A9 DUALLING
PERTH TO INVERNESS

A9 Perth to Inverness

Realising the benefits of Environmentally led design

27th October 2020

Stephen Bacon and Sarah Kydd

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

ATKINS mouchel

Dualling the A9

One of Scotland's largest infrastructure projects, involving the upgrade of 80 miles of road between Perth and Inverness to:

- Improve operational performance by:
  - Reducing journey times; and
  - Improving journey time reliability.
- Improve safety by reducing:
  - Accident severity; and
  - Driver stress.
- Facilitate active travel within the corridor;
- To improve integration with public transport facilities.

Programme Delivery

ATKINS mouchel

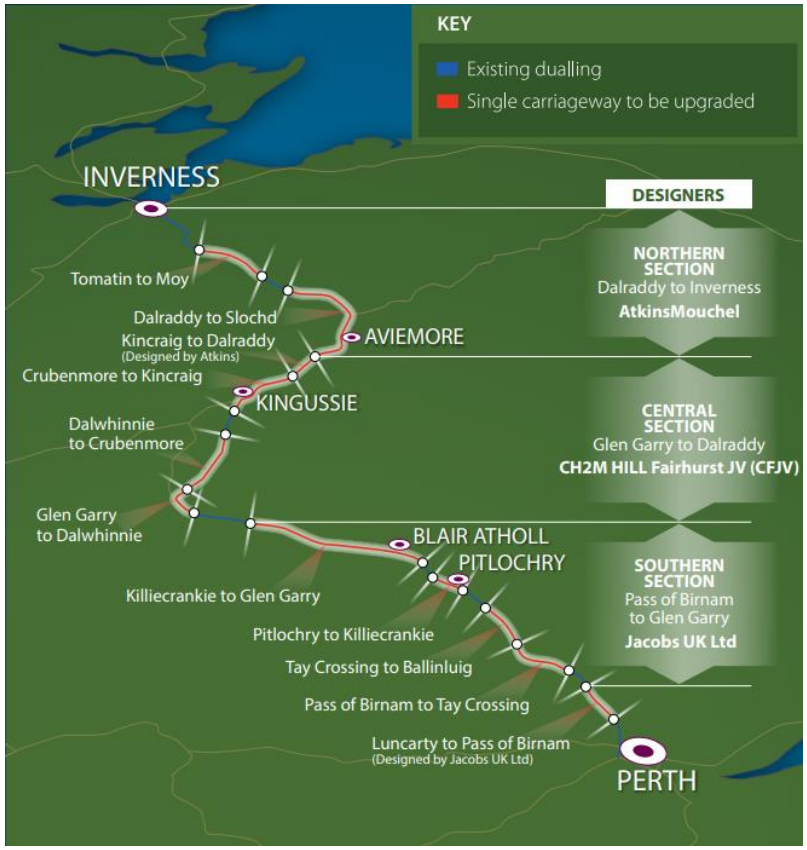
Northern Section – Dalraddy to Inverness

ch2m FAIRHURST

Central Section – Glen Garry to Dalraddy

JACOBS

Southern Section – Pass of Birnam to Glen Garry



TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
COMHDHAIL ALBA

ATKINS mouchel

Challenges

Engineering

- Rock cuttings
- New bridges and widening
- Utilities
- Highland mainline railway

Communities

- Improving accessibility
- Providing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians
- Improving links to public transport facilities
- Minimising impacts of construction

Safety

- Addressing accident clusters
- Improving lay-by provision
- Minimising impacts of construction

Business

- Economic growth
- Improved access to tourist and recreation sites
- Improved business connectivity

Environmental

- SAC, SPA, Ramsar sites
- SSSI
- Cairngorms National Park
- Ancient woodland
- NSA
- Scheduled Monuments
- Flooding

Background to the development process

- Strategic Assessment – DMRB Stage 1, including SEA
- Route Options Assessment - DMRB Stage 2
- Detailed Design and Assessment - DMRB Stage 3, Environmental Statement
- Statutory Process – Publication of Environmental Statement and Orders
- Procurement – Appointment of Works Contractor

The environmentally led design approach

- Early consideration of environment through design stages:
  - SEA Environmental Design Principles
  - Aesthetic Design Guide
- Early and Sustained Stakeholder Engagement
- Holistic Design and Assessment
- Retained invested knowledge within teams from route (corridor) selection through to procurement.

Forums & Working Groups

External Forums

- Local Authorities/Regional Transport Partnerships
- **Environmental Steering Group**
- Environmental Forum
- Access Group
- Non-Motorised User Group
- Business reference group
- Community Forums

Internal Working Groups

- Engineering
- **Environmental**
- Aesthetics
- Statutory Process
- Data Management – BIM
- Communications
- Cost and Risk
- Traffic and Economics (LTEA)

Holistic approach to assessment

- Environmental Working Group
  - Agreement on assessment criteria, report structure
  - Reduced risk of challenge on differences in approach
- A9 Programme Stage 3 EIA Scoping Report, Wider Network Noise Assessment
- HRA process
- Standard programme mitigation
- ‘Embedded’ and ‘Additional’ project-specific mitigation
- Cumulative impacts
- Auditing (Framework)
- SEA Monitoring Framework

Stakeholder Engagement

A9 DUALLING PERTH TO INVERNESS

Environmental Steering Group

NatureScot
Scotland's Nature Agency
Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

SEPA
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Buidheann Dìon Àrainneachd na h-Alba

Cairngorms NATIONAL PARK
Pàirc Nàiseanta a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

ATKINS mouchel

Environmental Steering Group

- No surprises
- Joint consideration of cross-cutting themes / Resolution of competing/conflicting issues
- Review draft EIAs / HRA
- Continuing through to procurement
- Continuity of staff

