

# Inquiry into A9 Dualling Project

Update from Transport Scotland on A9 Dualling 2025 Delivery Strategy, provided to Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital and Minister for Housing and Transport, dated 28 May 2012

## **ADVICE TO MINISTERS**

### **A9 UPGRADE TO DUAL CARRIAGEWAY**

#### **Purpose**

1. Further to Ministers' commitment to publish more detailed plans for delivering the dualling of the A9 by 2025:
  - To provide a delivery strategy and high-level programme that demonstrates how the 2025 target date can be achieved
  - To recommend a package of work to be taken forward within the current Spending Review period and budget provision of £18.95 million
  - To advise on handling of a possible announcement of the programme in early June

#### **Priority**

2. Routine. An early indication of your views on the recommendations would allow procurement of professional support to make meaningful progress this year and allow an announcement on 6 June, highlighted by the Cabinet secretary as a potential date for this when he visits Perth Chamber of Commerce.

#### **Annexes**

- A Financial Implications
- B Background Information and Input to Options
- C Overall Communications Strategy
- D Key Plan of A9
- E Outline Programme

## **Background**

3. The announcement of Ministers' plans to upgrade the A9 between Perth and Inverness to full dual carriageway by 2025 was made during the launch of the Infrastructure Investment Plan on 6 December 2011. The Cabinet Secretary gave a commitment to bring forward more detailed proposals on programme and funding by around Spring.

4. The programme to upgrade to dual carriageway standard must deliver 129km of improvements in under 13 years. Delivering this programme requires careful planning of the statutory processes and connected activities along with effective stakeholder engagement and a continuous funding stream. The programme will comprise a number of smaller, although large in themselves, projects, phased to suit the available funding and to deliver progress on a number of fronts over the programme horizon. There is considerable stakeholder and public expectation around the programme and early engagement with stakeholders demonstrates a range of views on the upgrade, including some who do not support it.

5. Work is continuing on the design of the southern sections of the route between the existing dual carriageway at Luncarty and the Tay Crossing north of Dunkeld. Subject to funding and the unchallenged progress of the design and authorisation of the Luncarty to Pass of Birnam section of this project, site works could start on this section in 2017.

## **Finance**

6. The total programme cost was indicated in the STPR as between £1.5 billion and £3 billion. Early work to update this has confirmed this range, with a current estimated outturn cost of £3 billion. Using industry standard percentage allowances for preparation and land costs indicates a budget of £200-£300 million is required. This is in addition to construction costs, and will require to be funded in advance of construction starting on site. Within the Motorway and Trunk Road Programme £18.95 million has been allocated for Spending Review 2012 to progress the A9, representing nearly 80% of the available budget for roads scheme preparation.

7. Given the capital budget constraints going forward, we have carried out an initial assessment in conjunction with Scottish Futures Trust to consider potential opportunities for innovative funding vehicles for both the design and construction costs of the programme. Our initial assessment is that no existing approaches provide a clear vehicle to lever in private sector funding to cover design and development costs of the scale required. Three main structures have been considered:

- **single scheme NPD.** It is unlikely that a single provider would be a practical proposition for a £3 billion programme. The experience of previous roads projects is that the private sector is not willing to accept, or manage, the up front costs and risks associated with the statutory processes and land purchase. Should that impediment be overcome, the scale of up-front investment and the time lag to completion of construction when unitary charge payments would commence is unlikely to deliver value for money. The construction programme could, however, be broken down into two or three smaller, but still in the order of £1 billion, sub-programmes, which may be more viable. No assessment has been made at this stage as to the likely cost and availability of finance.
- **hub** The hub model requires the private sector to take some development cost risk that is very much at the margin. The principal objective of hub is to provide a procurement capability for a wide range of public sector bodies along with economies of scale. The basic characteristics of the A9 programme are different, and further work will be progressed to assess whether benefits could be achieved through a development partner route.
- **arms length company** Creating an arms length company along the lines of, for example, Network Rail to then borrow money against a regulated asset base would only be workable where there was an identifiable revenue stream such as direct tolls. Without such a revenue source, no risks would be transferred in the development stage and private funding would be most likely classified as straightforward borrowing

8. With no significant construction expenditure anticipated for at least the first five years of the programme, the immediate challenge is to fund the design and development costs. An initial high level analysis highlights the following key issues:

- considerable work is required to develop the approaches to securing funding for the development and construction programme and ensuring any solution provides both flexibility in approach and value for money
- the overall affordability of the programme, both in the short term for development costs and in the longer term when assessing the level of borrowing required
- the work being progressed within SR2012 will raise expectations for delivery with consequences for funding provision within SR2015 and beyond
- the work planned within SR2012 has turned on the available funding: to deliver the full upgrading by 2025 needs this preparation budget to rise to approximately £25 million per annum in subsequent Spending Reviews
- no capital construction budget has been identified for the Luncarty to Birnam and Kinraig to Dalraddy projects once they complete their statutory authorisation processes.

