improved.
- Note that anywhere in Scotland that road improvement happens – some form of traffic lights are in place.
- The forestry track would require a convoy system and therefore one way OMR would be a quicker option.

Cllr John Armour:

- Hearing loud and clear that current proposals will not work.
- Questioned the possibility of a freight ferry service from Islay, calling at Campbeltown and going to Ayrshire Coast – this had mixed responses from hauliers who felt that it may be an option for some freight but not for all.
- Questioned success of catchpits that are currently in place.
- Noted the significance of current delays due to traffic light system and impact that has been having.

[REDACTED]:

- Conducted a great deal of research on financial impacts of these proposals – estimating around £10m per year. RHA have verified these figures as accurate.

Jackie Baillie MSP:

- Very clear feeling around need for two way solution – need to find ways to deliver this.
- Questioned the possibility of having the OMR upgraded to be two way for the full length
 - TS advised this was looked at however costs would be very substantial for a temporary solution and would cause further delays to delivery due to environmental assessments etc.
- Notes that given this has been ongoing for 20 years already – further delays to ensure the right outcome would be worth it.

Brendan O’Hara MP:

- Life in Argyll is tough enough – many advantages felt in other parts of Scotland are not felt here.
- Questioned whether improvements to OMR would only be a temporary solution given issues of landslips outwith area due to be protected by canopy.

- View that a road should never have been built on the RABT and that we are now continuing to build a historic mistake.
- Has consistently advocated for tunnel solution.
- Fear for businesses viability should this go ahead.

[REDACTED]:

- Notes the benefits of hearing impact on employers
- Highlights the importance of ensuring Argyll remains competitive
- Stressed impact on key industries and export industries that would be felt by HM Treasury
- Importance of continuing to produce data to press the arguments.

Jenni Minto MSP::

- Important to get a clear message from today
- Notes the significance of increased driver time and the impact on workforce
- Consideration to other roadworks happening throughout network
- Information and projections on cost important for building up an overall picture of impact
- Grateful that human element has been highlighted – must not be forgotten

Session Two – Larger Business Sectors

Additional Attendees:

- [REDACTED]– National Farmers Union Scotland
- [REDACTED]– AKVA Group Scotland Ltd
- [REDACTED]– Bakkafrost
- [REDACTED]– Clyde Fisherman’s Association
- [REDACTED]– Argyll Estates
- [REDACTED]– Glennon Brothers
- [REDACTED]– MacLeod Construction
- [REDACTED]– A & L McCrae Ltd

[REDACTED]:

- Bakkafrost have farms across Argyll and a factory in Cairidow, the farms shouldn’t be too impacted by this however there is significant traffic in and out of the Cairidow site daily.
- An 11 minute delay as suggested could be manageable but not convinced that will be the reality.
- A 20 minute delay could lead to a 25% increase in costs – could be upwards of £250k per year
- The OMR is not suitable for HGVs – the ferry route would be a better plan B however costs are prohibitive.
- Major concern around staff – unable to employ the necessary numbers locally and so bring many in by bus each day over the RABT.
- Expecting to increase production volume – if there is issue with staffing it could lead to requiring the use of third party which would have 7 figure costs.

[REDACTED]:

- Many engineers are based in Dumbarton and there have already been cases of staff leaving company due to the road.

- Feels solution must be two way road at all times
- Highlighted issues caused by recent closure on the road – vital shipment did not make it to their site

[REDACTED] provided further points and detailed analysis in writing which is provided at the foot of these notes.

[REDACTED]:

- Shellfish and fishing remains a significant industry in Argyll.
- Biggest concern is around the transportation of live shellfish – if delays are too long they deteriorate and eventually die.
- Current proposals for single file OMR would cause 4 years of disaster.
- Loads can vary from £250k - £300k in value but deterioration will cause significant loss in value when delayed.
- The boats have contracts from processors who are all based in the central belt. The processors hire hauliers who have to get there and back in one night otherwise they will end up in a layby and another driver would have to be paid to go and collect the lorry to finish the journey – at a significant expense
- These are family businesses - if they increase charge by 50p per kilo to cover drivers and fuel means that business loses about £1000 per week. That equates to their profit margin
- Feels strongly that four year closure without two way system with traffic lights – will mean no investment in Mid Argyll and Kintyre which will exasperate depopulation problem.
- Seems that as we are a long way from the central belt we are treated differently.

[REDACTED]:

- Concern about record of delivery in major infrastructure problems and suggested this could make 3-4 year timeline for temporary solution unrealistic.
- Outlined the scale of farming in Argyll with significant amount of beef, lamb and milk production. All of Argyll is classified as Severely Disadvantaged under the Less Favoured Area (LFA) designation. No LAF sheep and cattle farms or crofts are profitable without agricultural support payments. Though not as vital support payments are also significant for dairy farmers, particularly on the island of Bute and in Kintyre, which operate in marginal milk fields. Impacts over delays on the RABT primarily affect, Mid- Argyll, Kintyre, Cowal & Islay, but the route is also used to service farmers and crofters on Bute and in the Oban area.
- Livestock welfare a factor when considering delays – concerns over longer journey times, particularly if lorries have to go round the longer route via the A82; this can mean that two drivers are needed, depending on where the lorry is going.
- Volatility of the market – hauliers and farmers working on very fine margins. Uncertainty on the road would jeopardise an already fragile situation. Most of the additional cost to agriculture would be from any increase in transport costs, as a result of longer journey times. As well as livestock and milk going out, all feed, fertiliser, fuel, machinery etc in general comes over the RABT. Some farmers and crofters will haul their own livestock, so impact here is on the additional time it takes and the extra time they have to allow to travel over the RABT.
- Mental wellbeing in the sector is already a major concern and added pressures here could cause further stress to an already vulnerable community, it is generally acknowledged that suicide rates amongst farmers is higher than other sectors.

- Difficult to put exact figures on potential losses as each business is different but indirect costs cannot be overstated. Many farmers and crofters are also involved in agritourism businesses, which bring in an important additional income stream. Any impact on visitor numbers and/or confidence to visit the area, because of delays on the RABT, will have a detrimental impact on their ability to survive financially.

[REDACTED]:

- Timber production last year in Scotland of 6.3m tonnes with 20% of that coming from Argyll. It is increasing, and will go up by around 25% in the next 7 or 8 years.
- Sector employs around 1300 people directly and around 2250 indirectly.
- 300 lorry loads go over RABT every week – over 5 days. Majority goes to Ayrshire.
- Forecast an increase of around 10% in costs for timber going over RABT should current proposals go ahead. If they had to go via Crianlarich it would be an increase of about 50% and that would shut down the sector in Argyll.
- Big risk of the processors in Ayrshire running short of wood supply.
- Higher operating costs lead to lower quality timber
- Could be significant reputational damage to Argyll with the hassle factor and uncertainty.
- Timber link scheme of moving timber by boat – in place for 25 years and is huge success story for environment especially. Funding from ScotGov has not increased since 2000 whilst costs have gone up so we are moving less timber this way as a result even though production is increasing.
- Timber Link removes 3000 vehicles per year from the road with a £1m contribution from Scottish Government
- Lack of timber in UK as is – have to import over 80% at present.

[REDACTED]:

- Fear we are heading into four years of disaster with current proposals with serious implications for housing market which is currently stagnant with housebuilding figures down and forecast to go further down due to political and market uncertainty.
- Always try to employ locally as much as possible and have great pride in this but do have to bring in staff and materials from central belt – would be a nightmare.
- Will take houses out of housing market and 5% out of projects such as NHS or Education infrastructure.
- Will impact ability to be competitive against other contractors – cited example of recent job they had to decline for this reason.
- Already had to decrease workforce but this would lead to further redundancies.
- It has never been more challenging for house building here due to planning timescales and new building regulations coupled with reduced buyer confidence (buyer interest down by around 10%).
- Concern about Government funding being directed to other parts of Scotland due to social housing benchmarks which may not be able to be met.
- Argyll and Bute were first to declare housing emergency – then Scottish Government declared one – but steps are not being taken to help here. This will exasperate the problem.
- Currently unable to take on apprentices due to lack of projects.
- Only solution is two way route with no lights and no convoy otherwise Argyll will not be open for business.

[REDACTED]:

- Budgets assigned for MOD: Coulport £630m, Faslane £909.8m
- SSE Transmission for West Coast £1.1bn, pumped storage hydros £2.5bn
- Reading what has been presented is not right – 11 minutes is not at all accurate. Good time of day 20-30 minutes, bad time can be 60-70 minutes. One lane for four years would lead to major loss of jobs across Argyll.
- We could tar the forestry road tarred and ready within 6 months.
- Recent landslips were not at the area where the shelter will be, so there will still be closures even when permanent solution delivered.
- Argyll will be brought to a stop.
- Appreciate arguments given about forestry road and regulations for trunk roads however these standards are not met on half the roads in Argyll.
- Business study for this was done by designers in London – that is serious red flag.
- Would cripple the whole economy in Argyll and hundreds of jobs if not more.

Cllr John Armour:

- Questioned the 11 minute delay and how it was calculated – advised this was calculated on average of 24 hour period. There were lots of concerns raised that this does not reflect actual delays at peak times during the day and also that it is working on existing volumes of traffic when a number of factors suggest the volumes will increase.

[REDACTED]:

- Suggestion that calculations on delay should be done for 7am-7pm time period, not over 24 hours.

Brendan O'Hara MP:

- Should the impact be even half as bad as is suggested it would be catastrophic – cannot go ahead as proposed.
- Suggestion that all who attend the roundtable sessions sign a letter setting out an agreed position on the need for a rethink and delivery of two way road at all time.

Jackie Baillie MSP:

- Noted work of many elected representatives to challenge for best outcome
- Noted that economic and social impact amount to much higher cost than cost of delivering two way OMR.

