



TRANSPORT  
SCOTLAND  
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

# Access to Argyll and Bute (A83)

Preferred route exhibition for  
permanent, long-term solution

[transport.gov.scot/projects/a83-access-to-argyll-and-bute](https://transport.gov.scot/projects/a83-access-to-argyll-and-bute)



# Welcome

**Welcome to this public exhibition for the preferred route for the permanent, long-term solution to the challenges at the Rest and Be Thankful, part of the Access to Argyll and Bute (A83) scheme.**

Transport Scotland has undertaken detailed assessment work to develop a safe and resilient permanent solution to the issues faced at the Rest and Be Thankful.

In **September 2020**, 11 potential route corridor options were presented to the public to gather feedback and inform initial design and assessment work. In **March 2021**, the preferred route corridor was announced as the **Glen Croe** corridor and five potential route options were identified for further design work. Feedback was provided on the route options which included tunnels, viaducts and debris flow shelters. Throughout this process, regular updates were provided through the **A83 Story Map** and Transport Scotland has held regular meetings with the **A83 Taskforce**, now being held three times per year.

In **September 2022**, Transport Scotland appointed the Atkins WSP Joint Venture (AWJV) to take forward the design and assessment of both the long-term and medium-term solutions. The preferred route for the medium-term solution was then announced in **December 2022**.

The purpose of this exhibition is to present the **preferred route** that has been selected as the permanent, long-term solution and explain the next steps to deliver this solution for road users of the A83 and local communities.

Transport Scotland and their consultant AWJV will be happy to assist you with any queries you may have in relation to the project.



A summary overview leaflet is available for you to take away. There is also a feedback form where we would welcome your feedback and comments.



# Background

**The A83 Trunk Road is one of only two east-west strategic trunk road network connections between Argyll and Bute and the Central Belt. The section through the Rest and Be Thankful, also known as Glen Croe, is increasingly affected by landslides.**

The most significant recorded landslides at the Rest and Be Thankful occurred in August and September 2020. Following these unprecedented events, the former Cabinet Secretary instructed Transport Scotland to look at a long-term, resilient, and sustainable solution to the problem of landslides in Glen Croe.



A83 and Old Military Road from the Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park

## Timeline of actions to date:

### October 2020

Public consultation on the 11 proposed route corridor options

### March 2021

Glen Croe corridor identified as the preferred route corridor and initial feedback obtained on the five route options

### April 2021

Publication of Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 Report and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report

### September 2022

Atkins WSP Joint Venture (AWJV) appointed to take forward next stages of design for both the medium and long-term solutions

### December 2022

Improvements to the existing Old Military Road identified as the preferred option for the medium-term solution

### Spring 2023

Preferred route for permanent, long-term solution announced

### June 2023

Preferred route exhibitions

### Throughout

A83 Story Map updates

# Scheme objectives

The design and assessment considers the performance of options against the **scheme objectives** and the Scottish Government's five appraisal criteria, namely; **environment, safety, economy, integration and accessibility and social inclusion**.

The scheme objectives are:

## Resilience



Reduce the impact of disruption for travel to, from and between key towns within Argyll and Bute, and for communities accessed via the strategic road network

## Safety



Positively contribute towards the Scottish Government's Vision Zero road safety target by reducing accidents on the road network and their severity

## Economy



Reduce geographic and economic inequalities within Argyll and Bute through improved connectivity and resilience

## Sustainable travel



Encourage sustainable travel to, from and within Argyll and Bute through facilitating bus, active travel and sustainable travel choices

## Environment



Protect the environment, including the benefits local communities and visitors obtain from the natural environment by enhancing natural capital assets and ecosystem service provision through delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure

# Scheme assessment process

The preparation and development of trunk road projects follows the assessment process set out in the **Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)**. This is considered standard good practice and used throughout the UK.

This three-stage assessment process considers **engineering, environment, traffic and economic** criteria.

