A96 Inverness to Nairn (incl. Nairn Bypass)

Option assessment – Nairn Bypass

Option 2E is preferred for the following reasons:

Environment:

- Option 2E offers the lowest volume of imported material and a smaller footprint of land takes.
- Impact on the environment is more beneficial in relation to noise, vibration, geology and soils, water quality, biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland.
- Option 2E avoids impacts at Delnies Wood relating to habitats and biodiversity and the path network.
- Option 2E offers a less intrusive crossing of the River Nairn than other options.
- Option 2E performs less favourably in relation to landscape and visual impacts and likeliness of cultural heritage impact.
- Option 2E performs less favourably in relation to the visual and landscape impacts throughout the woodland.

Option 2E is preferred for the following reasons:

- The River Nairn crossing at Broadley is preferred to the crossing at Delnies Wood.
- Option 2E is further from receptors (e.g. properties) at Mossburn.
- Option 2E avoids impacts at Delnies Wood relating to habitats and biodiversity.
- Option 2E has the best earthworks balance, hence the lowest volume of imported material and can be constructed with less disruption or impact during construction to road users and the local community.
- Option 2E has one of the lowest impacts on the Alton Burn flood plain.
- Option 2E offers benefits to walking and cycling in the town.
- Under Option 2E existing bus routes should provide benefits to public transport and active travel (e.g. pedestrians and cyclists) in the town by removing trunk road traffic from the existing A96.
- Option 2E has the lowest estimated scheme cost of all the Nairn Bypass options and provides value for money.
- Option 2E is also further from receptors (e.g. properties) at Hazelbank.
- Option 2E avoids the Kildrummie landscape at Howford. It also avoids the environmental bunds.
- Options (2B and 2J) would have greater NMU conflicts in relation to non-motorised users (NMUs) such as pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users (NMUs).

The preferred option for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme shown on the drawing overleaf is indicative of the preferred option. Transport Scotland has begun a procurement process to select a contractor to develop the preferred option for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme shown on the drawing overleaf.

What happens next?

Transport Scotland has begun a procurement exercise to appoint a design consultant early next year to take forward the development and promotion of the preferred option for the scheme (DMRB Stage 4 assessments).

The preferred option for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme shown on the drawing overleaf is indicative of the preferred option. Transport Scotland has begun a procurement process to select a contractor to develop the preferred option for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme shown on the drawing overleaf.

Further information

For further information on the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme visit the Transport Scotland website: www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a96-dualling-inverness-nairn-including-nairn-bypass

If you have any queries or any comment on the project, please contact The A96 Dualling team at the address above or call 0141 272 7100. You can also post to:

A96 Dualling Team
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
59 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 0HF

By 12 November 2014
**Introduction**

The Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), published in 2001, set out the Scottish Government's transport investment priorities over the coming decades and included upgrading the A96 between Inverness and Nairn to dual carriageway and also the creation of a bypass of Nairn.

Priority was given to dual the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen by 2030, thus completing the dual carriageway network between all Scottish cities.

The commitment to dual the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen over the coming decades and included upgrading sections:

- the A96 between Inverness and Nairn to dual
- Nairn Bypass.

In December 2011, when Scottish Ministers published their Infrastructure Investment Plan which contained the commitment to dual the A96 between Inverness and Nairn, the A96 route option assessment process was completed. This leaflet provides a summary of the outcome of the assessment process, as well as the preferred option for the scheme.

The route option assessment process has now been completed. This leaflet provides a summary of the outcome of the assessment process, as well as the preferred option for the scheme.

**The Scheme**

The new 30km dualcarriageway scheme can be divided into two sections:

- Inverness to Gollanfield
- Nairn Bypass

**Inverness to Gollanfield**

- The preferred option is Option 1C (MV), which includes:
  - 15km dual carriageway
  - Four grade separated junctions at Smithton, Newton, Mid Coul and Brackley
  - Major utility pipeline and overhead power line diversions.

**Nairn Bypass**

- The preferred option is Option 3E, which includes:
  - Skin dual carriageway
  - Two grade separated junctions at Nairn West and Nairn East
  - No other direct/local accesses onto the new trunk road
  - Local road de-allocation
  - Major utility pipeline and overhead power line diversions.