Jenni Minto MSP:

- Hearing significant financial impact and risk to jobs
- Significant human impact which can't always be quantified
- Calculating the estimated delay during peak travel time as opposed to 24hr period is a clear piece of work that must be done

Session Three – Tourism & Hospitality

Additional Attendees:

- [REDACTED]– Portavadie
- [REDACTED]– Association of Scotland's Self Caterers
- [REDACTED]– Inveraray Jail
- [REDACTED], George Hotel
- [REDACTED], Loch Lomond & The Trossachs

[REDACTED]:

- Tourism represents significant part of big business in Argyll and Bute and ease of access is pertinent.
- Combination of issues with RABT and ferries causes serious damage already.
- Highlighted possibility of Visitor Levy which could be introduced by Argyll and Bute Council and the added pressure that would put on businesses.
- Anything that adds to visitors travel time could have impact on numbers.
- HGV concerns have already been discussed however this could cause problems for supply chain impacting T&H businesses.
- Scotland is already on the high end of costs for travel destination in global market, can't afford to have anything leading to costs increasing. Overall impact on value of what is offered to customers.
- Serious concern about comms on radio and in press – cited example of recent land slip with radio Scotland reporting 'road closure from Helensburgh turnoff.' Frequent reporting of road being closed is misleading and puts visitors off.
- Need consideration of a two way system for medium term solution – appreciate cost involved but financial impact of current proposal far more significant.
- Issues on hillside worse than ever – used to have landslips in winter, now they are happening in August.

[REDACTED]:

- Biggest concern is on communication – need to project the positive that road is open but frustrating the press always focus on the negative.
- Level of information provided by Transport Scotland and BEAR Scotland not helpful – cited example of signs at Cothouse outside Dunoon suggesting the road was open when it was not which would cause very significant wasted mileage.
- Notes the use of acronyms such as 'OMR' and 'RABT' on signs not helpful for tourists who are not familiar with the terms.
- Since 1989 jail has been open all year round and we are very proud of this as it has meant we can offer full time jobs – unfortunately this winter we will have to close and have redundancies due to increased costs and reduced visitors.

[REDACTED]:

- Conducted a survey and got 85 responses – they suggest current proposals for 4 year one way system would cause structural economic and reputational damage that would be long last.
- Some businesses fear losses of up to 50% - clear for most losses will escalate sharply. Such losses would make many businesses permanently non viable.
- Proposals would deter any new investment for foreseeable future.
- Need for market reassurance through alternative transport links, improved infrastructure and financial support should these proposals go ahead.
- Should they go ahead – it has to be completed in less than four years.
- Possible alternative of forestry road should be considered.
- Mental health crisis in sector – this will not help for those in Argyll.

[REDACTED]:

- Good hospitality businesses work on around a 5% margin, about to have a 5% increase in costs.
- Expect to lose around 30% of customers when this work begins
- Predict direct impact of £1m on sales per year along with marketing costs to try and mitigate.

- Indirect impacts such as lack of confidence to invest and inability to employ as many staff.
- Google & Apple Maps regularly say the road is closed as does Radio Scotland – someone must be accountable for this.
- If this goes ahead financial support for businesses is essential or they will not survive.

[REDACTED]:

- The National Park is a tourism destination and we know from businesses within the park that it is already a challenging environment to operate in.
- Concern about disruption to recreational access to Arrochar Alps. Perhaps alternative arrangements to ensure access is still possible at times or creation of recreational routes.

[REDACTED]:

- On communications issue – Cabinet Secretary and BEAR Scotland have raised this with BBC on numerous occasions. Share the frustrations on this issue. Will undertake to raise this again.

Jackie Baillie MSP

- Issues go beyond communications as issues on road embedded in our psyche. Improved communications and signage are mitigation but most important is permanent solution.

Jenni Minto MSP:

- Notes work by Cabinet Secretary on communications issue previous, know that there had been some improvement following this but agree it has again slipped and is unacceptable.
- Importance of people's wellbeing – hospitality is the provision of wellbeing
- Today an opportunity to gather real impression of impact on communities in Argyll and Bute

Session Four – SME's

Additional Attendees:

- [REDACTED]– Argyll Estates
- [REDACTED]– Mid Argyll Chamber of Commerce
- [REDACTED]– Campbeltown
- [REDACTED]– Ardkinglas Estates
- [REDACTED]– Federation of Small Businesses

[REDACTED]:

- Argyll facing depopulation and present population unbalanced – many young people leaving and never coming back.
- Despite challenges Argyll punches above its weight.
- Scotland has predicted growth including in some parts of Argyll
- Current four year proposals would cause serious impact to businesses in Inveraray and beyond – they rely on visitors getting in and out with ease
- Predict at least a downturn in visitors of 25% over the four years
- Inveraray a very popular destination for day trips however feel this would no longer be the case.

- Indirect issues such as recruitment and retention have to be considered.
- Argyll must not be disadvantaged once again when there are better options
- Solution – A83 remaining open whilst other road is built. If it has to be in same place, then two way OMR with no traffic lights.

[REDACTED]:

- The bulk of Argyll industry relies on travel over the RABT
- Issue of keeping people in employment – four year restricted access would pose serious challenges
- Big concern about construction industry and in particular house building when we are already in a housing emergency
- Added costs to haulage will have impact to all businesses and the wider economy
- Tourists are deterred by the media messaging – have complained about BBC road reports for years – this adverse messaging impacts businesses.
- Expect costs for many businesses to rise anywhere from 5%-10%
- If not factored into contracts, this could cause penalties
- Host of other challenges facing businesses here already – ferries, visitor levy, STL legislation
- Feel that if we were closer to Edinburgh we would not be in this position and closures as damaging as these would not be considered. 20% of Scotland's landmass but neglected in terms of transport links

[REDACTED]:

- Increased haulage costs could be 30%
- At present, deliveries from England to Glasgow at £40 then cost additional £60 for Glasgow to Campbeltown
- Serious investment in Campbeltown and Kintyre by distilleries and Machrihanish resort however these are threatened by uncertainty around the road.
- Whisky revenue goes to public finances but this will be impacted by these works.
- Fear that tourists are shying away from the area
- Feel that tunnel would be better solution
- Need ferry service to Campbeltown for people of Kintyre.

[REDACTED] also provided a written submission which is included at the foot of these notes

[REDACTED]:

- FSB have around 400 members across Argyll and Bute
- 3-4 years feels very excessive timescale for this disruption with no guarantees that it will actually be delivered in that time.
- Need financial support for businesses that will be impacted – small grants for businesses.
- Concern about resilience of the OMR and likelihood of it staying open for the duration of the closure.
- Suggestion of proactive push for engagement on social media to improvement messaging issues. Get message out that Argyll remains open for business.

[REDACTED]:

- Cairndow a small community but feels the issues acutely
- Loss of income for estate could be £100k - £200k per annum
- Will adversely impact visitor number and interest in hosting events such as weddings
- Margins are low and would be very vulnerable with increased transport costs
- Overall financial impact on estate could be around £1m over the four year period.
- Immediate decrease in routine maintenance work

- Forecast for Treeshop (significant local business) shows a 50% reduction in sales and therefore staff by the fourth year.
- Will cause investment to be put on hold should these proposals go ahead.
- Also impact on childcare provision in area due to increase in fuel costs and journey time staff member who travels from Arrochar an example.
- Not large companies that can absorb such increased costs
- Knock on effect of costs to Government through increased social security and to Council through less Council Tax income
- Any financial assistance scheme would be difficult to administer and inevitably lead to unfairness
- Only answer is a better solution for the road.

[REDACTED] provided additional information in writing which is copied at the foot of these notes.

Jenni Minto MSP:

- Illustration here that even in a small community impact could be significant

Session Five – Public Sector

Additional Attendees

- [REDACTED] – Police Scotland
- [REDACTED] – Mid Argyll Transport Volunteers

[REDACTED]:

- Background on organisation – volunteers getting vulnerable people to key medical appointments. 40-60 round trips to Glasgow in a four week period.
- Road is absolutely critical and delays are a constant concern.
- Often have to leave 1-2 hours early to ensure time for diversion if necessary.
- Health service has tightly scheduled appointment and delays on the road can mean they are missed – which has cost implication for NHS and can be life and death situation for some patients.
- Volunteers are affected on a personal level when appointments are missed due to delays on the road.
- Volunteer organisation that is out of pocket when there are issues.
- Huge rise in clients using the service from around 50 to around 600 in small number of years

[REDACTED]:

- Main concern around both emergency and non emergency access for police (and other emergency services).
- Subdivisions in Helensburgh and Cowal often need to cross this road.
- Any hold ups in emergency situation would be a serious worry.
- Often need to move officers between stations to ensure there is appropriate numbers for safety – it can be problematic for nightshifts if they can't get from Helensburgh to Dunoon.
- These issues can lead to paying officers overtime which is very expensive for Police Scotland.
- Often required to move prisoner if staffing numbers aren't met – they are taken to Clydebank. If there is not access through the RABT this can be a very serious issue.

[REDACTED]:

- Staffing a major point of concern. Have remedied some of this with hybrid working but a number of frontline officers and staff still require to travel over RABT.
- Council have concerns around impacts to tourism and economy.
- Feel not enough of an offering to young people – this is increasing our ageing population.
- Concern that shelter will only cover one area of the road – need to look at entire route.
- On the communications issue – should consider giving people opportunity to sign up for regular updates on the road via text.

[REDACTED] also provided a written submission on impact to waste collections, copied at the foot of these notes.

Jenni Minto MSP:

- With ageing population reliance on access to medical appointments likely to increase
- Overall very productive day – grateful to all for their contributions and will take actions away and update all attendees.

