

# A9 Dualling UPDATE

October 2015



## Welcome

**Welcome to the second of our regular newsletters containing news about the A9 Dualling programme and the work going on to deliver this major infrastructure project.**

Over the last few months, the design work has been stepped up across the programme and we have been holding public exhibitions to show locals and road users the options we are developing for the stretch of the A9 near where they live, work or travel.

These events have been well attended and people have taken the opportunity to view our proposals and comment on them. These comments will be taken into consideration as we work towards designing a preferred route for each section to be dualled.

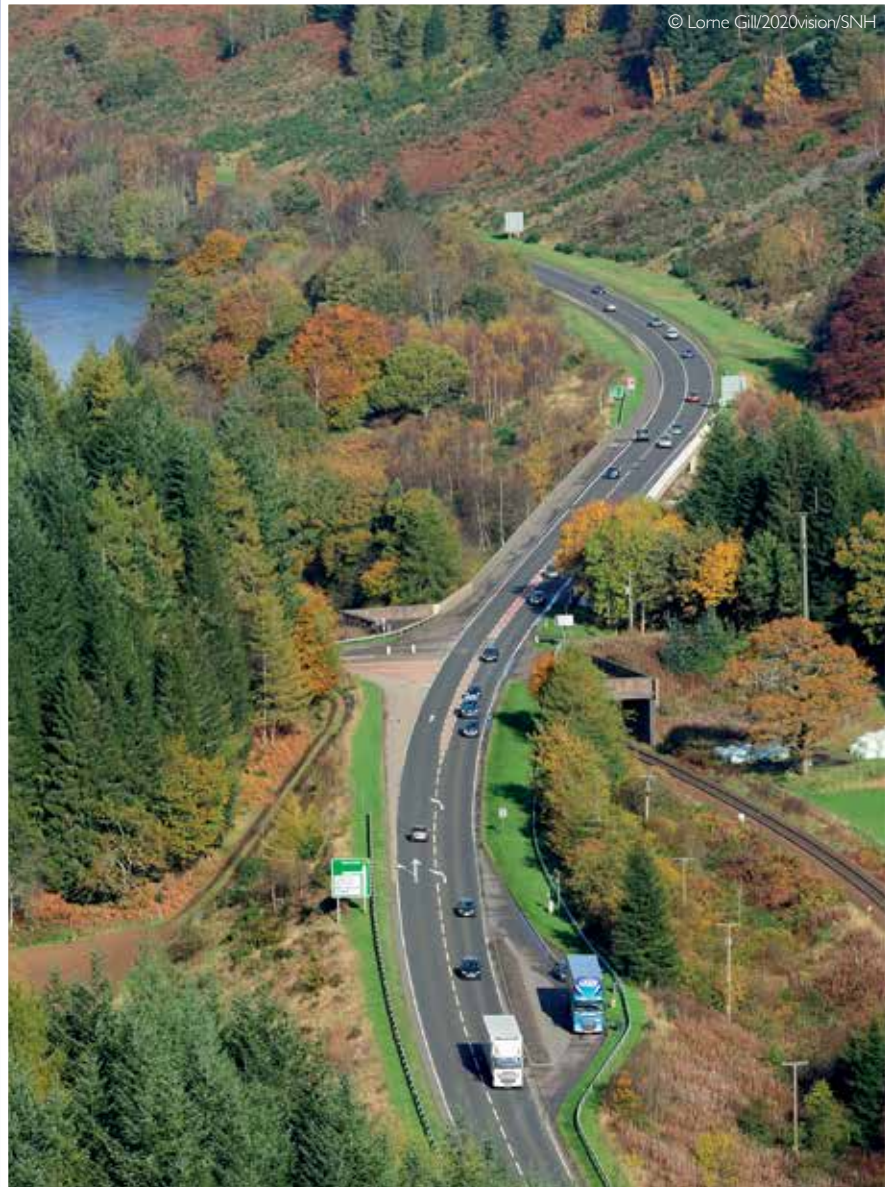
As well as the design work, there are a number of other things happening related to the dualling programme. A metal detecting survey on the famous Killiecrankie battlefield has provided us with the opportunity to explore Scotland's historic past while at the same time helping inform the design of this part of the A9.