**Option assessment – Inverness to Gollanfield**

**Engineering**

- The existing A96 has 17 local road junctions, 23 private accesses and at least 15 accesses into agricultural and forestry land. Option (MV) is generally offline (away from the existing A96) with lower impacts on relationships with the existing A96’s property, agriculture and forestry land and businesses.
- Option (MV) is generally offline (away from the existing A96) with lower impacts on relationships with the existing A96’s property, agriculture and forestry land and businesses.
- Option (MV) is generally offline (away from the existing A96) with lower impacts on relationships with the existing A96’s property, agriculture and forestry land and businesses.
- Option (MV) is generally offline (away from the existing A96) with lower impacts on relationships with the existing A96’s property, agriculture and forestry land and businesses.
- Option (MV) is generally offline (away from the existing A96) with lower impacts on relationships with the existing A96’s property, agriculture and forestry land and businesses.

**Economy:**

- For Option (MV) the existing A96 is retained between Smithton and Brackley. Safety benefits will be realised on the existing A96 for both motorists and non-motorised users (pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians) due to the significant reduction in traffic.

**Environment:**

- While there are differences between the options at individual topic level, the overall level of environmental assessment is much more finely balanced, such that one option substantially and materially better than the others.
- Option (MV) performs less favourably in relation to noise and vibration, landscape and visual, water quality, cultural heritage and agricultural and forestry land.

**Safety:**

- For Option (MV) the existing A96 is retained between Smithton and Brackley. Safety benefits will be realised on the existing A96 for both motorists and non-motorised users (pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians) due to the significant reduction in traffic.

**Accessibility and social inclusion:**

- Option (MV) is expected to have some of the lowest impacts on all travellers (eg botherno) when compared to other options.

**Integration:**

- Option (MV) offers benefits for public transport and active travel (walking and cycling) through the alignment of the single carriageway between Smithton and Brackley which will have significantly reduced traffic on it.
A96 Inverness to Nairn (incl. Nairn Bypass)

Option assessment – Nairn Bypass

Option 1E is preferred for the following reasons:

Engineering: Quickest and simplest option, uses a large part of Blackcastle quarry and the final alignment, and Nairn West by-pass under Option 1E are both based on the Blackcastle route. The Nairn River crossing at Broadford is preferred to the crossing at Invergordon since it is shorter and the lower cost of the structure makes

Environment:Whilst issues are different between

Option 1E has the most environmental impacts in the Nairn West area, with an option substantially and materially better than the others.

Option 1E would allow for the development of the site in the future.

Safety:

The significant reduction in risk to traffic from the existing A96 would make for safer roads. Option 1E offers a more direct route, with fewer bends, and a lesser impact on the sensitive

Economy:
The Nairn Bypass will benefit the town by removing traffic from the existing A96. The A96 Dualling Study (2009) in the existing A96 through Nairn is estimated to reduce its average daily traffic from 17,000 to 12,000 vehicles per day.

Option 1F is a further option (as proposed at Rossie

Option 1G is the lowest cost option, with the least impact and material benefit on the environment.

Option 1F would allow for a more direct route, with fewer bends, and a lesser impact on the sensitive

Conclusion:

Overall, Option 1E is expected to have some of the lowest impacts on all travelling (e.g. path networks) than other options.

Preferred option

The preferred option for the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme is shown on the drawing overleaf, in order to reduce the number of accidents in Nairn. Option 1E offers a more direct route, with fewer bends, and a lesser impact on the sensitive

What happens next?

Transport Scotland has begun a procurement exercise to appoint a design consultant early next year, in order to take forward the development, assessment and promotion of the preferred option for the scheme (DHI/MGE Stage 2 assessments).

Further information

For further information on the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn scheme, please visit the Transport Scotland website:

www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a96-inverness-nairn-including-nairn-bypass

For further information on the A96 Dualing Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme shown on the drawing overleaf in initiative, and will be developed further during the next stage of development. This includes the preferred option agreement and layout of all the works within the A96 Dualing Inverness to Aberdeen programme can be found at the website and are available on the project website:
Option assessment – Nairn Bypass

Option 2E is preferred for the following reasons:

**Engineering:**
A96 Inverness to Nairn (incl. Nairn Bypass)

Option 2E offers the lowest estimated route cost of all the options at £150m. The other options would result in a higher cost above £200m. The option selected is likely to have a lower impact on the environmental features and landscape at Howford since it is shorter and has a lesser impact on the sensitive side reducing the potential impacts from noise and air pollution and biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland.

**Safety:**
The significant reduction in traffic using the existing A96 should reduce the number of accidents in Nairn. Option 2E offers safer travel through the area particularly around the A939 junction, Newmill and at Kinsteary.