The following summary of the roundtable meetings has been provided by [REDACTED] of the A83 Campaign Group:

The A83 at the RABT is not simply a roadworks project, with restricted single lane access for the past 5 years, Argyll has already had a significant impacted on businesses, investment and on peoples welfare. Additional delays using the OMR under convoy was proved to be far greater than estimated by Transport Scotland, and is unanimously seen as an economic catastrophe for Argyll by all the participants at these round tables.

The estimates provided at the round table show the cost of delays and business losses are likely to be circa £500m over the lifetime of this project, with further population decline and business failure unless a way is found to upgrade the medium term solution to 2 way. Argyll will be further disadvantaged as new businesses, investors, and visitors who are turned away or discouraged by inaccessibility will not come, they will go elsewhere, and they may never come back.

The human element is also important, people and businesses of Argyll are resilient, but they cannot absorb the sustained disruption we have seen over the past 5 years or see this get worse by the use of the OMR convoy. The current situation having a huge impact on staff and is making recruitment which is already challenging worse, with employees leaving the area and those that stay finding it difficult to access services in the central belt. Unless decisive action is taken to reopen the two way road without restrictions, we face more business closures, stalled investment, and a tourism economy in long-term decline. The message from all sectors is clear: we need urgent reliable two way access, without it, Scotland risks losing not only businesses, but the confidence of visitors on which our rural economy depends.

In addition to improving the medium term solution to two way a number of additional measures were also highlighted during the day:

- *Urgent, transparent travel updates – ensuring people and businesses can plan with confidence. The current Traffic and Bear Scotland websites are often out of date, are difficult to navigate, with google/satnav and radio information providers often show the road closed when it is not.*
- *With the increasing timber volumes coming out of Argyll, it would seem entirely*

- *prudent for a sensible discussion to explore the expansion of the Timberlink scheme*
- *to relieve significantly more future pressure from the RABT. The Ayrshire wood*
- *processing businesses would be more than willing to engage with government to*
- *fully explore this option to update the 2011 Argyll Woodland Strategy that*
- *specifically highlighted the expansion of Timberlink as a key strategic priority.*
- *Business support for using western ferries at Dunoon could benefit local hauliers and*
- *businesses with road equivalent tariffs in order to avoid using the RABT route. A*
- *similar scheme would be useful if a regular ferry service could be reestablished from*
- *Campbeltown.*
- *Direct business support – grants, tax relief, or rates adjustments to keep viable*
- *businesses alive during this periods when the main road is restricted to a single lane*
- *or OMR under convoy.*

Written submissions:

[REDACTED]- AKVA Group Scotland Ltd:

On the proposals to close the A83 at the Rest and be Thankful for 4 years and rely on a single Carriageway Convoy over the OMR for the duration.

This proposal if it goes ahead will:

- Severely curtail and damage the economic, social and cultural life of Argyll, even more than the current intermittent closures of the A83 have done. As there really is no effective alternative route.
- The suggested alternative route up the A82 is unsuitable, as it is fundamentally not a safe route, as an HGV and bus cannot safely pass each other, the mix of bike, motorbikes, tourist traffic, HGVs on a subsiding carriageway often strewn with rocks and floods make it literally a death trap, avoided by locals. And it can take up to an extra 2-3 hours and adds significant cost. If the minister is determined to pursue a single way convoy solution for the OMR it should be contingent on upgrading the A82 in advance of any interim single way solution on the OMR.
- Any interim solution for the A83 whilst works are underway should be 2 way carriageway, without traffic lights.
- The single convoy system proposed for the A83 OMR – will not be fit for purpose as it will unnecessarily lengthen journey times- the average delay estimation is somewhat farcical at 11 minutes each way and is not indicative of delays during peak time hours. That 11mins would be about the current delay with traffic lights on the main carriageway. I incidentally drove the road on Friday after the meeting and the delay was 9 minutes southbound at 17:30 and 6 minutes North bound at 22:45 – with a catch all sign saying “delay up to 15mins”. At peak time I would envisage the delay will be around 60 mins on the OMR convoy at current traffic levels -without the additional predicted traffic increase.
- My view is the one shared by almost everyone at the meeting is that the proposed solution is the wrong one, as the entire hillside is unstable and the rock bypass will only cover part of the area at risk, meaning the saga will continue indefinitely after additional huge sums have been spent. A new route on the south forestry road or a redesign of the OMR would appear to be a more cost-effective solution.
- The strength of feeling in Argyll over the A83 issue means that the constituency would be unlikely to deliver either an SNP MP or MSP at the next election – as constituents are not blind or stupid they can see for themselves the vast sums spent upgrading east-coast road transport infrastructure in a quick and timely manner – this A83 farce has been going on for +20 years as Argylls economy and population declines.

As for impact on our business:

At AKVA Group we specialise in supplying sea- based and land-based fish farm technology: our kit is present on almost every fish farm site in Argyll. Argylls share of Scottish Salmon production is about 25% of all fish grown in Scotland and export value of ¼ of total £1 billion of farmed salmon exports, so Argylls share is approximately £250m almost all of this will pass down the A82 or A83 plus a significant proportion of the total exports. A lot of this production is flown from Glasgow Airport and timely delivery and shelf life is essential.

- AKVA Group employ 18-20 engineers at any time across the highlands average or 4 working in Argyll – we estimate our vans do 4 return journeys a week over the rest, delays of 4 hours a week at £75/hr = £15,000 year
- We have had 2 engineers leave due to constant stress of road delays - re recruitment and training costs lost are in region of £20,000, we will continue to recruit from central belt as multitasking skilled engineers are in short supply.
- Supply chain delays can be highly impactful in fish farming, as every fish needs fed on every site every day - the consequences of critical parts delay for farmers are highly significant in terms of lost growth production. Whilst we hold stock locally in our Lochgilphead unit, sometimes the inevitable happens and critical parts are flown into Glasgow airport and transported to site. The cost of a single day missed feeding on one farm, at mid cycle biomass feeding 30 tonnes per day =£54,000. Argyll has around 30 active marine farms at one time in production.
- The impact on our business of the proposed delays on the A83 OMR is relatively small, whilst we operate in a highly competitive business environment, and every penny is hard earned.
- The impact on our customers and Scottish exports is potentially very large, as you heard from the hauliers present at the meeting and highly significant.

[REDACTED] – Ardkinglas Estates:

Impact of 4 years OMR on Ardkinglas Estate

Ardkinglas Estate's financial position is currently fairly stable, but is dependent on income from a number of commercial leases, - Bakkafrost, Cooke Aquaculture and McCrae's Clachan quarry being the principal ones. The viability of those commercial sites will be at serious risk from the proposed use of the OMR. The potential loss of income to Ardkinglas Estate could be between £100,000 and £200,000 per annum. For any additional investment (in major building renovation works or new projects) the Estate relies on bank loans and/or income from one-off film location projects. The OMR proposal could deter most film producers from using this area during that four year period, with a potential loss of income to the Estate in the region of £100,000. At a smaller, but equally important, scale, the OMR use is likely to adversely affect the number of visitors to Ardkinglas Woodland Garden, the number of bookings for the Butler's Quarters self catering accommodation and the number of weddings and other events using Ardkinglas House. This could amount to a loss of £50,000 per annum. One of the Estate's self-employed contractors currently lives in Arrochar. He travels to work on the Estate an average of

three times a week. Prolonging his return journey by 30 – 60 mins would result in an additional cost to the Estate of approx. £1,800 per annum. In the past other members of staff have commuted from Helensburgh and in the future staff recruitment could be made more difficult by the OMR use. Clachan Farm operates as a Contract Farming business, with a flock of 900 ewes and some cattle. It has been financially stable for many years but margins are low and it is particularly vulnerable to increased transport and delivery costs. Ardkinglas Estate has some areas of commercial forestry, one part of which will be due for felling within the next five years. Again, margins are low and vulnerable to transport costs. Overall, the financial impact on the Estate over four years of OMR use could be in the region of £1,000,000. It is almost certain that there would be continuing financial impact for many years beyond that, with serious consequences for employment in the area. Another of the indirect consequences of this financial impact would be an immediate reduction in routine building maintenance and upgrade work on the Estate. This risks starting a cycle of decline which it would be hard to reverse in the future

4-year forecast with OMR diversion for Tree Shop, Cairndow.

Based on previous times when road is shut, I would envisage the impact of long-term closures of the A83 (with OMR diversion in place) to be catastrophic for our business, The Tree Shop Garden Centre & Café. I currently have 28 employees. I would have to reduce my staffing costs in line with losses. This does not include increases in energy costs or the minimum wage. I would think that by the end of Year 3 we would have to consider whether to continue trading.

Year 1: Sales impact: 20 - 25% reduction in sales and profit. £300,000 less turnover. £18,750 less profit. Reduce staff by 7 people.

Year 2: 30 – 35% reduction in sales and profit. £420,000 less turnover. £26,250 less profit. Reduce staff by a further 2.8 people.

Year 3: 40 – 45% reduction in sales and profit. £540,000 less turnover. £33,750 less profit. Reduce staff by another 2.8 people.

Year 4: 50 – 55% reduction in sales and profit. £660,000 less turnover. £41,250 less profit. Reduce staff by another 2.8 people

Cairndow Community Childcare – OMR impact

What are the direct cost implications to your organisation, sector or region.

The cost implications will arise from increased time and fuel costs for our staff, users, delivery services and suppliers – all of which are likely to lead to increased prices and wage requirements which will impact our financial viability. We currently have one full time member of staff who travels from Arrochar every day and already struggles to meet the demands on her time as she needs to return home to collect children from school etc. All our supply deliveries use the road and will certainly be impacted. Families with children in Arrochar and Tarbet will be discouraged from using our facility which will again impact us financially.

What are the risks and indirect cost impacts such as investment, recruiting the right workforce, potential loss of trade or difficulties in accessing services in a timely way.

