A83 Rest and Be Thankful

DMRB STAGE 3 SCHEME ASSESSMENT REPORT - VOLUME 1 PART 3 - SUMMARY

Transport Scotland

09/12/24

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8.1. Proposed Scheme

8.1.1. The Proposed Scheme is predominantly online and is therefore on or very close to the line and level of the existing A83. Its overall length is 2.25km, starting broadly at the Croe Water (Cobbler Bridge) and extending to a point north of the junction to the B828 Glenmore local road, adjacent to Loch Restil.

8.1.2. Landslide, debris flow and boulder protection are achieved through the inclusion of a Debris Flow Shelter (DFS) combined with a catchpit over a length of 1.4km, with an additional 146m of catchpit and Debris Flow Protection Wall (DFW) to the north. It is proposed that maintenance of the catchpit, which sits on the uphill side of the DFS and DFW, will be achieved via the roof of the DFS with access taken directly from the A83 via a new direct access. The Proposed Scheme also includes improvements to the B828 Glenmore local road junction and Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park and bus stop / turning area. Extending from the Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park and bus stop / turning area, to the Core Path on the lower slopes of Ben Donich, the Proposed Scheme includes an Active Travel Link which closely follows the B828 Glenmore local road in the southern verge.

8.1.3. There are several other key structures as part of the Proposed Scheme including 16 No. culverts (12 within the extents of the DFS and a further four to the north of the DFS) and a 30m bridge structure, referenced B02 Burn Bridge at the northern extents of the project.

8.1.4. To support the construction of the Proposed Scheme and provide a suitable, and more resilient diversion route for A83 Trunk Road traffic, a series of Improvements to the Old Military Road (OMR) are proposed as follows:

- widening of the OMR over a length of approximately 1.4km to accommodate two-way traffic including a new proprietary bridge structure that will carry southbound traffic with northbound traffic continuing on the existing bridge over the Croe Water;
- localised widening at three existing sharp bends at the northern end of Glen Croe to assist HGVs in navigating the narrow carriageway when using the OMR as the diversion route;

- an approximately 150m long debris flow protection earthwork bund to protect the OMR during debris flow and rock fall events;
- extension of the existing HESCO barrier by approximately 150m to protect the OMR during debris flow and rock fall events; and,
- installation of debris flow and rock fall fences above the A83 Trunk Road to increase resilience of the OMR. New fences are proposed where there are currently no geotechnical interventions.

8.2. Proposed Scheme Objectives

8.2.1. The Proposed Scheme objectives were defined in the Access to Argyll and Bute (A83) DMRB Stage 1 Assessment Report (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Preliminary Engineering Services (PES)). The objectives were developed based on the problems and opportunities relating to the strategic road network through an extensive review of existing studies. Additional cognisance was taken of public and stakeholder feedback obtained through consultation in September and October 2020.

8.2.2. The Proposed Scheme objectives are:

- **Resilience** – Reduce the impact of disruption for travel to, from and between key towns within Argyll and Bute, and for communities accessed via the strategic road network.
- **Safety** – Positively contribute towards the Scottish Government's Vision Zero road safety target by reducing accidents on the road network and their severity.
- **Economy** – Reduce geographic and economic inequalities within Argyll and Bute through improved connectivity and resilience.
- **Sustainable travel** – Encourage sustainable travel to, from and within Argyll and Bute through facilitating bus, active travel and sustainable travel choices.
- **Environment** – Protect the environment, including the benefits local communities and visitors obtain from the natural environment, by enhancing natural capital assets and ecosystem service provision through delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure.

8.3. Proposed Scheme Objectives Delivered

8.3.1. The Proposed Scheme will result in an overall benefit in terms of the A83 Rest and Be Thankful project objectives.

Resilience

8.3.2. The Proposed Scheme will improve resilience of the A83 Trunk Road within Glen Croe through the incorporation of the DFS, DFW and associated catchpit which will protect the road from landslide, debris flow and boulder fall events, reducing the impact of disruption for travel to, from and between key towns within Argyll and Bute.

8.3.3. Improvements to the A83 Trunk Road and B828 Glenmore local road within the Proposed Scheme extents will also improve resilience of the route, particularly for larger vehicles including local and regional buses.

Safety

8.3.4. The upgraded geometry and cross-section of the A83 Trunk Road within the Proposed Scheme extents and the revised layout of the B828 Glenmore local road junction, including rationalisation of the Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park entrance, offer improvement over the existing in terms of operational safety.

8.3.5. The A83 Trunk Road at the Rest and Be Thankful will also be a safer overall route for all road users as a result of the resilience measures incorporated.

Economy

8.3.6. The improved resilience offered by the Proposed Scheme through the introduction of the DFS and DFW with adjacent catchpit, will result in improved reliability and reduced journey times improving connections to and from Argyll and Bute and numerous islands.

Sustainable Travel

8.3.7. The improved bus stop and turning area incorporated within the upgraded Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park layout will provide a dedicated provision for

local and regional buses, thereby encouraging increased use of public transport services.

8.3.8. The Active Travel Link located adjacent to and south of the B828 Glenmore local road will provide a direct and safe route between the Rest and Be Thankful Viewpoint car park and the core path / forestry track network within Glen Croe.

Environment

8.3.9. The Proposed Scheme has included consideration of the environmental constraints present within the scheme extents and has sought to avoid or mitigate, where possible, the potential for adverse environmental impact.

8.3.10. The design development of the Proposed Scheme has been influenced by the knowledge gained through the Environmental Impact Assessment process. Through this process the design has been developed and refined in an iterative process to reach the final DMRB Stage 3 design.

8.3.11. Environmental measures embedded within the Proposed Scheme include the creation of four Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Natural Capital enhancement sites which will promote habitat creation and enhancements.