

A9 Dualling Tomatin to Moy project



Preferred option
November 2016



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Introduction

In October 2015, Transport Scotland held an exhibition to seek public feedback on the mainline and junction options being developed for the Tomatin to Moy dualling project.

Following this feedback, the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment process for the project has been completed and the preferred route option has been selected.

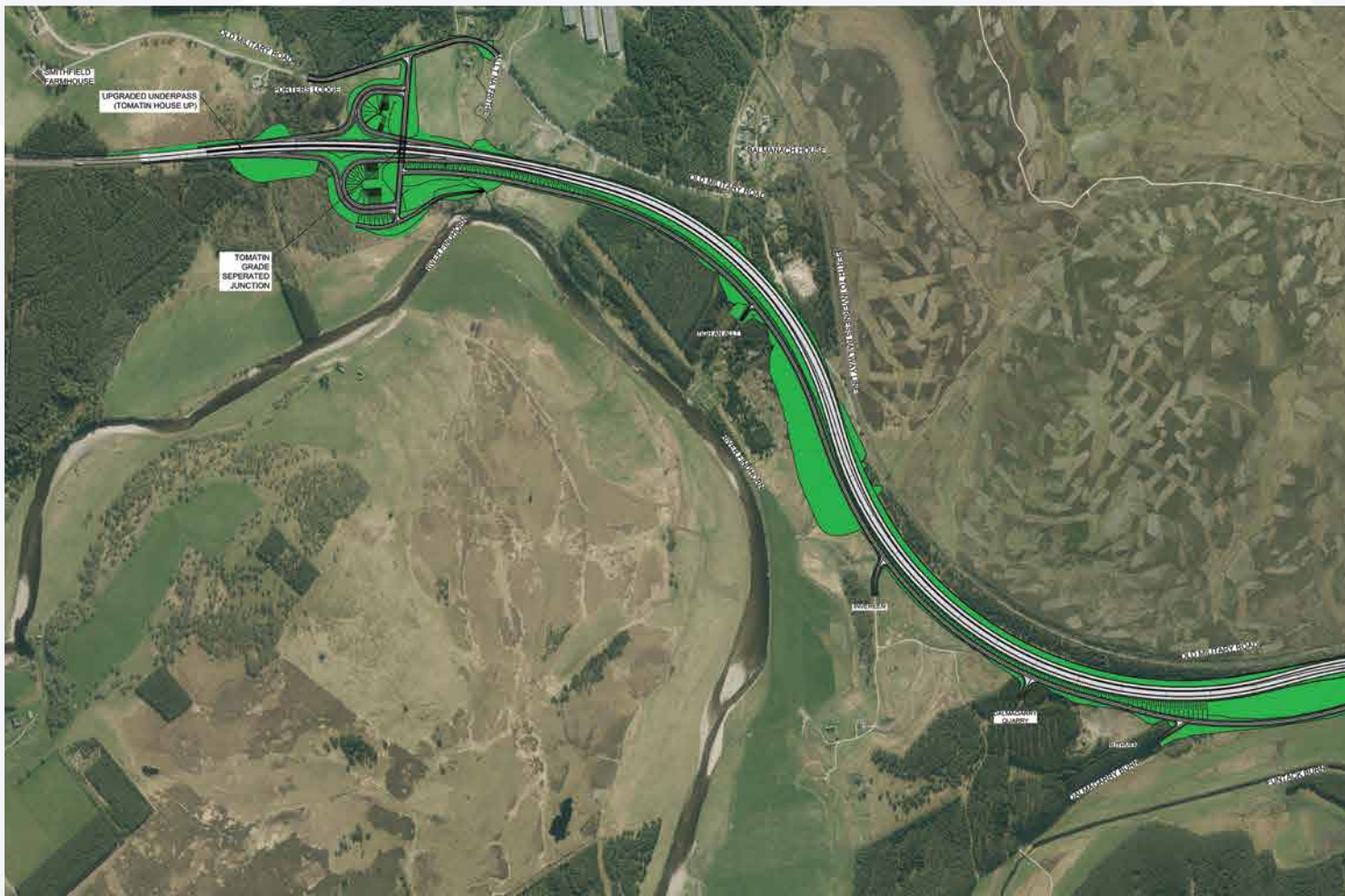
This leaflet provides an overview of the outcome of the route option assessment work and presents the preferred route option for the project.

Throughout the next phase of design work, the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment, feedback from stakeholders and members of the public will be considered as part of the further development, refinement and assessment of the preferred route option. We will also carry out further consultation on the junction and access strategy for the route, as we look to address access to properties and land adjacent to the existing A9.