As an integral part of the process, Transport Scotland has and will continue to consult with a diverse range of stakeholders, local communities and interested parties, including, environmental, public transport and active travel groups.

The **DMRB Stage 1** assessment of the Access to Argyll and Bute (A83) scheme was completed in April 2021.

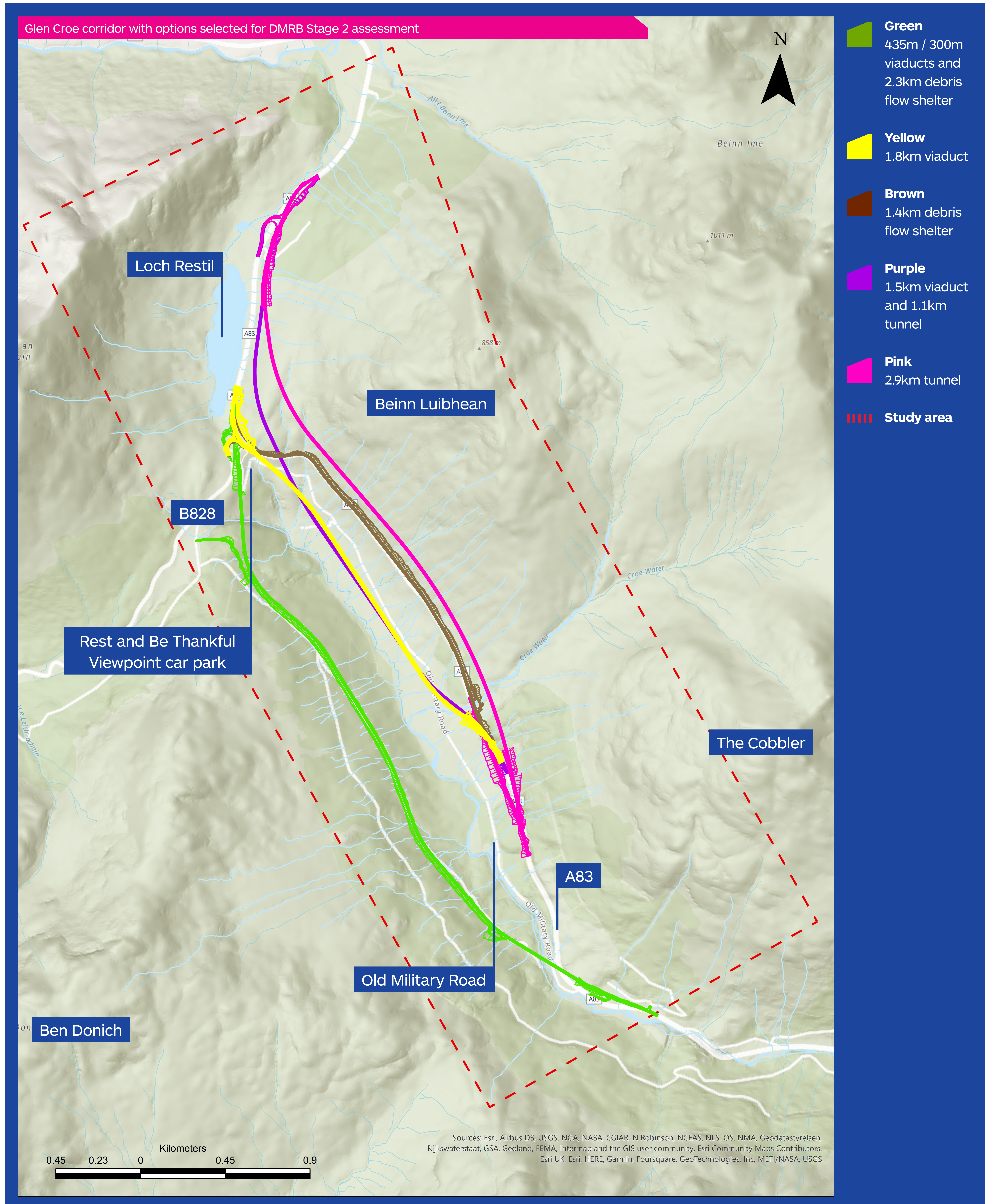
The **preferred route** for the permanent, long-term solution was announced in Spring 2023 and is available for you to view. The **preferred route** announcement marks the conclusion of the **DMRB Stage 2** assessment process.

