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with the heading

Road problems are down to priorities of the Scottish Government

Donald Morris (Letters 1 November) is absolutely right to say the Scottish Parliament has the power to make the A82 and A83 less prone to landslides.

It amuses me to see he then blames their failure to do so on the UK government.

It is purely a matter of Scottish Government political choice. They have chosen to allocate £3000m to dualling the A96, another £3000m for the A9, and are now proposing an unspecified number of £bn for high-speed rail between Edinburgh and Glasgow. These projects all have their supporters, but they involve huge sums, and weather-proofing the A82 would only mean a moderate shifting of project timescales should the Scottish Government so wish. Unfortunately resilience and repairs often lose out to big shiny projects for Ministers to open. I would cheer Mr Morris on should he tackle his MSPs on this!

On a vastly smaller scale, SNP MSPs such as Fiona McLeod and Joan McAlpine imply that the 1%-2% or so of transport spending that goes to cycling infrastructure would rise if only it were not for the UK government. This is laughable in the context of Scottish Government transport projects costing £bn's - again it is a matter of political choice. Failure of the government's own ambition for 10% of all trips to be by bike in 2020 will result purely from its own funding choices, not from any Westminster decision.

Potholes are the same story. As Transform Scotland point out in their "Fix it First" campaign, all Scotland's potholes could be fixed for a fraction of the cost of Scotland's trunk road expansion programme - it is just a question of government priorities.

As for Mr Morris's suggestion that additional oil revenues would solve the A82 and A83 problems, it is unfortunately just as likely, or perhaps more likely, that the cash would be used to speed up trunk road expansion or Edinburgh-Glasgow HST. And, if we are concerned for Scotland's future, then more oil is anyway not a solution - as Britain's top finance official, Mark Carney, said recently, "The vast majority of world oil reserves are unburnable if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change."

Yours Sincerely
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