

Minister for Transport submission of 27 February 2023

PE1974/D: Adopt the A890 as a trunk road

Thank you for your further correspondence on Petition PE1974. As previously discussed, Ministers do keep the trunk road network under continual review with the issue last considered by Scottish Ministers following publication of the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR).

For your awareness, the STPR defines the key functions of a strategic road network as follows:

- Linking major urban centres and areas of population change;
- Providing links to international gateways, airports, ports and borders;
- Linking remoter communities;
- Linking key tourist areas;
- Facilitating freight routes; and
- Linking areas of economic activity and regeneration areas of national significance.

Although there is linkage in relation to the A890 with some of these criteria, it is our assessment that the A890 does not sufficiently meet the criteria to be incorporated into the strategic motorway and trunk road network and is currently appropriately classified in the hierarchy of Scotland's roads as a principal "A" class road. Principal A Class roads are best managed locally rather than centrally and function as main roads which distribute traffic to and from the strategic trunk road network.

The routes to the Hebrides and the Western Isles from the north, east and south are currently well served with several trunk routes linking to the main ferry ports including the A835, A82/A87, A830 and A85 to Ullapool, Uig, Mallaig and Oban respectively. Several principal A class distributor roads including the A890 link to these routes.

I note also that the main driver for the proposal is stated to be one of funding which is not in itself a justifiable criteria in respect of the hierarchy of Scotland's roads. I appreciate the challenges in managing the A890 but transferring the route to the trunk road network would not solve the investment challenges as it would require to compete with a

wide range of existing commitments and pressures on the hard pressed Motorways and Trunk Roads budget.

I trust this is of assistance and clarifies the Government's position on this matter.