The next step is to progress the **DMRB Stage 3** assessment of the preferred route, which is now underway.



# Scheme options

Permanent, long-term solution options



# Scheme options

The following three panels provide details of the options considered as part of the DMRB stage 2 process and how they were assessed against a range of criteria.

The **Green Option** is located on the western side of Glen Croe, on the lower slopes of Ben Donich. Our assessment has highlighted the potential for landslips on the lower and upper Ben Donich slopes. Therefore, a debris flow shelter with catch pit has been included along the majority of the **Green Option** to protect road users from future debris flow and landslides, similar to that of the Beinn Luibhean slope. The total route is 4.35km long with two viaduct structures to cross the Croe Water at the southern end and the steep ravine at the northern end.



Green Option – Southern viaduct and debris flow shelter



The **Yellow Option** is predominantly situated away from the existing A83 on the lower slopes of Beinn Luibhean, below the existing A83 and the Old Military Road.

The route is 2.5km long, with 1.8km of the route on a viaduct up to 90m above the ground. The remaining lengths to the north and south of the viaduct, are on embankment. Some of the viaduct piers require deflection structures to protect the pier from debris flow and landslides in the future.

The **Yellow Option** has been moved to the lower lying ground below the Old Military Road following design refinement that has considered the impacts resulting from construction and an assessment of resilience. The lower slopes of Beinn Luibhean, where the **Yellow Option** is now located, are less steep and less susceptible to ground movement. This makes the construction of the piers more efficient and reduces the extent of the temporary works.



Yellow Option – Viaduct

# Scheme options



Brown Option – Debris flow shelter

The **Brown Option** is generally located on the existing A83. To protect the road users from debris flows and landslides, a structure known as a debris flow shelter is required to cover part of the road considered to be at higher risk.

The form of the **Brown Option** has evolved to include a catch pit on the uphill side of the flow shelter structure. The purpose of the catch pit is to channel landslip material, allowing it to be removed safely and efficiently, without adversely impacting the road user or the downstream slope.

The **Brown Option** is 2.4km long, with the flow shelter and catch pit extending to 1.37km. The catch pit and protection wall extends a further 180m to further protect road users below the Beinn Luibhean slope and area of highest vulnerability.