We have also had A9 Dualling teams at a number of popular public events over the summer, including the Royal Highland Show and the Black Isle Show. These were great opportunities to speak to people from across the country about the dualling work.

As well as designing and building a road, we have launched an exciting new educational initiative to give pupils in schools along the A9 between Perth and Inverness the opportunity to learn more about the massive engineering project on their doorstep.

The 'Academy9' programme will give students the opportunity to learn more about the engineering challenges of dualling this vital route, with opportunities for training and apprenticeships intended to open up the chance to work on the A9 Dualling programme or other major projects.

Hand-in-hand with all this, as a tangible sign of our commitment to deliver this programme, we have started building the first section of the A9 to be dualled between



Aerial view of the A9 at Dunkeld

Kincraig and Dalraddy, with the work expected to be completed in 2017.

There is a lot happening, and I hope this newsletter gives you a flavour of the scale of work going on across the programme which, when completed, will improve road safety and journey times on this road which links central Scotland with the Highlands and Islands.

**Jo Blewett** Programme Manager



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# A9 Dualling Update

## TAKING THE A9 DUALLING PROGRAMME ON THE ROAD

**The Transport Scotland A9 Dualling team along with their technical advisors have spent this summer meeting the travelling public who regularly use the A9. The design teams took their display stand to the Royal Highland Show at Ingliston in June and during the summer also attended the Scottish Game Fair at Scone Palace, the Killiecrankie battle re-enactment, the Black Isle Show and Moy Fair in the north and, finally, the prestigious European International Horse Trials at Blair Atholl in September.**

Visitors to the stand were able to view a historic construction video of the A9 upgrade in the 70s/80s, and a 3-D digital model showing what various sections of a dualled A9 could look like in the future. The team answered questions and handed out leaflets with further information on the dualling programme. There was also an opportunity for any younger members of the public who called in to learn in an

interactive way about the varied wildlife which may be found living on the A9 corridor. Their interest and participation was rewarded by being presented with a yellow safety waistcoat!

The display and activities provided an excellent opportunity to meet end-to-end users of the A9, and provide an overview of all that is going on with design along the length of the A9. As well as car drivers, we also engaged with drivers of HGVs, buses and coaches, freight vehicles, agricultural transport and horse boxes. In addition, non-motorised users including cyclists, walkers and pony riders were also present. Attendance at these public events supplemented the various community engagement sessions for individual dualling projects that have been held in various locations within the A9 corridor since design started.

Almost 4500 people visited the A9 Dualling stand at these six public events and the majority of these individuals expressed overwhelming support for the dualling upgrade between Perth and Inverness. Many welcomed the A9 Dualling programme and the opportunity to gain a greater



Highland Field Sports Fair, August 2015

understanding of how the designs for the dual carriageway are developed. They were advised of the expected timescale for the individual projects, the challenges and constraints presented along the route and the potential environmental mitigation that would require to be built into the designs. Comments received regarding the project included the following:

- "This will make the north more accessible"
- "The dual carriageway will make for a much more relaxing drive"
- "This will help my business with

reduced, more reliable, journey times"

- "The grade separated junctions will be a lot safer"
- "The sooner the A9 is dualled the better"
- "Why is it going to take so long?"

These public displays have been a great success, letting us reach individuals and businesses who would not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet the design teams.

**Sam MacNaughton,**  
Transport Scotland, A9 Dualling  
Stakeholder Manager.

## SOUTHERN SECTION PROJECTS JACOBS UPDATE

### ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORK

#### TAY CROSSING TO BALLINLUIG, PITLOCHRY TO KILLIECRANKIE, KILLIECRANKIE TO PITAGOWAN AND PITAGOWAN TO GLEN GARRY

Over the past six months, Jacobs has developed a number of route options for the mainline dual carriageway for these southern section projects. We have also developed new junctions at Pitlochry south and north, Aldclune and Bruar/Calvine,

which take into consideration the environmental impacts, engineering constraints and traffic impacts. These options were presented at the recent public exhibitions in May, June and July 2015 which saw 720 people attending. Feedback from

these exhibitions is currently being considered as part of the ongoing development, refinement and assessment of the route and junction options, which allow for access to the A9, lay-bys and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

The environmental assessment of the route options is ongoing and designs are now being reviewed and assessed by our environmental specialists. The findings of these assessments will be taken into account, along with engineering and traffic



considerations, when determining the preferred route option for the above projects. Following this determination, the Stage 3 preferred route option will then be further assessed during more detailed design development, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and preparation of an Environmental Statement (ES) starting in 2016. Various site surveys to collate traffic, environmental, geotechnical and

topographical data are still ongoing along the route of the A9, and the results of these will inform the more detailed assessment. Environmental surveys currently under way include surveys for protected species such as bats, surveys of woodlands and air quality monitoring. Therefore, our surveyors can be seen out in the field at various times of day and night.

