

PE1657/DD

A77 Action Group submission of 18 March 2021

Let's compare capital spend on road infrastructure in the area over the past two decades by the Scottish Government and that of the two ferry companies.

Total A77 & A75 is £83.05m compared to a total spend in Scotland of £10.5bn

This represents 0.8% or another way 8/10th of 1%

Ferry Companies Spend on routes out of Cairnryan.

P&O Ferries invested over the same two decades a total of £88.5m between new port infrastructure and two new Ro-pax ferries. Already, P&O Ferries has exceeded the investments of the Scottish Government over the past two decades, by around £5m.

Over the same period Stena Line committed to Scotland to build a New Port facility, conversion work of Stena Superfast 7 & 8, charter and then subsequent outright purchase of these two ships at a total investment of £334.4m This gives a combined total of **£422.9m** investment in ferry services from Cairnryan, over the five times the investment the Scottish Government has made on the road infrastructure! While out of £10.5bn this represents 8/10ths of 1% or 0.8% of the Capital budget. The theme of being forgotten, ignored, neglected and deprived finds the south west corner of Scotland being left behind.

The following **Schematic diagram 1** on the next page shows the relationships with NI, the South West of Scotland with population sizes, distances from Ayr, it also identifies the urban towns and villages who are yet to be bypassed on A77.

Given that the UK Government's Union Connectivity Review published an Interim Report – March 2021 only just a few days ago. Where it highlights the A75T to be included by Sir Peter Hendy CBE team in a £20m feasibility study, it is highly likely to make the final version of this review and receive much needed funding it sorely requires. From what I understand the investment by the UK Government is over and above the Block Grant given to the Scottish Government.

This is welcome for the south west corner for the A75, but it is very much bittersweet and feels that the A77 is being forgotten, ignored, neglected and deprived by only being mentioned once in that report.

Reasons given to favour the A75, is the volume of commercial traffic on the road connecting North of England to Northern Ireland via South West Scotland. The A77 has very similar issues to the A75, as to platooning columns of vehicles, accidents, diversions, poor journey time reliability. It also in that it links Northern Ireland to another member of the United Kingdom. That being Scotland, or certainly the rest of it.

The A75 traffic bound for Cairnryan Ports also has to use the A77 to actually physically get to the ports.

The Scottish Government seem too busy trying to politicise this when they should be arguing for the A77 to be included for this addition money.

Schematic diagram 1

