

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

1st Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Wednesday 18
January 2023

PE1974: Adopt the A890 as a trunk road

Petitioner	Derek Noble
Petition summary	Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to adopt the A890 as a trunk road, and to resolve the safety problems associated with the Stromeferry Bypass.
Webpage	https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1974

Introduction

1. This is a new petition that was lodged on 19 October 2022.
2. A full summary of this petition and its aims can be found at **Annexe A**.
3. A SPICe briefing has been prepared to inform the Committee's consideration of the petition and can be found at **Annexe B**.
4. While not a formal requirement, petitioners have the option to collect signatures on their petition. On this occasion, the petitioner elected to collect this information. 134 signatures have been received.
5. The Committee seeks views from the Scottish Government on all new petitions before they are formally considered. A response has been received from the Scottish Government and is included at **Annexe C** of this paper.

Action

The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerk to the Committee

Annexe A

PE1974: Adopt the A890 as a trunk road

Petitioner

Derek Noble

Date lodged

19 October 2022

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to adopt the A890 as a trunk road, and to resolve the safety problems associated with the Strome ferry Bypass.

Previous action

I have contacted Rhoda Grant MSP for advice.

Background information

As highlighted in the [Annual Slope Inspection Report](#) of 2021, "the A890 serves as the main link-road down the west coast of Scotland and is also a significant transit for east to west traffic travelling between the Isle of Skye and Inverness." The road is mainly single carriageway but frequently reduces to single track with passing places along the stretch between Attadale and Ardnarff. There has been a history of rock falls at the site since the road was opened, which continue to occur, posing a risk to the road and its users.

The Highland Council have undertaken feasibility studies into two alternatives to the Strome ferry Bypass. One is a bridge between North and South Strome and the other a new bypass route through Glen Udalain.

The existing road is the route taken daily by school buses, and there have been many days of education lost due to closures.

In 2012, the estimated cost of the Glen Udalain route was £23 million and that of the Bridge was £60 million. This level of funding can only come at a government level. The A890 has to be adopted by the Scottish Government for improvements to happen.

Annexe B

The logo for SPICe, featuring the text 'SPICe' in white on a purple-to-blue gradient background.

The Information Centre
An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on PE1974: Adopt the A890 as a trunk road, submitted by Derek Noble

Background

The A890 is a largely single two-lane carriageway road linking the A87 at Auchtertyre with the A896 Strathcarron junction, a distance of 32.2 miles. There are single track sections, with passing places, on the three-mile stretch between Attadale and Ardnarff where the road runs along a narrow strip of flat land between cliffs and the banks of Loch Carron. Space is further constrained on this section as the road runs right alongside the Inverness-Kyle of Lochalsh railway. The road is managed and maintained by Highland Council.

With regards the development of a bypass for the Strome ferry section of the route, Highland Council state that:

“A rock fall in December 2011 resulted in the closure of the A890 at the Strome ferry Bypass for several months. The closure led to major disruption with motorists facing a 130-mile diversion.

31 route options located in 6 route corridors were identified during a pre-appraisal study period. These were sifted to 17 route options. A shortlist was established to take forward to a second stage of more detailed appraisal.

These are:

- 2 northern routes with either a tunnel or bridge across Strome Narrows

- 5 online options with either a viaduct, tunnel, extended avalanche shelter and shared use rail or road or do minimum on the existing line of the road
- 1 southern route through Glen Udalain
- 1 renewable energy option

The detailed appraisal of these routes is still underway.”

Further information on these route options is available on [the Highland Council website](#).

Scottish Government Action

The Scottish Government indicated in answer to written [Parliamentary Question S5W-20047](#) that it “...has no plans to trunk the A890”.

Scottish Parliament Action

The Scottish Parliament has not previously considered the trunking of the A890.

Alan Rehfisch
Senior Researcher
7 October 2022

SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), an office of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

Annexe C

Transport Scotland submission of 24 October 2022

PE1974/A: Adopt the A890 as a trunk road

The Scottish Government has no plans to trunk the A890.

Scottish Ministers have a statutory duty to manage and maintain the trunk road network in line with the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. The Act places an obligation on Ministers to keep the network under continual review. Furthermore, the Act places statutory responsibility for local road improvements, maintenance and repair with local authorities.

In the United Kingdom, trunk roads were first defined in the Trunk Roads Act 1936. There have been two national reviews of the Scottish road network within the last 70 years. The first was in 1946 and the second in 1994/95. The latter was prompted by the reorganisation of local government in Scotland.

A comprehensive national review of the overall network would only be required in response to matters of national significance. We therefore currently have no plans to undertake a formal review of the trunk road network. Ministers do however, keep the trunk road network under continual review with the issue last considered by Scottish Ministers following publication of the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR). Analysis of the network at that time determined that no major adjustments were required. In the intervening period, the network has been kept up to date by modifying the status of particular sections, as appropriate, in conjunction with the delivery of specific trunk road schemes.

The following guiding principles apply to the trunk road network:

- Provide the users with a coherent and continuous system of routes, which serve destinations of importance to industry, commerce, agriculture and tourism;
- Define nationally important routes which will be developed in line with strategic national transport demands; and
- Ensure roads of predominately local importance are managed locally.