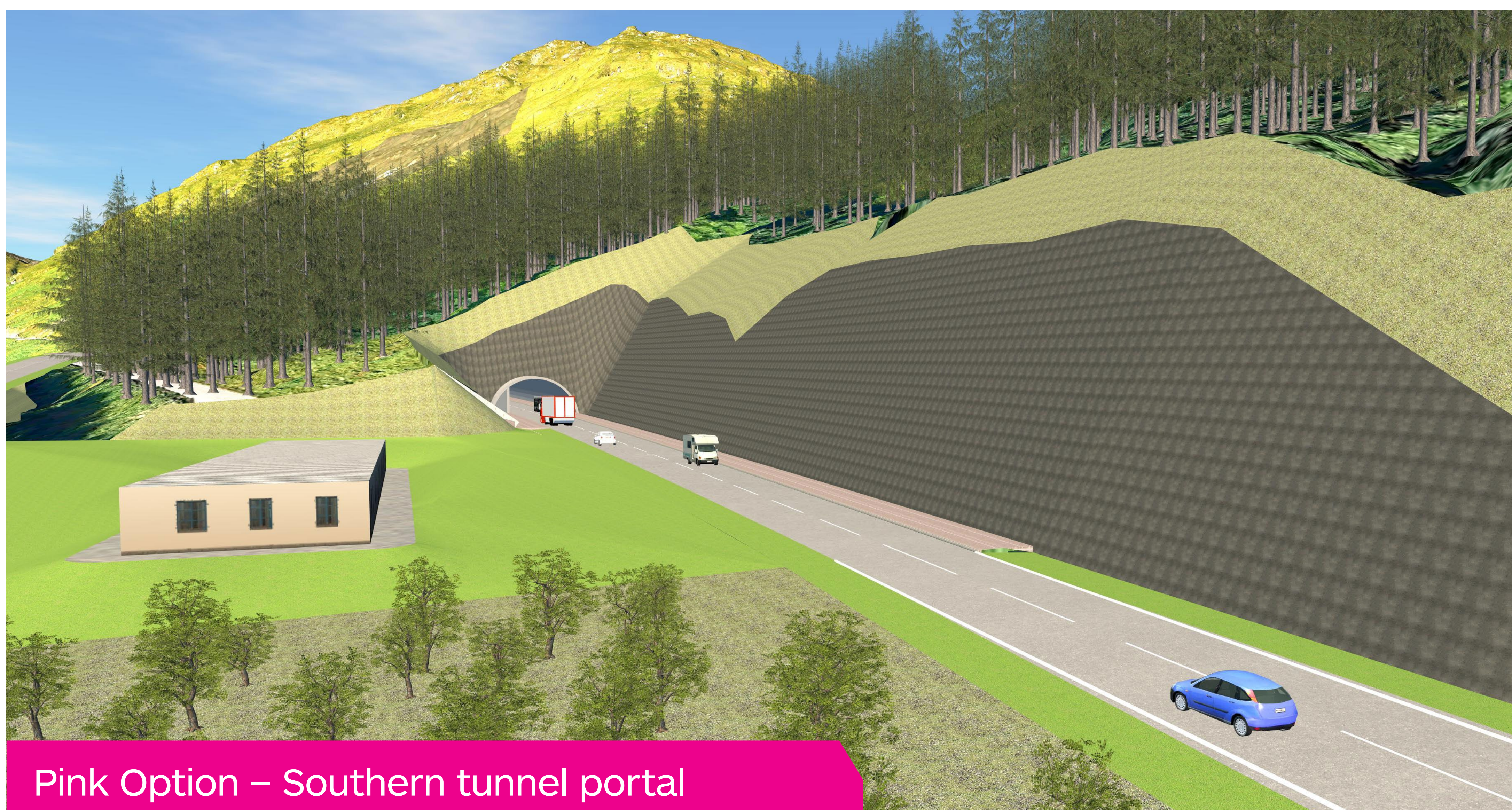
The **Purple Option** is predominantly situated away from the existing A83 on the lower slopes of Beinn Luibhean, below the existing A83 and the Old Military Road where adjacent ground is less steep and less susceptible to movement.

The route is 3.7km long, with around 1.48km of the route on a viaduct up to 52m above ground level. There is also a 1.2km tunnel located beneath the Old Military Road, existing A83 road and slopes of Beinn Luibhean.

As a result of the tunnel, the **Purple Option** bypasses the existing B828 Glen Mhor local road junction and Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park. Therefore, a new junction is required to maintain access. This involves using a section of the existing A83 and creating a new junction to connect the B828 Glen Mhor local road with the **Purple Option** (A83), north-east of Loch Restil.



Purple Option – Viaduct and tunnel



Pink Option – Southern tunnel portal

The **Pink Option** is located mostly away from the existing A83. The route is 3.94km long, located to the east of the existing A83 road, beneath the western slopes of Beinn Luibhean. The route includes a tunnel which is 3km long.

Similar to the **Purple Option**, the **Pink Option** bypasses the existing B828 Glen Mhor local road junction and Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park, requiring a new junction to maintain access.



