



A9 Dualling Programme: Perth to Inverness
Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing
January 2016 Public Exhibitions
Summary Report
FINAL 00

August 2016

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Transport Scotland

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1. Introduction

The Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment launched the Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) on 6th December 2011, which provided an overview of the Scottish Government's plans for infrastructure investment over the future decades. Contained within the plan was a commitment to complete the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness by 2025. The IIP commitment builds on work undertaken in the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) in 2008, which identified dualling of the A9 as a priority Trunk Road intervention.

The A9 corridor forms a strategic link between Central Scotland and the Scottish Highlands. The 177 kilometre route between Perth and Inverness consists of seven single carriageway sections interspersed between eight existing dual carriageway sections. Approximately 129 kilometres of these single carriageway sections are proposed to be dualled in order to complete the overall dualling of the A9.

The overall A9 Dualling Programme has been divided into twelve discrete projects for design and development purposes. In August 2014 Jacobs U.K Limited (Jacobs) was awarded the commission to progress the southern section of dualling between the Pass of Birnam and Glen Garry. This includes the following five schemes:

- Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing;
- Tay Crossing to Ballinluig;
- Pitlochry to Killiecrankie;
- Killiecrankie to Pitagowan; and
- Pitagowan to Glen Garry.

It should however be noted that Killiecrankie to Pitagowan and Pitagowan to Glen Garry have now been combined to form one scheme, Killiecrankie to Glen Garry.

The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 2 assessment is currently ongoing for the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing section. As a result, three options are being assessed to identify the engineering, environmental and traffic and economics advantages, disadvantages and constraints. The outcome of the DMRB Stage 2 assessment will be confirmation of the Preferred Route Option.

As part of the DMRB Stage 2 assessment a public exhibition was held in the Birnam Arts & Conference Centre, Birnam between 11:00am and 7:00pm on the 27th January 2016 and 11:00am and 4:00pm on the 28th January 2016. This exhibition provided the public with an update on the work that has been undertaken to date for the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing section and provided an opportunity to view the current design options for dualling the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing section of the A9.

This report summarises the exhibition process and provides the key findings and feedback received from the public.

2. Preparations for Exhibitions

2.1 Exhibition Advertising

2.1.1 Landowner and Stakeholder Advertising

Prior to the exhibition, e-mail correspondence was issued to local residents and businesses that have previously provided feedback or contacted Transport Scotland/Jacobs regarding the scheme. In total, 84 e-mails were issued on 14th January 2016 detailing the exhibition arrangements and encouraging attendance. A copy of the e-mail issued is included in Appendix A. Land and property owners directly impacted by the route options were contacted by telephone or letter and offered an advance meeting with Transport Scotland and Jacobs. Advance meetings were held with two landowners prior to the exhibition. Local Community Councils were informed of the exhibition by telephone and Councillors were contacted by letter. An example of the letter issued is included in Appendix B.

To further publicise the exhibition, 750 leaflets were hand delivered to properties and businesses in Dunkeld and Birnam a week in advance of the exhibition. A copy of the leaflet is included in Appendix C. Posters were also placed in various locations, including:

- Birnam Arts & Conference Centre;
- The Erigmore Estate;
- Birnam Library;
- The Co-operative (Dunkeld);
- St Mary's Episcopal Church;
- St Columba's Church;
- Dunkeld Parish Church
- Dunkeld & Birnam Station;
- Birnam Post Office;
- Dunkeld Post Office; and
- Dunkeld Information Centre.

Exhibition dates were advertised on the Transport Scotland website and the exhibition material was uploaded to the web-site on the morning of the 27th January 2016 at the following address:

www.transport.gov.scot/project/a9-pass-birnam-tay-crossing

2.1.2 Press Advertising

The public exhibition was advertised in local news publications The Press and Journal and The Courier on the 15th, 20th, 22nd and 27th January 2016. The exhibition was not advertised in the January 2016 edition of local publications the Atholl Quair or Newsround North due to timing of publications. The Bridge, which reports local news, events and information for the Dunkeld and Birnam area, does not produce a January edition, however the leaflet that was delivered to properties and businesses in Dunkeld and Birnam was delivered to The Bridge's distribution area.

2.2 Exhibition Material

The exhibition material presented at the public exhibition consisted of:

- Exhibition Boards (25);
- Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing, Options A, B and C Drawings:

- Desk Plans; and
- Plan & Profiles.
- A9 Geographical Information System (GIS) Web-based Mapping (touchscreen computer);
- Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing Virtual Reality Model (VRM):
 - Current Jacobs Options, Options A, B & C; and
 - Previously Considered Options, Options 6 & 7.
- A9 Dualling: Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing Project Leaflet; and
- Feedback Form.

