

PE1540/S

Avril Lockhart Email of 15 February 2016

I am writing to request that major investment is made to provide a PERMANENT SOLUTION to the problem of landslides on the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful in Argyll. For years we have put up with temporary solutions and the last landslide at the end of December 2015 was not stopped by the netting, there was no prior warning to stop vehicles travelling on the road and two cars were caught up in the landslide. It is only by sheer luck that these people were not seriously injured or killed. One car nearly fell down hundreds of feet into the glen below.

The A83 is a major lifeline for the people of Argyll and is the main route in and out of the area. The constant disruption caused by landslides is causing serious problems to Argyll's economy and is probably preventing investment into the area, is harming existing businesses and possibly forcing people to leave the area. Never mind putting people off driving past the Rest and Be Thankful for fear of landslides. We have put up with extensive road closures for years but we have had enough. How can we keep our young people in the area or encourage people to visit if there is a constant risk of landslides and the problems these cause? There is also the major inconvenience of supplies not being able to reach the area and shops running short of stock and so on.

The diversion route via Crianlarich is a nightmare and the road is not built to cope with the volume of traffic and amount of buses and lorries, etc. It is particularly dangerous during the winter. It is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident on this road and the whole area will be gridlocked. Even the emergency route via the old military road is not working. Often the landslides fall down onto this road or the landslides happen in an area that blocks access to this road. I think it is underestimated how many people and businesses depend on this route. If landslides affected the central belt, the problem would be addressed immediately. But because it is rural Argyll it is not seen as a priority. But believe me, we do matter. For the sake of Argyll's economy, the ability of Argyll's people and visitors to be able to travel in and out of Argyll and for the prevention of a fatal accident, something must be done now to find a permanent solution.

Avril Lockhart