

Open Letter 17 May 2021

Dear Mr Matheson,

Over the past few weeks, the Rest and Be Thankful (RABT) Campaign group has met with representatives from Transport Scotland (TS) to better understand plans to change its approach and deliver a rapid solution as directed by yourself in April. We have followed this up with several letters to Roy Brannen and Hugh Gillies.

Disappointingly from those communications we have concluded Transport Scotland appear more interested in protecting its procedures than finding a quick and sensible solution.

This is not HS2, we are not looking to build a highway through virgin countryside, blighting homes. We are looking for a replacement to an existing road along the same road corridor. This is probably the only road development in Scotland that has the support of every person, public body, and business in the region.

We are therefore asking for the Scottish Government, in its power, to recognise the RABT as an emergency, cut through the “business as usual” approach and deliver a change that will not only improve lives and livelihoods, but also reduce the carbon footprint of what is also considered a climate emergency.

We need the Scottish Government and parliament to deliver on their pre-election promises of a rapid solution for the RABT.

1. We would like to understand how we can harness the universal support we have for a rapid solution at the RABT in order to remove the time wasted on statutory procedures design to protect TS from prosecution.
2. We need TS to be freed from their procedural inertia, agree a course of action, and deliver a temporary solution before the autumn that takes keeps a two way road open this year, and delivers a permanent solution within this parliament.
3. We are asking to meet with you to agree an approach before the summer recess if we are to have a chance of changing anything before the next landslide.


In September 1962 President Kennedy set a goal to reach the moon within the decade, seven years later they achieved this goal. We are not asking for the moon, but we are asking for two miles of safe road that is open when it rains, and we challenge you to be the first transport minister who has been able to deliver it.


We look forward to hearing from you.


John Gurr



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