



A9 Dualling Engaging with Communities

June 2013



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A9 Dualling – Engaging with Communities

I. Introduction

As well as bringing many benefits, new road schemes inevitably come with impacts for those living along the route, which is why communities lie at the heart of Scottish Government and Transport Scotland's planning.

A local perspective on the main risks and opportunities associated with road construction is not only welcome, but vital.

The Scottish Government and its transport agency Transport Scotland are committed to encouraging interest and public involvement in the development of proposals for dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness by 2025 – one of the biggest infrastructure projects in Scotland's history.

This document, A9 Dualling: Engaging with Communities, outlines:

- how Transport Scotland and our appointed consultants and contractors will engage with the public during the design and development phases
- how you will be able to take part and
- how you can contact us for information or advice.



In addition to meeting all statutory requirements, Transport Scotland will ensure that:

- arrangements for participation are inclusive, open and transparent
- a wide range of participants are encouraged to get involved at the appropriate time
- information is provided at key stages to allow for full consideration
- communication is facilitated through a range of methods in a range of appropriate locations and
- all representations will be fully considered and feedback provided.

Construction of the dualling at Crubenmore.



2. Background to A9 Dualling

In 2008, the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) set out the future investment programme for transport in Scotland over two decades including the proposed upgrade of the A9. As part of this upgrade work, the STPR identified dualling sections from Perth to Blair Atholl, then Aviemore to Inverness and Blair Atholl to Aviemore.

Then, in December 2011, Scottish Ministers confirmed a commitment to upgrade the A9 between the cities of Perth and Inverness to full dual carriageway standard by 2025 as part of their Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) which outlined £60 billion of spending by 2030. This also committed to dual the A96 by 2030, ensuring the road network between all Scottish cities will be dual carriageways.

Transport Scotland, the national transport agency for Scotland, is progressing the A9 dualling project at an estimated cost of £3 billion.

Running from Dunblane to Thurso, the A9 is the major link between the Central Belt and the far north of Scotland. At 439 kilometres (273 miles), it is the longest trunk road in Scotland.

Perth to Inverness

The Perth to Inverness section forms 177 kilometres (110 miles) of the total. The existing dual carriageway sections between Perth and Inverness total 48 kilometres (30 miles), leaving 129 kilometres (80 miles) to be dualled.

There are seven sections of single carriageway to be dualled:

- Luncarty to Pass of Birnam
- Pass of Birnam to Ballinluig
- Pitlochry to Killiecrankie
- Killiecrankie to Glen Garry
- Glen Garry to Crubenmore
- Crubenmore to Slochd
(This section includes the Kincaig-Dalraddy scheme)
- Tomatin to Moy.



Those sections of dual carriageway already in place will also be upgraded to modern standards.

Dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness will provide a number of benefits by:

- supporting sustainable economic growth
- improving road safety for motorised and non-motorised users – e.g. by reducing accident severity and reducing driver stress
- improving journey times and reliability
- supporting access to the tourist and recreation sites – including the Cairngorms National Park
- facilitating links to pedestrian, cycling and public transport facilities.

3. Project development

Preliminary design work on two sections of the A9 was undertaken to support the outcome of the STPR in 2008. This work has allowed Transport Scotland to find out more about the challenges involved in dualling the A9. The two sections are:

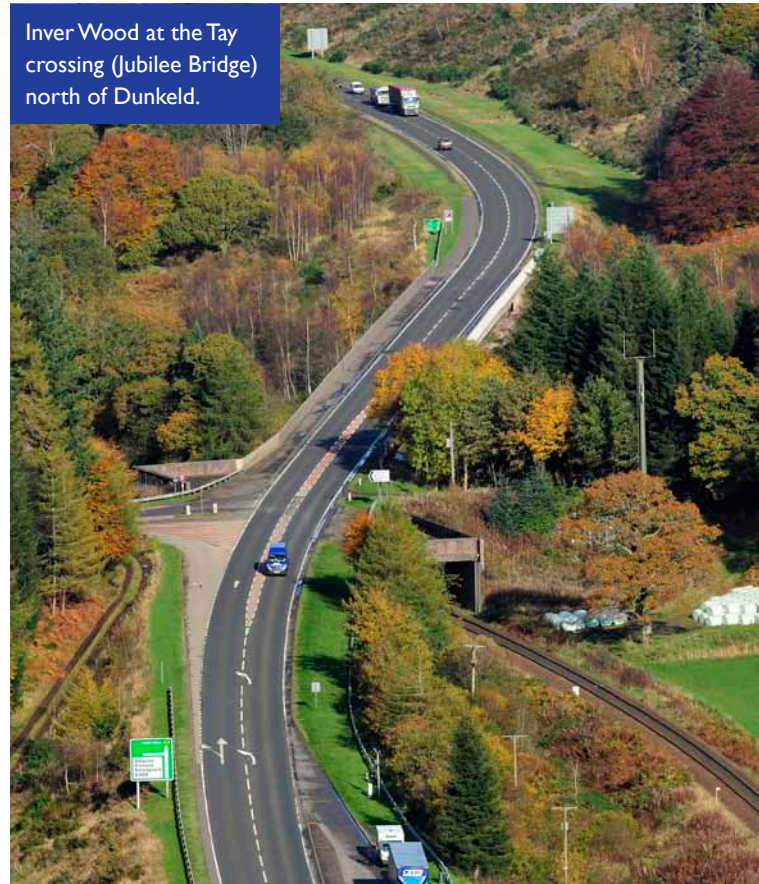
Luncarty to Pass of Birnam – The Minister for Transport and Veterans announced that construction on this scheme would be ready to start in 2017. Transport Scotland has appointed Jacobs Engineering UK Ltd to progress the project.

