

PRESS RELEASE

CALL FOR U-TURN ON A82 CLOSURE

20 August 2009

Transport Scotland has been urged by the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) to sit down with businesses in Lochaber to work out an “economically acceptable” alternative to the planned full closure for maintenance of the A82 south of Fort William.

It is proposing to shut entirely a two-mile stretch from 8pm to 6am for 3 weeks in September.

Gareth Williams, Highlands and Islands Manager, SCDI, said:

“Fully closing the A82 between early evening and the next morning will hit many businesses, at a time when all government agencies should be supporting the economy. It will increase costs and inconvenience for industry and put off visitors at the end of the tourism season.

“SCDI’s Highlands and Islands Committee met in Fort William last Friday where we heard from local businesses about the importance of transport links to their success and this announcement on their most important route seems to have come as a bolt from the blue.

“In proper consultation with business, Transport Scotland should reverse its plans, look at all the options and agree an economically acceptable alternative which also ensures safety.

“This problem once again shows the pressing need for significant investment in the A82.”

ENDS