

Cabinet Secretary for Transport submission of 26 March 2024

PE1967/K: Protect Loch Lomond's Atlantic oakwood shoreline by implementing the High road option for the A82 upgrade between Tarbet and Inverarnan

Thank you for your letter of 11 March 2024 regarding the A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan Scheme following the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee meeting of 6 March 2024.

As confirmed in my letter of 30 June 2023, there is a lot of development work still to be undertaken on the scheme, which is being informed by our enhanced understanding of the specific complexities associated with improving this iconic route.

I can confirm that the Scottish Government continues to progress the preparation stages to conclude the detailed development and assessment process for this vital improvement scheme in advance of publication of draft Orders. Outstanding work on the scheme includes further engineering development and assessment, the requirement to engage further with those whose property is directly affected by the scheme proposals, additional environmental surveys and associated reporting, preparation of the detailed Environmental Impact Assessment Report, and subsequently the preparation and publication of the necessary statutory Orders. I am not yet able to confirm a detailed timescale for publication of draft Orders and the associated statutory consultation period because progress is dependent on completion of the above stages. However, I would like to reassure you that the Scottish Government will follow the requirements of the statutory process and I again confirm that, in due course, the petitioners will have the opportunity to formally comment on the proposals following publication of draft Orders.

With regard to further detail and clarification on the analysis of both route options, I can advise that this is available to view in the A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan Upgrade, Strategic Business Case, 2014 and A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan Upgrade, DMRB Stage 1 Assessment Report, 2014. The links to these documents were issued to the Committee in previous

responses of 6 February 2023 and 30 June 2023 and are quoted below for ease of reference.

- <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/51175/strategic-business-case.pdf>
- <https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/a82-tarbet-to-inverarnan/project-details/#52885>

The Committee has also requested information on the estimated costs and time required to repeat work already undertaken and carry out a new STAG appraisal for the A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan corridor.

The STAG framework is described more fully in the STAG Managers Guide at the following link

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-transport-appraisal-guidance-managers-guide/> and the Committee may wish to refer to this for further information on the framework.

The approach, including associated costs, to a further STAG appraisal of the A82 Tarbet to Inverarnan corridor would need fuller scoping in order to determine the scale of the re-appraisal, but it is estimated that it could take 12-18 months. However, it is important to note that undertaking a new STAG appraisal would return the project to the very start of the process with a fresh analysis of problems and opportunities and revisiting the Transport Planning Objectives. This would be followed by repeating the process of option generation, option sifting, option development and options appraisal. This would result in several years of delay to the scheme and also attract significant additional cost in revisiting the detailed appraisal and subsequent assessment stages already completed. As I set out in my previous submission to the Committee, this would unnecessarily repeat work already carried out and would not provide any value for the Scottish taxpayer.

I trust this is of assistance.

Fiona Hyslop