

Public inquiry to be heard over A9 dualling plans for historic Highland Perthshire battlefield

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Members of Killiecrankie 1689.

A public inquiry will be held on plans to route the busy A9 Perth to Inverness road past the site of one of Scotland's most historic battles.

Transport Scotland has revealed the Killiecrankie to Glen Garry stretch of the £3 billion A9 dualling plan is now "subject to statutory process" and an inquiry will take place in "due course."

The move follows pressure from the Killiecrankie 1689 group set up to protect the designated battlefield.

The campaigners say Transport Scotland has been sent 183 objections relating to

George MacLean, of Killiecrankie 1689, said: “At first, Transport Scotland refused to tell us how many objections had been received but now – 14 weeks after the objection period closed – they confirmed the number.

“The process has been flawed from the start. The area of the designated battlefield should have been central to the plan so that the sensitive part of it is not damaged.”

Mr MacLean said Historic Environment Scotland (HES), the agency charged with protecting and enhancing Scotland’s cultural heritage, had highlighted “gaps” in Transport Scotland’s assessment methodology.

He added: “HES says that far too little research and fieldwork has been done on archaeological and physical remains relating to the battle of Killiecrankie and Transport Scotland has not understood the relevance or importance of the battlefield’s topography and landscape.

“Transport Scotland is now considering what extra metal detecting, geophysical studies and trial trench work needs to be done to satisfy HESs demands. Exactly who will be responsible for archaeology studies still seems moot.”

A Transport Scotland spokesperson confirmed the public inquiry would now go ahead.

He said: “This section of the A9 is now subject to the statutory process and evidence will be heard at a public local inquiry in due course.

“Scottish Ministers will thereafter be called upon to determine this case and it is not therefore appropriate to comment on the proposals or indeed the objections that have been raised.”

He added: “We are aware of the sensitivities around what is an important inventory battlefield.

“As the existing A9 already runs through the site of the battlefield, any of the dual carriageway widening options — for example widening the existing road on its northbound side or widening the existing road on its southbound side — will have some impact on the battlefield.”

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