Programme objectives

The Scottish Government has committed to dualling the A9 between Perth and Inverness by 2025. The A9 Dualling Programme objectives are to:

- Improve the operational performance of the A9 by:
 - reducing journey times
 - improving journey time reliability
- Improve safety for both Motorised and Non-Motorised Users (NMIUs) by:
 - reducing accident severity
 - reducing driver stress
- Facilitate active travel within the corridor
- Improve integration with public transport facilities.



Project development

We are following the normal trunk road scheme development process and progressing in accordance with guidance in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

The three-stage assessment process covers engineering, environment, traffic and economic considerations.

Throughout this process, Transport Scotland consults a large number of landowners, local communities, the public, stakeholders and interested parties including heritage, environmental and Non-Motorised User (NMTU) groups such as pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists.

Following feedback from the previous public exhibition, the route option assessment (DMRB Stage 2 Assessment) process for the Tomatin to Moy project has been completed and we have started work to develop the preferred option further as part of the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment.



Looking north at Dalmagarry Quarry

Stage 2 – preferred option

The preferred option identified following the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment is Mainline Option 1.

Mainline Option 1 includes:

- southbound widening at the southern end of the project
- a crossover point, north of the proposed Tomatin grade-separated junction, to widen the northbound side of the existing A9 for the remaining length of the project.

Mainline Option 1 is preferred for the following reasons:

- reduced environmental impact on forestry land, water features (including ponds next to southbound carriageway), and the removal of mature screening vegetation
- results in the least volume of material that needs to be imported, thereby reducing the impacts associated with sourcing and transporting material to site and reducing the overall cost of the project
- constructing the dual carriageway on mainly the northbound side for the majority of the route will minimise the need for carriageway cross-overs during construction, simplifying construction and traffic management.



Stage 2 – preferred junction option

The preferred junction option is Junction Option A(ii) – Tomatin junction only.

Junction Option A(ii) includes:

- a grade-separated junction serving all directions at Tomatin
- a loop layout with an underpass.

Junction Option A(ii) is preferred for the following reasons:

- constructing one grade-separated junction is less complex and involves less engineering challenges (for example, poor ground conditions), than constructing two grade-separated junctions

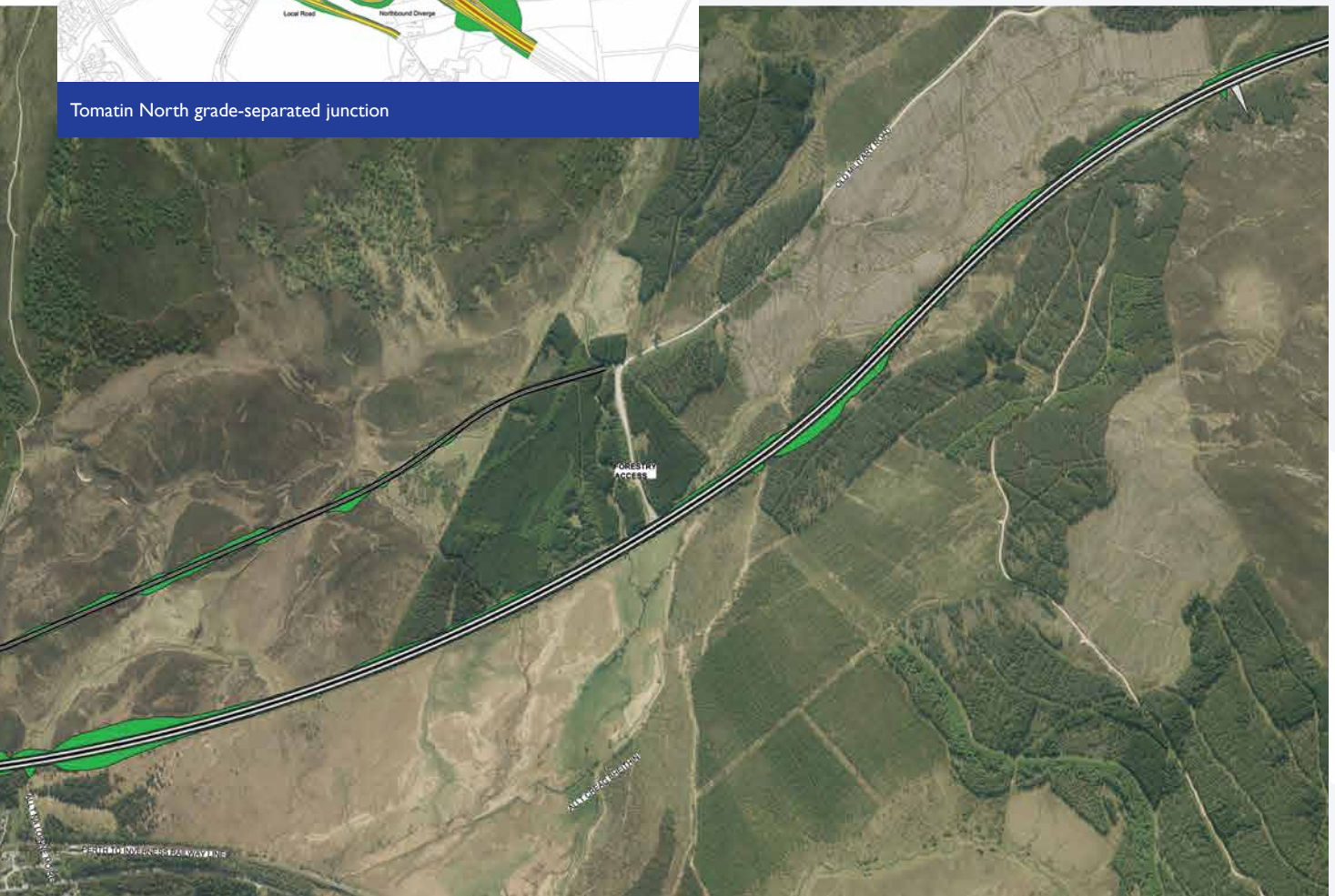
- constructing one grade-separated junction results in less visual and noise impact, and also minimises impact on watercourses and local water quality
- loop layout of Junction Option A(ii) requires less land-take than the diagonal layout proposed in Junction Option A(i)
- Junction Option A(ii) is the best performing option from an economic perspective.