2.2.1 Exhibition Boards

Information relating to the scheme was presented on 25 boards. Details of the boards are given below:

- 1) Welcome
 - Purpose of the exhibition.
- 2) Programme Objectives
 - Overall A9 Dualling Programme objectives.
- 3) Project Constraints
 - Identification of relevant physical and environmental constraints.
- 4) Development of Early Route Options (2009 - 2012)
 - Introduction to previous assessment undertaken by AECOM (formerly URS).
- 5) Development of Early Route Options (2009 - 2012)
 - Identification of previously considered junction layouts.
- 6) Alternative Route Options (June 2013)
 - Lowered A9 option.
- 7) Corridor-wide Engineering & Environmental Studies (2013 - 2014)
 - Details of route-wide studies, including:
 - Preliminary Engineering Services (PES); and
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 8) Developing the Route Options (2013 - 2014)
 - Residual issues with route options.
- 9) Developing the Route Options (2013 - 2014)
 - Further assessment to determine the visual impact of route options, which included production of a VRM.
- 10) Developing the Current Route Options (2014 - present)
 - Introduction to the works undertaken by Jacobs following appointment in August 2014.
- 11) Ground Investigation (2014 - 2015)
 - Extent and findings of a detailed Ground Investigation (GI).
- 12) Constructability - Initial Review of Previous Route Options
 - Constructability review of at-grade option.
- 13) Constructability - Initial Review of Previous Route Options (continued)

- Constructability review of lowered option.
- 14) Landscape and Visual Impacts - Previous At-grade and Lowered Options
 - Introduction to the VRM for previous route options developed between 2012 and 2014.
- 15) The Current Design Options
 - Details developments undertaken to the previous route options, taking into account landscape, ground conditions, visual impact and constructability issues and to take account of the findings of the PES and SEA commissions.
- 16) Option A - At-grade Option
 - Key design features of the current Option A.
- 17) Option B - Lowered Option
 - Key design features of the current Option B.
- 18) Option C - New Option
 - Key design features of the current Option C.
- 19) The Three Current Options, Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing - Option A
 - Strip plan of the current Option A.
- 20) The Three Current Options, Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing - Option B
 - Strip plan of the current Option B.
- 21) The Three Current Options, Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing - Option C
 - Strip plan of the current Option C.
- 22) Possible Station Relocation
 - Proposals to relocate Dunkeld & Birnam Station for Options A and C and identification of key features.
- 23) Tay Crossing Structure
 - Options for the River Tay structure to accommodate the scheme.
- 24) Ongoing Design Development
 - Timescales for future scheme development.
- 25) What Happens Next?
 - Focus for further design work; and
 - Details for provision of feedback.

The exhibition boards are included in Appendix D and are available to view on the Transport Scotland web-site. The general layout of the exhibition boards is illustrated in Figures 2.1 to 2.4.

Figure 2.1: Public Exhibition, Photograph 1



Figure 2.2: Public Exhibition, Photograph 2



Figure 2.3: Public Exhibition, Photograph 3



Figure 2.4: Public Exhibition, Photograph 4



2.2.2 Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing, Options A, B and C Drawings

The following drawings were presented at the public exhibition:

- Desk Plans: Plans on A1-sized paper at 1:2,500 scale showing the route options for the scheme. The drawings displayed the route options, and associated junctions, on both aerial photography and Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping. The OS mapping highlighted physical and environmental constraints and identified where the route options impacted upon these constraints. The Desk Plans are included in Appendix E; and
- Plan & Profiles: Plan & Profile drawings on A1-sized paper at 1:2,500 horizontal scale and 1:500 vertical scale showing the route options for the scheme. The profiles displayed the level of the proposed route options and the existing ground level at 50 metre intervals. The Plan & Profile drawings are included in Appendix F.

2.2.3 A9 GIS Web-based Mapping (Touchscreen Computer)

To complement the exhibition material, an interactive GIS web-based mapping system was developed and presented on a touchscreen display. The web-based mapping application contained digital maps of the three route options under consideration and the physical and environmental constraints. The system included features such as a distance and area measurement tools, address search and item identification, helping the public to gain a greater understanding of the project and how it related to them. Transport Scotland and Jacobs' staff assisted the public to utilise the system and were on-hand to explain the various options on display.

