

Finlay Carson MSP submission of 7 September 2022

PE1610: Upgrade the A75 and PE1657: A77 upgrade

Regrettably, I am unable to attend today's meeting of the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee.

Once again, however, can I voice my wholehearted support for the petition PE 1610: Upgrade the A75 and PE1657: A77 upgrade.

As many of you are probably aware, I have raised this issue many times in the Scottish Parliament chamber pressing for this work to be carried out as a matter of urgency.

The A75 and A77 are key strategic routes for the Port of Cairnryan and serve as crucial economic and transport infrastructure links between Great Britain, Northern Ireland and beyond. Yet, despite their importance, both the A75 and A77 continue to be starved of the investment needed to upgrade these routes to the standard required for key strategic links.

I know both featured in the draft recommendations contained within the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 – but, sadly to date, no final publication has been forthcoming. The outcome of STPR2 must be published as soon as possible and following this investment in the A75 and A77 must come quickly.

The UK Government's Union Connectivity Review highlighted the need for the A75 to be improved and crucially the review and subsequent UK Government response suggested that there was the possibility of additional investment from the UK Government to get this road up to an acceptable standard. It is incredibly frustrating that Scottish Government Ministers have been slow to engage with UK Government colleagues to secure additional funds to upgrade the A75.

The A75 and A77 are both key drivers of economic growth in South West Scotland and beyond. We need the Scottish Government to respond to the need to invest in and improve these routes which has been highlighted not only by hauliers and ferry operators but by the

residents of South West Scotland who want to see their fair share of investment in this crucial route. For too long, this part of Scotland has been left behind in transport investment, it is time for the Government to act rectify this.

I would urge the committee to back this petition and provide it with the necessary support and backing it deserves.