Project 11 - Dalraddy to Slochd and Project 12 – Tomatin to Moy

- 35 km section of the A9
- 16 designated sites within 2 km of the Projects 11 and 12, including a National Nature Reserve and SPA's and SAC's, along with areas listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory

Project 11:

- Within the Cairngorms National Park
- Within a Wildcat Priority Area
- Within a key location for capercaillie
- Multiple crossings of River Spey SAC

Route selection process

Key considerations:

- Landscape
- Water and flooding
- Soils and Geodiversity
  - Peat
  - Rock cuttings
- Ecology

Route selection process

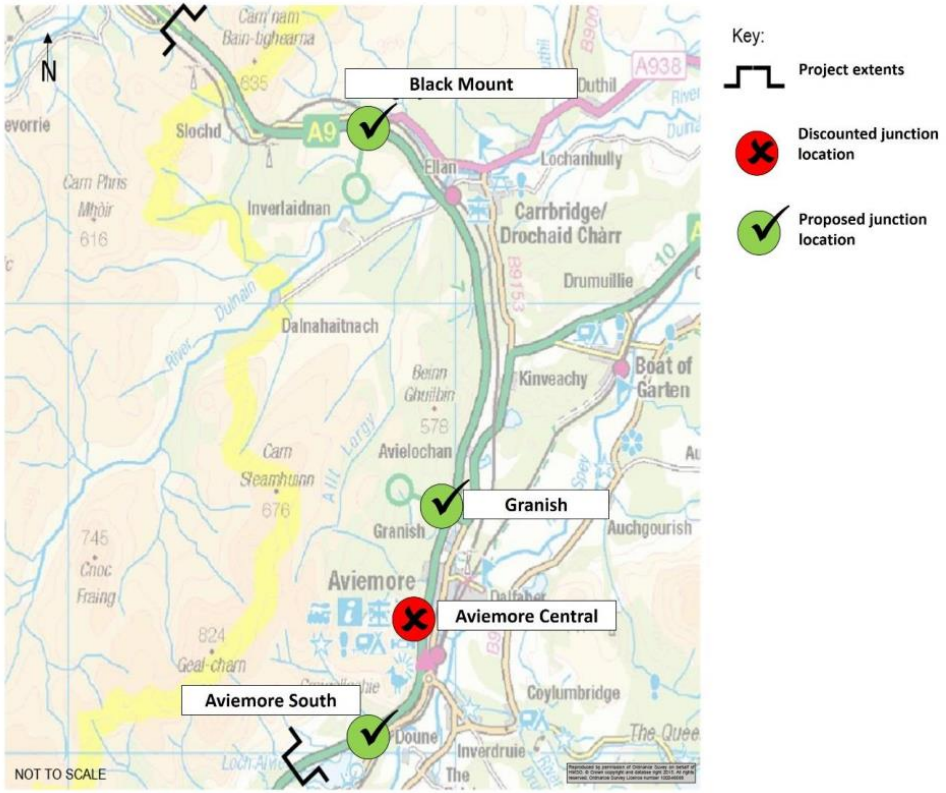
Aviemore Central Junction – Discounted due to:

Encroachment on NNR/ SSSI

Impact on ancient woodland

Significant earthworks

Impact on NMUs



A9 DUALLING PERTH TO INVERNESS

Route selection process

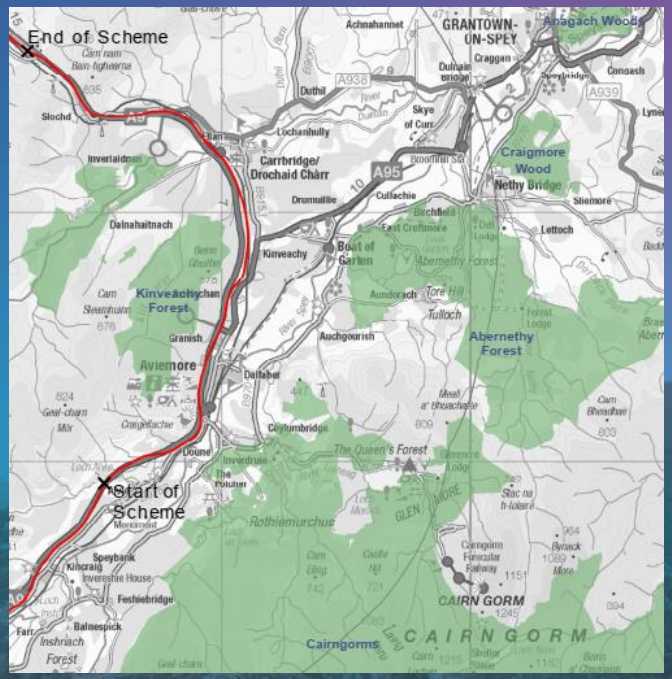
Project 11: Ecology paid a key part in route selection process

Determining factors:

- Reduced extent of ancient woodland loss
- Avoidance/ reduction of habitat loss from NNR and SSSI

HRA – Capercaillie Sites

- Survey approaches designed in consultation with RSPB
- Training provided by RSPB - provided Stakeholders with confidence in survey data
- Surveys combined habitat suitability assessment with presence/ absence surveys
- Detailed consultation throughout HRA development
- Meetings held with NatureScot/ CNPA to agree key considerations of HRA
- Reporting outline and draft iterations provided to NatureScot prior to submission
- Ecology and engineering teams worked closely on HRA production



TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

ATKINS mouchel

Benefits of the process

Design led:

Better outcomes for the environment

Stakeholder Engagement:

Better understanding of views

Concerns identified early and considered

No sustained objections

A9 DUALLING
PERTH TO INVERNESS

Any questions?

sarah.kydd@atkinsglobal.com
stephen.bacon@atkinsglobal.com

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

ATKINS mouchel