If Families with children in Arrochar and Tarbet are unable to use our facility there is no other childcare available to them locally. Staff recruitment is already a major issue for us and if we lose key staff due to the difficulties with reaching us we will struggle to re recruit. We rely on our public play area to help maintain our financial stability. Increased travelling hours for visitors will reduce time available for leisure activities such as our play area.

Cairndow Stagecoach Inn – OMR impact

The continuous use of the Old Military Road as a diversion will be devastating for The Stagecoach Inn. This narrow, unreliable route is not fit for the volume of traffic it now carries, and its constant use deters tourists, coaches, and even local customers from travelling through the area. For a business like ours, which depends on passing trade and visitor numbers, this is not simply an inconvenience—it is an existential threat. The resulting decline in footfall will slash revenue, endanger jobs, and jeopardise the future of the inn.

Loch Fyne Oysters:

Loch Fyne Oysters has been a roadside institution since 1978 and is reliant on the A83 providing a regular supply of passing trade for approximately 90% of our retail and restaurant business.

We sell our products throughout the UK to small customers and large retailers and export all over the world.

There are many benefits to this upgrade on the A83 but with 4 years of construction there is a high risk many businesses will not be around to see the rewards.

Direct Cost Implications:

• Restaurant:

- **Reduced Numbers:** Reduced access and increased travel time will lead to less bookings and fewer 'walk ins', particularly during key tourism periods. This directly affects revenue and profitability.
- **Cancellations:** We often see more cancellations when travel time is increased, customers from further afield can often underestimate how long it takes to get here from the central belt and 'permanent' roadworks will magnify this issue.
- **Staffing:** Increased travel time for staff getting to work may lead to late opening times and could ultimately encourage staff to look for alternative employment opportunities.
- **Increased Marketing Spend:** To combat reduced visibility and accessibility, we may need to increase our spend in advertising, marketing and promotional campaigns to attract visitors via alternative routes.
- **Operational Disruption:** Staff shortages due to travel difficulties could lead to increased overtime costs and delayed deliveries will impact the ability of the restaurant to provide a full range of meals. Increasing stock levels is not a solution when dealing with perishable goods and fresh seafood.

Retail:

- **Supply Chain Costs:** Delays in deliveries of goods will result in missed sales opportunities and the need to hold higher stock levels, which, as previously mentioned is not possible when shellfish and seafood are the main products sold.
- **Customer Footfall Decline:** Reduced traffic through the area will lead to a drop in tourist spending, directly impacting daily takings and cash flow.
- **Staffing Challenges:** Similar to hospitality, retail staff may face commuting difficulties, leading to increased absenteeism or turnover, which carries recruitment and training costs.

Aquaculture:

- **Transporting Live Shellfish:** Our aquaculture operation relies on timely and temperature-controlled transport of live seafood. Any delays or route changes could compromise product quality, leading to financial losses and reputational damage.
- **Regulatory/Compliance Risks:** Delays could affect our ability to meet strict regulatory timelines for transport and delivery, potentially resulting in penalties or lost contracts.

These direct costs, if sustained over a prolonged period, could significantly impact our financial planning and operational resilience. Risks and Indirect Cost Impacts:

Workforce Recruitment and Retention:

- In an area where recruitment is particularly difficult due to low population density and we rely on possible candidates from further afield.
- Accessibility challenges may deter potential employees, particularly seasonal and part-time staff who rely on public transport or commute from surrounding areas.
 - Existing staff may face longer, more stressful commutes, leading to increased absenteeism, reduced morale, and higher turnover—each carrying recruitment, training, and productivity costs.

Loss of Trade and Customer Confidence:

- In hospitality and retail, customer behaviour is highly sensitive to travel convenience. Prolonged disruption could lead to a decline in visitor numbers, especially from tourists unfamiliar with alternative routes.
- Aquaculture customers, particularly those in export markets, may lose confidence in our ability to deliver reliably, impacting long-term relationships and contract renewals.

Investment and Expansion Hesitation:

- Infrastructure uncertainty may discourage internal investment in new facilities, upgrades, or product lines. Investors may also view the region as high-risk, delaying or withdrawing planned capital injections.
- This could stall growth plans and reduce competitiveness.

Supply Chain Vulnerability:

- Retail and aquaculture operations depend on timely deliveries of goods, feed, packaging, and equipment. Disruption could lead to out of stock items, production delays, and increased reliance on costly contingency measures.

Environmental and Reputational Risks:

- Longer transport routes may increase our carbon footprint, conflicting with sustainability commitments and customer expectations.
- Reputational damage could arise if we are perceived as unable to adapt or maintain service standards during the disruption.

These indirect impacts, while harder to quantify, could have lasting effects on our operational resilience, brand reputation, and regional economic contribution.

[REDACTED] – Argyll and Bute Council:

The additional HGV bulker lorry journeys from Argyll and Bute to the Central Belt following the municipal landfill ban implementation from 1st January 2026 is estimated at circa 1,300 per annum i.e. additional 25 return journeys per week. I am waiting on our Waste Team projecting costs and once I have these will send them on.

The estimated number of existing annual HGV bulker journeys which currently go over the Rest delivering waste and recycling to the central belt with approximate annual costs are as follows:

- Co-mingled recycling and glass deliveries from PPP area and Island sites plus all other existing recycling loads delivered from Island sites – 500 journeys @ total cost = circa £500k
- In addition there is other recycling journeys from the PPP area such as wood, garden waste and scrap metal etc which we do not have separate journey numbers or costs for as these are all included within the PPP unitary charge rate . Would estimate there could be another existing circa 400 annual journeys from the PPP area to the central belt with these and some other recycling materials . I can't extrapolate the haulage costs for this as its all wrapped up within the PPP unitary charge rate but if taking an average of £450 per load, this equates to £180k per annum (400 x £450 per load).

Therefore currently there are an estimated 900 existing HGV bulker journeys per annum with municipal waste and recycling going over the Rest and be Thankful costing an approximate £680k per annum.

The additional landfill ban HGV bulker return journeys of 1,300 per annum from 1st January 2026, we estimate will cost an extra £700k in haulage annually.

If wondering why the estimated haulage cost for additional 1,300 journeys of residual general waste re landfill ban equates to a similar cost for 900 mainly recycling existing journeys, the main reason is due to residual general waste is heavier than most recycling materials . Therefore bulker maximum haulage payloads can be maximised much more often for general waste compared to recycling.

If there is additional disruption at the Rest, then this will no doubt add further haulage costs as well as logistical difficulties. For example with the recent closure at the Rest , a haulage contractor added a further £250 per load due to the extra time and costs incurred.

[REDACTED] – Road Haulage Association:

1. What are your organisation's concerns associated with the disruption from the construction of the LTS.

It is now over five years since the major land slip that closed the RABT for two hundred days and despite many millions being spent on catch pits, netting and investigation works the road has never re-opened to two-way traffic since then.

The disruption has added cost and delay to a sector which operates on an average of 2% margins. The road haulage sector literally drives the Scottish economy and the A83 is a key strategic route for moving whisky, timber, aquaculture, pharma goods, all the materials for windfarms before even looking at the lifeline services our trucks bring to the isolated communities on the Western Isles and remote areas of the mainland. In short, all key supply chains and everything the Scottish Government are relying on to support and invigorate the Scottish Economy. The longer the disruption goes on the greater cost that hauliers have to swallow or pass on to customers, making the cost of living in Argyll more expensive, the strain on hauliers and their drivers almost untenable and the risk of losing hard fought for contacts, to companies in the central belt.

2. What are the risks and indirect cost impacts such as investment, recruiting the right

workforce, potential loss of trade or difficulties in accessing services in a timely way.

HGV drivers must comply with the EU Drivers Hours Regulations as well as the Working Time Directive and so must operate on two clocks each with mandatory rest periods after set time frames of work. Delays on the A83 have led (and continue to lead) to trucks and drivers missing delivery times (thus attracting penalties) and in some cases have led to not making the journey back to base as their hours run out. These mandated breaks mean that neither the driver nor the truck is where it needs to be to swap shifts, be loaded for the next days work or take the rest back at home. All of which leads to an unhappy and disgruntled workforce and employer.

The sector has for many years suffered from a driver shortage and recruitment in rural locations has proven to be particularly difficult. Issues such as the very valid example given above does nothing to attract anyone to the sector. Who wants to work in a role where they regularly find they cannot get home at night or are treated badly at delivery point because they are late through no fault of their own.

The same shortage exists for mechanics and technicians. Who would want to use the A83 to travel too and from work when it will be closed for extended periods of time (under the current medium and long-term plan) and at best regular diversions?

3. What can be done to ease the impact during the 3–4-year period.

The RHA along with Western Ferries met with the Cabinet Secretary to propose a funded voucher system to facilitate hauliers using the Dunoon to Gourock Ferry but she did not feel that such a scheme was tenable. We remain of the opinion that this scheme has merit.

We listen to our members and there is a groundswell of opinion from businesses from many sectors who feel that options recommended by Transport Scotland (medium and long term) are not the answer to the problem and that alternative solutions may be available which are less costly, quicker to carry out and therefore would lead to less disruption over a shorter period of time. RHA is keen that the art of the possible is explored fully and that the testimony given from our members, from the engineers, quarry owners and road builders who will give evidence on the 12th of September will be given due consideration and credence.

[REDACTED], HG Salmon UK:

First, as Treasurer of the South Knapdale Community Council. The A83 was discussed during yesterday's (17th February) Community Council meeting. These are not formal minutes but rather my interpretations of the discussion.

1. Unexpected Delays and Disruptions:

Unanticipated disruptions have caused a ~1h wait or detour, which has led to a lot of grievance. Most notably:

1. Flights missed
2. Hospital appointments missed
3. Court cases missed

I am personally most worried about trauma accidents. Often the Lochgilphead hospital sends patients to the more advanced hospitals in Glasgow through road transport. I will also assume there will be more strain on the helicopter services.

