



Working to protect and defend Bennachie and its surrounding area from the A96 dual carriageway

www.savebennachie.com

CAMPAIGN REPORTS CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING WITH SCOTTISH TRANSPORT MINISTER BRIEFING DOCUMENT

For immediate release

The **Save Bennachie** campaign say they have had a positive meeting with the Minister who will be responsible for deciding on a controversial new development which could affect one of Scotland's best loved hills - and they say they are very hopeful that he will accept an invitation to come and experience Bennachie's unique landscape for himself.

The Scottish Government has pledged to dual the A96 Aberdeen to Inverness road by 2030. Consultants say one of several options being considered is a 26 mile high level route which would impact Bennachie, the hill range whose iconic profile dominates much of Aberdeenshire.

Today the Save Bennachie campaign travelled to Holyrood to discuss the plans with the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson.

Six local politicians were also in attendance to support the campaign. These included Alexander Burnett MSP representing Aberdeenshire West and Gillian Martin from the neighbouring constituency of Aberdeenshire East.

Afterwards Margaret Garden said,

“We had an excellent discussion with the Minister and we are grateful for his time. He took a close interest in the points we had to make about the environment, traffic management and the public amenity value of Bennachie. We emphasised that while the road undoubtedly needs to be upgraded, there are better options which don't impact on Bennachie.

“We hope the Minister will take up our invitation to visit Bennachie. We want to protect this outstanding landscape for generations to come. Bennachie has been recognised as a special place for hundreds of years. Our grandchildren, and their grandchildren, will not forgive us if we allow it to be spoiled on our watch.

We demonstrated to the Minister that this is a decision which is so close to Aberdeenshire hearts that it has united all our MSPs across the political spectrum.”

Consultants are currently working on a shortlist of route options which would bypass Inverurie. Their conclusions will be revealed at a series of public meetings which are expected to be held next month.

For further details call Margaret Garden (07876 495555) or Lynda Bain on (07749 801596).

Note to Editors

MSPs in attendance were Alexander Burnett, Gillian Martin, Mike Rumbles, Peter Chapman and Tom Mason.

Alexander Burnett and Gillian Martin have indicated they are available for interview.

For further details of the process and facts about Bennachie, see our Press Page at, <https://www.savebennachie.com/press-kit>