

WORKSHOP NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER	70075948	MEETING DATE	08 October 2020
PROJECT NAME	A9 North Kessock to Tore Study	VENUE	Microsoft Teams
CLIENT	Transport Scotland	RECORDED BY	
MEETING SUBJECT	Key notes from 2nd stakeholder workshop held on 8 October 2020		

Session 1 - Draft Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs)

The first session built upon inputs from the stakeholder workshop held on 23 September and sought comments from the stakeholder attendees on the three proposed TPOs shown below.

1. To achieve an improvement in road safety and a reduction in conflicts at the Munloch junction (A9 / B9161)
2. To achieve an improvement in road safety and a reduction in conflicts at Tore roundabout (A9 / A832 / A835)
3. Through a reduction in conflicts for active modes at the junctions along the A9 between North Kessock and Tore, encourage the use of active travel modes.

Breakout Session One – Transport Planning Objectives (workshop attendee comments)

Discussion theme: TPO #1

- Add in reference to the short, medium and long term in the TPO description
- Add in an indicator for “reduction in unusual manoeuvres”
- Add in an indicator for “driver behaviour/speeds”
- Speed compliance, lane discipline and near misses should be recorded
- The cost to society for fatal accidents and near misses should be considered
- There should be indicators that are a way of observing and monitoring the road network
- Add in an opportunity to support the Road Safety Framework

Discussion theme: TPO #2

- Add in reference to “vehicular” road safety to the TPO description
- Add in an indicator for “reduction in unusual manoeuvres”
- Add in an indicator for “driver behaviour/speeds”
- Add in an opportunity to support the NTS2 Travel Hierarchy

Discussion theme: TPO #3

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- Reorder the TPOs to reflect the NTS2 travel hierarchy – so move this to TPO #1
(Project team comment - there is no prioritisation of objectives - they are equally important)

Discussion theme: potential additional TPO to reflect A9 intermediate junctions

- Road safety along the A9 intermediate junctions should be considered.
- Problem = mix of vehicles (including agricultural vehicles, commuters and 4x4s) seeking to access the A9 vs narrow central reserve. Problems with large agricultural vehicles and narrow central reserves - they encroach on fast lane when trying to pull out.
- Local farmers have mentioned that it's more and more difficult to use the junctions and the section of the A9 because they slow down traffic and also it's difficult to merge onto the A9.
- Indicator = conflicts / accidents

Discussion theme: potential additional TPO re future growth

- The route serves the whole of North of Scotland and the Isles and this strategic part of the corridor between Kessock and Tore should be considered
- Bear in mind that any short/mid/long term solutions can have impacts in the wider corridor and these need to be sustainable
- LDP is currently under review... there is a strong desire to engage with all stakeholders, approached by the Council as planning authority. The study team should have direct engagement with the Council's development planning team.
- A9 is main route north to and from Inverness – The Black Isle is one of the fastest growing areas for development. Really important for commuters. Stage now to upgrade junctions as the existing are not fit for purpose and requires major restructuring
- We have to align the national and regional priorities. We have to address how to build houses if the A9 has no capacity. Some of the issues come from being single lane from the west (A835) and North (A9)
- Safety is not reflected since the capacity does not reflect the future growth
- The A9 is the main link north of Inverness. Development is welcome but it has to be a holistic approach including future planning and the strategic characteristic of the A9
- Growth is one of the key elements that needs to be considered in the area
- Near misses are not usually recorded and are as important in the analysis.
- A9 is a trunk road and everything from the North comes through Tore and the roundabout. Big part of the highlands and essential for Scottish Govt and Transport Scotland. A9 should reflect its strategic vision
- Infrastructure around Tore is inadequate for future development of the Ports in the northern region. Traffic coming south can be of very high volume. Sightline from the A9 around the A832 to Cromarty has to be reviewed because it can be very dangerous
- Tore roundabout needs a serious amount of thought given that Tore was planned to be the biggest area north of Inverness

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- There is a need for an objective around future growth, considering the the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HWLDP) and the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) to identify future impacts on local roads associated with development.
- There is a need to take a strategic view of the area and to consider the strategic importance of the A9, and to develop an objective related to future travel demands and readiness for these future requirements.

