

# AGENDA ITEM 8

## APPENDIX I

### ROUTE OPTIONS APPRAISAL – PROJECT 9 CRUBENMORE TO KINCRAIG

## Appendix I

Route Options Appraisal – Project 9, Crubenmore to Kincaig		
Section	Route Options	Appraisal
Section 1	<p>1a – online widening to the east</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing carriageway becomes the northbound route</li> <li>New southbound route constructed adjacent and to the east</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      National Cycle Route (NCR) 7 runs parallel to the A9 on the west at this point so the proposal to widening to the east is welcome.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      Widening into embankment and cut embankment slopes at northern end. The main impact on both landscape and ecology will be the loss of naturally regenerating woodland.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      The current junction providing access to the public road to Glen Truim and Invernahavon Holiday Park will be removed and an alternative access to the A9 provided in an alternative location. This will be dealt with at Stage 3.</p>
Section 2	<p>2a - online widening to the east</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing carriageway becomes the northbound route</li> <li>New southbound route constructed adjacent and to the east</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      National Cycle Route (NCR) 7 runs parallel to the A9 on the west at this point so the proposal to widening to the east for both options is welcomed. Potential impacts on NCR7 and re-alignment to mitigate will be dealt with at Stage 3. Opportunity exists to improve connectivity between Ralia and land/NMU routes located east of the A9 including General Wade's Military Road. Key crossing points (including horse access) are all identified and continuity of access should be a consideration.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      There will be an impact on landscape in terms of tree loss and some alteration and disturbance to natural landforms and established vegetation cover. The proposed slope engineering is very uniform which is contrary to the landscape character and should be addressed. This option largely follows the verge of the existing A9, however, slight increases in finished road height above existing means that in one or two places the west-side embankments and the land envelope are very close to one or two residential properties. There will be significant tree loss in this section and loss of habitat, compensation should include provision for birch regeneration and blueberry.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      There are a number of residential properties in this section as well as the Ralia Centre. The boundary of one property (Ptarmigan Lodge) could be impacted by earthworks extents. Access to the Ralia Centre will be altered and addressed at Stage 3.</p>

Route Options Appraisal – Project 9, Crubenmore to Kincaig		
Section	Route Options	Appraisal
	2b – <u>off-line</u> widening to the <b>east</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing carriageway is abandoned</li> <li>Entirely new Dual Carriageway built to east of existing route</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b> As for Option 2a above.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b> As for Option 2a above but with a significant widening of the transport corridor and a high degree of alteration and disturbance to natural landforms, established vegetation cover, and habitat loss. Option 2b impinges less on residential amenity than option 2a but it is not entirely without effect. Option b does present more opportunity to plant new woodlands between the road and views to the west than option a. However, this is unlikely to fully compensate for the greater landscape effects.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b> As for Option 2a above. Option 2b is marginally preferable to 2a due to lesser impact on property boundaries, however, those impacts in 2a could be mitigated against at DMRB Stage 3</p>
Section 3	3a - online widening to the <b>east</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing carriageway becomes the northbound route</li> <li>New southbound route constructed adjacent and to the east</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b> Continuity of access from and across the carriageway (north/south) requires consideration including the links with General Wade's Military Road and access to Lubleathann Bothy.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b> There will be an impact on landscape ecology in terms of significant tree loss, rock cutting, and proposed slope engineering which is very uniform and contrary to the landscape character and should be addressed. The construction is adjacent to a small lochan on the west of the road and risks adversely affecting this attractive landscape feature, its setting and habitat. Mitigation will be required.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b> In general there are no significant impacts on community or private assets.</p>