# Assessment process

Environment, engineering and traffic and economic impacts of the Scheme Options have been assessed as part of **DMRB Stage 2**, which has now been completed. Environmental, engineering, traffic and economic assessments will also inform the development of the preferred route at **DMRB Stage 3**, which will be reported in an **Environmental Impact Assessment Report** and other **Stage 3 Reports**.

## Environmental assessment

The environmental assessment considers the following topics:

- **Air quality:** Traffic-related changes at sensitive receptors (e.g. residential areas, schools, hospitals).
- **Noise and vibration:** Traffic-related changes at sensitive receptors (e.g. residential areas, schools, hospitals).
- **Population and human health:** Land-use changes, agriculture and forestry effects, walkers, cyclists and horse riders, and severance of routes used by the community. Travellers using the new road.
- **Materials assets and waste:** Material resources, waste management.
- **Cultural heritage:** Archaeological remains, battlefields, landscapes and historic buildings.
- **Landscape and visual:** Landscape character (including designated areas), effects on topography and potential visual impacts affecting views from properties and on people outdoors.
- **Geology and soils:** Geological and soil resources, including designated sites. Groundwater, private water supplies, other sources of drinking water.
- **Road drainage and the water environment:** Flooding and flood risk, water quality, drainage and river processes, forms and sediments.
- **Major accidents and disasters:** Considers the vulnerability of scheme to risks from either major accidents or disasters.
- **Biodiversity:** Effects on designated ecological sites, and on important habitats (including rivers and woodlands) and species.
- **Effects on climate:** Considers the climate emissions assessment, i.e. the potential effects to the climate.
- **Climate vulnerability:** Considers the impact of climate change and associated extreme weather in the context of the scheme.

## Engineering assessment

The engineering assessment considers the following topics:

- **Local roads and accesses:** The impact on local roads and accesses which connect directly with the A83 carriageway or alternatively run adjacent to the A83 carriageway.
- **Construction duration:** The length of time required to construct each of the scheme options.
- **Resilience:** Events on Beinn Luibhean slope: Resilience relates to the closure of the A83 resulting in diversions for road users. This includes risk of unplanned closures due to external factors, but specifically landslide events at Beinn Luibhean.
- **Alignment with standards:** Considers the alignment of the design with the relevant engineering standards, including an assessment of where refinement of standards have been incorporated whilst still providing a safe and resilient solution.
- **Topography and land use:** Considers how the scheme options interface with the existing topography and land use.
- **Geotechnics and earthworks:** Complexity and extent of geotechnical works.
- **Hydrology:** Considers the complexity of the drainage system and culverts noting other hydro/hydromorphology elements are considered in the environmental assessment.
- **Structures:** All scheme options include for a significant number of structures including bridges, underpasses and retaining structures. This factor considers the design complexity of said structures both in relation to construction and maintenance.
- **Utilities:** Considers the impact of underground and overhead Public Utilities within the extents of the project, including the provision of services to support construction and operation.
- **Constructability (disruption):** Considers disturbance to road users during construction.
- **Operation and maintenance:** Considers the impacts of operation and maintenance interventions to structures, tunnels, flow shelters and engineered slopes.

## Traffic and economic assessment

The traffic and economic assessment considers the traffic and economic performance of the Scheme Options, including consideration of the ways the options improve the resilience, safety and operation of the route.

The A83 is considered key infrastructure in supporting the wider national economy through; connecting businesses and communities, facilitating access to essential services, and supporting jobs and activities in industries such as healthcare, education, aquaculture, forestry, tourism, energy and renewables. Therefore, consideration of the **wider economic benefits** also forms a key part of the assessment.

# Preferred route

The preferred route for the permanent, long-term solution at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful is the Brown Option and is shown on the following exhibition panels.

