

Minister for Transport and Veterans

Keith Brown MSP

T: 0845 774 1741

E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



David Stewart
Convener
Public Petitions Committee
Room T3.40
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP



Our ref: A4021046

September 2012

Consideration of Petition PE1428

Thank you for your letter of 17 September about Petition PE1428. I am happy to respond to your questions.

- 1 The A83 study will look closely at what more can be done in managing the effects of landslides at the Rest and Be Thankful, including long-term engineering options such as rock shelters, stabilisation using vegetation techniques and investigating alternative access routes to mid Argyll. The study will also look at removing pinch points along the route. We remain on schedule to complete the study by the end of 2012 and the A83 Taskforce will also oversee delivery of these longer-term measures. The landslip on 1 August has not impacted on the timetable for completing the study.
- 2 Construction of the works at Pulpit Rock will require a full closure of the A82 at that location to construct the scheme safely and efficiently. The main closure period is currently programmed to be up to 14 weeks although the full extent of any closures will be dependent upon the successful tender proposal, and could be impacted by unforeseen physical conditions or extreme adverse weather conditions. Suitable advance warning will be given for any closures required as part of the works to allow road users to plan their routes during the construction period. A diversion route will be signed via A83/A819/A85. In the event of a landslide on the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful traffic will be diverted to the emergency route currently being constructed.

Following consultation with local communities and statutory bodies, the main closure has been programmed between October and December 2013 to avoid the main tourist seasons. In addition to providing a signed diversion route, mitigation measures for those users of the A82 affected during the construction period will include advance signage, radio station traffic bulletin updates and information displays on Traffic Scotland website and Transport Scotland signs in the wider central Scotland network.



- 3 You have asked about the current criteria for trunking and the type of information that would be considered relevant to extending the trunk road section. While Scottish Ministers are obliged to keep the trunk road network under continual review, it is for Argyll & Bute Council to submit a formal request for trunking.

Functions of the strategic networks (road and rail) are defined in the Scottish Transport Projects Review as:

- Linking major urban centres and areas of populations;
- Providing links to international gateways, airports, ports and borders;
- Linking remoter communities;
- Linking key tourist routes;
- Facilitating freight routes; and
- Linking areas of economic activity and regeneration areas of national significance.

In addition, the following guiding principles apply to routes which make up the trunk road network:

- Provide the users with a coherent and continuous system of routes which serve destinations of importance to industry, commerce, agriculture and tourism;
- Define nationally important routes which will be developed in line with strategic national transport demands; and
- Ensure roads of predominately local importance are managed locally.

It is these functions and guiding principles which would provide the context for any trunking application. To inform the consideration, relevant current and projected data for the non-trunk road section of the A83 would be required, along with fresh perspectives on what role it might perform within the trunk road network. A comprehensive analysis would also require consideration of the impact on the existing relationship between the trunked and non-trunked sections of the A83, and the performance of the current A83 trunk road as a whole.

- 4 This will be considered as part of the A83 Study.
- 5 Some work was carried out with regard to the pinch point on the A83 at Erines as part of a study some years ago, but any further work was dependant on available funding and competing priorities across the Scottish trunk road network. This location will, however, be looked at again as part of the current A83 study, which is investigating the feasibility of longer term improvements on the A83 trunk road, including the removal of pinch points along the route. We remain on schedule to complete the study by the end of 2012.

I hope this response is helpful.

Kind regards

KEITH BROWN