2. Expected Delays:

Consensus has been the additional time is not welcomed, however if planned it could be managed.

The second, as MD of Landcatch, a company that employs 28 people and provides 18 houses to the staff. Our land based freshwater farms (11million juveniles p.a.), is not different than many others in Argyll. These are local farmers such as Kames, Bakka Frost, Mowi, Scottish Sea Farms and Otter Ferry. The A83 is our lifeline to bring feed and oxygen. Landcatch purchase 700t of feed, at £1.5m pounds,

and about £700k of oxygen and both are critical to sustain life.

Keep note, that all trucks in the UK have a tracker and are governed by Working Time Directive.

1. Delays:

Every delay prevents the truck from returning on time to the depot, and either requires the lorry to stay overnight, or will require two drivers. Both adding significant costs, but most importantly prevents the truck from refilling and going to another site. BOC only has rigid-oxygen lorry in entire Scotland that services the remote farms like my own.

2. Disruptions:

Without feed, we can starve the fish. Without oxygen, we got no fish. During the summer we require deliveries **every 3 days**. Recognising the risks of the A83, 2h delay through A82 or breakdown of the only truck in Scotland. We invested £500k to have a back-up oxygen generator in the event of any disruptions which should help us get to 8 days without a delivery. As a business we already have to invest in our own housing because the Council does not prioritise the construction, and now also have to spend wasteful investments in back-ups because of road insecurity. I rather have spent the money in business growth.

[REDACTED], Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers:

The Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers (ASSC) conducted a survey between 26 August and 11 September 2025, receiving 85 responses from operators across Argyll & Bute and the wider selfcatering sector. The findings are stark: a prolonged four-year closure of the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful would not simply inconvenience visitors, it would cause long-lasting, structural damage to Argyll & Bute's economy, communities, and reputation as a place to visit and invest.

This is not a hypothetical concern. Disruption is already routine. Businesses are losing bookings now. Guests are sitting in traffic for hours, missing ferries, or abandoning visits altogether. Operators describe the situation as "the final straw" in the face of ferry chaos, rising costs, and regulatory pressures.

Three central messages emerge from the survey:

- **Disruption is universal and confidence is draining away**
Every single business (100%) is affected. 30% are already losing bookings, and one in three are not confident about their future if the situation persists. Visitors are questioning whether Argyll & Bute is accessible at all.
- **Economic losses will escalate sharply**
72% expect moderate–severe impacts from a four-year closure, with turnover losses typically in the range of 10–30%. Some fear losses of up to 50%. This scale of revenue decline would make businesses unviable, not just for a season but permanently.
- **Reputational and investment damage will be severe**
57% believe prolonged closure would deter any new investment. Many warn that the reputational hit to Argyll & Bute as a tourism destination would be permanent, compounding ferry disruption and deterring visitors who may never return.
- **What businesses say they need most**
Real-time travel updates – 85%
Guests must have accurate, reliable information. At present, they are travelling blind, with confidence eroding daily.
- **Marketing reassurance – 79%**
Without visible reassurance that Argyll & Bute is open for business, visitors will choose destinations that appear more accessible and reliable.
- **Improved ferry and alternative transport links – 67%**
Ferry disruption is already biting. If the A83 fails, ferries must not. Investment in resilience and reliability is critical.
- **Direct financial support – 55%**
Operators cannot absorb years of double-digit turnover losses. Grants and tax relief are needed to bridge the gap.

- **Infrastructure improvements – 51%**
Businesses are not asking for luxuries – they are asking for signage, diversions, and alternative routes that actually work.

The reality on the ground

- Visitors are facing detours adding hours to their journey, with some reporting being stuck for up to **five hours in traffic at Inveraray**.
- Operators are warning of “**permanent reputational damage**” and guests spreading the word that Argyll & Bute is inaccessible.
- Many respondents compared the closure to ferry disruption, calling this “**the final straw**” for visitor confidence.
- Businesses that have operated successfully for decades are now questioning their viability. One respondent noted: *“I cannot afford to close my business – but I may have no choice.”*

Key Findings

- 100% of businesses experience disruption (56% occasionally, 39% frequently).
- 30% already experiencing cancellations and lost bookings.
- 72% expect moderate–severe impacts from a four-year closure.
- 10–30% average turnover losses predicted; some up to 50%.
- Only 11% are very confident about their future; 31% are not confident.
- 57% believe prolonged closure would deter new investment.
- 13% would consider permanent closure if disruption persists.

What we are asking MSPs to support

1. **Urgent, transparent travel updates** – ensuring guests and businesses can plan with confidence.
2. **Targeted marketing reassurance** – a national campaign to keep Argyll & Bute on the visitor map.
3. **Investment in alternative transport** – especially ferry reliability and resilience.
4. **Direct business support** – grants, tax relief, or rates adjustments to keep viable businesses alive.
5. **Practical infrastructure improvements** – diversions, signage, and safe alternative routes to keep the region connected.

Conclusion

The A83 closure is not simply a roadworks project. It is a potential **economic catastrophe** for Argyll & Bute and a **reputational crisis** for Scotland. Visitors who are turned away by inaccessibility will not simply delay their trip – they will go elsewhere, and they may never come back.

Self-catering operators are resilient and deeply embedded in their communities, but they cannot absorb sustained disruption in isolation. Unless decisive action is taken now, we face **business closures, job losses, stalled investment, and a tourism economy in long-term decline**.

The message from the sector is clear: **we need urgent communication, reliable access, and direct support. Without it, Scotland risks losing not only businesses, but the confidence of visitors on which our rural economy depends.**

[REDACTED] Campbeltown:

The following projects are underpinned by significant investments totalling £546m and linked to 4-500 jobs in the area but could be put at risk by continued poor connectivity with the rest of Scotland.

- An investment of £13m by Brave New Spirits at Machrihanish
- A £100m investment by Machrihanish Dunes in a new golf course and accommodation
- Whisky investments by Glen Scotia of £7m and £6m for new bottling plant for Springbank.
- A new Bonded warehouse in Campbeltown costing £20m

- A £400m bid by the Machrihanish Airbase Community Company to build a Space port and is one of two shortlisted bids.

[REDACTED], RABT Campaign Group:

Statistics of the impact of 4 years on the OMR on the tourism and hospitality sector.

- Argyll and Bute’s economy depend heavily on tourism, accounting for 15% of private sector jobs. In 2023 Argyll and Bute had over 2.8 million visitors, providing an economic impact of over £461 million. (Argyll and Bute visitor levy short life working group, Development and Economic Growth 1st October 2024)
- There was general agreement that the economic impact of long term travel into Argyll using the OMR will have an impact of between 10 and 30% impact on the tourism industry in Argyll. (Association of Scotland’s Self-Caterers survey results)
- The closure to Glasgow the higher the impact as day-trippers as disruption makes day trips less viable. Both the George Hotel and Inveraray Castle highlighting a 25% reduction in turnover from recent experience over the latest set of OMR diversions in 2025.
- It was also highlighted that building a business in their tourism and hospitality sector happens over time as people stay and recommend the experience. The difficulties experienced travelling over the RABT while using the OMR will take years to build back customers, so what might be a 4 year diversion on the OMR might require additional time to build back that reputation and business.
- It was suggested by David Sumsion that any decline with build over the years so might start at 15% but build to 40-50% by year 4 and then drop back again as restrictions to traffic flow are lifted.
- Suggested impact for a 4 year OMR temporary road could be:

Year	Best case		Worst cast	
	% impact	£m impact	% impact	£m impact
1	10	46	15	69
2	15	69	20	82
3	20	82	25	115
4	25	115	30	138
5	15	69	20	82
6	5	23	10	46
Total impact on Tourism and hospitality		404		532

Even if these estimates where out by a factor of 4 they are significant and should be taken as a serious indication of what will happen.

Estimates from the Association of Scotland’s self-Caterers also suggest that 13% of their members would be forced to close with an extended period of OMR working were to go ahead. If this were to be seen across the sector, we could also see a more permanent reduction of £60m pa ongoing impact from businesses closing for good.



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

Jenni Minto MSP
Keir.Low@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202500485450
Your Reference: A83 Rest and

be Thankful 3 October 2025

Dear Jenni,

Thank you for your letter of 19 September on behalf of your constituents concerning the A83 Rest and Be Thankful project following the recent A83 Roundtable meetings held in Inveraray on 12 September 2025.

I first of all would like to thank you for arranging the recent A83 Roundtable meetings and for providing a comprehensive minute of the meeting. I would also like to thank your constituents who attended the meetings and provided valuable input on the potential impacts during construction of the Long Term Solution (LTS) to their business or industry.

From the feedback I received from my officials at Transport Scotland who attended the A83 Roundtables, coupled with the discussion at the A83 Taskforce on 1 October, I did gain a strong sense of feeling from stakeholders of their economic and wellbeing concerns in respect of the use of the Old Military Road (OMR) as a diversion route during construction of the LTS. I can confirm that I have also received a letter from Brendan O'Hara MP which you referred to in your letter with the same concerns and seeking reconsideration of the proposals to use the OMR under traffic lights and by a convoy system for extensive periods during construction of the LTS, despite approximately 60% of it becoming a two way road as part of the medium term solution (MTS) proposals.

As discussed at the A83 Taskforce meeting, I have instructed Transport Scotland to review the MTS options which were previously assessed, which included use of the forestry track and a full two way option. I'm aware of the concerns of your constituents and also that time has passed since these options were assessed.

I have also asked Transport Scotland to continue to engage with [REDACTED] of the A83 Campaign Group with a view to holding a second Roundtable meeting with the Group for open discussion on the MTS options previously assessed.