Route Options Appraisal – Project 9, Crubenmore to Kincaig		
Section	Route Options	Appraisal
Section 4	<p>4a – online widening to the east with existing bridge over River Spey retained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing carriageway becomes the northbound route with current bridge retained</li> <li>• New southbound route (including a new bridge) constructed adjacent and to the east</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      A public Right of Navigation exists on the River Spey which is also a designated Core Path along with canoe/kayak access points near Ruthven overbridge. The River and access points will be impacted by all options. The river and access points have not been identified as core paths in the consultation report, this should be rectified. A crossing point (underpass) at Lynchat should be retained serving a core path. This option has the least impact on NMUs of all options for this section.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; ecology:</b>                      All options fill in to the west in part with significant tree/woodland loss and all options require a new River crossing with varying degrees of impact. The design of the bridge and approaches will have an impact on landscape character and a degree of landscape and ecological disturbance for all options.</p> <p>This option widens to the east minimising impacts on the community at Kingussie. This option also retains the existing embankments and bridge over the River Spey with a new bridge constructed adjacent, minimising disturbance and impact on the River. Erosion protection measures (rock armour) will be required to protect the embankment and there is a potential impact on important wetland and wader habitats through widening.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      This section includes Kingussie and the smaller settlements in Lynchat and Ruthven, but no direct impacts are identified. A Potential slight negative impact on Glebe Ponds is identified. There is planning permission for a residential development in Kingussie at this location but no direct impacts are identified. In general there are no significant impacts on community or private assets.</p>

Route Options Appraisal – Project 9, Crubenmore to Kincaig		
Section	Route Options	Appraisal
	<p>4b – off-line widening to the <b>east</b> :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing bridge over River Spey and embankment <b>removed</b></li> <li>new dual carriageway bridge and road constructed to the east</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      As for option 4a but due to removal of existing bridge and embankment and construction of a new bridge there is a likely higher impact on waterborne users due to disruption. The design of the new bridge should give consideration to waterborne users.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      All options fill in to the west in part with significant tree/woodland loss and all options require a new River crossing with varying degrees of impact. The design of the bridge and approaches will have an impact on landscape character and a degree of landscape and ecological disturbance for all options.</p> <p>This option widens to the east and has the least potential impact on the community at Kingussie although widening offline does create a wider envelope creating a greater impact overall. This option sits on a new embankment east of the existing one on both the northern and southern approaches to the Spey crossing. It is not clear in reports what would happen to the existing embankment on which current A9 sits. Whether retained or removed this option would significantly expand the extent of unnatural landforms and corridor of disturbance over other options. This option would enable natural river migration and improvement to river/floodplain connectivity. There would be a longer construction period due to removal of the existing infrastructure and therefore a longer period of disturbance to adjacent habitats.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      As for option 4a above.</p>
	<p>4e – online widening to the <b>west</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing carriageway becomes the southbound route with current bridge retained</li> <li>New northbound route (including a new bridge) constructed adjacent and to the east</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      As for Option 4a</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      All options fill in to the west in part with significant tree/woodland loss and all options require a new River crossing with varying degrees of impact. The design of the bridge and approaches will have an impact on landscape character and a degree of landscape and ecological disturbance for all options.</p> <p>This option widens to the west and therefore has a greater impact on the community than the two previous options the land envelope is very close to the Community Park and ponds. This option retains existing embankments which will require erosion protection and widening to accommodate new crossing.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      As for options 4a and b above but bringing the road closer to Kingussie. There is land which falls partially within the study corridor for this option which benefits from planning permission in principle for residential development. In addition, this site also has detailed consent for 30-40 dwellings (which lies outside of the route corridor but within the wider study area) and permission for amended conditions relating to site access, a compound and haul road. This site is also allocated for residential development within the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan. In general impacts on this site are minimal but higher than for options widening to the east.</p>