Other key features of the preferred route include:

- closure of the existing B9154/A9 junction, replaced by an extension of the B9154 to the new Tomatin grade-separated junction
- a left-in/left-out junction at Lynebeg, providing access for all traffic between Lynebeg and the A9 northbound carriageway
- an underpass below the A9 at Lynebeg to allow cars, other light vehicles and Non-Motorised Users (NMUs), such as pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists, to access the B9154 near Moy
- closure of the existing forestry access at Lynebeg. Access will either be retained via a new access road between Lynebeg and Forestry Commission land or via development of an alternative arrangement
- a new major structure crossing the Dalmagarry Burn and a new major structure crossing the Highland Main Line railway near Moy.



Tomatin North grade-separated junction



Tomatin South junction

Tomatin South junction is located outwith the Tomatin to Moy project, on the existing dualled section, and includes a gap in the central reserve for turning traffic. Previous feedback from members of the public requested clarification regarding any intentions for the junction.

The general junction strategy for the A9 Dualling Programme is to provide grade-separated junctions at A and B roads and consider closing other local roads junctions and accesses. This strategy has been set to improve safety on the A9 and support the provision of a high-quality dual carriageway.

Considering local feedback, work has been undertaken to review the existing junction and options for when the A9 is dualled. The options are:

- **Option A** – closure of the junction, with all traffic using the new grade-separated junction at Tomatin

- **Option B** – closure of the junction, with a single-track road linking to Slochd, which would then provide access to the A9 further south at Black Mount
- **Option C** – provision of left-in/left-out junction with access to and from the northbound A9 only
- **Option D** – new grade-separated junction, with slip roads providing access to and from the A9 to the south.

All options except option D would require construction of a bus turning facility on the local road network in Tomatin.

Based on initial evaluation, Option A is being considered and we are looking for further public feedback that can help inform completion of assessment work and any decision regarding the junctions. No decision to close the junction has been taken at this time.

Drawings of each option are available to view on the Transport Scotland website.

Stage 3 – preferred route further development

Transport Scotland's consultant is taking forward the development and assessment of the preferred option for the project DMRB Stage 3 Assessment. Some of the work required to complete the assessment has already begun on the Tomatin to Moy project.

This next stage of assessment process includes:

- consultation with affected parties such as land and property owners, statutory bodies, community councils and other relevant interest groups
- design developments
- ground investigation works (carried out July/August 2016)
- identification of the land required for the project and preparation of draft Orders
- Environmental Impact Assessment of the developed preferred option and preparation of the Environmental Statement
- development of suitable mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the environment. For example:
 - appropriate construction management plans
 - side slopes designed to suit surrounding landscape
 - suitable fencing and underpasses for otters and other mammals
 - landscape planting.