In tandem, Transport Scotland will engage with Highland and Island Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council with a view to setting up an Economic Action Group to consider potential economic impacts during construction of the LTS and possible mitigation or policies to assist in alleviating such impacts.

My officials at Transport Scotland will also progress further engagement with the Road Haulage Association and Western Ferries to consider possible measures to encourage hauliers to use ferry services as opposed to the A83.

It may be helpful for you to note that the preferred option for the MTS to improve the OMR was announced by the then Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP, in December 2022 following detailed assessment of various options, including two way options for the OMR and forestry track, and also the use of the single lanes on the OMR and forestry track in a loop arrangement. Transport Scotland also met with the A83 Campaign Group to discuss the MTS and explain why options had been sifted out at a Roundtable meeting held in June 2024. Transport Scotland followed up this meeting by submitting a paper to the A83 Campaign Group on 6 September 2024 summarising the two way options which were considered and sifted out of the assessment for a MTS, in advance of draft Orders being published and the formal objection period commencing.

Finally, I would like to reassure you and your constituents that the Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority, and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.

As I outlined at the A83 Taskforce meeting, I remain keen to maintain progress to address the landslip challenges for this lifeline route to communities and businesses in Argyll and Bute. However, I also recognise the strong feeling from stakeholders regarding the use of the Old Military Road under traffic lights and by a convoy system for extensive periods during construction of the LTS. As such, Transport Scotland will progress the above work with the A83 Campaign Group in parallel with continuing to progress work on delivering improvements at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful.

I hope this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

FIONA HYSLOP
Cabinet Secretary for
Transport



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Fiona Hyslop MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Transport
Transport
Scottish Government, St Andrew`s House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

25 September 2025

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

A83 Rest And Be Thankful

We understand that following the meeting held in Inveraray to discuss the economic, and social impact of the proposed convoy and traffic management system on the Old Military Road during the 4-year closure of the Rest And Be Thankful, that Jenni Minto MSP has been in contact with both yourself and the First Minister`s office to convey the strength of feeling that exists among businesses in Argyll & Bute.

We the undersigned, also wish to put on record the grave concerns that we have about the introduction of convoy and traffic management on the Old Military Road, and the economic damage that would have.

You will be aware that an extremely broad section of stakeholders were present at the Inveraray meeting, including parliamentarians, local councillors, Argyll & Bute Council, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Mid-Argyll Chamber of Commerce, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, the Federation of Small Businesses, the National Farmers Union of Scotland, The Road Haulage Association, and independent ferry operators.

Also in attendance were representatives of Argyll & Bute`s construction industry, the aquaculture sector, the fishing and shellfish industries, public transport providers, forestry, road haulage industry, aggregate quarrying, the voluntary sector, renewable energy, as well as our hugely important tourism sector.

While we are relieved that a long-term solution for the Rest And Be Thankful has been identified, we are unanimous in our belief that having the main arterial route into Argyll & Bute reduced to a single carriageway, and accessible only by a convoy system and traffic lights for 4 years, would be economically catastrophic for Argyll & Bute.

Telephone: 01436 670 587
Email: brendan.ohara.mp@parliament.uk

Every sector of our economy would be adversely affected by this proposal, and many businesses, both large and small have collated evidence of the negative economic impact that this proposal would have on them. They are more than happy to share those figures with you and your colleagues at Transport Scotland.

We ask that as a matter of urgency, you reconsider this proposal and that any work on the Rest And Be Thankful which would necessitate the closure of the existing carriageways, does not begin until an alternative is found; an alternative which guarantees the free flow of traffic into, and out of Argyll, without recourse to either a convoy or traffic lights.

We look forward to hearing

from you. Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Brendan O'Hara MP
Argyll, Bute & South Lochaber

Jackie Baillie MSP for Dumbarton
Cllr Jim Lynch, Leader Argyll & Bute Council
Cllr John Armour, Roads Argyll & Bute Council
[REDACTED] Chamber of Commerce
[REDACTED] Federation of Small Businesses
[REDACTED] Road Haulage Association
[REDACTED] Road Haulage Association
[REDACTED] Peter McKerral Ltd
[REDACTED] B.Mundell Ltd
[REDACTED] A.M. Transport
[REDACTED] National Farmers Union, Scotland
[REDACTED] Clyde Fisherman's Federation
[REDACTED] A&L McCrae
[REDACTED] Ardkinglas Estates
[REDACTED] MacLeod Construction
[REDACTED] Argyll Community Housing Association
[REDACTED] Bakkafrost
[REDACTED] AKVA Group, Scotland
[REDACTED] Glennon Brothers Scotland
[REDACTED] Portavadie
[REDACTED] The George Hotel
[REDACTED] Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers and Argyll & the Isles Tourism Co-operative
[REDACTED] Inveraray Jail
[REDACTED] Mid-Argyll Transport Volunteers
[REDACTED] Rest And Be Thankful Campaign Group

Brendan O'Hara MSP

By email: brendan.ohara.mp@parliament.uk

Our Reference: 202500486367
Your Reference: (Case Ref: BO28704) 9 October 2025

Dear Brendan,

Thank you for your letter of 25 September 2025 on behalf of attendees at the A83 Roundtable meetings held in Inverary on 12 September 2025 concerning the A83 Rest and Be Thankful project.

Firstly, I would like to thank all attendees for their valuable input on the potential impacts during construction of the Long Term Solution (LTS) to their business or industry.

In your letter you raise concerns and seek reconsideration of the proposals to use the Old Military Road (OMR) under traffic lights and by a convoy system for extensive periods during construction of the LTS which, I would note, will become a two way road for approximately 60% of its length as part of the medium term solution (MTS). From the feedback I received from my officials at Transport Scotland who attended the A83 Roundtable meetings, coupled with the discussion at the recent A83 Taskforce on 1 October, I have gained a strong sense of feeling from stakeholders of their economic and wellbeing concerns in respect of the use of the OMR as a diversion route during construction of the LTS. I'm aware you did not attend the recent A83 Taskforce meeting but that your Senior Parliamentary Assistant, [REDACTED], attended in your absence.

As discussed at the A83 Taskforce meeting, I have instructed Transport Scotland to review the work undertaken to date in relation to providing two-way operation for the MTS including use of the forestry track and a full two way road option. I'm aware of the concerns of A83 Roundtable attendees and also that time has passed since these options were assessed.

I have also asked Transport Scotland to continue to engage with [REDACTED] of the A83 Campaign Group with a view to holding further meetings with the Group for open discussion on the MTS options previously assessed.

In tandem, Transport Scotland will engage with Highland and Island Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council with a view to setting up an Economic Action Group to consider potential economic impacts during construction of the LTS and possible mitigation or policies to assist in alleviating such impacts.

My officials at Transport Scotland will also progress further engagement with the Road Haulage Association and Western Ferries to consider possible measures to encourage hauliers to use ferry services as opposed to the A83.

It may be helpful for you to note that the preferred option for the MTS to improve the OMR was announced by the then Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP, in December 2022 following detailed assessment of various options, including two way options for the OMR and forestry track, and also the use of the single lanes on the OMR and forestry track in a loop arrangement. Transport Scotland also met with the A83 Campaign Group to discuss the MTS and explain why options had been sifted out at a Roundtable meeting held in June 2024. Transport Scotland followed up this meeting by submitting a paper to the A83 Campaign Group on 6 September 2024 summarising the two way options which were considered and sifted out of the assessment for a MTS, in advance of draft Orders being published and the formal objection period commencing.

Finally, I would like to reassure you and all A83 Roundtable attendees that the Scottish Government is committed to an infrastructure solution to address the A83 Rest and Be Thankful landslip risks. Delivery of a permanent and resilient solution is a priority, and we will continue to seek ways to achieve that as quickly as possible.

As I outlined at the A83 Taskforce meeting, I remain keen to maintain progress to address the landslip challenges for this lifeline route to communities and businesses in Argyll and Bute. However, I also recognise the strong feeling from stakeholders regarding the use of the Old Military Road under traffic lights and by a convoy system for extensive periods during construction of the LTS. As such, Transport Scotland will progress the above work with the A83 Campaign Group in parallel with continuing to progress work on delivering improvements at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful.

I hope this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

FIONA HYSLOP
Cabinet Secretary for Transport

Annex C – Correspondence sent to or from Scottish Ministers in relation to the A83 Rest and Be Thankful from the 27th September 2025 to the 27th October 2025

From:Redacted - 38 (1)(b) on behalf of Cabinet Secretary for Transport
Sent: 30 September 2025 16:06
To:Redacted - 38 (1)(b) Cabinet Secretary for Transport
Cc:Redacted - 38 (1)(b)
Chief Executive Transport Scotland
Subject: RE: A83 Rest and Be Thankful - Traffic on OMR

Good afternoon,

Ms Hyslop has noted the update.

Redacted 38 (1)(b)
Redacted 3

Redacted - 38 (1)(b) | Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Transport – Fiona Hyslop MSP | Scottish Government Redacted - 38 (1)(b) | cabsecfortransport@gov.scot

From:Redacted - 38 (1)(b)
Sent: 30 September 2025 11:45
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport <CabSecfortransport@gov.scot>
Cc:Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Chief Executive Transport Scotland <ceo@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: A83 Rest and Be Thankful - Traffic on OMR

Dear Cabinet Secretary

I would like to inform you that due to the latest weather forecast we are moving traffic from the A83 onto the OMR today from 18.00. Daily calls will continue with external partners and a decision when the traffic will return to the A83 will be made once a more favourable forecast has been received.

To note a yellow warning has been issued from 1st to 3rd October (Wed-Fri) for the forecast rainfall events. An increasingly wet and windy period develops across the RBT with potential for impacts from rainfall intensity and accumulations developing, with rainfall totals forecasted up to 80 mm on 2nd October (Thu). This will be the first rainstorm event after the A83 Butterbridge slide on 1st September.

