

Minister for Transport and Veterans
Keith Brown MSP



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Mr Chic Brodie
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The Scottish Parliament
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Your ref: PE1428
Our ref: A6120904

18 June 2013

Dear Chic,

Thank you for your letter of 17 May about the above Petition, seeking clarification of timescales for the works recommended in the A83 Study Report. I will respond to your points in sequence.

Issues relating to the Rest and Be Thankful

Part A of the A83 Route Study covered the mitigation works at the Rest and Be Thankful. Subsequent to the recommendations of the report, the Red Option has been taken forward as a permanent solution to reduce the risk of landslide debris reaching the road. This option demonstrated a similar level of benefits to the other options considered, but for significantly less capital cost.

Phases 3 and 4 of landslide protection at the Rest and Be Thankful were completed in April. These works included fencing and netting works and construction of a catch pit capable of retaining 1,200 tonnes of material with erosion control matting.

A structural maintenance scheme at the top of the A83 Rest and Be Thankful, which has improved the strength of the road at the top of the hill, was completed in May.

Phases 5 and 6 of the Red Option mitigation works are currently being procured and construction is due to start in July 2013. Phases 7 and 8 of the Red Option are planned to be constructed in Autumn 2013. These next phases will involve additional fencing and netting works, as well as improvements to drainage on the slope.

We have also programmed investigations at additional landslide risk areas on the A83 at Cairndow, Glen Kinglas and Loch Shira. These investigations will be completed in 2013/14.

In addition, we are taking forward additional monitoring sites on the Rest and Be Thankful slope, as well as improving the existing monitoring equipment.

Pinch points at Inveraray and between Lochgilphead and Tarbert (Lochfyne)

Part B of the Route Study Report examined other issues raised at the A83 Task Force. This included pinch point locations at Erines, Barmore Road in Tarbert and Dunderave.

During 2013/14 we intend to progress Erines through preliminary design phase. This will involve undertaking ground investigations leading to detail design.

Barmore Road, Tarbert will be progressed through the preliminary design phase and we will also begin consultation in 2013/14

At Dunderave, we have split the elements of this scheme into 3 phases to allow the scheme to be delivered as soon as possible. Phase 1 of the works, which involves the surfacing element, will be taken through the procurement process to allow works to take place early 2014/15. Phases 2 and 3 of the works involve ground investigation and design elements. We plan to take these phases through early consultation and start the land acquisition for the works in 2013/14.

Safe crossing points at Ardrishaig and Tarbert (Lochfyne)

As referred to in Part B of the Route Study Report, Transport Scotland has re-examined the issues relating to the potential for a signalised pedestrian at Ardrishaig. This assessment has been carried out in consultation with the local Community Council, ensuring that the community had an opportunity to agree with the extent of the study and that we have included the additional comments made by community representatives during the Route Study liaison. The report on the outcomes of this study is currently in draft format. We will circulate this to the Community Council prior to publication on Transport Scotland's website.

Transport Scotland will carry out a pedestrian crossing study at Tarbert which will consider the current issues highlighted in the report, including the presence of parked cars along Barmore Road. Transport Scotland will also carry out a pedestrian crossing study at Inveraray, which was also referred to in the Route Study report. Both the Tarbert and Inveraray information gathering exercises will be undertaken during summer 2013 and the reports will be completed by September 2013.

In addition, Transport Scotland is developing a series of web pages, specifically to provide information on the planned works identified through the A83 Route Study. These pages will be produced by the end of June 2013 and will include information on programmes and progress on individual projects.

I hope this is helpful.

Kind regards

KEITH BROWN