



**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01478**

**Name of petitioner**

Murray Cooper

**Petition title**

A90 Balmedie to Tippetty Dualling Project

**Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to deliver the A90 Balmedie to Tippetty Dualling Project as near to the original Transport Scotland promise of 2013 as possible, and by no later than mid 2014.

**Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

I have made contact via email with the local Councillors, MSPs, MPs, the First Minister and the Transport Minister, requesting that they provide details on their activities with regard to recovering this delayed project.

On receiving their initial round of correspondence and being dissatisfied by the responses, i.e. none of them answered the specific question, they all indicated that they were concerned that the road was delayed, however they did not provide any details on anything they were doing to try and recover the situation.

I then collated the return letters and emails and replied to them all indicating that their responses we're, in my view, inadequate. I then challenged them again, as representatives of the local area, to do more to ensure that this critical project is delivered as near to its original planned date as possible. I specifically asked the following questions:

1. When the decision was made to link the AWPR and TBDCP (Tippetty to Balmedie Dual Carriageway Project), who made the decision and what was the criteria for supporting that decision i.e. how much money would it save?

2. When the decision was made to link the projects was it expected that this would result in a delay of the TBDCP and if so by how much and was this considered by those making the decision in question 1?

3. Now that the delivery of the TBDCP looks to be delayed by years does that impact on the criteria used to make the decision in question 1, if so how? and what will now happen to address this?

4. What is the economic impact of the delay to the TBDCP? (For example in the winter months I start queuing at the Ellon roundabout and remain in a queue most mornings until I reach Balmedie even though I leave my house at 06:00hrs in the morning. Which I estimate adds at least 10-15 minutes to my journey and the same is true when returning home in the evenings). What is the total cost of this type of delay when multiplied across all the users of the roads, i.e. buses, lorries, commuters, business etc etc etc.?

5. What is the environmental impact of delaying the TBDCP, is it positive or negative?

6.What work has been put in to recover the delayed completion date of this project if any?

7.When is the completion date of the TBDCP part of the project? Saying that it will be accelerated within the overall AWPR project and it will be delivered before the end of 2018 is not good enough. It could be up to 5 years later than 1st planned!

At this time I also included the local and national press on my email with a view to attempting to stimulate further debate and discussion.

I have received some responses to the 2nd letter from those who have been contacted all indicating that they were seeking a response to my questions from the Transport Minister on my behalf. All again expressing disappointment that the road is delayed but again failing to provide any specific answers to the questions asked.

Subsequently, I received a letter directly from the Transport Minister which indicated that the two projects had been combined as a result of UK government cut backs to the Scottish funding in 2011. However, on all counts he failed to provide any answers to any of the seven specific questions I had asked in the letter.

### **Petition background information**

The issues around the section of the A90 between Balmedie to Tipperty being a bottle neck and the cause for severe delays to all traffic traveling to and from the NE of Scotland are very well known and understood, by local and national government bodies, as well as the local communities. As documented on both the Transport Scotland Trunk Roads Projects and Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) web sites and in numerous articles in the local press.

Furthermore, the critical importance of this project was recently highlighted by Scotland's First Minister, Alex Salmond, when he was quoted as follows: "Over the next three decades, the AWPR and the Balmedie to Tipperty road schemes are expected to bring in an additional £6 billion to the local economy, creating around 14,000 new jobs. It is therefore crucial that we crack on and deliver these vital and frankly long overdue infrastructure projects".

As such a plan to upgrade this section of road from single carriageway to dual carriageway has been developed and approved for some time with the Scottish government originally committing to having it complete by 2013.

Recently, however, the Scottish Government decided to link this project to the AWPR project and to fund it using the Non-Profit Distribution Model, rather than paying for it directly from central government funds which, it feels, could be better spent elsewhere.

As a result of this decision, the actual delivery date of the project is now not clear and despite asking the Transport Minister directly and specifically when this part of the project will be completed, he has declined to answer so far. Based on the high level overall project timelines provided by him, it's unlikely that the upgrade will be complete before 2016. As such, the people and business of the NE of Scotland are likely to face delays, inconvenience and increased travel costs for at least three years longer than was originally promised.

### **Unique web address**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/DualBalmedie2TippertyNow>

### **Related information for petition**

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/projects/a90-balmedie-to-tipperty-dualling-project>

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

22 / 04 / 2013

Comments to stimulate online discussion

**Are you fed up queuing from Tipperty to Balmedie and Balmedie to Tipperty almost regardless of what time you try and make that journey?**

**Did you know that the dualling of that section of road was due to be completed by the end of 2013 until it was linked to the AWPR project and the funding plans were changed and now it could be delayed until as late as 2018!**

**Please sign up to this petition and send on to as many people as you can to try and get this critical road improvement project delivered sooner rather than later!**