## **Programme Delivery**

9. The programme is most appropriately authorised through the procedures set out in the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. Promoting Roads Orders is a well-trying mechanism, the risks and procedures of which are well understood. Initial thinking suggests dividing the A9 into sections between each stretch of dual carriageway already on the route. This gives seven discrete sections balancing the scale of the scheme and the risks to delivery/ opportunity for objectors to derail the overall programme. A Key Plan indicating these sections is at **Annex C**, whilst an outline programme is at **Annex D**, indicating that progressing the existing Kinraig to Dalraddy WS2+1 scheme as a full dual carriageway sits well with demonstrating progress across the whole route.

10. To develop a robust scheme for authorisation, route-wide work packages will be procured in 2012/13 to undertake early Environmental scoping work including an updated Strategic Environmental Assessment, Engineering services including carrying out inter-agency collaborative business surveys, route-long baseline assessment work and stakeholder and risk management activities. This develops a strong foundation for the overall scheme before it is split into sections for delivery.

11. The options for each section and the detailed design could be developed as the seven sections indicated, or could be arranged differently to suit available budgets, risks and opportunities. The outline programme suggests that regular appointments for design commissions could be brought forward over the remainder of this Spending Review. The scope of works for each would be tailored in such a way that their progress is linked to available funding in the Spending Review 2015.

12. In the short to medium term, we can progress those sections of the A9 where development work is already well advanced as well as commencing preliminary work on the development and delivery strategy, and work on possible funding options. The £18.95 million budgeted over the next three years would be sufficient to:

- begin collaborative agency working on the business case; carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment; undertake scoping work to develop design guidance with Historic Scotland and SNH; build up a data set of traffic information; and complete the topographical survey for the route
- commence route option studies on all sections except Tomatin to Moy.
- complete the statutory process for Kincaig to Dalraddy upgrading project
- publish Roads Orders for Luncarty to Birnam project
- finalise the overall design and delivery approach

Further progress beyond 2014/15 will be dependent on the funds available.

13. The governance arrangements for such a large and complex project will be of a similar style to those successfully deployed on the Forth Replacement Crossing. The structure has been developed to be easily scaled up as the project proceeds to ensure quality of delivery and that our stakeholders expectations are properly managed. Some of the agencies we consulted expressed a desire to work collaboratively with us, including Regional Transport Partnerships, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Scottish Council for Development and Industry. This approach offers us benefits from local /specialist knowledge and the opportunity for wider ranging consultation and demonstrable partnering when dealing with scheme promotion. The governance structure allows for this approach.

## Communications

14. Dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness represents, in geographic and cost terms alone, the biggest single infrastructure project Scotland will have ever undertaken. Consequently, the scale of the stakeholder engagement requirement is unprecedented for a Scottish transport project. The Forth Replacement Crossing is the most recent yardstick for the importance of getting communications of a large, politically sensitive and disruptive infrastructure project right. We are preparing an overall communications strategy for the A9, the principles of which build on those used for the Forth.

15. The Cabinet Secretary has indicated his visit to Perth Chamber of Commerce on the morning of 6 June would be an opportunity to announce this further detail. TS Communications will recce a suitable location – potentially Luncarty Overbridge overlooking the start of the first single carriageway section going north - for a photo-opportunity/broadcast interviews. Further operational advice will be provided in due course. The main messages for this announcement are set out in **Annex E** and include:

- Announcing the complex and challenging programme required to deliver one of the biggest infrastructure projects in Scotland's history. The approximately £3bn project involves 80 miles of upgrade to the seven single carriageway stretches by 2025.
- Each section represents a major project in its own right and these require in-depth planning and design to ensure that we deliver the right scheme at the right price and keep impacts on communities, businesses and the environment to the absolute minimum.
- We have always said that delivery by 2025 was challenging but achievable.
- There is a lot to do and while we've taken into account the statutory processes in terms of delivery by 2025, the programme is currently indicative and construction of some sections may overtake others as we progress with our plans.
- The A9 is the longest trunk road in Scotland. To put the sheer scale of the project in perspective - it is 16 times the length of the recently completed M74 and eight times the length of the M80 between Stepps and Haggs
- We have already been engaging with the communities affected by the work immediately north of Perth and this will continue.
- Later this year, we will also begin a rolling programme of regular engagement from Perth to Inverness to ensure the businesses and

individuals who will be affected by the work over the next decade or so are kept fully informed and their important feedback is taken very much into account as we design, procure and construct.

