

Scottish Executive

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News Release

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Work on M74 missing link to start next month

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Work on site to complete the M74 missing link will start next month with drilling rigs rolled out to carry out ground investigations.

These investigations will help identify the most suitable line for the long awaited route, providing vital information for public consultation.

Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Wendy Alexander was in Glasgow today, joined by the Leaders of Glasgow City, South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire Councils, to launch the publication of a leaflet and website offering the public updated information about the project.

She said:

"The completion of the M74 will bring a raft of benefits to west central Scotland. It is estimated that the road will:

- relieve congestion on M8 taking around 28,000 vehicles per day off the M8 east of Charing Cross.
- improve journey times across Glasgow with an average of 10-12 minutes saved per journey

- reduce accidents - saving approx. 180 lives and over 1,100 serious injuries.
- And it will provide a major boost for regeneration of nearby sites for inward investment - with the creation of more than 12,000 jobs.

"By investing £214 million of the £250 million to deliver the M74 completion project by 2008 - in partnership with the three Councils - the Scottish Executive is helping to connect communities and encourage economic investment.

"The M74 completion will regenerate areas of disused land and old industrial sites. This land will be landscaped and the entire project will create an estimated 350 jobs over the three year construction period.

"The Enterprise Network and the adjacent local authorities will be bringing forward a number of complementary regeneration and development initiatives shortly.

"Providing an alternative to the heavily congested M8 will end years of irritation and uncertainty for road users in west central Scotland and will also help to ease local traffic congestion in Glasgow and South Lanarkshire. The completion of the M74 makes complete sense."

Councillor Charlie Gordon, Leader of Glasgow City Council said:

"After more than 12 years of talk we are now seeing action to complete the M74 Motorway. Today's launch and the announcement that ground investigations are about to start will reassure everyone who is committed to a thriving economy in Glasgow and the West of Scotland."

South Lanarkshire Council Leader Councillor Eddie McAvoy said:

"This is another important step towards the completion of the M74. Right from the start South Lanarkshire Council has been committed to seeing this project become a reality. Together with our partner councils we recognise that the extension is vital for the economic prosperity and regeneration of the area. This is particularly true in Cambuslang where it will turn numerous brownfield sites into prime development opportunities."

Councillor Jim Harkins, Leader of Renfrewshire Council said:

"I am delighted that the M74 project is moving forward. This development is critical for the economic development of Renfrewshire and of the west

of Scotland. It will ensure the competitiveness of Glasgow International Airport as Scotland's premier airport and will maximise the benefits of current or planned investment along its length and on the M8 at Hillington, Renfrew and Inchinnan. We must work together to overcome any problems to ensure the early completion of this essential piece of our infrastructure."

The new link will be a three lane motorway with hard shoulder reducing to two lanes with a hard shoulder at the connecting link between the M74 and M8. Three full four-way junctions will be built at Fullarton Road, Cambuslang Road and Polmadie Road, with a two-way junction constructed at Kingston.

The proposed timetable to completion:

Summer 2002 - Public information and opportunity for public to look at early plans.

Spring 2003 - Publish orders, confirm line of route with draft road orders and compulsory purchase orders.

Spring 2003 - Autumn 2004 - Statutory consultation and conclusion on orders and possible public local inquiry.

Autumn 2004 - Autumn 2005 - Invite tenders, award contracts and start construction.

2008 - Construction complete and M74 opens to traffic.