Our forecast show that potential rainfall of up to 250mm has been forecast next few days ahead and remains unsettled over the weekend.

A media release will be issued and contact has been made with colleagues at Argyle and Bute Council and local ferry companies to make them aware.

A further update will be provided once a decision has been made to return to the A83.

Regards,
Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Project Manager | Special Projects Team | Roads Delivery
E: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

7ER

transport.gov.scot

From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b) Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Transport
Sent: 13 October 2025 12:32
To: TS Corporate Correspondence Support Team <TSS@transport.gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Open Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Re- ongoing roadworks at the RABT

MR please

From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)
Sent: 13 October 2025 11:34
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport <CabSecfortransport@gov.scot>
Cc: 'Baillie J (Jackie), MSP' <Jackie.Baillie.msp@parliament.scot>; 'Eagle T (Tim), MSP' <Tim.Eagle.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Jenni.Minto.msp@parliament.scot; Grant R (Rhoda), MSP <Rhoda.Grant.msp@parliament.scot>; Ariane.Burgess.msp@parliament.scot; Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Subject: Open Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Re- ongoing roadworks at the RABT

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing to ask for your help in persuading Transport Scotland to open the A83 at the RABT to two way traffic and removing the single lane closure that has been in place for the last 5 years. Clearly if we are to see any benefit at all from the investment in mitigation measures such as catch pits and remove the burden of continual lane closures on the economy of Argyll, something needs to change.

We are told that further clearance work is required, and the road is unlikely to open this year. However, since September there has been no work along this stretch of the road, and we have seen the roadworks extended to its longest extent seen since it was closed to 2 way traffic on the 4th August 2020. Based on previously supplied information, an average cost of £120,000 is spent just on traffic management per month, that's £7.5m spent since 2020.

We are asking that the roadworks the RABT are removed and the road reinstated to two way as soon as possible. Any work that is required is carried out quickly and uses temporary lane closures for that section only, so that disruption is kept to a minimum.

As you have seen from the output of the round table discussions on the 12th September delays at the RABT are impacting people in Argyll, and it is concerning that all the time, energy and money spent on the short term measures will be wasted for an entire parliament. You will be doing a great service to the area if you are able to influence the removal of these roadworks.

Kind Regards
Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b) Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Transport

Sent: 15 October 2025 09:17

To: TS Corporate Correspondence Support Team

Subject: FW: Open Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Re- ongoing roadworks at the RABT

MR please.

Kind regards,

Redacted - 38 (1)(b) | Assistant Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Transport - Fiona Hyslop MSP | The Scottish Government | Web: www.gov.scot | Email: cabsecfortransport@gov.scot

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From: Baillie J (Jackie), MSP <Jackie.Baillie.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: 14 October 2025 16:38

To: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Cabinet Secretary for Transport

<CabSecfortransport@gov.scot>

Cc: Eagle T (Tim), MSP <Tim.Eagle.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Minto J (Jenni), MSP

<Jenni.Minto.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Grant R (Rhoda), MSP <Rhoda.Grant.msp@parliament.scot>; Burgess A (Ariane), MSP <Ariane.Burgess.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Subject: RE: Open Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Re- ongoing roadworks at the RABT

Dear Cabinet Secretary

I write in support for the request from John Gurr and the RABT Campaign Group. I would be grateful for a copy of your reply.

Best wishes

Jackie

From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Sent: Monday, October 13, 2025 11:34 AM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport <CabSecfortransport@gov.scot>

Cc: Baillie J (Jackie), MSP <Jackie.Baillie.msp@parliament.scot>; Eagle T (Tim), MSP

<Tim.Eagle.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Minto J (Jenni), MSP <Jenni.Minto.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Grant R (Rhoda),

MSP <Rhoda.Grant.msp@parliament.scot>; Burgess A (Ariane), MSP

<Ariane.Burgess.MSP@Parliament.scot>;

Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Subject: Open Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport Re- ongoing roadworks at the RABT

CAUTION: This e-mail originated from outside of The Scottish Parliament. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing to ask for your help in persuading Transport Scotland to open the A83 at the RABT to two way traffic

and removing the single lane closure that has been in place for the last 5 years. Clearly if we are to see any benefit at all from the investment in mitigation measures such as catch pits and remove the burden of continual lane closures on the economy of Argyll, something needs to change.

We are told that further clearance work is required, and the road is unlikely to open this year. However, since September there has been no work along this stretch of the road, and we have seen the roadworks extended to its longest extent seen since it was closed to 2 way traffic on the 4th August 2020. Based on previously supplied information, an average cost of £120,000 is spent just on traffic management per month, that's £7.5m spent since 2020.

We are asking that the roadworks the RABT are removed and the road reinstated to two way as soon as possible. Any work that is required is carried out quickly and uses temporary lane closures for that section only, so that disruption is kept to a minimum.

As you have seen from the output of the round table discussions on the 12th September delays at the RABT are impacting people in Argyll, and it is concerning that all the time, energy and money spent on the short term measures will be wasted for an entire parliament. You will be doing a great service to the area if you are able to influence the removal of these roadworks.

Kind Regards

Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

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Cabinet Secretary for Transport Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Còmhdhail Fiona Hyslop MSP/BPA

T : 0300 244 4000

E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Our Reference: 202500488860

Your Reference: ongoing roadworks at the RABT 16 October 2025

Dear Redacted - 38 (1)(b),

Thank you for your email dated 13 October 2025 regarding the ongoing roadworks at the Rest and Be Thankful.

As detailed at A83 Taskforce held on 01 October 2025 the traffic management at Rest and Be Thankful (RABT) is required to remain in place following the completion of the ground investigation of the Long Term Solution at the end of September 2025 for the essential remedial and improvement works.

These works include catch fence repairs at Phase 2, 4, 7 and 12, which are presently ongoing, westbound drainage improvements, which are due to commence on 20th October 2025, with other planned works to follow including, remediation at Phase 7 lower slope embankment and at Phase 3A lower slope and culvert, roadside VRS repairs and additional embankment and drainage remediation works following the landslides in early September 2025. Further works are also planned however they are subject to the programme of the Medium Term Solution and tree removal south of the RABT by Forestry and Land Scotland. All these works are essential to protect the resilience of the A83 before the completion of the Long Term Solution.

The traffic management extents have been increased since the landslides in early September 2025 to continuously monitor the Phase 14 channel. The overall length is maintained to avoid traffic queueing at highrisk area below channels over the autumn/winter months. Based on the on-site observation, traffic has now reduced from summer levels and delays are recorded between 2 and 6 minutes.

We will make effort and consider any opportunity to reduce or remove the traffic management as these essential works progress to minimise the disruption caused.

I hope this information is useful to you.

Yours sincerely

FIONA HYSLOP
Cabinet Secretary for Transport

From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)
Sent: 15 October 2025 19:41
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport Subject: A83
Rest and be thankful

Hi

I was wondering if you could advise me on the current works schedule at the A83 Rest and be thankful road. Now all the machinery has been removed and the weather is dry I am not understanding the need for the road to remain under traffic control.

I understand further work could be planned but opening the road fully in between time would be a welcome blessing for regular road users.

Kind regards

Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b) on behalf of Cabinet Secretary for Transport
Sent: 27 October 2025 13:53
To: Redacted - 38 (1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Transport
Cc: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

Subject: RE: A83 RabT emergency boulder removal at Phase 14

Redacted 38 (1)(b)

Good afternoon

Ms Hyslop has noted

Kind regards,

Redacted 38 (1)(b) | Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Transport - Fiona Hyslop MSP | The Scottish Government | Web: www.gov.scot | Email: cabsecfortransport@gov.scot

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From: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)
Sent: 23 October 2025 20:05
To: Cabinet Secretary for Transport <CabSecfortransport@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted - 38 (1)(b)

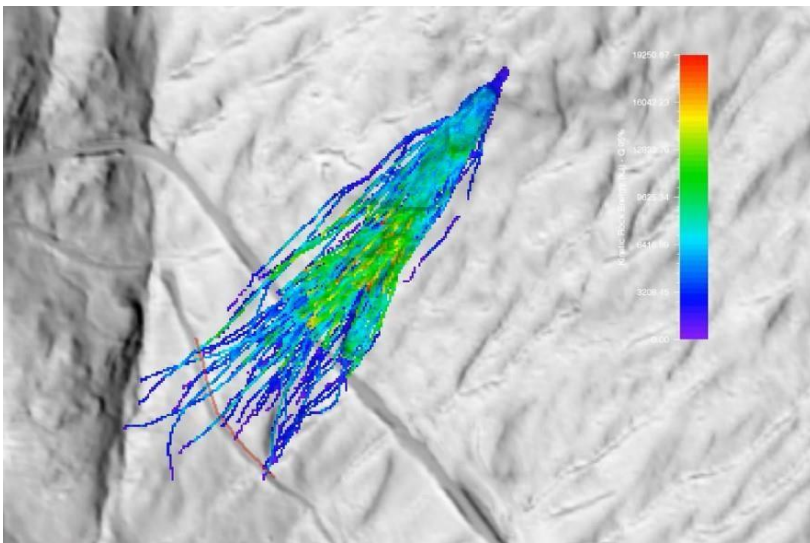
Subject: A83 RabT emergency boulder removal at Phase 14

Dear Cabinet Secretary for Transport

We would like to inform you of the following decision to undertake emergency works at A83 Rest and Be Thankful in the coming days in order to remove a large bolder that has been deemed to present a safety risk for the A83 and Old Military Road.

Hillside monitoring on 27 September 2025 detected a large boulder fall on the slope above the A83 (please refer to background below for images). Boulder 1 detached from the slope and came to rest downslope. Due to weather restrictions and access requiring specialist equipment the boulder assessment and surrounding area was carried out by remote imagery and historic high-definition photographs until access could be facilitated.