Birnam to the Tay Crossing – URS has been appointed to undertake preliminary design work. This is a particularly challenging section and detailed option assessment is underway.

In June 2012, the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment announced that Transport Scotland would be accelerating the programme to dual the A9 by bringing forward a scheme between **Kincraig and Dalraddy** to 2015/16. Atkins has been appointed to take forward the design work.

Route-wide constraints, mapping, survey work and strategic environmental assessment is being progressed to allow Transport Scotland to start design work on the remainder of the route.

Inver Wood at the Tay crossing (Jubilee Bridge) north of Dunkeld.



The A9 looking south from the bridge at Luncarty.



4. The planning process

Design and construction will be phased over a number of years, with each section requiring in-depth planning and design to ensure that impacts on communities, businesses and the environment are kept to a minimum.

Proposals are developed based on standards set by the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). Prior to construction, the design development stages to be completed for each section of the A9 are:

Stage 1: Strategic Assessment

- Strategic planning and development of improved transport links between Perth and Inverness.
- This stage is largely complete – The Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), published in 2008, broadly defined the need for the A9 to be dualled between Perth and Inverness.
- A strategic environmental assessment and preliminary engineering assessment is currently underway to complete this stage.

Stage 2: Route Options Assessment

- Development and assessment of route options for upgrading the A9 from single to dual carriageway. This includes an engineering and environmental assessment of the potential impacts of each option to inform the route choice.
- At the end of this stage the options will be made available for consultation.
- Following this assessment and consultation, the preferred option is then selected and taken forward to the detailed stage.

Stage 3: Detailed Design and Assessment

- Detailed assessment and definition of the preferred dualling option.
- An Environmental Statement is prepared and the land required for the dualling is identified.

Statutory Process: Publication of Environmental Statement and Orders

- The draft Compulsory Purchase Order (defining the extent of the proposed land required to deliver the scheme), the draft Roads Orders (defining the line of the proposed infrastructure) and the Environmental Statement (ES) are published.
- Any statutory objections which are lodged during the defined period but remain unresolved are then considered at a Public Local Inquiry (PLI).
- If the objections are upheld following the PLI, the scheme may have to be amended and taken through the statutory process again. If the objections are resolved or dismissed, then the draft orders are finalised and made.
- Following the publication of the made orders, there is a legal challenge period. After this point the legal permissions have been obtained and the preferred option can proceed with the necessary acquisition of land.

5. Engagement to date

Transport Scotland is committed to placing public engagement and meaningful dialogue with directly affected communities and other stakeholders at the heart of the development and delivery of its projects.

We want to ensure that communities have the opportunity to comment on the proposals for the A9 dualling project at every stage in the process and Transport Scotland is keen to hear people's views.

Since January 2012, Transport Scotland has been engaging with many partners, key agencies, communities and interested parties to identify the risks and benefits which need to be considered as part of the project delivery.

The work to date has identified a series of risks and opportunities that have helped shape the dualling strategy. This collaborative engagement will be ongoing throughout the project to deal with the challenges.

Transport Scotland has also been engaging with the communities affected by the current A9 projects at Luncarty to Pass of Birnam, Birnam to Tay Crossing and Kincaig to Dalraddy. More detailed consultation on these schemes is to take place in June 2013.

In December 2012, community consultation was extended through a series of exhibitions in venues along the route between Perth and Inverness. These highlighted key steps which must be completed in order to produce a suitable design for the road.

The feedback received has informed engineering and strategic environmental assessment work. The outcome of that work was consulted on in a series of public exhibitions in June 2013, allowing for the identification of route options to begin.

The A9 at Luncarty.



6. Engagement principles

Transport Scotland is committed to undertaking a rolling programme of regular engagement to ensure those affected by the work over the next decade and beyond are kept fully informed.

As the project is designed, procured and constructed, Transport Scotland will consider points raised during engagement and act upon them where reasonable and appropriate.

The A9 Dualling project will comply with the *National Standards for Community Engagement*.

These National Standards are aimed at ensuring communities and affected individuals have their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services. The standards were launched in May 2005 and have been widely adopted in Community Planning Partnerships and in other areas of government since their original endorsement by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Association of Chief Police Officers, Scottish Health Council and the Poverty Alliance. They have been recommended by Audit Scotland as good practice and their impact was the subject of a positive evaluation in 2008.

The standards set out best practice principles for the way that government agencies, councils, health boards, police and other public bodies engage with communities. They are not compulsory, but they are good practice.