- In the next 12 months or so, Transport Scotland will procure the necessary Design, Engineering and Environmental expertise to compliment the core TS team as we develop the scheme and begin the necessary statutory processes.
- By 2015, we expect to have begun and, in some cases, completed the statutory processes for a number of sections to start procurement and then construction beginning in 2017. These southern most sections of the A9 represent approximately £200m capital investment on their own.

## **Recommendation**

### **16. Ministers are invited to:**

- **Note the opportunities for delivery of the Luncarty to Birnam section and a small dualling scheme between Kincairdie and Dalraddy**
- **Agree that Transport Scotland procure the resources necessary to deliver the work set out in paragraph 11 as soon as possible during this spending review period**
- **Agree to the opportunity and arrangements for an announcement on 6 June**
- **Note the essential stages which are required to prepare the dualling scheme in general and to agree the timescales presented**
- **Note the implications of the strategy announcement on future budgetary requirements, with circa £200 million being required overall to continue to progress preparation work beyond SR 2012.**

(Redacted)

Transport Scotland

(Redacted) 28 May 2012

## **ANNEX A**

### **A9 UPGRADE TO DUAL CARRIAGEWAY**

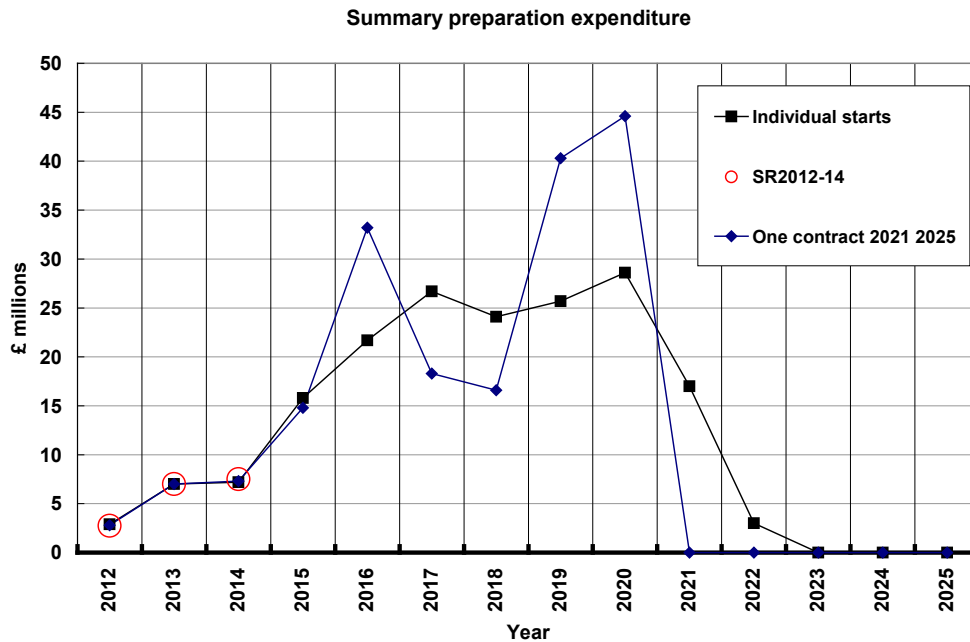
#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

1. The total programme cost was indicated in the STPR as between £1.5 billion and £3 billion. Early work to update this has confirmed this range, with a current estimated outturn cost of £3 billion. Using industry standard percentage allowances for preparation and land costs indicates a budget of £200-£300 million is required. This is in addition to construction costs, and will require to be funded in advance of construction starting on site.

2. A key element of the early stages of the programme is the Outline Business Case which will articulate the overall rationale and economic value of the scheme. With no significant construction expenditure for at least the first 5 years of the programme, the immediate challenge is to fund the design and development costs. The current budget allocation within the Spending Review period to cover scheme preparation costs is around £18.95 million and depending on the phasing of the construction this preparation budget will have to rise significantly to somewhere in the region of £25 million per annum in subsequent Spending Reviews to meet the 2025 completion timetable.

3. To assist future funding programming, two possible expenditure profiles have been modelled - phased construction with the first site start commencing in 2017, and a single contract approach (eg a single NPD contract) with a site start in 2021.