On Tuesday 14 October on-site inspections of Boulder 1, some adjacent boulders and the hillside were carried out. The assessment showed that the movement of Boulder 1 resulted in changes to the condition of an adjacent boulder (Boulder 2) leaving Boulder 2 more exposed and increasing its hazard level. Following the on site assessment a Rapid Mass Movement Simulation (RAMMS modelling) to assess the trajectory of Boulder 2 and its impact on the A83 and Old Military Road was carried out over the past week. The modelling showed a likelihood of Boulder 2 reaching the A83 and Old Military Road in the event of the boulder being mobilised.



RAMMS modelling output

Monitoring of Boulder 2 has not indicated any movement at present, however it now presents a credible hazard. With favourable short-term weather conditions the decision was taken for traffic to remain on the A83 under close monitoring until emergency works can be carried out.

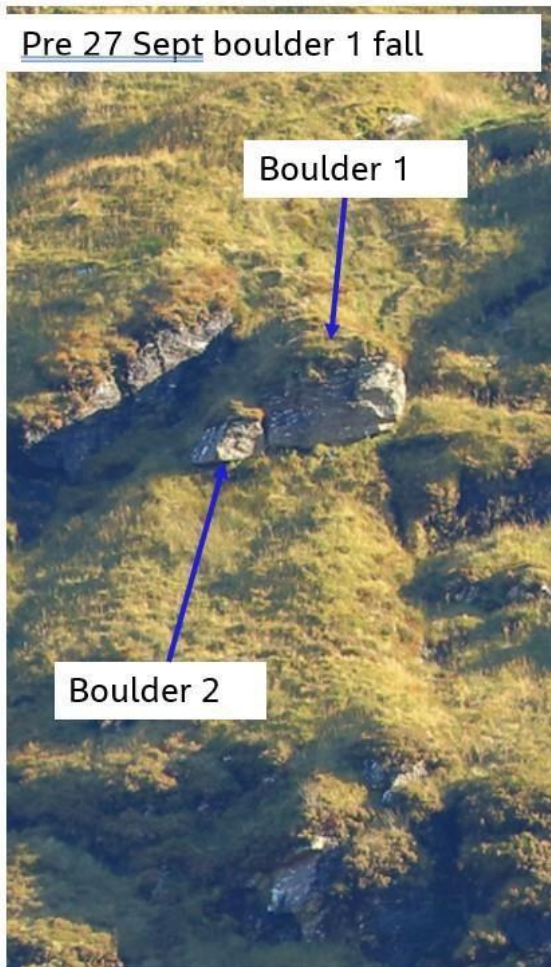
On Wednesday 22 October, the Old Military Road has been stood up as a proactive precautionary measure in response to the assessment of a boulder on the slope above the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful.

Emergency works to remove the boulder are planned to start on Monday 27 October for approximately 3 days. The emergency works will involve helicopter support for equipment staging and removal works on the hillside, traffic management on the A83, use of both the Old Military Road and SIDR as well as contingency measures for rapid reinstatement in the event of road surface or barrier damage.

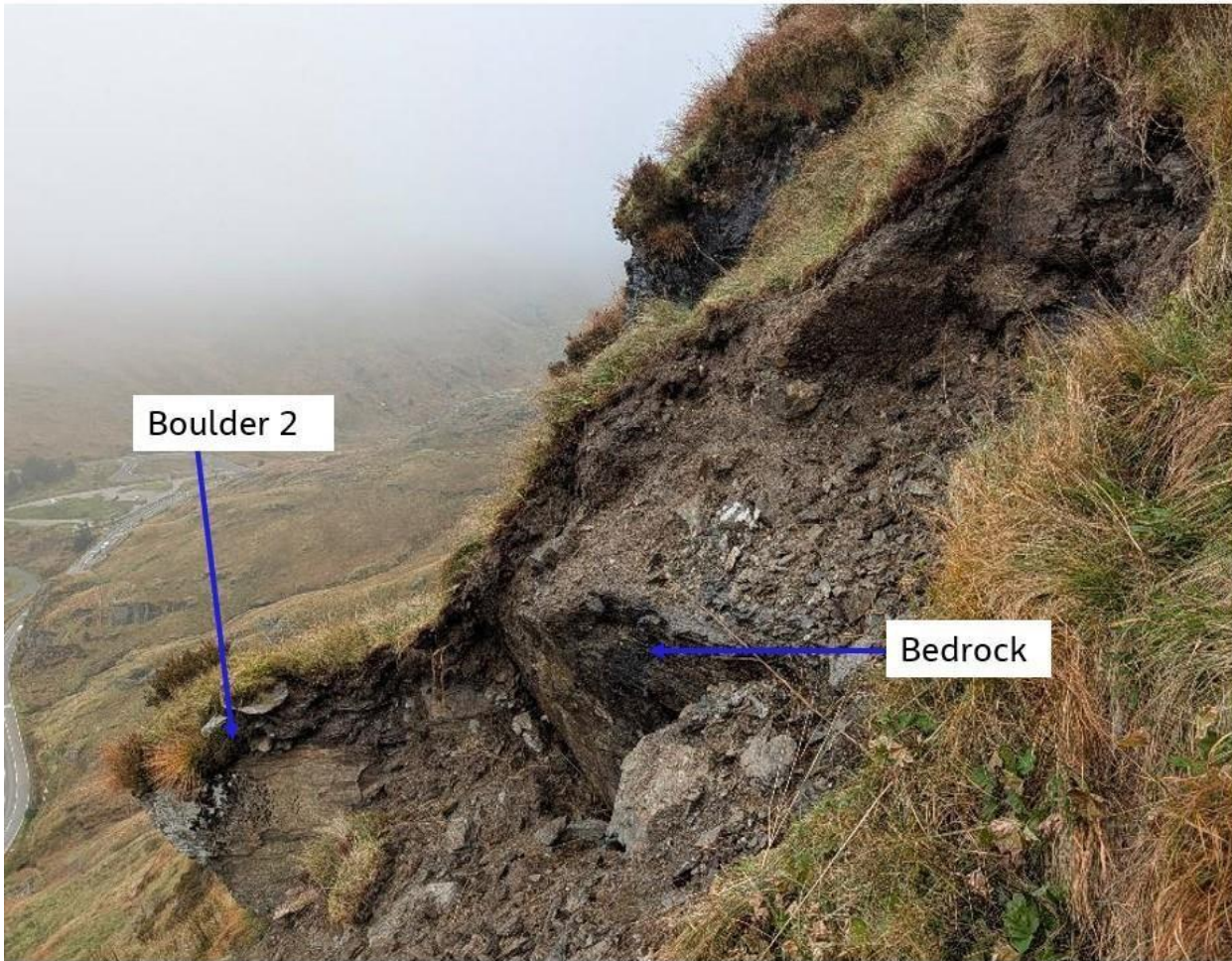
The removal of Boulder 2 is the only feasible solution to reduce risk to road users and operatives. This approach concentrates risk into a short, controlled window and ensures proportionality in line with ALARP (As Low As Reasonably Practicable) principles.

Background

1. On 27 September 2025, Boulder 1 detached from the slope and came to rest downslope, triggering an assessment of the adjacent Boulder 2. Boulder 2 was initially assessed as presenting no greater hazard than before Boulder 1 fell, based on remote imagery and historic high-definition photographs. However, an on-site inspection confirmed that the fall of Boulder 1 has changed conditions, leaving Boulder 2 more exposed and increasing its hazard level. Boulder 1 remains stable; no further intrusive works proposed with ongoing monitoring will continue to detect any change in stability.



2. Boulder 2, estimated size of 11m³, now sits on a wider exposed face with limited embedment, creating credible failure scenarios under erosion, wind loading, snow accumulation, or freeze-thaw cycles. Updated modelling confirms that if Boulder 2 mobilises, it could impact the A83 and the Old Military Road sufficient to damage barriers, pavement, and drainage structures.



3. Hillside containment strategies, including anchoring, mesh installation, and buttressing, were evaluated and rejected due to unacceptable risk to operatives, poor constructability in steep terrain, and uncertain performance under dynamic loading. Night-time works were also ruled out due to increased safety risk and inability to verify post-removal stability.
4. Direct removal via controlled release was selected as the only defensible mitigation strategy, concentrating risk into a short, managed operational window and aligning with ALARP principles

Programme for Works

Current intended programme of works will depend on prevalent weather conditions. On Wednesday 22 October the Old Military Road was stood up as a precautionary measure. On Monday 27 October all traffic will be diverted onto the Old Military Road in the early morning to facilitate the mobilisation of equipment onto hillside by helicopter. On Tuesday 28 October all traffic will be diverted onto the long diversion route via the A83, A82, A85 and A819 during the emergency removal works. The works are programmed to take place during daylight hours, with traffic staying on the long diversion route via the A83, A82, A85 and A819 until Wednesday morning in order to assess if A83 and the Old Military Road has been damaged by the removal procedure and commence day time repairs as necessary. On Wednesday 29 October a day light hours assessment of A83 and the Old Military Road condition will be carried out before traffic can return. The long diversion route via the A83, A82, A85 and A819 set-up will be retained should it be necessary to continue it's use in the event repairs to A83 and / or the Old Military Road are required.

Stakeholder Engagement and Media Strategy

A stakeholder update has been prepared with information on the programmed works and the need for the road closure and will be issued prior to the works commencing. Bear have also prepared a media release highlighting the need for the works and associated traffic management arrangements and durations. BEAR

will facilitate media updates and support throughout the works and will provide regular updates for stakeholders to ensure disruption is minimised. Further updates will be provided in due course.

Kind regards

Redacted 38 (X)(b)



5th floor, 177 Bothwell Street, Glasgow, G2

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Transport Scotland, the national transport agency
Còmhdaill Alba, buidheann nàiseanta na còmhdaill