Mr. Michael Matheson MSP

Cabinet Secretary

Transport, Infrastructure And Connectivity

Scottish Government

St. Andrew’s House

Regent Road

EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

October 2018

Dear Minister

Re: **Flood Risk due to Proposed V3 A96 Dualling Route across Kintore Flood Plain**

As you will be aware, Transport Scotland have recently held public consultations on the proposed East of Huntly to Aberdeen routes for the A96 Aberdeen to Inverness Dual Carriageway.

You will recall the devastating floods that occurred in Port Elphinstone and Inverurie in January, 2016 and which made both national and international news. Our First Minister, The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP, visited the area to offer support to the affected communities and the Scottish Government put in place an aid package of over £12 million to help the residents and businesses affected by the flooding to recover.

It is therefore with dismay and considerable concern we learn that the residents and businesses in these areas, who have already suffered such loss and hardship, will be put at further risk of flooding due to the proposed ‘V3’ route of the dual carriageway crossing the River Don Flood Plain at Kintore. To allow for contingency planning for a 200 year storm flood event, such as that which occurred in 2016, a flood plain width of over 500 metres would need to be spanned, which would require a bridge of massive proportions. With known climate change occurring, the type of rainfall that created the floods in 2016 is likely to happen more frequently.

Our main concerns are:

1. The increased risk of further flooding caused by the impact of the proposed V route across the Flood Plain at Kintore.
2. The environmental impact on such a sensitive river valley caused by additional erosion in an area with well defined meanders and oxbow lakes, contrary to the advice given by SEPA **(Ref – SEPA and Natural Scotland, Good Practice Guide “Engineering in the Water Environment: River Crossings” 2nd Edition, November 2010 – Pages 24-25).**
3. The cost to the Scottish taxpayer for the construction of a bridge of sufficient size and design to cross the flood plain and potential cost to recompense communities who may be flooded in the future as a direct result of the dual carriageway crossing the Kintore Flood Plain

No First Minister, or Transport Minister, we are sure, would want to have to explain to flooded communities along the River Don, why the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland allowed a road bridge to be built across such a sensitive location. We therefore urgently and respectfully request that Transport Scotland immediately and irrevocably rule out any bypass to the East of Inverurie on the grounds of, and subject to, the justifications listed above.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you and, should you feel a more in depth discussion is required, we will of course make ourselves available on a mutually agreed date and time.

Yours faithfully,

Enc: Photographs of 2016 flooded areas reference (by email)

Cc: The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon

First Minister, Scottish Government, St. Andrew’s House

Miss Ruth Davidson

Leader, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Mr. Richard Leonard MSP

Leader, Scottish Labour Party

Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Mr. Patrick Harvie, MSP

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Mr. Colin Clark, MP

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Mr. Terry A’Hearn, Chief Executive Officer, SEPA

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Mr. Jim Savage, Chief Executive

Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen AB16 5GB

Mr. Stephen Archer, Director, Infrastructure Services

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Ms Bonny Pailing, Stakeholder Co-ordinator, AmeyArup

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Mr. Billy Gordon, Landowner & Communities Manager, AmeyArup

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