### *A9 Land and Preparation costs: budget profile scenario planning*

4. Transport Scotland and the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) have held workshops to discuss potential delivery vehicles for the A9 programme: to discuss the hub model as an example of a development partner model; and a more general review of existing delivery approaches used to date and elsewhere. The scale and nature of the A9 programme in terms of level of investment, physical scale and technical complexity makes it appropriate to consider potential alternative delivery structures. One option is whether it would be possible to wrap up the significant upfront development costs within a privately funded structure.

5. Our initial assessment is that no existing approaches provide a clear vehicle to lever in private sector funding to cover design and development costs of the scale required. Three main structures have been considered:

- **single scheme NPD.** It is unlikely that a single provider would be a practical proposition for a £3 billion programme. The experience of previous roads projects is that the private sector is not willing to accept, or manage, the up front costs and risks associated the statutory processes and land purchase. Should that impediment be overcome, the scale of up-front investment and the time lag to completion of construction when unitary charge payments would commence is unlikely to deliver value for

money. The construction programme could be broken down in to two or three smaller, but still in the order of £1 billion, sub-programmes. No assessment has yet been made as to the likely cost and availability of finance.

- **hub** The hub model requires the private sector to take some development cost risk that is very much at the margin. The principal objective of hub is to provide a procurement capability for a wide range of public sector bodies along with economies of scale. The basic characteristics of the A9 programme are different, and further work will be progressed to assess whether benefits could be achieved through a development partner route.
- **arms length company** Creating an arms length company along the lines of, for example, Network Rail to then borrow money against a regulated asset base would only be workable where there was an identifiable revenue stream such as direct tolls. Without such a revenue source, no risks would be transferred in the development stage and private funding would be most likely classified as straightforward borrowing

### ***Short to Medium Term, SR 2012***

6. In the short to medium term, we can progress those sections of the A9 where development work is already well advanced as well as commencing preliminary work on the development and delivery strategy, and work on possible funding options. The £18.95 million budgeted over the next three years would be sufficient to:

- begin collaborative agency working on the business case; carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment; undertake scoping work to develop design guidance with Historic Scotland and SNH; build up a data set of traffic information; and complete the topographical survey for the route
- commence route option studies on all sections except Tomatin to Moy.
- complete the statutory process for Kincaig to Dalraddy upgrading project
- publish Roads Orders for Luncarty to Birnam project
- finalise the overall design and delivery approach

7. Transport Scotland and Scottish Futures Trust jointly presented the emerging thinking for the dualling of the A9 to the Infrastructure Investment Board on 19 March. The Board concluded the following:

“Conclusions:

1) IIB notes that:

- *irrespective of funding and other constraints, the scheme will be complex to deliver, due to being highly constrained and environmentally sensitive;*
- *considerable work will need to be undertaken to develop a new approach to securing the funding for the development and construction programme and ensuring any solution provides flexibility in approach and value for money;*
- *ensuring affordability both in the short term with regards to development costs and in the longer term when assessing the level of borrowing required will be a priority; and delivering a scheme of this size will require significant staff resource which will need to be managed within restricted capacity.*

2) *IIB notes that Transport Scotland and SFT are still assessing options for delivery vehicles.*

3) *IIB agrees that in the short to medium term the most practical option would be to progress those sections of the A9 where development work is already well advanced and that Transport Scotland and SFT should commence preliminary work on the overall development and delivery strategy, including further detailed work on possible funding options.*

4) *IIB notes the proposed use of the £18 million preparation budget over the next three years.”*

Letter from DG Finance to Transport Scotland, May 2012

## ANNEX B

### A9 UPGRADE TO DUAL CARRIAGEWAY

#### BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT, INPUTS TO FUTURE OPTIONS AND STATUTORY PROCESSES

1. A robust business case for the scheme is essential for defence at Public Local Inquiries (PLIs). Whilst a Ministerial commitment is a valid need for a scheme, it is usual to back that commitment with an evidence based demonstration of that need. Transport schemes are appraised using 5 criteria: Economy, Environment, Safety, Accessibility and Integration. In the case of the A9 examples of issues associated with each include:

- **Economy** - traffic flows are generally low and journey time savings are small which in combination gives poor monetised benefits.
- **Safety** - although there is a higher rate of serious and fatal accidents on the route, overall the accident rate for the route is below the National Average. There has been a higher than average percentage of 'winter weather' related accidents with almost a quarter of all personal injury accidents recorded on the A9 between Perth and Inverness during the 3-year period (2008 to 2010) occurring when there was either frost/ice or snow present on the carriageway. Winter conditions can also create unreliable journey times and on occasions lead to road closures. Further work will be required as part of the design to ensure that winter resilience is built in.
- **Environment** – The A9 passes through areas which are outstanding in wildlife and landscape terms, some of which are of national or international importance. It passes through the Cairngorms National Park and also through or close to a significant number of environmentally designated sites. Working in this environment comes with a need to obtain certain permissions and with that there is a risk of either not achieving those permissions or of protracted survey and assessment work being required to gain permission. This is considered the biggest challenge to delivering the scheme..
- **Accessibility** – access to the trunk road will be rationalised to certain key junctions leading to increased journey times for some users. There are opportunities to enhance the safety of facilities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.