Discussion theme: potential additional TPO re sustainability

- It's important to think in terms of Sustainability. The Highland Council is increasing its focus on sustainable modes of transport in the LDP revision. Good opportunity to include this as an objective
- Local unclassified road used from Tore to Munloch (cyclist). If you want people to change mode of transport there needs to be safe and efficient route (Parallel to A9), and other options to the car. Note the population is getting older and they need safer options
- We need to encourage behavioural change. Allow people to engage with the change.

Breakout Session Two – Initial Optioneering

The second breakout session considered potential options to achieve the objectives and address the problems and opportunities identified. The session was facilitated using the MIRO online whiteboard tool (with screenshots from the sessions included under Annex B) and the table below summarises the options proposed by the workshop attendees.

Option Nr	Option Type	Name	Description
S1	Short	Vehicle Separation	Add gap markings (chevrons) to allow cars to leave enough space
S2	Short	Speed limit reduction	Reduce the speed limit to 50 mph and extend from North Kessock to North of Munloch Reduce speed limit at approach to Tore to support pedestrian movements Reduce the speed limit within a one-mile radius of Tore roundabout
S3	Short	Warning signs for queueing traffic	Add warning signs at Munloch to warn northbound vehicles of queueing traffic waiting to turn right onto the B9161
S4	Short	Educate road users	Conduct road user education regarding 'give way' markings. The current one can cause uncertainty around who has right of way
S5	Short	Amend road signage	Change signs to instruct drivers travelling to Cromarty to go via Tore roundabout instead of going through Munloch

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			Make signage clearer for visitors and those unfamiliar with the area, e.g. no awareness of uncontrolled pedestrian crossing
S5	Short	Install lights	Add lighting or solar studs to Munloch y junction Also increase the lighting from the bridge to Munloch y junction
S6	Short	Activated warning signs	Install warning signs that activate when there is traffic ahead or vehicles crossing carriageway, especially buses
S7	Short	Enhanced road markings	Improve lane discipline at Tore roundabout by adding enhanced markings or studs
S8	Short	Relocate roundabout warning signage	Current signage is too far away from the roundabout and should be moved closer
S9	Short	Prohibit right turns	Stop right turn movements coming from side roads onto the A9 Stop right turn into Munloch y
S10	Short	Relocate bus stops	Consider revising the location of current bus stops, particularly at intermediate junctions to promote modal shift
S11	Short	Improve pedestrian routes	Integrate pedestrian routes with bus stops, especially at Tore for residential properties Improve footpaths at Tore roundabout Install a controlled crossing on the A9 south of Tore roundabout
S12	Short	Enhanced signage for cyclists	Enhance the signage for the cycling route – add one on the southbound carriage way at Tore
S13	Short	Widen central reservations	All junctions need wider central reservations as the current ones are too narrow for larger vehicles
S14	Short	Paint the kerbs	Use fluorescent paint to improve the visibility of kerbs, especially at Munloch y junction
S15	Short	Install speed cameras	Install a speed camera on the A9 southbound carriageway just before Munloch y junction Continue the average speed cameras up to Tore area to change driver behaviour
M1	Medium	Improve slip lane	The slip lane from Munloch y onto the A9 should be improved to allow better merging of traffic
M2	Medium	Create public transport hub	Having a public transport hub would encourage the reduction of private car usage
M3	Medium	Add laybys	Add a layby for cars to stop and allow public transport to stop – previous suggestions also looked at bus lanes