## Key features

- 2.4km of single carriageway improvements generally located on the existing A83
- 1,370m of debris flow shelter and catch pit
- 180m of protection wall and catch pit
- Improved junction with the B828 Glen Mhor local road
- Construction on the existing A83 will require temporary traffic management during construction, including diversion to the Old Military Road which will be upgraded as part of the medium-term solution (MTS). Further details of the MTS can be found on a later panel

## Key benefits

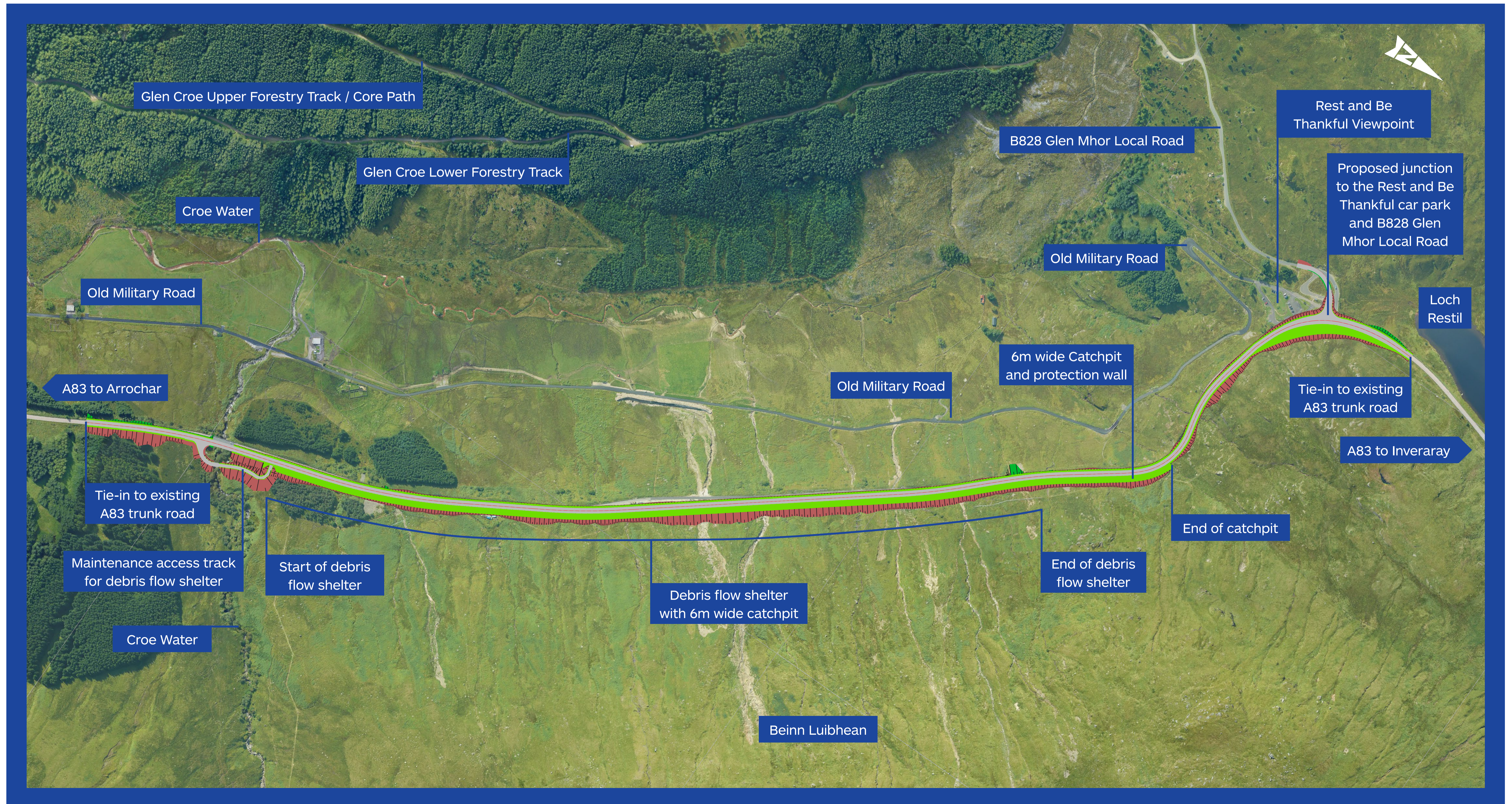
- Improved resilience and operational safety of the trunk road network by reducing the impact of disruption for travel to, from and between Argyll and Bute and the Central Belt of Scotland
- The greatest potential to be delivered quickly
- Most favourable performance across a broad range of environmental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