These standards are:

- **Involvement:** we will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement
- **Support:** we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement
- **Planning:** we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken
- **Methods:** we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose
- **Working together:** we will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently
- **Sharing information:** we will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants
- **Working with others:** we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement
- **Improvement:** we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants
- **Feedback:** we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement.

More information on the National Standards for Community Engagement can be found at:
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/regeneration/engage/HowToGuide/NationalStandards.pdf

7. Communication methods

We recognise that engaging with the communities affected by the A9 Dualling programme and maintaining that engagement is key to the success of this project.

We will use a range of methods for engagement on an ongoing basis throughout the project as appropriate, including the following:

| Participation method | Benefits | Commitments |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Letters | Direct contact with statutory organisations and other groups/ individuals/landowners/community/ interest groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce them to the project. • To invite stakeholders to meetings. • To request information. • To have direct communication with landowners. • To ensure that information issued to stakeholders is copied to constituency and list MSPs, MPs, MEPs and elected local councillors. |
| Email correspondence | A dedicated email address has been established a9dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk to allow the public to contact the project team. Faster and more cost effective than post in targeting consultee groups/individuals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respond to email queries received. |
| Project website | An important central resource for the public, media and all stakeholders to access up to date information. The website will feature a document archive, timeline, frequently asked questions (FAQs), feedback mechanisms, information about events, news articles etc. Information can be downloaded. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep the website up-to-date throughout the project. • To include all published project documents. • To use on-line feedback mechanisms. • To provide an email enquiry and response service. |
| eZines (electronic newsletters) | Dissemination of up-to-date information regularly to a targeted, but large database of interested parties. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To issue up-to-date information on project progress once design consultants have been appointed. |
| Leaflets | Provide regular information on specific route sections and topics and highlight feedback mechanisms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For use during public exhibitions and to keep key groups (e.g. community councils and landowners) informed with details of specific sections. |

| Participation method | Benefits | Commitments |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Newsletter | Once construction starts, to provide regular information and opportunities for individuals to feedback comments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep all affected parties and the general public informed about project development. • To make this information accessible to a wide audience by distributing through libraries and other community facilities. • To ensure that information issued to stakeholders is copied to constituency and list MSPs, MPs, MEPs and elected local councillors. |
| Media/news releases | To provide information to as wide an audience as possible using the national and local media. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep the media updated on developments throughout the life of the project through news releases and interviews or briefings. |
| Briefing sessions | Briefing members of representative stakeholder groups, including responding to questions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hold briefing sessions to introduce stakeholder representatives to the project team and set up a communication link with community groups. • To ensure that constituency and list MSPs, MPs, MEPs and elected local councillors are invited to briefing sessions, or are provided with a separate briefing session on the topics being presented. • To also give consideration to the location and timing of these briefing sessions and ensure that invitations are issued in good time. |

7. Communication methods continued

| Participation method | Benefits | Commitments |
|---|--|---|
| Public exhibitions | Opportunity for the public to feed back views through contact with the project team. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hold public exhibitions/ road shows to present information and gain public feedback on proposals. • To provide an opportunity for feedback. • To ensure that constituency and list MSPs, MPs, MEPs and elected local councillors are made aware of public exhibitions and are invited to attend. |
| Community council, residents association and landowner meetings | <p>Involving local people, key stakeholders and community groups to establish key issues and solutions. The format can be modified to suit the audience including formalised presentation, small group discussions and feedback.</p> <p>NB Discussions with community councils are taking place to investigate the potential for regular community forums to be established i.e. to allow representatives of established groups to raise any local issues.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage effectively with community representatives and affected parties. • To follow up on briefing sessions and to provide opportunity for discussion on project developments. |
| Reference/focus groups | Structured group process where peoples' views on specific issues can be sought. Can be directed to a particular group with an interest in the project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To benefit from the knowledge and expertise of particular groups to benefit the project. |
| One-to-one stakeholder meetings | One-to-one meetings with stakeholders most affected by the proposals. Opportunity to resolve potential issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet specific stakeholders to discuss issues related to the project, develop specific mitigation, etc. (As required or requested). |

Feedback from all consultation events will be recorded including how the information provided has been taken into account in the development of the project.

Reports summarising feedback from public exhibitions will be produced and made available on the project website and in paper format on request. Additionally, a summary of all consultation activities and feedback during the project will be collated.

The table sets out key methods that will be used for public participation. Transport Scotland will require appointed contractors to continue effective engagement with the local community and interested parties during construction to minimise disruption and deliver community benefits wherever possible.

NB This document will be updated before construction begins to detail how ongoing engagement will be maintained during this phase.

The A9 at Dalnaspidal Lodge.



8. Further information

If you would like further information on the A9 Dualling project or would like to express your views, please use one of the following:

Visit the project website:

www.transportscotland.gov.uk/a9dualling

Email the project team:

a9dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk

Write to:

A9 Dualling Team,
Transport Scotland,
Buchanan House,
58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow,
G4 0HF



The A9 at Crubenmore looking north.

