

UPDATE ON A83 REST AND BE THANKFUL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report gives a brief update on the A83 and advises Members of a seminar planned for Monday 8 September 2014 for Elected Members and stakeholders. Transport Scotland officials will deliver a presentation at the seminar and the focus will be on the resilience of the A83, the works completed and the works proposed. The meeting will also consider the improvement works on the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan.

Members are asked to note the report.

UPDATE ON A83 REST AND BE THANKFUL

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the A83 and advises Members of a seminar planned for Monday 8 September 2014 for Elected Members and stakeholders. The seminar will be attended by Transport Scotland officials who will make a presentation on both the A83 Rest and Be Thankful and the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to note the report.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 A meeting of the A83 Taskforce Group took place on 10 June 2014 chaired by Minister Keith Brown, supported by Transport Scotland officials, BEAR Scotland, Council Members, officers and attended by a number of stakeholders.
- 4.2 Minister Keith Brown has agreed that his officials will deliver a presentation to a seminar. The seminar will be hosted by Argyll and Bute Council on Monday 8 September 2014. The seminar will be open to all Elected Members and stakeholders.
- 4.3 The focus of the seminar will be keeping Argyll and Bute open for business and will focus on the resilience of the A83, the works completed and the works proposed. The meeting will also consider the improvement works on the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan.

Tarbet to Inverarnan

- 4.4 The route between Tarbet and Inverarnan runs adjacent to the west bank of Loch Lomond for 17 km (10.6 miles). It is located within the National Park in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Transport Scotland have commissioned survey and design work considering the options for improving this section of road. It is a complex site, physically constrained, with the loch on one side, and the hillside and

railway on the other. All feasible upgrade options are being reviewed by Transport Scotland to ensure value for money. The work will consider issues including:

- The impact of widening the road,
- Opportunities to improve visibility and reduce the levels of accidents
- Improving drainage
- Pedestrian and cycle access
- Car parking and lay-by provision
- Delivering journey time reliability

4.5 The £2million design and survey work started in summer 2013 and is programmed to take around two years to complete. A range of issues are being looked at as the study progresses. These include:

- Environmental impact
- Ground investigation
- Traffic impact
- Economic assessment
- Value for money

The study will follow an objective led approach that will be informed by consideration of the problems and constraints.

4.6 The Stage 1 assessment to identify a preferred corridor is now complete, Transport Scotland have announced the Preferred Route Corridor. A key part of this stage was to agree specific objectives that best define what the scheme is trying to achieve. The five scheme objectives are:-

1. To improve average journey times for A82 trunk road users between Tarbet and Inverarnan (based on observed post Pulpit Rock scheme).
2. To reduce personal injury accident numbers and their severity on the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan to be closer to or better than national KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured) rates.
3. To provide appropriate stopping opportunities for visitors and for all trunk road users on the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan taking account of the unique setting of the route within the National Park.
4. To seek to provide opportunities for enhanced access by sustainable modes of travel along the A82 corridor between Tarbet and Inverarnan.
5. To reduce disruption to road users resulting from the undertaking of maintenance activities on the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan.

A wide range of route corridors were identified and following an initial sifting process using the above objectives, the three most feasible route corridors were narrowed down to:

- (i) the existing A82 route corridor,
- (ii) a route corridor from Arrochar to Inveruglas along Glen Loin, and
- (iii) a route corridor above and to the west of the West Highland Rail line.

- 4.7 An assessment of the engineering challenges, environmental effects and traffic and economics concluded that option 1 (A82 on-line, the 'red route') is the preferred corridor. Other options, such as a straight line tunnel through the hillside or a submerged tunnel in the loch were also considered, but sifted out at an early stage because they failed to meet all of the objectives. It is also notable that the £4 billion estimated cost of the tunnels was considerably higher and would have provided a significantly lower economic return than the other options.
- 4.8 The project will now progress through a stage 2 assessment, to consider in more detail the issues and impacts of the development of an improved road alignment along this corridor including improvements to the A82/A83 junction at Tarbet. The stage 2 assessment will conclude with the identification of a preferred road alignment which will be presented at a local public exhibition in Spring 2015. Topographical, and ecological investigations have started and geotechnical investigations are planned for later in the year. Consultation exercises will also be undertaken to gather the views from stakeholders, landowners and the general public over the coming year with recommendation of a preferred road alignment expected in Spring 2015.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report provides an update on the A83 and advises Members of a seminar planned for Monday 8 September 2014 for Elected Members and stakeholders.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1	Policy	None
6.2	Financial	None
6.3	Legal	None
6.4	HR	None
6.5	Equalities	None
6.6	Risk	None
6.7	Customer Services	None

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