## LUNCARTY TO PASS OF BIRNAM

A Public Local Inquiry (PLI) to consider objections to the scheme was held in Bankfoot Church Centre on 8 June 2015. The Reporter then produced a report for the Scottish Ministers setting

out his conclusions and putting forward recommendations. After examining the Reporter's recommendation, the Scottish Ministers will decide whether or not to proceed with the scheme.

## PASS OF BIRNAM TO TAY CROSSING

The Stage 2 assessment for the challenging Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing section of the A9 is currently under way. This assessment is considering options within the on-line corridor and is taking account of the findings of the recently completed ground investigation works. This involves consultation with stakeholders, including Historic Scotland, Perth and Kinross Council and Network Rail. Transport Scotland is working with Network Rail to improve the Highland Main Line railway. Given the close boundary at Dunkeld, we are working jointly towards identifying a

solution that benefits both road and rail projects at this location.

We have been continuing our environmental appraisal throughout 2015 and have identified baseline conditions, and completed a broad assessment of the effects of the designs. Site surveys to collate environmental data are ongoing and the results of these surveys will inform the appraisal and be taken in to account when determining a preferred route option.

We will continue to engage with the local community on the options as they are developed through 2016.

## TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEYS

The survey team has been carrying out cross-section surveys of watercourses and bridge structures to enable our flood modellers to build computer models to assess flood conditions. The survey covered the area between Dunkeld and Pitgowan, with watercourses ranging in size from small burns up to the River Tay. The survey

work on the Rivers Tay and Tummel has required the use of our inflatable boat and outboard with an echosounder to measure depth linked to GPS positioning equipment on-board. The team worked closely with landowners to ensure minimum disturbance to fishing on the rivers, carrying out survey work on Sundays to avoid salmon fishing days.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Since March we have continued our programme of regular community drop-in sessions, holding one each in Killiecrankie, Blair Atholl, Ballinluig and Pitlochry with a further six at Birnam. There were a further five drop-in sessions at these locations during September.

The drop-in sessions continue to be well attended with a helpful two-way flow of information. In addition, we continue to meet regularly with the local community councils, both along the route and further afield, to discuss and understand local access requirements.



Public exhibition at Killiecrankie, May 2015

Throughout May, June and July we held public exhibitions to display and gather feedback on the emerging design options for both the road carriageway, and the associated junctions and accesses. In advance of the events, we met with a number of directly affected local businesses, communities and individual residents and landowners to talk through the designs and understand how they might be affected. Thereafter, the information was displayed through a combination of paper drawings, information boards, digital mapping and aerial photography and three-dimensional computer simulations of the various options.

Feedback on the display materials was very positive, suggesting that the variety offered has greatly enhanced the public

understanding of the emerging designs. The formal feedback period for these exhibitions is now closed to allow us to complete the exhibition reports. These reports will be made public via the Transport Scotland website and will provide a formal record of the events, including summarising the comments from those who provided feedback. Additionally, the exhibition materials remain on the A9 Dualling website and can be viewed and commented on at any time. We welcome and appreciate the ongoing engagement of local communities with this process and encourage you to contact our Stakeholder Managers (keith.sheridan@jacobs.com; sarah.morgan@jacobs.com; and fergus.allan@jacobs.com) with questions or any input you can provide to the ongoing process.

# A9 Dualling Update



Ground investigation works at River Garry

## ADVANCED GROUND INVESTIGATION

On 24 August 2015 Jacobs started an advanced ground investigation across all five of the southern projects between Pass of Birnam and Glen Garry. This exercise is designed to gather information on the ground conditions both along the mainline carriageway and around the junction locations. We need to understand the nature of the ground materials to inform the design of the road, its supporting structures and side slopes. Using this information we can further refine our designs to determine the best solutions. It will also help inform the cost estimating process by providing the information we need to calculate volumes and type of material involved.