- **Integration** – the policy support for the scheme is robust.

2. Preliminary work suggests that the quantifiable/monetised benefits of the scheme will not outweigh the capital cost and that the Environmental Impact of the scheme may be high. However the scheme has widespread support from stakeholders. Recent discussions with various key agencies have identified a series of collaborative exercises that will assist in supporting the business case by providing evidence on how the dualling will support key sectors such as tourism, food and drink, renewables and life sciences.

3. Along with the principal workstreams there are other issues that will be considered as part of the programme:

- **WS2+1 schemes** - The work to date has also considered the treatment of the remaining WS2+1 schemes in the programme. It recommends that the Kincaig to Dalraddy scheme could be readily converted into a dualled scheme and be shovel ready in 2015/6 if treated as a stand alone section. If no Public Local Inquiry is required this scheme could be shovel ready by 2014/15. Ministers are asked to consider if they would like this work to proceed at an estimated budget of £400,000 to gain the necessary statutory permissions. The WS2+1 scheme at Slochd does not have a readily dualled solution and will not provide an economic return in the lifetime it would have remaining to 2025. The strategy is therefore based on subsuming this scheme into the wider dualling preparation work.
- **Emerging work on A96 dualling** - Our stakeholders are keenly aware of the commitment to dual the A96 by 2030. Where we are commissioning route wide services for the A9 we will consider inclusion of the A96 corridor in those contracts to allow us to continue to demonstrate progress on this scheme. From our discussions with the Local Authorities it is likely that we will receive early pressure to identify alignments for bypasses along the A96 to allow Local Authorities to develop their Local Development Plans around them. Transport Scotland has already undertaken DMRB stage 2 work on a Nairn Bypass in partnership with The Highland Council and it is likely that similar work will be requested soon on bypasses of Elgin, Keith and Inverurie as a minimum. There is no budget provision for this work within the current spending review period.

- ***Interim maintenance of the carriageway*** - Approximately 26 kilometres of the road pavement of the existing A9 will require replacement within the next 10 years. If the dualling scheme is forthcoming then it would not be cost effective to carry out reconstruction works at that location in advance of the new scheme and more short term patching of the carriageway may be required and which may lead to public criticism on the state of the road. A public plan for handling this issue will be developed.
- ***Programme to ensure existing dualled sections meet standard*** - In order to ensure that the final dualled A9 is of a safe modern standard it will be necessary to re-examine the layout of some of the existing dualled sections that date back to the 1980s. It is important to address features such as at-grade junctions and laybys and rest areas that would not now be deemed appropriate provision.
- ***Interface with proposed Highland Mainline Improvements*** - The provision of passing loops on the Highland Mainline between Perth and Inverness could be implemented as part of a *corridor* solution for the A9 with the objective of providing faster journey times and facilitating more trains. Recent consultation with Network Rail has identified a number of interfaces between the road and rail where, for example, modifications to the same structures may be required for both road and rail schemes.

## **Statutory Processes**

4. The governing statute will be the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. There are three stages of design and development necessary to deliver a robust scheme through the statutory processes:

- DMRB Stage 1 and 2 design – baseline constraints and route options
- DMRB Stage 3 – development of design of preferred option; and
- Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 – promotion of draft Road Orders, Environmental Statement and draft compulsory purchase orders.

5. In terms of programme, the most uncertainty comes from the latter stage where objections and the need for a Public Local Inquiry can make this stage up to 18 months in duration. Transport Scotland has a good deal of experience in handling schemes through the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 process. As part of the design process we will identify how best to

subdivide the schemes for statutory promotion. Ideally sections will fall into straightforward and complex/contentious categories allowing us to decide where to bring forward potential early wins. Initial work with key agencies suggests that this may be the case and already some complex sections have become apparent. These sections will be brought forward in the design programme to give us sufficient time to manage the risks.

6. Ministers will be aware that we have progressed two sections of the route through the first of these stages to date – Luncarty to Birnam and Birnam to the Tay Crossing. We consulted on both sections in January 2012 to canvas the public view on the preferred option for each section. Of the two sections, the Luncarty to Birnam section is the least contentious and most straightforward in engineering and environmental terms. It therefore offers the best opportunity to achieve a 2017 construction start.