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M4	Medium	Side road flashing system	Install a flashing system for cars joining the A9 from side roads
M5	Medium	Park and ride	There is potential for a park and ride to support modal shift
M6	Medium	Install traffic lights	Install traffic lights at Tore roundabout which includes a controlled pedestrian crossing
M7	Medium	ITS Gantry System	Install an ITS Gantry System with signage
M8	Medium	Improvements to existing geometry	Improvements include extending the left turn merging lane and adding sight lines
L1	Long	Build an overpass	Close the intermediate junctions and build an overpass for slow moving vehicles
L2	Long	Build pedestrian bridge or underpass	On the northern section of Tore roundabout, build a pedestrian bridge or add underpass for better connectivity to the school Add an underpass at Munloch junction similar to the one at North Kessock
L3	Long	Grade separation for Munloch	Reroute access to Munloch using grade separation where cars needing to turn right can come off at access Munloch via a bridge
L4	Long	Promote modal shift	Promote travelling by public transport
L5	Long	Create single improved junction	A new single junction for local connector roads to feed into
L6	Long	New road connection	Add a new road connection into North Kessock junction from Munloch road (restricted at Munloch)

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ANNEX A – Slides from Workshop on 8th October

ANNEX A – Slides from workshop

(Not fully accessible due to format of original slides)

ANNEX B – Screenshots from MIRO Tool

Option Name
Discussion
Where opportunity to address?





Group 1 -Short Term Options

Munlochy junction - see footpaths column to improve visibility of work specially for schools. Also look for speed markings

Lighting between the bridge and Munlochy junction and speed limit reduction can both be short term

Improvement of footpaths in Tore roundabout. Tu/turn services to other areas of Tore

A9 to A835 - moving the speed limit past the school. Also right turns from school to A835

Reduction of the speed limit around Munlochy junction. Can be short term if no major objections

Closure of right turn at Munlochy junction. (Evaluate both directions A8/A9161)

Controlled ped crossing at A9 south of Tore roundabout

Reducing the speed limit on a T-junction around Tore roundabout. Also issues with the school bus turnaround in previous workshop

Change colour of pavement to red. Also area of change lighting in Munlochy and Tore area. Also area of change along the road.

Closure of right turns in other junctions and removal of central reserve along A8

Speed camera on SB A9 just before Munlochy junction

Continue the Average Speed Camera up to Tore area to change driver behaviour.

Group 1 -Medium Term Options

We are all road users. How do we improve the experience for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, bus users, motorists, emergency services, etc.)? Consider what pedestrian crossing and bus stops to provide Public Transport

Munlochy slip lane onto A9 could be improved to allow better merging of traffic

Public transport hub would encourage reduction of private car usage

Big liability for cars to stop and allow public transport to stop. Previous suggestions also looked into bus lanes

Suggestion for traffic lights at the roundabout. In addition to reduced speed limit

Duellling of A9 does not include junctions such as Munlochy

Group 1 -Long Term Options

Closing of intermediate junctions and overpass for slow moving/farming vehicles

Another suggestion is a pedestrian underpass on the NB section of A8 to allow for all users (better accessibility)

Re-routing of the A8 - accommodating access to Munlochy and re-signing on the northern section of the A8.

Munlochy roundabout pedestrian bridge. Ask an independent section of Tore roundabout. Better connectivity with school

Look into the HILLTOP and SWALDO to identify impacts on road infrastructure in the future

The existing format of Tore roundabout has talk the village and one existing cycle lane access modes. Consider the possibility that has been on going

Underpass at Munlochy similar to North Kessock

Need of strategic view for the area.

Munlochy roundabout could be unbundled with movements doing the right turns

Free trade proposal in the area. Infrastructure ready for future ports?

Designated as rural highway? No more housing with direct access to A8 north is allowed

STR2 will review the needs and budget allocation for long term possibilities

Provision for the SB parking area and cross the bridge to the village. There is a crossing and the bridge part of the bridge that is a challenge

Pedestrian and cycle movements at north of the bridge should be reviewed

Current economic and financial situation is a factor that will impact any future infrastructure. Some ideas and reduce the options may be possible

Problems with signage that allow the through for visitors and people unfamiliar to the area. No awareness of pedestrian crossings

Considerations for horses and riders in the area.

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