In planning these works we have sought to minimise impact on the existing road. We also stipulated that the ground investigation contractor, Fugro, avoid works requiring traffic management on the road during local events, such as the Blair Castle International Horse Trials. Our Landowner Liaison Engineer for the ground investigation team is Alan Nelson and he is working with Bill Anderson from Fugro to liaise with BEAR over access to the road to complete essential investigation. If you have any questions in relation to the ground investigation works, you can contact the A9 team at [A9dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:A9dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk)

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF OUR GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER

Alan Nelson is part of the ground investigation team on-site. He is living locally during the four months of the works along with a team of up to six geotechnical engineers, engineering geologists, ecologists and archaeologists.

Alan combines his role on-site with a personal interest in outdoor pursuits and recently travelled along the Tummel and Tay from Pitlochry to Dunkeld on a paddle board.

Alan studied civil engineering at the University of Glasgow and has worked with Jacobs since he graduated in 2009, as part of our team of geotechnical specialists, based in Glasgow. To date he has worked on several large highway schemes across Scotland, such as the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, the Forth



Replacement Crossing and the A9 Luncarty to Birnam scheme gaining valuable experience in ground investigations and highway design.

Having worked on the planning stages of the A9 ground investigation for some months and met with landowners to agree access in advance, a typical working day for Alan would look like this:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>0800</b> | Meet with drilling contractor to plan works for day and consider safety priorities   |
| <b>0930</b> | Meeting with landowner to review progress of work on their land and discuss restoration plans for borehole location              |
| <b>1030</b> | Visit borehole sites to assess progress and inspect samples  |
| <b>1200</b> | Review safe plan for work in the coming week and sign off with contractor  |
| <b>1400</b> | Receive and review borehole records. Schedule laboratory testing for soil and rock samples and feed results back to design teams |
| <b>1630</b> | Telephone conference with BEAR and contractor to agree road network access for coming week                                       |
| <b>1800</b> | Agree and amend programme with contractor for next working day and finish for the day.   |

**These works are programmed to finish in December 2015.**



A9 at Ruthven Barracks

## CENTRAL SECTION PROJECTS

### CFJV UPDATE

**The central section of the A9 Dualling programme was the first to get the green light for design development back in 2014, and the work is certainly gathering pace. Drilling rigs and yellow jackets have been visible over the summer along its length between Glen Garry and Kincaig. Most of the effort on the ground has been conducting environmental surveys and ground investigations but, in parallel, there has been a raft of meetings underway with the local stakeholders.**

Back at base, in the CH2M Fairhurst Joint Venture offices, the design teams have been hard at work collating all the information available, mapping the constraints and then developing options for the alignment of the new dual carriageway and the proposed grade separated junctions as part of the DMRB (Design Manual for Roads & Bridges) process.

Neil Stewart, Contract Manager with CFJV, commented: 'We are making good progress on all three projects in the

central section and it feels like we have come a long way in the last few months. We have progressed from the initial fact finding and scoping stage for all three projects and are now busy working away, developing and assessing options for carriageway alignments and grade separated junctions.'

Carron Tobin, the CFJV Stakeholder Manager, added: 'We have had a particularly busy few months out and about along the length of the central section meeting landowners, businesses, residents and the community councils to get to know everyone and find out how they currently access and use the A9. Without local knowledge we cannot design and, ultimately, build a road that benefits both local communities and road users.'

More recently we have been introducing the ground investigation contractor to the landowners to explore access arrangements and agree any restrictions that may be necessary while the works are under way.

We have conducted three public exhibitions so far this year, two in Dalwhinnie and one in Blair Atholl, which have each

stimulated useful feedback on the emerging options for two projects stretching between Glen Garry, Dalwhinnie and Crubenmore. The feedback and discussions at the events have helped us focus in on some key design issues. Over the coming months we will be concentrating on meeting stakeholders between Crubenmore and Kincaig, with an exhibition being

planned for both Kingussie and Newtonmore.