7. 2012/13 will focus on commissioning the resources necessary to undertake the work. To provide services in the short-to medium-term, it is proposed to let two or three commissions under our existing framework agreement to provide certain high-priority packages of services. These will cover the following activities:

- Carry out an SEA and develop the route wide Environmental baseline work to start the necessary liaison with SNH on managing the Natura risk and building an active travel network.
- Manage a programme of business surveys and collaboration with RTPs, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, HIE and others to develop the National benefits for the scheme.
- Provide Engineering support services to allow us to progress strategic activities such as traffic surveys, topographical surveys, baseline constraints mapping, stakeholder engagement, review of existing dualled sections, risk and opportunity management and establishing and managing an extranet site for data sharing. This commission should be broad enough to draw on project management support in-house if required. The commission should specifically exclude works beyond the scoping stage of any scheme i.e. no DMRB Stage 2 work or beyond.
- The A9 Luncarty to Birnam scheme to completion should also be let under the MFA as an exception. This scheme has been identified to be shovel ready by 2017 and must therefore commence early 2012/13. DMRB Stage 2 work is currently being undertaken on an MFA commission between Birnam and Tay Crossing and that should continue to conclusion during 2012/13.

- Revisit the Kincaig to Dalraddy section as a dualled scheme with the potential for this to be a quick win using an existing framework commission.

8. An industry day could be held in advance of the procurement of the first section with the remainder being tendered at regular intervals. This approach allows us to test resource capability across organisations and also allows sufficient time to learn lessons and fine tune the documents between procurements. The contracts would be sufficient closely tendered to make a statement to the industry on the status of this overall programme/delivery strategy and the level of activity in Scotland.