**Accessibility and social inclusion:**
The reduction in traffic passing through Nairn should provide benefits to public transport and active travel e.g. walking and cycling in the town. Under Option 2E existing bus routes should provide benefits to public transport and active travel e.g. walking and cycling in the town. Under Option 2E existing bus routes.

**Environment:**
While there are differences between the options at individual topic level, the conclusion of the overall environmental assessment is that Option 2E is likely to impact least on the environment. In particular Option 2E avoids impacts at Delnies Wood relating to habitats and biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland. The River Nairn crossing at Broadley is preferred to the crossing at Howford since it is shorter and has a lesser impact on the sensitive landscape at Howford. It also avoids the Kildrummie ledges and fences, landscape planting and noise barriers or management plans, mammal (e.g. badger and otter) underpasses, development of suitable mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the environment.

**Economy:**
The total route cost of Option 2E is significantly lower than the other options at £150m. The option selected is likely to have a lower impact on the environmental features and landscape at Howford since it is shorter and has a lesser impact on the sensitive side reducing the potential impacts from noise and air pollution and biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland.

**Integration:**
A96 Inverness to Nairn (incl. Nairn Bypass)

Option 2E offers the lowest estimated route cost of all the options at £150m. The other options would result in a higher cost above £200m. The option selected is likely to have a lower impact on the environmental features and landscape at Howford since it is shorter and has a lesser impact on the sensitive side reducing the potential impacts from noise and air pollution and biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland.

**Safety:**
The significant reduction in traffic using the existing A96 should reduce the number of accidents in Nairn. Option 2E offers safer travel through the area particularly around the A939 junction, Newmill and at Kinsteary.

**Accessibility and social inclusion:**
The reduction in traffic passing through Nairn should provide benefits to public transport and active travel e.g. walking and cycling in the town. Under Option 2E existing bus routes should provide benefits to public transport and active travel e.g. walking and cycling in the town. Under Option 2E existing bus routes.

**Environment:**
While there are differences between the options at individual topic level, the conclusion of the overall environmental assessment is that Option 2E is likely to impact least on the environment. In particular Option 2E avoids impacts at Delnies Wood relating to habitats and biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland. The River Nairn crossing at Broadley is preferred to the crossing at Howford since it is shorter and has a lesser impact on the sensitive landscape at Howford. It also avoids the Kildrummie ledges and fences, landscape planting and noise barriers or management plans, mammal (e.g. badger and otter) underpasses, development of suitable mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the environment.

**Economy:**
A96 Inverness to Nairn (incl. Nairn Bypass)

The total route cost of Option 2E is significantly lower than the other options at £150m. The option selected is likely to have a lower impact on the environmental features and landscape at Howford since it is shorter and has a lesser impact on the sensitive side reducing the potential impacts from noise and air pollution and biodiversity and the path network throughout the woodland.

**Further information**
For further information on the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme please visit the Transport Scotland website: www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a96-inverness-to-nairn-including-nairn-bypass. Information on the wider A96 Dualling Inverness to Aberdeen programme can be found at www.transportscotland.gov.uk/a96dualling.

If you have any queries or any comment on the project, please contact The A96 Dualling team at the address above or via the following contact details:

Telephone: 0141 373 7166
Email: a96dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk

A96 Dualling Team
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
59 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G5 0HF

By 16 November 2014

www.transportscotland.gov.uk/a96dualling

For further information on the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme please visit the Transport Scotland website: www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a96-inverness-to-nairn-including-nairn-bypass. Information on the wider A96 Dualling Inverness to Aberdeen programme can be found at www.transportscotland.gov.uk/a96dualling.

If you have any queries or any comment on the project, please contact The A96 Dualling team at the address above or via the following contact details:

Telephone: 0141 373 7166
Email: a96dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk

Further information
For further information on the A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme please visit the Transport Scotland website: www.transportscotland.gov.uk/project/a96-inverness-to-nairn-including-nairn-bypass. Information on the wider A96 Dualling Inverness to Aberdeen programme can be found at www.transportscotland.gov.uk/a96dualling.

If you have any queries or any comment on the project, please contact The A96 Dualling team at the address above or via the following contact details:

Telephone: 0141 373 7166
Email: a96dualling@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk

A96 Inverness to Nairn (incl. Nairn Bypass)

Preferred option

The preferred option for the A96 A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme is shown on the drawing in yellow in outline, and will be developed further during the next phase of design and development. This includes the preferred option alignment and layout of all the sections. The environmental-led mitigation will also be added to the scheme design. Drawings can be viewed at the consultation and are available on the project website.