Neil Stewart continued: 'For these exhibitions we have been using some state-of-the-art technology which allows us to produce three-dimensional fly-through visualisation models. This can even allow local people to see what different options may look like from a particular viewpoint.'

### GLEN GARRY TO DALWHINNIE

The dualling within this section extends to 9.5km and is one of the most tightly constrained stretches of the A9, especially at Drumochter Pass where we have a river, a railway, electricity pylons, the existing A9 and various international environmental designations to contend with.

Based on the junction strategy for the A9 Dualling programme, a grade separated junction is now proposed at Dalnaspidal, more or less halfway between Calvine and Dalwhinnie. Options are being considered for the design of this junction which will incorporate an underpass to allow traffic to access the north and south bound carriageways.

Ross Gray, the CFJV Project Manager for the Glen Garry to Dalwhinnie project, commented: 'We have been busy developing a number of practical options for the mainline and junction at Dalnaspidal. We are now entering an important stage on the project where we are assessing the merits of each of these options, informed by the public feedback following the exhibition in June, together with consideration of the environment, engineering, traffic and economics. This assessment will allow us to make a recommendation for a preferred route to Transport Scotland in the new year.'



# A9 Dualling Update



Wade Bridge over the River Truim

## DALWHINNIE TO CRUBENMORE

This 11km project is working to a tight programme with the DMRB Stage 2 report likely to be published early next year, setting out the preferred mainline alignment. Two public exhibitions have taken place, one in March which focused on the junction options at Dalwhinnie and one in August which set out the shortlisted junction options to the south of the village, and the dualled A9 alignment options along the Truim valley.

The assessment process is focusing on the relative merits of the various options from an engineering, traffic and economic and environmental perspective, and based on the feedback from

the various consultations.

Murdo Thomson, the CFJV Project Manager for this project, commented: "There is real momentum behind the work we are progressing and we are aiming to confirm early next year what the preferred option will be, to then develop it in more detail in Stage 3. We have been really pleased with the way we are working with the main landowner to understand their access requirements and we have had good dialogue locally on what is important when providing a junction to serve the community of Dalwhinnie and the A889 link with Laggan and the west coast."

## CRUBENMORE TO KINCRAIG

The longest and also possibly the most complex project in the central section is the 16km dualling from Crubenmore to Kincaig. George Irvine, the CFJV Project Manager, explained: "One of our biggest challenges is where the existing A9 crosses the River Spey in Kingussie where there is regular flooding of the Insh Marshes in a very sensitive environmental setting. We are very aware of the potential for local impacts given the immediate setting of the Ruthven Barracks and RSPB Reserve and discussing the options with the relevant

stakeholders has greatly improved our local knowledge and understanding of the many issues in this area.

"We are focusing on developing a number of viable options based on our understanding of the hydrology of the area."

An exhibition on the emerging options for the two junctions at Newtonmore and Kingussie, together with the alignments through the Spey Valley and across the River Spey, is being planned in both communities.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GRADUATE ENGINEERING GEOLOGIST

### Siobhan Warden, Graduate Engineering Geologist, CFJV

Since graduating I have worked for three years on various earthworks projects including road construction for a major housing development in Bishopton, site supervision during the A82 ground investigation last year, and serving as assistant site supervisor for causeway, road and harbour construction in Lochboisdale, South Uist.



The A9 Dualling is a great project to be working on. I have not been involved in a project of this scale before and believe it is a great opportunity to see the different rigs in operation and how traffic management is organised.

For this job I am based on-site full-time just now and with the rest of the site supervision team I have been staying in Aviemore and sharing a car to travel to and from the site at Dalwhinnie. A typical day involves a site walkover, speaking with the drilling/trial pitting teams to see how they are progressing and observing the ground conditions encountered. Then I review the engineer logs received and schedule geotechnical/geochemical testing accordingly. A daily site record is also completed to track progress and record plant movement.

A really interesting aspect of working on the A9 is that I had not seen a 'sonic rig'

in action before as it is less commonly used than a cable percussion or rotary rig. That's been a great experience. It's also been a fantastic opportunity to learn about the organisation and planning of traffic management and liaison with landowners. The scenery is really beautiful too!