The preferred route will be subject to further design and development as the scheme progresses, with particular focus on minimising disruption to road users during construction. Environmental mitigation and sustainable travel facilities, which will include bus and active travel, will also be incorporated into the scheme design as part of the **DMRB Stage 3** assessment.



Preferred route looking southbound

# Preferred route plan



# Medium-term solution

Recognising the frustration to local communities and businesses of landslides at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful, in March 2021 Transport Scotland committed to developing a **medium-term solution** to address the urgency of the issue.

The purpose of the **medium-term solution** is to deliver a **safe, proportionate and more resilient** diversion route when the A83 is closed, until the permanent, long-term solution is constructed.

On 23rd December 2022, the former Minister for Transport announced that the **medium-term solution** would consist of a programme of improvements to the **Old Military Road**.

These improvements will provide an improved Old Military Road by:

- Reducing journey times by increasing the extent of two-way operation.
- Improving the safety and resilience of the Old Military Road by including landslide protection measures such as bunds and fences.

These interventions will be in place prior to construction of the permanent, long-term solution to reduce the disruption to road users during the construction period. We are working at pace to ensure the medium-term improvements will start on site before the end of the year.



A83 at Beinn Luibhean from Ben Donich slopes

# What happens next?

**Key site activities, including detailed ground investigation and ecological surveys will continue throughout the summer to inform the on-going assessment.**

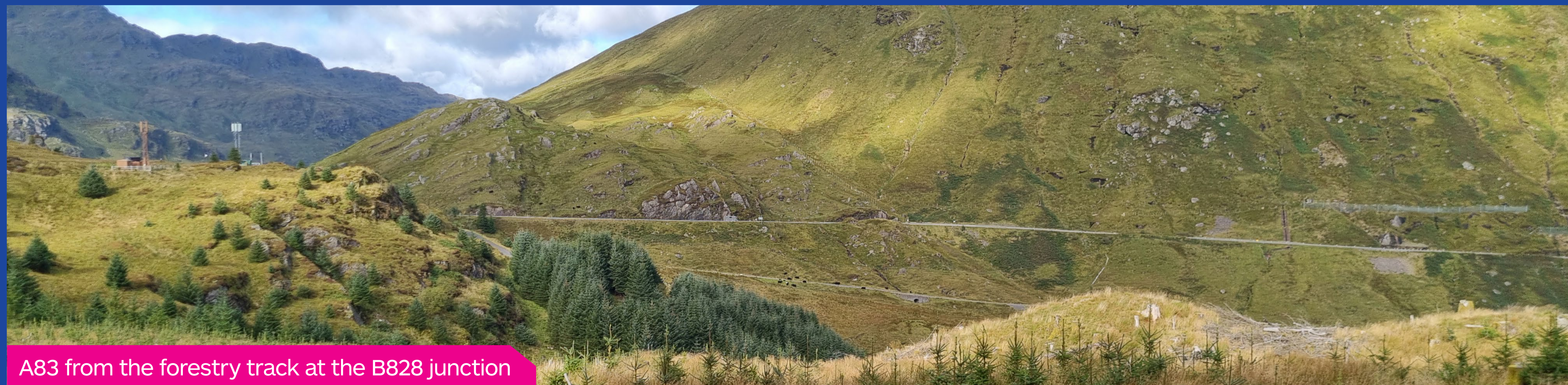
Transport Scotland and its consultant AWJV will continue to develop the preferred route and look for opportunities to deliver the permanent, long-term solution as quickly as possible.