2.2.4 Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing VRM

The following VRMs were presented at the public exhibition:

- Current Jacobs Options, Options A, B & C: 3-dimensional VRM fly-through showing the current route options and how they interface with the surrounding environment; and
- Previously Considered Options, Options 6 & 7: 3-dimensional VRM fly-through at road level of options considered as part of previous assessment undertaken by AECOM.

2.2.5 A9 Dualling: Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing Project Leaflet

The exhibition leaflet was made available to the public at the exhibition. The leaflet summarised the information on the exhibition boards and included relevant contact details and sources of further information.

2.2.6 Feedback Form

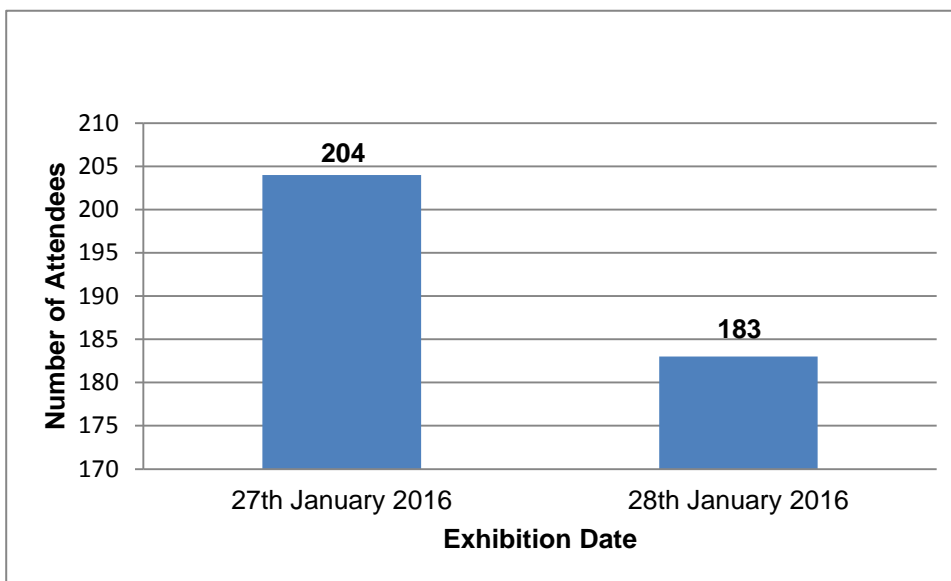
Attendees were encouraged to complete and return feedback forms provided at the exhibition on the day or to return them by post or email thereafter. A sample blank feedback form is included in Appendix G. The deadline for submission of feedback was 18th March 2016, however this was extended to 15th April 2016 following discussions with Dunkeld & Birnam Community Council.