The key challenges have been organising/planning traffic management to ensure it does not conflict with traffic management in adjacent sections and to minimise delays to A9 traffic. Also, there are multiple protected environmental sites and areas of geological/ecological conservation so these must be avoided by the works. Good relations with landowners must also be maintained during the ground investigation process.

One of my hobbies is walking. There are plenty of walking routes close to the A9 with stunning scenery so I've been enjoying many of those in my free time.

## CONTACT

Carron Tobin, the CFJV Stakeholder Manager, can be contacted on 07715773660 or email [carron.tobin@ruraldimensions.com](mailto:carron.tobin@ruraldimensions.com)

# NORTHERN SECTION PROJECTS

## AMJV UPDATE

### DALRADDY TO SLOCHD

This 24.1 km section of existing single carriageway from south of Aviemore to the existing dual carriageway at Slochd summit includes a number of existing junctions, a crossing of the River Dulnain and a major crossing of the Perth to Inverness railway line. The close proximity to Aviemore, Carrbridge and the constrained landscape at Slochd will be key factors in developing a preferred option. The AtkinsMouchel Joint Venture (AMJV) project manager for this section is Rory Gunn.

The environmental team is currently undertaking a data gathering exercise, which includes desk studies, consultation and site surveys covering such aspects as ecology, archaeology, hydrology and landscape. The information obtained is being used to provide a baseline against which the potential environmental impacts of a number of road alignment options can be assessed. A database showing the location of key environmental constraints has been developed to help inform the design of options.

In addition, mapping, both from the ground and via rope access techniques, is also being completed across the Dalraddy to Slochd scheme in areas where good quality data can be collected safely and relatively easily along the toe of the rock cut. Ground investigations in support of the Dalraddy to Slochd scheme are scheduled to commence in 2016.

The AMJV stakeholder engagement team has been organising drop-in sessions to give people an opportunity to come along and discuss, on an informal one-to-one basis, any issues or queries. Drop-in sessions were held in September in Carrbridge and Aviemore for the Dalraddy to Slochd project. Further drop-in sessions and public exhibitions will be held as the project progresses.

The AMJV stakeholder engagement team will be in attendance at the drop-in sessions along with technical specialists and representatives from Transport Scotland to answer any questions and discuss the project.

### TOMATIN TO MOY

The Tomatin to Moy section includes the upgrading of over 9 km of single carriageway. Options development work is currently ongoing, and designs are being developed and assessed for different mainline alignments, considering widening options to the southbound and northbound sides of the existing route.

Junction strategy options are also being considered to establish the safest and most efficient arrangements for accessing the communities of Tomatin and

Moy. These mainline and junction alternatives are being assessed on the basis of engineering and environmental constraints, and the process is being informed by engineering and environmental survey work and extensive local consultation. The AMJV project manager for this section is Steve Byer.

In support of the Tomatin to Moy option development, advance ground investigations were completed in August 2015. The purpose of the investigations was

to obtain advance information on the key geotechnical risks, such as areas of soft ground (peat bogs) and existing rock cuttings which would influence option development. Further investigations to provide an improved understanding of the ground and groundwater conditions are scheduled for the coming months.

The advance investigations included the completion of rotary boreholes and hand-held probes. Rock coring was undertaken at two discrete locations to develop the rock profile and better understand its characteristics whilst hand-held probes were completed across the site to determine the extents and depth of soft ground. The drilling took place within

areas of dense woodland which provided challenges for access. However, these were overcome with perseverance and a can do attitude.

Recently the AMJV team held a drop-in session in Strathearn Hall on 18 August 2015. The team are currently preparing for a public exhibition for the Tomatin to Moy section this autumn. This exhibition is being held to give locals and road users the opportunity to comment on initial design work.

If you have any questions regarding the drop-in sessions and exhibitions, please contact Robin Smith our Stakeholder Manager for landowners and stakeholders, on 07557 172 747 or email [Robin.Smith@mouchel.com](mailto:Robin.Smith@mouchel.com)

## ROCK MAPPING

To supplement the intrusive works, geological mapping of the existing rock faces was also completed by engineering geologists from the AMJV.

Where required, engineering geologists with specialist rope access skills were used in order to gain access to the steep slopes. Rope access inspections allow collection of data from across the rock face and provide an opportunity to assess the condition and performance of the existing cut. Both of these

elements play an important role in the design of new rock cuts that may be required to facilitate dualling of the A9.

