

PE1967/N: Protect Loch Lomond's Atlantic oakwood shoreline by implementing the High road option for the A82 upgrade between Tarbet and Inverarnan

Michael Bainbridge written submission, 30 March 2025

I am writing to you as I have learned from a persistent social media campaign that petition PE1967 (A82 High Road solution) is to be considered again by the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee in the near future.

I am writing as a resident of Tarbet, Arrochar. In Ballyhennan Glen, currently traffic on the A83 trunk road passes the front of my home as it makes its way into Argyll. Should the 'High Road' option for the A82 become a reality, in addition to A83 traffic, the A82 traffic would pass firstly in front of my home before then turning to pass once more at the rear of my home. A recent traffic survey at Luss provided data that the A82 experiences 5.2 million journeys per year, making it busier than the to-be dualled A9 between Aviemore and Inverness. The additional traffic would not be appreciated and would be at great detriment to villagers' quality of life. The spaces the road would occupy are currently enjoyed for recreation including dog walking and mindfulness enjoying the nature.

To date no public consultation on the 'High Road' option has taken place; thorough and proper public consultation has taken place on the recognised A82 upgrade. As the A82 has seen decades of piecemeal improvements gradually being linked together, the proposition of a 'High Road' including a number of tunnels seems somewhat far-fetched. Our communities recently produced a Local Place Plan, and trunk roads were found to be a significant issue. We are both served and blighted by the A82 and A83, many local improvements would bring benefit to residents and those transiting through our communities. Arrochar, Tarbet and Ardlui all need to benefit from improved road safety measures, but this would best be done with local bespoke measures. In fiscally austere times it is difficult to imagine funds for such a project to be available. Moreover, the carbon footprint of such a project would be huge in comparison to upgrading the current road. If such large-scale infrastructure projects are possible then I would recommend reinstatement of rail lines removed by Beeching, for example from Crianlarich to Perth. Much of the proposed line of the 'High Road' is newly built forestry road serving harvesting as part of the local forestry plan, how would these interact? The 'High Road' would run above the West Highland Rail Line, alterations to water courses and other drainage would be very impactful, as is the case at A83 Rest and Be Thankful. Should 'High Road' plans be considered then precedent would be set for other communities along the A82, in Onich, Glen Righ, Drumnadrochit etc., to seek the same costly measures.

The Atlantic Oak Woods and North Atlantic Temperate Rain Forrest are natural assets worthy of veneration and protection. One would hope that all infrastructure projects in future could involve some planting of native trees to help with nature corridors and sequestration of carbon.

Thank you for taking the time to read my opinions and concerns. I look forward to seeing future road improvements in my area.