3. Exhibition Results

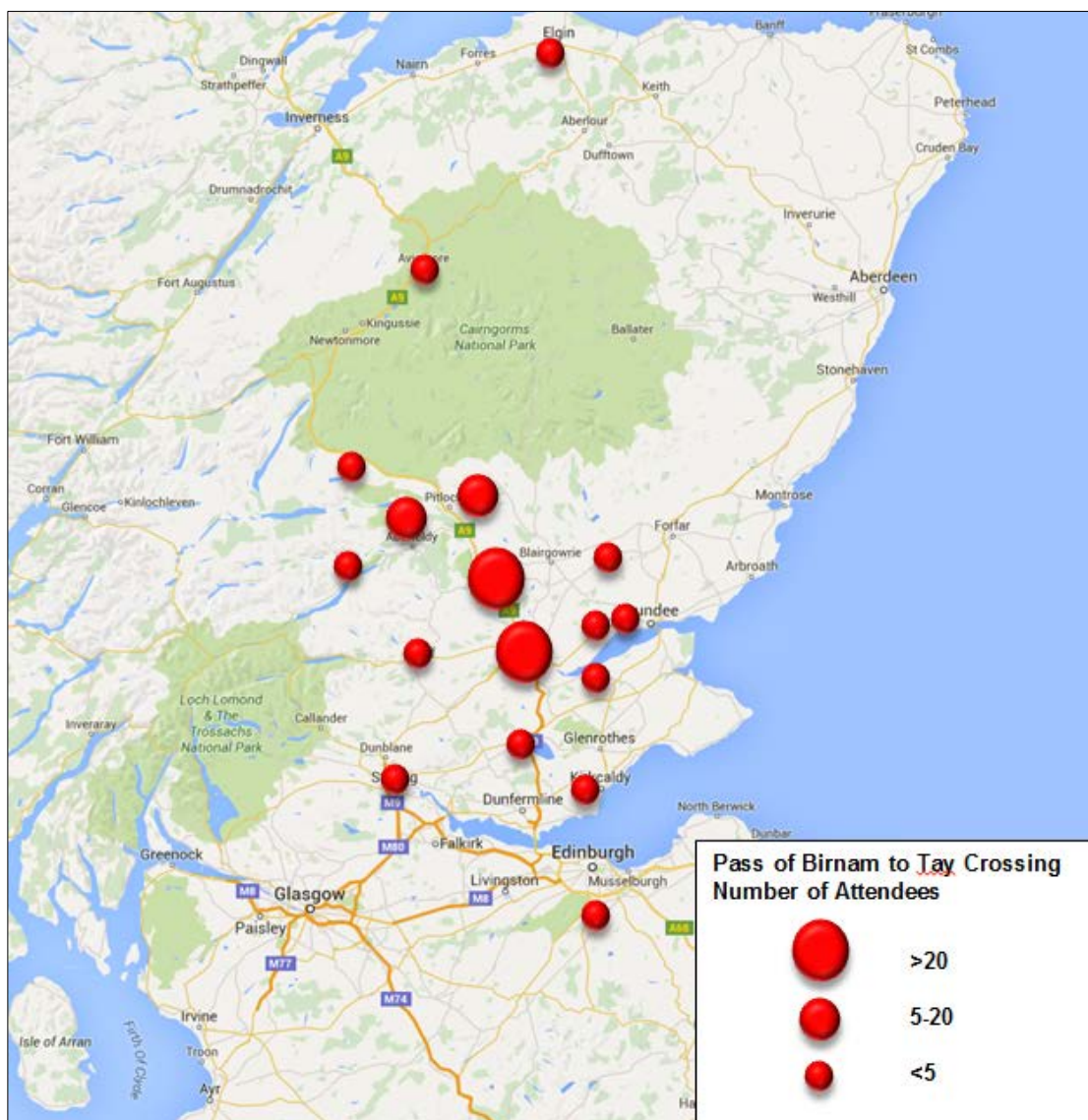
3.1 Attendance

Over the course of the two day exhibition, a total of 387 people attended. A breakdown of the number of attendees on each day can be found in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Exhibition Attendee Numbers



A sign-in sheet was utilised at the exhibition, which gave attendees the option to provide their name, address and email contact and include their postcodes. While not all attendees provided this information, this can be used to determine general interest in the scheme from surrounding areas. Assessment of the sign-in sheets shows that the majority of attendees live in the locality of Birnam and Dunkeld. Attendees from outside the local communities could include tourists, visitors or people who travel along the A9 for business and leisure purposes. A map showing the geographical spread of the attendees at the exhibition is provided in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Exhibition Attendees, Geographical Spread (base image from Google Maps, 2016 (<http://www.google.co.uk/maps>))

The sign-in sheet also offered attendees the opportunity to provide an e-mail address and receive newsletters reporting progress of the A9 Dualling Programme. In total 159 people requested to receive newsletters and were added to the mailing list.