Health and safety is of paramount concern during rope access work – not only the health and safety of personnel but also that of road users. Measures adopted include implementation of traffic management to create an exclusion zone beneath the work area and ongoing assessment by the engineering geologists in conjunction with



Rope access inspection work



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a qualified supervisor to avoid potentially hazardous zones. Less adventurous but equally important ground-based rock mapping was also completed.

Iain Murch is a Graduate Engineering Geologist who is involved in various geotechnical aspects of the A9 northern section dualling – most recently the rock mapping carried out on the Tomatin to Moy scheme. After qualifying as an Industrial Rope Access Trade Association (IRATA) Level I Rope Access Technician earlier this year, Iain has been looking forward to

utilising his skills on many of the iconic rock cuts between Dalraddy and Inverness.

Jessica Smith is a Senior Engineering Geologist and Chartered Geologist who is leading the rock mapping on the A9 northern section. Jessica has been an IRATA LI Rope Access Technician for four years having cut her rope access teeth on the steep cliffs of the Rock of Gibraltar. She is enjoying the opportunity to work with members of the AMJV team as work on the northern section advances.

## KINCRAIG TO DALRADDY



Cabinet Secretary Keith Brown with Alvie Primary School pupil Megan Swan

September saw a major milestone reached in the dualling of the A9 with the start of construction on the first section of the route.

Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, visited the KinCraig to Dalraddy site and put the first spade in the ground, marking the start of construction work.

During his visit, he said: "In the weeks and months ahead, people will now see work on the ground as the road progresses. When this ambitious programme is complete, enormous economic and social benefits will be felt by communities along the length of the road, and beyond. Today sees the first spade in the ground, with work beginning in earnest to see the programme through to a successful finish. Shorter-term safety improvements for the A9 are already delivering positive benefits for the safety of the route, with preparation

work on further dualling work also now starting to bear real fruit. With nearly three quarters of a million tonnes of excavation work to be carried out on this section here at KinCraig alone, we are at the start of a long journey to deliver the entire programme. But we are committed to this programme and we will remain focused to ensure this work, which is now at the hard end of construction, is seen through to a successful conclusion."

Over the coming months the contractor, a joint venture of Wills Bros Civil Engineering and John Paul Construction, will be working hard to complete this section of the route. Over 700,000 tonnes of earth will require to be excavated and over 18 hectares of new road carriageway, the equivalent of 25 full-size football pitches, will need to be laid as part of the work to ensure completion in summer 2017.



Kingussie High School pupils

## ACADEMY9 – TEACHING OUR FUTURE ENGINEERS

**An exciting new education initiative linked to the A9 Dualling programme will encourage pupils of schools on the Perth to Inverness corridor to consider a career in engineering.**

Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, visited Kingussie High School at the start of the new school year to launch Academy9.

The programme will give pupils the opportunity to learn more about the massive engineering project, apply mathematical, scientific and design aspects of the dualling programme to their schoolwork and secure future training and job opportunities.

At the launch event around 20 pupils from Kingussie High School (acting as mentors) and 85 pupils from primary schools in the area (Gergask, Kingussie, Aviemore, Newtonmore and Alvie) took part in a range of engineering challenges. The various activities were all based on teamwork with a focus on inclusion, being active and having fun. All the activities used skills

related in some way to the A9 and the design of it and included measuring and building, health and safety, overcoming obstacles and constraints, traffic sense and precision.

Addressing the children, Keith Brown told them that as well as offering them the opportunity to learn about the A9 Dualling and the challenges involved, Academy9 also gave them the chance to train and gain apprenticeships with the ultimate goal of getting them ready for a career in engineering.

The programme is starting with nine-year-olds, the so-called A9'ers, who are due to leave school in 2025 when the dualling programme is completed. The programme will also be available to older pupils in S1/2 where subject choices are made and in S4/5/6 where career choices are made.

As the programme is further developed, more ambitious initiatives are being planned from 2016/17 in partnership with other organisations such as Perth and Inverness Colleges, Perth and Kinross and Highland Councils, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Institute of Chartered Engineers (ICE).

## FURTHER PROJECT INFORMATION

[www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a9-dualling-perth-inverness](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a9-dualling-perth-inverness)

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