The next stage is the **DMRB Stage 3** assessment which will conclude with the publication of **draft Road Orders** and an **Environmental Impact Assessment Report**.

The **Road Orders** provide the statutory authority to construct new roads and to improve and maintain Scotland's roads. The **Compulsory Purchase Order** will define the extent of land required to construct, operate and maintain the scheme.

**The next stage of the assessment process will include:**

- Further detailed ground investigation.
- Design development and refinement of the preferred route, including opportunities to reduce disruption during construction.
- Further consultation with affected parties, statutory bodies, the A83 Task Force, community councils and other relevant interest groups.
- Design development of sustainable travel facilities including bus, walking, cycling, wheeling and horse-riding facilities.
- Environmental surveys.
- Identification of the land required for the scheme and preparation of draft Orders.
- Environmental assessment of the developed preferred route and preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.
- Development of suitable mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the environment.



# Comments and feedback

Transport Scotland welcomes your comments and feedback on the preferred route. Please take time to consider the information presented here today and provide any comments you may have as soon as possible and by:

28 July 2023

Access to Argyll and Bute (A83)



Preferred route exhibition for permanent, long-term solution

## Feedback form

Thank you for visiting our Access to Argyll and Bute (A83) preferred route public exhibition for the permanent, long-term solution at the Rest and Be Thankful. We would be grateful if you could take the time to provide feedback or any comments you may have on the material presented and return this form to us by email or post (details on the reverse) by 28 July 2023. Transport Scotland will use the content of your feedback form to help inform the development and assessment of the preferred route. All completed feedback forms will be shared with our consultant Atkins WSP Joint Venture.

### Your details (optional)

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Transport Scotland and its agents will process any personal information provided on this form and it will be recorded solely for the purpose of the Access to Argyll and Bute (A83) project and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THIS FORM TO RECORD YOUR COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK

Comments can be made on the feedback forms here or sent by email or post.

**Please email your comments to:**  
a83@transport.gov.scot

**Or by post to:**  
A83 Access to Argyll and Bute Team,  
Transport Scotland,  
George House, 2nd Floor,  
36 North Hanover Street,  
Glasgow, G1 2AD

Feedback forms can also be submitted online via our virtual exhibition room. Should you have any specific accessibility requirements, the summary leaflet and information panels presented at today's event can be made available in an appropriate format on request by contacting the project team.



Transport Scotland will consider your comments and feedback to help inform the development and assessment of the preferred route, and all submissions will be shared with our consultant as required. We may also use your submission to inform future reports or public documents related to this activity.

If you choose to provide contact details with your submission, Transport Scotland will only use these details to keep you updated with the progress of this project. Your personal data will be deleted in line with our records retention and disposal policy (available at [gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-records-management-plan-2/](https://gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-records-management-plan-2/)). You can opt out of receiving updates from Transport Scotland at any time by contacting the project team using the above contact details.

The provision of contact details is optional and your comments will still be considered if provided anonymously. However, Transport Scotland will be unable to respond to your submission if you choose not to provide these details.

If you want to make a complaint about how we have handled your personal data or exercise any of your rights under the UK GDPR please contact [dpa@transport.gov.scot](mailto:dpa@transport.gov.scot).

## Contact details

Should you wish to contact Atkins WSP Joint Venture, details for the stakeholder team are:

**Tel:** 0131 316 8293      **Email:** A83@wsp.com  
**By post:** Atkins WSP Joint Venture, 110 Queen St,  
Glasgow, G1 3BX

All of the information presented at today's event is available in the virtual exhibition room:

[pinpointcloud.co.uk/accesstoargyllandbuteA83](https://pinpointcloud.co.uk/accesstoargyllandbuteA83)