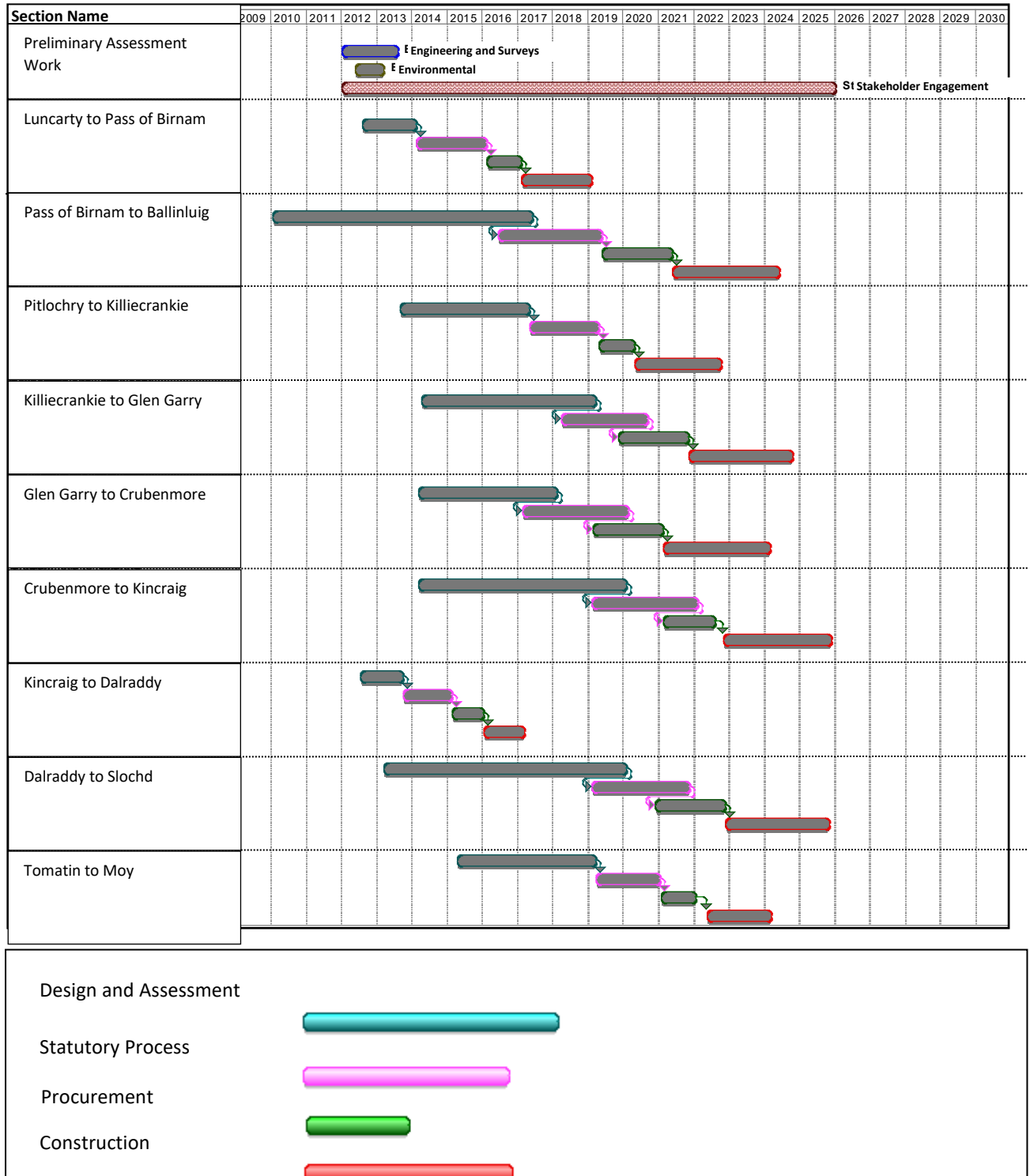
# ANNEX C

## A9 UPGRADE TO DUAL CARRIAGEWAY



# ANNEX D

## A9 UPGRADE TO DUAL CARRIAGEWAY OUTLINE PROGRAMME



## **ANNEX E**

### **A9 UPGRADE TO DUAL CARRIAGEWAY**

#### **OVERALL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

1. A9 Dualling represents – in geographic and cost terms alone – the biggest single infrastructure project Scotland will have ever undertaken. Consequently, the scale of the stakeholder engagement requirement for the project is unprecedented for a Scottish transport project.

2. Transport Scotland's record of successful infrastructure delivery has been backed up by a strong emphasis on community and stakeholder engagement. The Forth Replacement Crossing is the most recent yardstick for the importance of getting communications of a large, politically sensitive and disruptive infrastructure project right. The project set a high watermark for the standard of community engagement for publicly delivered infrastructure projects in Scotland. While the FRC Bill process added a layer of formal Parliamentary scrutiny that A9 Dualling will not have, the scheme remains politically sensitive and will involve a far larger footprint of affected communities, businesses and other stakeholders.

3. We are currently preparing an overall communications strategy for the project, which will be underpinned by a number of basic principles:

- Communications is a key element in successful project delivery and therefore should be fully integrated into both day-to-day delivery and the overarching governance of a project (including communications meetings)
- Regular, clear, informative communication with the range of carefully identified and continually reviewed stakeholder audiences via a range of appropriate channels (including online and traditional media) is essential best practice for any publicly-delivered infrastructure project.
- The programme will involve a large number of milestones and opportunities which will be regularly offered to Ministers to demonstrate progress and momentum via engaging media statements and photo-opportunities.
- There will be different levels and types of information flow depending on the stakeholder audiences and their relative importance to successful delivery. We should always be seen to be open to feedback and stating up-front that we will always ensure that we

engage when there are opportunities to have meaningful dialogue with directly-affected stakeholders.

- All external communications on the project via any channel – traditional and digital media, correspondence with the public, Parliamentary statements, speeches and presentations etc – should be aligned with an overall communications strategy.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAMME (6 June TBC)**

### **Background**

4. Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment said on 15 December 2011:

*“Early next year we will continue the important engagement with these local communities and key organisations along the route to explain our plans and get feedback which will be crucial to delivering the right scheme. This will be followed in subsequent years with design, statutory, procurement and construction milestones across the various phases of the project.”*

The news release added: “...options for the Luncarty to Tay Crossing would be published in the new year with more details on the schedule for completion of the Perth to Inverness stretch to follow soon after.” Subsequent media statements have announced construction of section starting at Luncarty would begin in 2017 and announcement on further programme detail would be made in Spring 2012.

5. This will build on the recent announcements on dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness by 2025 (and starting as early as 2017) with a more detailed delivery programme including various sections and timetable for design & development, procurement and construction.

6. Importantly, the announcement will also make a strong commitment to a programme of regular, meaningful stakeholder engagement focusing on directly affected communities and other interested groups along the length of the route and nationally. This will start later in 2012 and will be a rolling programme throughout life of the project.

### **Location**

7. The Cabinet Secretary has indicated his visit to Perth Chamber of Commerce on the morning of 6 June would be an opportunity to announce

this further detail. TS Communications will recce a suitable location – potentially Luncarty Overbridge overlooking the start of the first single carriageway section going north - for a photo-opportunity/broadcast interviews. Further operational advice will be provided in due course.

