

PE1610/Q and PE1657/P

Petitioner (PE1610) submission of 2 July 2018

While I welcome the views of the petitions committee and their wish to have a round table meeting of the stakeholders of the A75 and A77 at Holyrood, I have some concerns with a few items.

I recognise that the condition of the road surface, the encroachment of trees/verges into the roadway and the need for a 50mph HGV limit are all important factors in the problems faced by the A75, but I worry that these are in danger of distracting from the major issues facing the road. The Loch Ryan Ports have suffered from underinvestment in the infrastructure serving them for decades, all the while every other ferry port on the Irish Sea routes have been receiving investment in upgrading the roads infrastructure serving them and are now connected to the motorway network by dual carriageways. There is also a new threat in the run up to Brexit of direct routes being established between Ireland and the continent cutting out Scotland altogether.

While the ferry companies may not be talking about pulling out of the Scottish routes yet, unless something is started soon, such as a concrete plan for upgrading the A75 over the foreseeable future such as that currently underway for the A9, then it may be too late to do something meaningful should the route become unsustainable.

As well as the issues surrounding the ports, upgrades to the route would provide a real opportunity to revive, revitalise and re-invent the economy, opportunities and living standards for not just the area around the ports nor only for Dumfries and Galloway but for the whole of the South West of Scotland. Another round table meeting will be helpful but due to the importance of this issue to the Scottish economy and to Scotland's strategic links, I would suggest that a parliamentary debate may be the best way to have the importance of the issue recognised and to get things moving.