

Petitioner submission of 4 September 2022

PE1657/II - A77 Upgrade

The A77 Action Group want to make this further submission drawing the Committee's attention to a number of recent aspects that relate to this Petition.

The Petition was first before committee on the 14th September 2017. Our Petition mentions the landslide at Marchburn, 1 mile north of Cairnryan which happened in 2014. Since then, the Marchburn landslide, the A77 has been constantly under traffic management control with the major A77 trunk road being reduced to a single lane. This first landslide took 4.5 years to rectify. A further landslide then followed at Lendalfoot with the trunk road reduced to single lane for 8 months, taking us up to the landslide prevention work at Carlock Wall in 2019. Today of writing Carlock Wall has been more serious than the other 2 landslides and was attended to by Transerve and currently by Amey as the A77 Trunk Road contractors. We draw the Committee members' attention to the fact that Transerve commenced the work on Carlock Wall in 2019 with geo-engineering works to pin and stabilise the land, with a completion date of summer 2020. This was delayed because of COVID with an updated completion of Spring 2021.

Amey has succeeded Transerve as the A77 Trunk Road Contractor and undergone a review of the geo-engineering. The geo-engineering works was the subject of yet further delays on the advice conveyed to A77 Action Group at a meeting we had with Transport Scotland and Amey representatives that the initial engineering works was not substantial to stabilise the land. Members of the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee may want to seek what the reasons are for the continual delays, what extra cost has this put on the works, and examine reasons for any failure in the engineering works with any additional expenditure required?

The reason we draw the number of landslides to the Committee's attention, the road being reduced to single lane being the subject of traffic control since 2014, and continual delay after delay to completion dates is to compare the A77 against the A83. In doing so, this is to compare the capital expenditure being allocated to the A83 at the Rest and be Thankful as against the major A77 trunk road that is the arterial route between Scotland, Northern Ireland and onward into Europe

through Southern Ireland. This route contributes greatly to the local and Scottish economy being it serves the only sea crossing on the Irish Sea between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It is our contention that the A77 would have been better served being re-aligned at Carlock Wall which, in our view, would have been more cost effective. We say this as the topography of the ground at Carlock Wall could be the subject of further landslides in years to come, as many suspects as possible.

In saying that, we would draw the Committee members attention to what is being considered as a possible resolution to the road problems at the Rest and be Thankful. The links below illustrate in detail what is being considered by way of tunnelling into the hill to create an alternative route with expert opinion being sought from Norway into road tunnelling. Given the landscape of the road between Cairnryan and Ballantrae, could the same consideration be given to the A77 with the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee seeking clarification of the Scottish Government's Transport Minister as to why this is not a consideration for the A77 on a cost effective and efficient long-term basis.

Our last point would be in drawing attention to the cost benefit of having the town and villages on the A77 being served by a bypass. This not only would make the environs of the town and villages much safer, but it would bring prosperity with inward investment as is demonstrated at Maybole. Already they are seeing a massive increase to the construction industry with a new school being built, 300 and more private and social houses and a new supermarket coming to Maybole. This is in comparison to seeing shops closing and boarded up on our High Streets. We fully understand why the other towns and villages would be envious of Maybole but we prefer they have the opportunity to share in such prosperity that a bypass can bring to small towns and villages on a main arterial route.

We hope the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee will consider this further submission along with the links to further information on advice being sought from Norway experts on re-aliening roads by tunnelling into the landscape.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/49429/consultation-report-main-report-and-appendices.pdf>

<https://www.facebook.com/A77ActionGroup/photos/pcb.2207333766092907/2207333556092928/>

<https://www.facebook.com/A77ActionGroup/photos/pcb.2207333766092907/2207333559426261>

<https://www.facebook.com/A77ActionGroup/photos/pcb.2207333766092907/2207333562759594>

<https://www.facebook.com/A77ActionGroup/photos/pcb.2207333766092907/2207333649426252>

<https://www.facebook.com/A77ActionGroup/photos/pcb.2207333766092907/2207333659426251>