## Messages

8. The main messages for this announcement are:

- **Announcing the complex and challenging programme required to deliver one of the biggest infrastructure projects in Scotland's history. The approximately £3bn project involves 80 miles of upgrade to the seven single carriageway stretches by 2025.**
- **Each section represents a major project in it's own right and these require in-depth planning and design to ensure that we deliver the right scheme at the right price and keep impacts on communities, businesses and the environment to the absolute minimum.**
- **Announcement of Kincaig-Dalraddy (to be confirmed)**
- **We have always said that delivery by 2025 was challenging but achievable.**
- **There is a lot to do and while we've taken into account the statutory processes in terms of delivery by 2025, the programme is currently indicative and construction of some sections may overtake others as we progress with our plans.**
- **The A9 is the longest trunk road in Scotland. To put the sheer scale of the project in perspective - it is 16 times the length of the recently completed M74 and eight times the length of the M80 between Stepps and Haggs**
- **We have already been engaging with the communities affected by the work immediately north of Perth and this will continue.**
- **Later this year, we will also begin a rolling programme of regular engagement from Perth to Inverness to ensure the businesses and individuals who will be affected by the work over the next decade or so are kept fully informed and their important feedback is taken very much into account as we design, procure and construct.**
- **In the next 12 months or so, my officials in Transport Scotland will procure the necessary Design, Engineering and Environmental expertise to compliment the core TS team as we develop the scheme and begin the necessary statutory processes.**

- **By 2015, we expect to have begun and, in some cases, completed the statutory processes for a number of sections to start procurement and then construction beginning in 2017. These southern most sections of the A9 represent approximately £200m capital investment on their own.**

## **Audiences**

9. Key Audiences for this announcement are:

- **Business & Tourism** HIE, Scottish Enterprise, Economic Forums, Cairngorm National Park, Local Chambers of Commerce, CBI Scotland, Fed of Small Businesses, Institute of Directors, Scottish Chambers of Commerce, SCDI
- **Community / Key Locations along route** – e.g. members of the public using route or living along it, community councils and other representative groups
- **Media** – the nature of this project will require a strong emphasis on regional and local media such as Courier, P&J and regional BBC radio/online. These messages must be coordinated with the national media to ensure consistency of message.
- **Special interest groups** – e.g. campaigners, environmental groups, safety groups, cycling/walking groups
- **Political** – e.g. constituency and regional list MSPs (including Ministers with constituency interest), constituency MPs, MEPs, all ward councillors on route
- **Key Landowners**

## **Channels**

10. Suggested channels for this announcement are

- **Photo / filming / interview Op** near Perth (potentially at Luncarty Overbridge)
- **News Release** – national release with regionalised versions for Perthshire and Inverness
- **Media Briefing Pack** – more detail, map, high-level timeline, 3<sup>rd</sup> party quotes/case study (preferably Inverness-based)
- Launch of A9 Dualling **webpage** (limited content at the start but this will develop as the programme progresses).
- **Tweets** with #A9DuallingNorth and #A9DuallingSouth hashtags, tweeting links to graphical timeline, map and 3<sup>rd</sup> party quotes

- **Thought piece** from Cabinet Secretary for key printed media focusing on the wider safety and economic benefits, what this Government has already achieved on the A9 to improve safety, our record of infrastructure delivery and our future plans.
- **Key Stakeholder Letters** with details of announcement and committing to giving more details of rolling stakeholder engagement in due course.

11. Initial stakeholder letters should be from Ministers but these will refer to regular follow-ups from TS officials.

12. The letters will also ask stakeholders to provide an email address to allow us to send electronic newsletters to either compliment further announcements or directly communicate less significant progress.

13. Careful consideration will be given to setting up more online channels including potential dedicated Facebook group and Twitter channels to ensure we can communicate progress directly with interested parties

### **Timing**

14. Cabinet Secretary is due for a breakfast meeting with the Perth Chamber of Commerce so we suggest carrying out the photo-op at approximately 10.30-11am. We'll finalise timings with Private Office.

15. Mr Neil will wish to refer to the announcement at the Perth Chamber so we would suggest releasing announcement to the media earlier to coincide. A broadcast trail (Tay FM, GMS, Daybreak) will also be organised if possible

16. Given local newspaper deadlines, we would suggest giving Perth Advertiser, Dundee Courier, P&J and Inverness Courier some advanced material on the afternoon of 5 June to ensure maximum coverage.

### **Next Steps**

17. A programme of stakeholder meetings and exhibitions along the route will be devised and rolled out later in the year. We will advise Ministers of this in due course.