

7 Consultation

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This chapter presents information on previous and ongoing consultation with a range of stakeholders, including summary details on groups consulted, and type of consultation and engagement undertaken, including meetings and exhibition events.

7.1.2 Various consultation groups and forums were initiated during the A9 Dualling Programme DMRB Stage 1/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) phase, and these have continued throughout DMRB Stage 2 and Stage 3. **Table 7-1** provides an overview, with text below summarising DMRB Stage 3 EIA consultation.

Table 7-1: Consultee forums and groups

Name of Forum/ Group	Description of Members	List of Forum/ Group Members	
Environmental Steering Group (ESG)	Statutory consultees	Transport Scotland Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)	Historic Environment Scotland Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) The Highland Council Perth and Kinross Council
Environmental Working Group (EWG)	Transport Scotland and A9 Design Organisations.	Transport Scotland Design Organisations for Southern, Central and Northern Sections (Jacobs, CH2M Fairhurst Joint Venture (CFJV), and Atkins/ Mouchel JV)	
Landscape Forum	Organisations with specific landscape interests	A9 Dualling Consultants (sub-group of the ESG)	SNH CNPA
Environmental Forum	Statutory and non-statutory environmental organisations	SNH SEPA Historic Environment Scotland CNPA Perth and Kinross Council The Highland Council Design organisation representatives The Woodland Trust Scottish Wildlife Trust Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group	Forestry Commission Scotland Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Spey Fisheries Board Tay Fisheries Board British Deer Society Scottish Badgers Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust Findhorn, Nairn, and Lossie Fisheries Board
Local Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships (LA/RTP)	Local Planning Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships	The Highland Council Perth and Kinross Council The Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership (TACTRAN)	The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) North East of Scotland Transport Partnership (NESTRANS)
Non-Motorised User (NMU) Forum	Organisations related to walking, cycling and riding	Sustrans Ramblers Scotland British Horse Society Scotways Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC) Scotland Moray Council Outdoor Access CNPA The Highland Council Perth and Kinross Council Highland Cycle Campaign	People Friendly Design Mobility and Access Committee Scotland The Mountaineering Council of Scotland Scottish Orienteering Association Paths for All Scottish Outdoor Access Network National Access Forum Perth & Kinross Access Forum Cairngorms Access Forum John Muir Trust

Name of Forum/ Group	Description of Members	List of Forum/ Group Members	
Local Businesses	Businesses local to the Proposed Scheme	Diageo Distillery Dalwhinnie Filling Station, Post Office & Hot Food Takeaway	Toll House Bistro Loch Erich Hotel (accommodation currently closed), incorporating the Snack Shack Café, Take Away & Gift Shop
Business & Community Forum	Organisations related to business and tourism for the region	Scottish Disability Equality Forum Highlands & Islands Enterprise Scottish Enterprise Scotland Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) Chambers of Commerce (representatives of) Freight Transport Association/Road Haulage Association (FTA/RHA) Dalwhinnie Community Council Newtonmore Community Council	Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Scotland Scottish Tourism Alliance Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) Forestry Commission Cairngorms Business Partnership Skills Development Scotland Visit Scotland Laggan Community Association Kingussie Community Council

7.1.3 The purpose of these groups/ forums is to facilitate consultation between A9 consultants and stakeholders; to provide an opportunity to discuss developing issues, with regular updates and reviews of emerging design work.

7.2 Previous and Ongoing Consultation

Key Stages of Consultation

7.2.2 At DMRB Stage 1 (2012), community consultation included a series of exhibitions between Perth and Inverness. A further round of Public Exhibitions in 2013 provided an update on the A9 Preliminary Engineering Services (PES) and the SEA. The principal aims of these early consultations were to:

- obtain baseline environmental information, identify key environmental sensitivities and understand local needs and aspirations
- inform statutory consultees and others about the proposed dualling
- provide a range of stakeholders and organisations with the opportunity to comment on dualling proposals and the SEA process

7.2.3 In March and August 2015, two public exhibitions were held at Dalwhinnie Village Hall to:

- raise awareness of project design developments and initial mainline and junction options
- further understand local needs and aspirations and enable those with views on the dualling project an opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process
- update on DMRB Stage 2 designs and options assessments

7.2.4 Reports on these events are available online from Transport Scotland's website:
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/a9-dualling-perth-to-inverness/a9-dalwhinnie-to-crubenmore/>

7.2.5 In March 2016, a third public engagement event was held, at Dalwhinnie Village Hall, over two days to announce the preferred route selection for Project 8. This was followed by two exhibitions in October 2016 and May 2017 to maintain public engagement on design developments and the new compact junction form for Dalwhinnie.

