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Alison Wilson
Assistant Clerk to the Public
Petitions Committee
TG.01
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date:
21 July 2010

Dear Alison

Consideration of Petition PE1236: A90 Laurencekirk

I am writing in response to the further questions raised by the Petitions Committee about PE1236 on A90 Laurencekirk junctions at its meeting on 18 May 2010.

Taking each of the questions in turn:

Q. Can you provide the Committee with an accurate cost to provide a flyover at Laurencekirk?

A. As I indicated in my letter of 10 May, and also in my earlier letter of 30 December 2009, we do not consider that grade separation is necessary at this time and hence we have no plans to carry out a further study. It is not possible to provide an accurate cost without undertaking a thorough investigation and design at additional cost to the taxpayer.

I realise that this is disappointing. However, Stewart Stevenson MSP, as the Minister responsible for the Scottish trunk road network, has to ensure that the money available is spent where it will have the greatest effect. In this context, we are entering a period of severe fiscal constraint and face significant funding pressures in the coming years.

Q. Can you provide the Committee with the accident figures for two other sites where grade separation has been approved so that these figures can be compared with those at Laurencekirk?

My colleagues spoke to you and clarified that the question should read "Can you provide the Committee with the accident figures for the A9 between Stirling and Perth where grade separation has been approved....."

A. The accident statistics for the A9 between Kier Roundabout and Inveralmond Roundabout are provided in Annex A, together with the information we have previously supplied

for Laurencekirk from 1999 to 2009. To assist with your considerations of these statistics, it is worth bearing in mind the following:

The STPR recommendation for the A9 between Dunblane and Perth is a nationally strategic intervention covering around 43km of the A9 which has a record of high accident severity at a number of locations. There are approximately 60 gaps in the central reserve which could be closed by this intervention. Appraisal of this intervention has indicated that this would significantly reduce the accident rate and accident severity on this route. Given the strategic nature of the STPR, the specific locations and measures along the A9 have not been identified at this stage. As the STPR is not a funded document, the pace at which the STPR projects will be developed further and delivered will be determined by the availability of resources in future spending reviews.

In terms of Laurencekirk, the STPR appraisal process gave specific consideration to the case for the grade separation of the Laurencekirk south junction. Further to the road safety measures introduced in 2005 at the south junction which resulted in improved accident statistics at this location, it was not considered that grade separation was necessary at this time.

The Review concluded that grade separation would not address or make a significant contribution to the STPR objective established for the corridor of a 'continual reduction in accident rates and severity rates across the strategic transport network' and the safety record at this junction will continue to be monitored through STPR Intervention 1 - Strategic Road Safety Plan.

This will be progressed through Transport Scotland's Strategic Road Safety Unit who monitor the performance of the whole of the trunk road network.

Q. The Committee has also been made aware of proposed developments in the Montrose area, can I refer you to the points made by the Committee, and in particular Nigel Don and Nanette Milne, in respect of the impact of these developments may have on the volume of traffic and the adequacy of the junction

A. As a statutory consultee within the planning process, Transport Scotland is given the opportunity to consider the safe performance of the trunk road network in relation to the potential effects of development plan proposals and comment on development plans. In terms of the safe performance of the trunk road network, this includes issues such as safety and capacity. Similarly, Transport Scotland is consulted on relevant planning applications and makes recommendations and specifies conditions as part of an official planning response.

Consultation on the emerging Angus Local Development Plan is due to start in autumn 2010 with the aim of adopting the Plan in summer 2014. Transport Scotland will engage with Angus Council and other key stakeholders during the Council's Plan preparation process.

Regarding Aberdeenshire's proposals for Laurencekirk, as I also indicated in my letter, Transport Scotland's appraisal of the impacts of this on the A90 identifies the need for the Council to bring forward a strategy of junction improvements, including grade separation in parallel with the development. Transport Scotland will continue to work with Aberdeenshire Council on how the Council brings forward such improvements and how they might be funded.

In addition, it may be helpful to refer back to the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change's evidence to the Petitions Committee Meeting on 2 March 2010 regarding proposed developments at Laurencekirk.

Finally, I would like to make reference to the 18 May meeting in relation to Mr Rumbles' statement that in the 4 year period since the installation of the previous measures in 2005, there has been a 50% increase in injury accidents at the "Laurencekirk junction".

Whilst there has been an increase in accidents when the statistics for all three junctions are considered together, since 2005 the south junction (A90 / A937) has seen a reduction in the number and the severity of accidents while traffic volumes using the south junction have increased over the years. In light of the overall increase in accidents, Transport Scotland recently implemented recommendations resulting from the A90 Laurencekirk Road Safety Review to enhance the safety of all three junctions. The accident statistics tables we have previously supplied for the junctions at Laurencekirk are included in Annex A.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Frances Duffy

Injury accidents on the A9 (including surrounds of roundabouts to radius of 150m) between Keir Rbt and Broxden Rbt. (these figures are based on information available at 29 June 2010)

ANNEX A

Year	FATAL	SERIOUS	SLIGHT	Total
1999	2	10	35	47
2000	4	12	17	33
2001	4	9	34	47
2002	1	6	30	37
2003	5	5	47	57
2004	4	8	22	34
2005	1	12	26	39
2006	1	11	35	47
2007	2	14	39	55
2008	3	4	29	36
2009	0	10	25	35
Total	27	101	339	467

Injury accidents on the A90 in vicinity of Laurencekirk including the 3 junctions (150 metres south of south junction to 150 metres north of north junction)

Year	FATAL	SERIOUS	SLIGHT	Total
1999	0	1	1	2
2000	0	0	3	3
2001	2	2	2	6
2002	0	0	2	2
2003	0	1	0	1
2004	1	0	2	3
2005	0	4	2	6
2006	0	2	2	4
2007	0	2	2	4
2008	0	1	4	5
2009**	1	2	2	5
Total	4	15	22	41

Yearly injury accident figures for the A90/A937: southern junction only.

Year	FATAL	SERIOUS	SLIGHT	Total
1999	0	0	1	1
2000	0	0	2	2
2001	2	2	1	5
2002	0	0	1	1
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	1	0	1	2
2005*	0	1	1	2
2006	0	0	1	1
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	2	2
2009**	0	0	1	1
Total	3	3	11	17

* Cameras and reduced speed limit effective from October 05. Injury accidents occurred prior to that date.

** The 2009 data is for the period 1 January - 31 October.