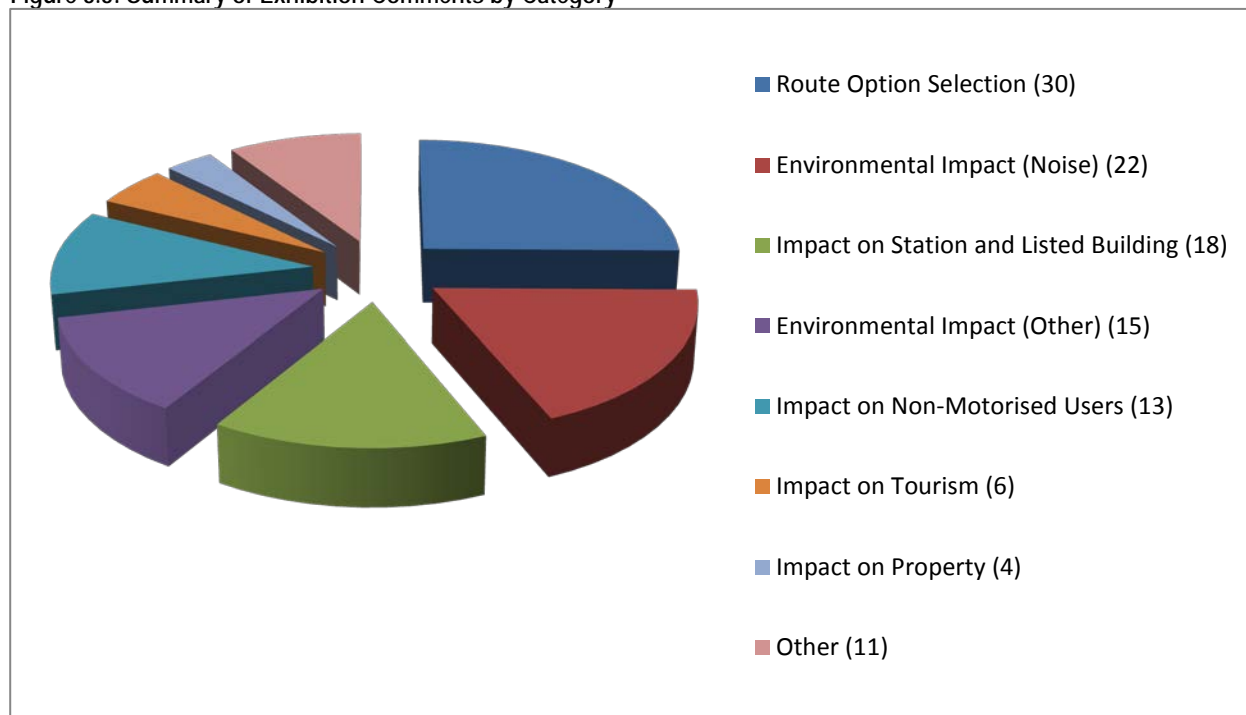
3.2 Comments

Feedback from the public forms an important part of the design process to ensure the project team understands local concerns and issues. As a result, at the exhibition, attendees were encouraged to provide comments and ideas on the route options via the feedback forms, which would inform future design and assessment work.

In total 66 feedback forms were returned. 28 were returned at the exhibition itself and a further 39 were submitted by either e-mail or by post. Of these 66 feedback forms a total of 119 comments were made. In general, the majority of those that attended the exhibition appeared supportive of the A9 dualling, primarily on safety grounds. However, many attendees expressed concerns about the impact on the local community and environment.

The comments received have been grouped into categories and are shown in Figure 3.3. Further details of the comments, including proposed responses, are included in Appendix H. For the purpose of this report and to protect the privacy of individuals, the name of the individuals who provided the comment has not been included.

Figure 3.3: Summary of Exhibition Comments by Category



The feedback shows that the environmental impact of the scheme is of significant concern to local residents, in particular the possible noise impact given the scheme is in close proximity to numerous residential properties. The impact on the surrounding natural landscape and visual impact of the route options was also commented on. The route options under consideration will have an impact on Dunkeld & Birnam Station, which incorporates a Category A Listed Building and a number of attendees expressed concern as to the likely impact on the public transport facility. Given Birnam and Dunkeld operate as tourist destinations, predominantly during the summer months, concern was raised as to the impact the scheme may have on the tourist industry.

A number of feedback forms specified a preference for a particular route. A breakdown of the route preference is given in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Route Option Preference

Option	Preference (%)
Option A	25
Option B	29
Option C	17
Option A or C	25
Option B or C	4

4. Summary

Public exhibitions for the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing section of the A9 Dualling Programme held on 27th and 28th January 2016 updated the public on the project's progress and presented the three options being considered as part of the DMRB Stage 2 assessment. It also provided the public with an opportunity to discuss the scheme with Transport Scotland and their representatives. The aim of the exhibition was to capture ideas and issues of local residents and to determine how the route options impact those that own land or property in close proximity to the A9.

The exhibitions were advertised on the Transport Scotland website, local media outlets and various local shops, post offices and churches.

In total 387 people attended the exhibition over two days and 66 feedback forms were received. Of these 66 feedback forms a total of 119 comments were made. The results and feedback obtained from the public exhibition will be used by Transport Scotland and their representatives to inform the ongoing development of the scheme.

There were a number of exhibition boards utilised to provide the scheme background and introduce the current route options. The boards were generally well received with the drawings and sketches incorporated in the boards helping to aid understanding. The interactive GIS based mapping system was also well received by the public, allowing them to interact directly with the scheme and determine the potential impacts of the proposed A9 dualling. The VRM was valuable in that it gave attendees a good appreciation as to how the proposed scheme will interface with the surrounding topography and environment.



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