Design refinements are being considered in various areas including Lynebeg, Dalmagarry, Tomatin junction and we are also considering an alternative location for the forestry access. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and further refinements in other areas may be considered.

Dalmagarry and Lynebeg/Moy area sub-options

The section of the project in the vicinity of Dalmagarry is heavily constrained, with the new dualled A9 to be routed between the Highland Main Line railway and Dalmagarry Farm and the floodplain to the south of the farm. Ongoing study and assessment of this area has resulted in the identification of five sub-options, with the intention to arrive at a solution which minimises the impacts of the new dual carriageway in this vicinity. All of these sub-options have markedly different engineering

and environmental impacts and will have significantly different impacts on the access arrangements for Moy, Lynebeg and Ruthven. We are seeking feedback on these sub-options and encourage you to visit the Transport Scotland website where drawings of each of the sub-options are available to view.

Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)

Consultation with NMu groups has been ongoing throughout the A9 Dualling Programme, with key events to date including NMu forums in May 2015 and May 2016. This consultation has allowed design teams to collate information on NMu routes, to understand stakeholder interests and to help identify NMu opportunities and constraints. Feedback from consultations is being taken into account as we look to integrate provision for NMUs into the Tomatin to Moy project.

Transport Scotland has prepared a Non-Motorised User (NMU) Access Strategy to formalise its position in relation to NMu access arrangements for the A9 Dualling Programme. This sets out an appropriate plan of action towards securing best outcomes for NMu-related interests, taking account of all relevant criteria. The strategy has been developed in consultation with statutory consultees, and it can be viewed at: **www.transport.gov.scot/report/a9-dualling-non-motorised-user-nmu-access-strategy-9068**

Lay-bys

As part of the project design process, potential locations for lay-bys and enhanced lay-bys are being considered. Key considerations for locating lay-bys are road design, safety restrictions, viewpoints, landscape, land take, use and NMUs.

Providing that safety requirements are met, then locating lay-bys will also seek to maximise benefits, such as scenic views and access to foot and cycle paths, including possible short linkages to existing paths or parking provision as part of lay-by design.

Preliminary proposals for NMu provisions and potential lay-by locations for the Tomatin to Moy project can be viewed on the Transport Scotland website.



View of the Highland Main Line railway and existing A9 looking north-west, passing over the River Findhorn

What happens next?

Public consultation will continue throughout the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment process.

The comments and feedback that you provide on the issues that have been presented will be considered in the next stage of the project design development. At the next public consultation event, Transport Scotland will look to provide an update on the preferred route and junction option, the Dalmagarry and Lynebeg/Moy area sub-options, and the Tomatin South junction options.

Following this an Environmental Impact Assessment will then be carried out and additional mitigation measures may be included to establish the land-take boundaries. This will lead to the completion of the DMRB Stage 3 Environmental Statement and the publication of draft Road Orders and Compulsory Purchase Order for the Tomatin to Moy project.

The draft Road Orders will define the line of the developed preferred option, junctions, accesses and side roads. The draft Compulsory Purchase Order will define the extent of the land required to deliver and maintain

the project. Other aspects such as proposals for Non-Motorised Users (NMUs), such as pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists, locations of lay-bys and environmental mitigation will also be confirmed.

The publication of the draft Orders marks the start of the formal statutory process and it is at this time that the route alignment will be fixed and members of the public will be able to formally comment on the proposals. After publication there is a six-week objection period associated with the draft Orders and a six-week representation period associated with the Environmental Statement.

Should Transport Scotland receive objections to the draft Orders which cannot be resolved, there may be the need for a Public Local Inquiry before the project can proceed. Progress after publishing the new draft Orders will depend on the formal comments received to the proposals.

Comments and feedback

Transport Scotland welcomes your comments and feedback, particularly on the following topics:

- The preferred route and junction option
- The Dalmagarry and Lynebeg/Moy area sub-options
- The options being considered at the Tomatin South junction.

Please take time to consider the information presented and provide any comments you may have as soon as possible and **by 10 January 2017**.

Email to: a9dualling@mouchel.com

Or by post to:

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For further information

You can contact AMJV Stakeholder Manager Robin Smith at any time:

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For further information on the Tomatin to Moy project, and to view the exhibition materials, drawings and visualisations, please visit:

www.transport.gov.scot/project/a9-tomatin-moy

For further information on the wider A9 Dualling Programme, please visit the Transport Scotland website at: www.transport.gov.scot/a9dualling