7.2.6 At DMRB Stage 3, the EIA consultation strategy was to:

- inform the scope of the EIA and collate further baseline information regarding existing environmental conditions
- seek consultee input to developing design proposals and discuss potential impacts and the development of appropriate mitigation
- ensure that statutory consultees were informed of the proposals and provided with an opportunity to comment

7.2.7 Public exhibitions/ drop-ins were held as described in **Table 7-2**.

Table 7-2: Project 8 Public Exhibitions/ Drop-ins

Location and date	Purpose
Dalwhinnie, March 2015	Outlined an initial range of junction options for Dalwhinnie
Dalwhinnie, August 2015	Presented DMRB Stage 2 mainline alignment and junction options under consideration
Dalwhinnie, March 2016	Presented the DMRB Stage 2 outcome, the preferred mainline and junction
Dalwhinnie, October 2016	Presented DMRB Stage 3 design developments, including SuDS and accesses
Dalwhinnie, May 2017	Presented the Dalwhinnie Junction Compact Design

Landowners (ongoing consultation)

7.2.8 The Proposed Scheme is in a remote area, with a limited number of landowners and residents within proximity. There are five Estate interests within the study area, which are described in detail within **Chapter 8**, these are:

- Phoinies Estate – located between ch. 22,100 and 31,050 on land both sides of the A9
- North Drumochter Estate – located between ch. 20,000 and 22,100 on land west of the A9
- South Drumochter Estate, which has a secure agricultural tenancy – located between ch.20,000 and 22,100 on land east of the A9
- Crubenmore Estate, which has a secure agricultural tenancy - located between ch. 30,450 to 30,700 on land west of the A9
- Ben Alder Estate –woodland potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme located at the southern edge of village of Dalwhinnie at approximate ch. 22,300

7.2.9 These estates were engaged through a series of one-to-one meetings, which focused on providing information on the Proposed Scheme and on understanding how their land is used/ managed with respect to access to/ from the existing A9.

7.2.10 Introductory meetings were held with the landowners who have land holdings affected by the Proposed Scheme from August 2014 through to January 2015. Subsequent meetings have been held with landowners and agricultural tenants, as required, to discuss evolving design details of the Proposed Scheme, from May 2015 through October 2017.

7.2.11 Consultation with landowners and tenants is ongoing and it is normal practice for the details of landowner accommodation works to continue beyond the EIA process. Agreed mitigation measures and accommodation works, however, will be included within the construction contract.

Environmental Steering Group (ESG) (ongoing consultation)

- 7.2.12 The A9 Dualling Programme ESG is attended by the statutory consultees noted in **Table 7-1**. These meetings commenced in August 2014 and have been held monthly, with a few exceptions, until November 2017; there are been over 35 ESG meetings in total. The ESG aims to deliver consistent advice across all A9 Dualling projects.
- 7.2.13 **Appendix 7-1** provides a summary of ESG feedback on the DMRB Stage 2 assessment consultation, specifically relating to additional work/ information required as part of this EIA. Responses provided in the appendix detail how each requirement has been addressed.
- 7.2.14 DMRB Stage 3 consultation has been on-going via the ESG, and the group will continue to meet following publication of this EIA. ESG consultation will continue through later contract and detailed design development stages.

Landscape Forum (ongoing consultation)

- 7.2.15 The Landscape Forum, established as a sub-group of the ESG, considers programme-wide landscape issues and agree consistent objectives and assessment methods across the three A9 Sections (North, Central and South). The Landscape Forum comprised landscape specialists from the Design Organisations and Transport Scotland, and undertook consultation throughout the assessment process with SNH, CNPA and the relevant local authorities to reach agreement on the approach to the assessment and to finalise viewpoint locations, aiming to ensure achievement of landscape outcomes.

Environmental Forum (ongoing consultation)

- 7.2.16 The A9 Dualling Programme Environmental Forum meets generally every six months, with a range of environmental interest groups and bodies. The Environment Forum aims to ensure that the wide variety of natural heritage stakeholder interests along the A9 are considered. The first meeting was held in Aviemore in September 2014. Meetings were then quarterly through 2015 and six-monthly through 2016, with written updates provided upon any postponements. There have been at least six meetings, with the most recent in February 2017.

