

PE1657/X

Dual the A75 Group submission of 2 February 2021

The A75 in its present format is predominately a single carriageway road with little overtaking lanes and short dual carriageway stretches far between. The A75 stretches from the M6 / M74 motorway at Gretna to Stranraer in the very west of Scotland, and connects onto the A77 via the A751. Once onto the A77 it's a mere four miles to the Cairnryan ferry port, where traffic then experience the shortest crossing over the Irish Sea to reach Northern Ireland. Cairnryan is the only ferry port in the UK & Ireland on the Irish Sea which is not supported by at least a dual carriageway.

The A75 is around 95-100 miles long and as highlighted above traffic from Scotland, England and Northern Ireland predominantly use this route (as well as traffic from other EU countries and the Republic of Ireland). I feel it is very important given that the review is to improve UK Connectivity between the nations that upgrading the A75 to a dual carriageway is given consideration.

The A75 in its current format is unfit for purpose - although the fastest way to cross the Irish Sea is by sailing from Cairnryan the journey to Cairnryan from the UK motorway is abysmal and unrealistic for many. Like said above with the A75 being predominantly single carriageway it is common for lots of slow moving HGV convoys to appear, which are limited to a speed of 40mph, which makes journeys difficult and questionable for them as they are at a 10mph disadvantage to single carriageways / dual carriageways in other parts of the UK. With there being many HGV convoys this also proves a serious danger to other vehicle users as we see far too often drivers becoming frustrated at sitting at 40mph and taking risks to overtake and make progress.

The UK Government has been looking for ways to better connect Great Britain and Ireland, mainly looking at options of building bridges and / or tunnels between Scotland and Northern Ireland. Whilst there might be serious consideration for these proposals, we believe it is necessary to first upgrade the A75 between the motorway and effectively the Irish Sea beforehand, as the road is struggling with capacity at peak times at the moment. An influx of more vehicles would only lead to more accidents with more drivers taking more risks.

One of the best ways to improve transport connectivity of the nations of the United Kingdom is by upgrading the A75 to a dual carriageway. You are effectively creating a fast link from the North of England and South of Scotland to Northern Ireland and beyond, and with sailing from Cairnryan being the quickest way to cross the Irish Sea, by upgrading the road you would be taking advantage of this and it would definitely see more haulagers and tourists alike use this crossing, which has massive potential to transform the economy at both a local and national level.

To sum up what I've said, the best possible way to improve transport connectivity between member countries of the UK is to upgrade the A75 between Gretna and Stranraer to a dual carriageway.