Route Options Appraisal – Project 9, Crubenmore to Kincaig		
Section	Route Options	Appraisal
	<p>4f – online widening to the <b>west</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing bridge over River Spey and embankment <b>removed</b></li> <li>new dual carriageway bridge and road constructed to the west</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      As for option 4b, due to removal of existing bridge and embankment and construction of a new bridge there is a likely higher impact on waterborne users due to disruption. The design of the new bridge should give consideration to waterborne users.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      As for Option 4e, but with removal of existing embankments and bridge so no erosion protection required. There are potential longer term benefits associated with this option in terms of improved habitat connectivity and improved species permeability (due to lengthened crossing) and the potential to allow more natural migration of the River Spey. In the short term there is likely to be a longer construction period due to creation of a new bridge and removal of existing.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      As for 4e above.</p>
Section 5	<p>5a - online widening to the <b>west</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing carriageway becomes the southbound carriageway and a northbound carriageway is constructed adjacent to the west</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      Crossing point 16 at Mains of Balavil is incorrectly recorded in the consultation report as an at-grade crossing. The crossing is a pedestrian 'subway' with an elevated pedestrian walkway installed and steps. Any ongoing purpose for this requires consideration in regard to new designs. Crossing point 17 provides valuable NMU connectivity from B9152 to land west of the A9. NCR7 does not follow the A9 at this point although (it follows the back road on the other side of the river) there is an opportunity to create a re-aligned dedicated traffic-free cycle path located adjacent to the upgraded carriageway.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      There will be significant loss of areas of mature oak woodland and impacts of both the A9 dualling and accommodation works on the Balavil designed landscape (incl. Mains of Balavil). The proposed slope engineering is very uniform which is contrary to the landscape character and should be addressed. There is scope for river corridor enhancements in this location.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      There are a number of residential dwellings and holiday accommodation properties in this section including Meadowside and Balavil House and Estate. The Highland Wildlife Park is located within this section and partially falls within the study corridor as does Meadowside Quarry. There is an existing undetermined planning application to create a visitor centre with associated cafes and commercial uses at Balavil. There is an existing permission at Meadowside Quarry for increased extraction conditional on an alternative access to the existing shared access with the Wildlife Park. There is a potential impact on these properties and accesses which will be dealt with at Stage 3.</p>

Junction Options – Project 9, Section 2, Newtonmore		
Junction Option	Description	Appraisal
4	Combined with option 2b (offline to the east) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 way, 2 level trumpet arrangement</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      This option has a high level of new land-take. Continuity of access east via existing path and crossing point (NMU5) to be considered.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      The junction has a high level of new land-take and the new alignment cuts onto steep ground to east and will require a deep cut to allow for underpass with loss of habitat.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      Ralia and Newtonmore are served by this junction and with access retained and no significant impacts identified.</p>
7	Combined with option 2a (online to the east) north of existing junction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southbound – loop layout located</li> <li>• Northbound – half diamond</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      This option minimises new land take and provides for continuity of access east via existing path and crossing point (NMU5).</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      This junction option is slightly smaller than option 4 and so has a lower landscape and visual impact and requires marginally less habitat loss.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b> The report splits the “Community and Private Assets” into a number of smaller sections: As for Junction Option 4.</p>

Junction Options – Project 9, Section4, Kingussie		
Junction Option	Description	Appraisal
2	<p>Can be applied to all Section 4 options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade of existing junctions with compact grade separated left-in/left-out</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      Acceptable impact on existing NMU provision/core paths including access to General Wade’s Military Road. This option for alignment option 4B presents the least overall impact upon existing NMU facilities, however, is offline so greater land take and new bridge over the Spey required. This junction option for alignment option 4E has greater impact on Glebe Ponds but is online and utilises existing Spey bridge.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      This junction option for alignment options 4a, 4b and 4e &amp; f are based on the existing A86 alignment (running below the A9) with slight variations in the configuration of embankments. This option has the smallest footprint and land take requirement and therefore the least impact of the two options.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      This junction serves Kingussie and smaller settlements such as Lynchat and Ruthven and that access is retained. No significant impacts identified. This option would result in a lesser land take therefore impact on the community is minimised.</p>
7	<p>Can be applied to all Section 4 options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade of existing junctions with compact grade separated left-in/left-out</li> <li>Improvements to the existing connector roads</li> <li>Re-alignment of connector roads A86/B9152 to the north</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access:</b>                      Greater impact than previous option upon existing NMU provision/core paths including Glebe Ponds and General Wade’s Military Road and large land take. This option in conjunction with alignment 4F presents high losses of existing NMU provision including a proportion of Glebe Ponds.</p> <p><b>Landscape &amp; Ecology:</b>                      This junction option for alignment options 4a, 4b and 4e &amp; f are based on a re-aligned A86 (running below the A9) requiring a greater land take and impact on the environs of Kingussie and Wade’s Military Road. It will also result in loss of some Ancient Woodland.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Private Assets:</b>                      As for Option 2 above. This option would result in a slightly greater land take than for option 2 therefore having a slightly greater impact on the community.</p>