Local Authority/ Regional Transport (LA/ RTP) Partnerships (ongoing consultation)

- 7.2.17 The LA/ RTP working group meets generally every six months, attended by the organisations noted in **Table 7-1**. The first LA/ RTP was held in April 2013. This forum provides LA/ RTP members an opportunity to comment on developing designs, and to provide Transport Scotland with information on local issues for design teams to be aware of. It also provides an opportunity for discussion on A9 trunk/ local road interfaces.
- 7.2.18 A special LA/ RTP/ ESG drop in event was held in June 2017, in the Dewars Centre in Perth, displaying the preferred routes for each A9 project (including Project 8), with staff from each design organisation available to answer questions. This session was well attended with a number of technical discussions taking place throughout the day.

Non-Motorised User (NMU) Forum (previous consultation)

- 7.2.19 A programme-wide workshop, held in May 2015, was attended by NMU groups, including walkers, cyclists, equestrians, SNH and CNPA. It discussed access requirements and a route-wide access strategy. A follow-up programme wide NMU Forum event was held over two days in May 2016 and each Proposed Scheme has since taken account of access requirements discussed, and held further discussions with individual group representatives where necessary.

7.2.20 A further NMU drop-in session for Central Section projects was held in November 2016, and there were two (programme wide) accessibility workshops held in March and October 2017. The first was attended by People Friendly Design and Mobility and Access Community for Scotland (MACS) and the second was attended by MACS.

Local Businesses and residents (previous consultation)

7.2.21 A range of meetings were held with local businesses and residents in proximity to the Proposed Scheme extents, both to provide information on the developing dualling proposals and to listen to business perspectives and residents' concerns. Dialogue continued through public exhibitions, drop ins and one-to-one sessions during DMRB Stage 3.

Community (previous consultation)

7.2.22 The Proposed Scheme extent is primarily in two Community Council areas; Dalwhinnie Community Council on the west of the A9 and Kingussie & Vicinity Community Council to the east of the A9. The Proposed Scheme is also adjacent to Laggan Community Council and Newtonmore & Vicinity Community Council towards the north. Laggan does not currently have an elected Community Council but does have a Community Association.

7.2.23 Since 2014, the Project 8 stakeholder team has attended meetings with each of the three Community Councils plus Laggan Community Association (Dalwhinnie Community Council in December 2014, Kingussie and Vicinity Community Council in October 2014, Newtonmore and Vicinity Community Council in November 2014 and Laggan Community Association in January 2015) to make introductions and provide an overview of the dualling programme and Central Section projects.

7.2.24 The Stakeholder team then attended three subsequent meetings of Dalwhinnie Community Council (January 2015, March 2015 and August 2015) to discuss local details for the Proposed Scheme, notably in relation to the Dalwhinnie Junction, and has since met with elected representatives at public exhibition and drop in events in the Dalwhinnie Village Hall.

7.2.25 In addition, the Project 8 stakeholder team has attended two meetings of the recently formed Badenoch and Strathspey Community Forum (September 2015 and March 2016) to provide information on the developing Proposed Scheme.

Technical Stakeholder Consultations (previous and ongoing consultation)

7.2.26 A range of more technically focused meetings have been held with stakeholders including, for example, SEPA, SNH, CNPA and the Spey Fishery Board. In summary:

- SNH have been consulted on the development of DMRB Stage 3 options:
 - Route-wide workshop – Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) consistency – Dec 2014
 - Watercourse crossings and cascades (Central Section principles with SNH, SEPA and Spey Fisheries Board (SFB)) – July 2015
 - Freshwater species data (with SNH & SFB) – Nov 2015
 - Watercourse crossings and morphology (Ecology & Hydrology team members met SNH & SFB) – Feb 2016
 - DMRB3 design development options, SNH meeting November 2017
 - Follow up discussions post-ESG meetings

- SEPA have been consulted in relation to flood risk and modelling, hydromorphology and engineering (CAR issues):
 - CFJV presentations on Flood Risk Assessment and modelling approach, FRA report structure and approach to flood risk mitigation – July 2017
 - Consultation meeting – work affecting watercourses, hydromorphology and erosion risk and CAR application requirements – October 2017
- CNPA have been consulted throughout Proposed Scheme development via monthly ESG meetings, as well as via Landscape and NMU Forums.
 - specific advice was sought on woodland and planting issues (August 2016)
 - assessment of the Special Landscape Qualities of the Park (February 2017)
 - locations of viewpoints for assessment (May 2017)
 - lay-by provisions (May 2017) and
 - Environmental Mitigation proposals (October and November 2017)

7.2.27 These technical consultations aimed to ensure that relevant technical and compliance requirements could be met through the Proposed Scheme design and that stakeholders had the opportunity to input into the developing design and mitigation requirements.

Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping with Statutory Consultees

7.2.28 Following the completion of DMRB Stage 2, which included detailed consultation with Statutory Consultee bodies via the ESG, a route-wide EIA Scoping Report was produced and issued in August 2016. The route-wide Scoping Report outlined the proposed structure of A9 Dualling project Environmental Statements, the assessment methods to be adopted for this EIA, as well as noting that baseline information gathered at DMRB Stage 2 would be updated and refreshed accordingly. This specific consultation with statutory consultees aimed to ensure that the EIA was scoped at the relevant level of detail to assess likely environmental impacts.

7.3 References

7.3.1 Relevant references for introductory Chapters 1 to 7 of this ES are listed below:

- AECOM (2015). Local Safety Parameters – Technical Note 4
- Cairngorms Business Partnership (2015), Cairngorms National Park Economic Strategy 2015 – 2018. <http://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/151001CNPEconomicStrategyV1.pdf>
- Cairngorms National Park Authority (2016). Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 Consultation
- Halcrow (2013a). A9 Dualling Programme: Strategic Environmental Assessment – Environmental Report (June 2013).
- Halcrow (2013b). Habitat Regulations Appraisal – Screening Report (May 2013).
- Halcrow (2013c). A9 Dualling Programme: Habitat Regulations Appropriate Assessment (September 2013).
- Halcrow (2013d). A9 Dualling Programme: Strategic Landscape Review (August 2013).
- Halcrow (2013e). A9 Dualling Programme: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (October 2013).
- Highways Agency (*et al*) (2009), Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 11 – Environmental Assessment
- Scottish Government (2005), Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act
- Scottish Government (2007), Circular 8/2007: EIA (Scotland) Regulations 1999
- Scottish Government (2008), Strategic Transport Project Review (STPR), <http://www.transport.gov.scot/strategic-transport-projects-review>
- Scottish Government (2011a), Infrastructure Investment Plan (IPP) - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/12/05141922/0>
- Scottish Government (2011b), EIA (Scotland) Regulations 2011
- Scottish Government (2011c) the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011
- Scottish Government (2014), National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/06/3539>
- Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick (1997), A9 (T) Perth to Inverness Development of a Route Strategy - Phase 3 Final Report
- Scott Wilson (2006), A9 Perth to Blair Atholl - Route Improvement Strategy Study (RISS)
- Tabler (2003), *Controlling Blowing and Drifting Snow with Snow Fences and Road Design*, National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies - <http://www.esf.edu/willow/Isf/Litterature/Tabler%202003%20-%20Controlling%20Blowing%20and%20Drifting%20Snow.pdf>
- The Highland Council (2011), Highland Tourism: A report by Director of Planning and Development, Planning Environment and Development Committee 25th May 2011
- Transport Scotland (2014), A9 Dualling Programme – PES – DMRB Stage 1 Report
- Transport Scotland (2014), A9 Dualling Programme – SEA – Addendum to the Environmental Report
- Transport Scotland (2014), A9 Dualling Programme – SEA – Post Adoption Statement
- Transport Scotland (2015a), A9 Dualling – Glen Garry to Dalraddy – DMRB Stage 1 Environmental Scoping Report
- Transport Scotland (2015b), A9 Dualling – Glen Garry to Dalraddy – Junction Strategy Report
- Transport Scotland (2015c) Dalnaspidal Initial Junction Review
- Transport Scotland (2015d), A9 Dualling – Glen Garry to Dalraddy – DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment Report

Transport Scotland (2015e) Glen Garry to Dalwhinnie Project: June 2015 Exhibition Summary Report' (September 2015)

Transport Scotland (2016), A9 Dualling: Case for Investment.

Transport Scotland (2016a), A9 Dualling Programme – EIA Scoping Report (July 2016)

Transport Scotland (2016b), A9 Dualling – Glen Garry to Dalraddy Dalwhinnie to Crubenmore Preferred Route Announcement Public Engagement Event Summary Report

Transport Scotland (2016c), A9 Dualling Programme Non-Motorised User (NMU) Access Strategy