# Polish driver disqualified after reckless overtake near Blair Drummond Safari Park amid ongoing road safety concerns



In a recent court case, a Polish driver, Thomas Smolira, faced serious repercussions after causing a collision while overtaking a line of vehicles at a junction leading to Blair Drummond Safari Park. The incident, which occurred on June 9 last year, involved Smolira striking a Vauxhall Corsa as it attempted to turn right. The collision was severe enough to detach the bumper from the Corsa, yet Smolira continued driving, stopping only later to assess damage to his own vehicle, a Ford Kuga.

In court, Smolira's defence argued that he was unaware of the necessary procedures following an accident, attributing his actions to a lack of understanding of local driving laws. “He had an error of judgment in attempting to overtake where he did, and he accepts that,” his lawyer stated. Despite these claims, Sheriff Derek Hamilton expressed significant concern over Smolira's choices, indicating that the decision to overtake in such a manner was grossly negligent. The sheriff articulated, “If you can’t understand that is careless, maybe you shouldn’t be driving.” Ultimately, Smolira was disqualified from driving for 18 months and fined a total of £1,180, underscoring the court’s stance on traffic safety and responsibility.

The area around Blair Drummond has been focal not just for traffic incidents but also for safety concerns associated with the safari park itself. It has a history marked by accidents, including a serious single-car crash on the A84, which resulted in the tragic death of a 48-year-old man. The incident brought renewed attention to road conditions in the vicinity and calls for improvement in safety measures, particularly given the park's popularity as a family destination. Witnesses were sought to assist with investigations into that incident, illuminating the continued dangers on these roads.

Further compounding the local safety narrative, reports of past accidents involving wildlife at Blair Drummond have raised questions regarding animal welfare within the park. Notably, a distressing episode in 2020 saw lions fatally attacking a monkey that had inadvertently entered their enclosure, an incident that prompted an apology from park management and the immediate implementation of new operational protocols. This incident was not isolated; previous years had seen several other animal-related fatalities, leading wildlife charities to demand thorough investigations into the park’s practices.

The safari park has drawn a great deal of public interest, not only for its animal displays but also due to the accompanying risks associated with the busy A84, which has been a site of several traffic collisions over the years. In June 2021, investigations revealed serious mechanical defects in buses used for transporting school pupils to the park, highlighting ongoing concerns about vehicle safety standards.

And while public safety remains paramount, the recent cases surfacing from the courts in the area also reflect broader societal issues, including scams and drug trafficking. A conman named Alistair Baxter was recently jailed for defrauding over 60 individuals through a fake gardening business, stirring frustration within the community over deceitful tradespeople. The courts have increasingly felt the pressure to address such matters, striving to restore public trust.

As the community navigates these layered challenges—from traffic safety to animal welfare—it's evident that greater awareness and responsibility are required from all stakeholders involved, ensuring Blair Drummond can continue to be a cherished destination without compromising the safety of visitors or the well-being of its animal residents.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3
2. Paragraph 4
3. Paragraphs 5, 6
4. Paragraphs 5, 6
5. Paragraph 5
6. Paragraph 7
7. Paragraph 8

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/courts/5231880/stirling-court-round-up-safari-park-crash/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.stv.tv/east-central/man-dead-after-single-car-crash-near-blair-drummond-safari-park> - A 48-year-old man died in a single-car crash on the A84 near Blair Drummond Safari Park on February 27, 2025. The driver, the sole occupant of a black Audi, was pronounced dead at the scene. The road was closed overnight for investigations and reopened around 3 am the following day. Police are seeking witnesses who were on the A84 around the time of the crash to assist with inquiries.
3. <https://www.bizstats.co.uk/ltd/ab-garden-building-limited-SC705773/> - AB Garden Building Limited is a private limited company based in California, Falkirk, Scotland. Incorporated on August 4, 2021, the company specializes in the manufacture of other furniture and builders' carpentry and joinery. The latest confirmation statement was filed on August 3, 2022, with the next due date on August 17, 2023. The company is run by director Alistair B., who holds a 50.01-75% shareholding.
4. <https://news.sky.com/story/safari-park-apologises-to-families-who-saw-lions-chase-down-and-kill-monkey-accidentally-let-into-enclosure-12162312> - Blair Drummond Safari Park in Scotland apologized to two families who witnessed lions chasing and killing a monkey that had accidentally entered their enclosure. The incident occurred on December 1, 2020, when a nine-year-old Barbary macaque named Shaw escaped its pen and entered the lion enclosure. Despite efforts by the lion warden to protect the macaque, the lions responded as they would in the wild, resulting in the animal's death. The park expressed deep regret over the distressing event and implemented new operating procedures to prevent future occurrences.
5. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/five-animal-deaths-blair-drummond-24281202> - Between 2016 and 2020, five animals died at Blair Drummond Safari Park, leading wildlife charity Born Free to call for an independent investigation. The incidents included two lionesses euthanized due to injuries inflicted by a male lion, a nilgai antelope attacked by another male, a lemur killed after escaping into the tiger enclosure, and a Barbary macaque mauled by lions in front of visitors. Born Free urged the Scottish Government to launch a transparent investigation into these fatalities.
6. <https://news.stv.tv/west-central/serious-collision-closes-major-road-near-blair-drummond-safari-park-in-both-directions> - A serious collision on the A84 near Blair Drummond Safari Park led to the road being closed in both directions. The incident occurred shortly before 8:30 pm on a Tuesday, with emergency services in attendance. Motorists were advised to use alternative routes and plan for additional travel time. The exact details of the crash, including the number of vehicles involved and any injuries, were not immediately available.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-18673448> - Nine buses used to transport school pupils to Blair Drummond Safari Park were removed from the road after serious mechanical defects were discovered during checks between June 18 and 22. The most critical issue was an emergency door that would not shut. Other defects included faulty exhausts, oil leaks, and broken seat belts. Additionally, 15 drivers were found to be working beyond their allowed hours or unable to prove their working hours and were not permitted to drive until they had sufficient rest.