



TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge
A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot
Bridge B6 – Scour Repair Works

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Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland on behalf of Transport Scotland has been commissioned to undertake scour repair works at two footbridges along the A9; A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 (Figure 1; Grid ref: NN 63735 81425 and NN 65737 72482 respectively).

The bridges are experiencing scour damage caused by excessive erosion of the sediment at the foot of the bridges. Scour repairs are deemed to be essential to ensure the stability of the structures and safety of public users. In addition, the wing wall at A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 has sheared away from the abutment and as such is no longer fit for purpose. The proposed works at each bridge are summarised below.

The works at A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 will include the following:

- Downlink embankments scour holes to be infilled with normal flow concrete.
- Slip on the Uplink embankment to be reformed using rock filter bags.
- Concrete apron immediately after the culvert curtain to be removed and re-poured.

The works at A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 will include the following:

- Scour holes to be infilled using soluform bags.
- Existing parapet will be removed from damaged wing wall to be reused.
- Replacement of damaged wing wall.

The scheme is currently programmed to be completed within the first half of the 2023/2024 financial year, with a proposed start date being between June and September 2023. Works are expected to be completed over ten days (for each scheme), operating between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00; however, changes in the programme may result in the need for night works.

Traffic management (TM) within the schemes will consist of temporary single lane closure on the northbound dual carriageway and temporary single lane closure on the northbound single carriageway to set up and take down site compound. The layby located nearest to the footbridges will be closed to facilitate site access for contractors. Both footbridges will remain open for pedestrians and cyclists.

Location

A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 is located 1km southeast of Dalnaspidal, and A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 is located approximately 3km south of Dalwhinnie. The footbridges are located within Perth and Kinross Council and Highland Council areas (Figure 1) respectively. The schemes have the following National Grid References (NGRs):

- A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6: NN 65737 72482
- A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8: NN 63735 81425



Figure 1. Locations of the of the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6. Source: BEAR Scotland. F101 – Environmental Assessment Screenings: A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6.

Description of local environment

Air quality

The schemes do not fall within any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) ([Air Quality Scotland](#)) declared by the Perth and Kinross Council or Highland Council. No Air Quality Monitoring Stations are located within 10km of the works ([Air Quality Scotland](#)). Both footbridges are located within a rural setting, and as such pollution levels are not expected to be high.

No sites registered on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) ([Scotland's Environment](#)) for air pollutant releases are located within 10km of the works.

Average Annual Daily Flow (AADF) for the A9 carriageway approximately 3km south of A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 and 7km north of the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 accounted for 8,351 vehicles in 2021, of which 20% were heavy goods vehicles (HGV) ([Road Traffic Statistics](#)).

Baseline air quality at both scheme locations is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A9 trunk road, with secondary sources likely to arise from nearby agricultural practices. A section of railway line 'Blair Atholl to Dalwhinnie' lies 60m to 230m from the scheme extents. Railway movements will also have an impact on the local air quality.

Cultural heritage

There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Garden and Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or Inventory Battlefields identified within 300m of either scheme ([PastMap](#)).

Of lesser cultural heritage interest, five Historic Environment Records (HERs) and four Canmore features are located within 300m of the scheme extents. Two of these records are depicted adjacent to A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and refer to a bridge within A9 carriageway.

There is no connectivity between the schemes and the remaining cultural heritage features.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is located within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP) ([SiteLink](#)), which has the following special qualities:

1.0 General Qualities

- Magnificent mountains towering over moorland, forest and strath
- Vastness of space, scale and height
- Strong juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes
- A landscape of layers, from inhabited strath to remote, uninhabited upland
- ‘The harmony of complicated curves’
- Landscapes both cultural and natural

2.0 The Mountains and Plateaux

- The unifying presence of the central mountains
- An imposing massif of strong dramatic character
- The unique plateaux of vast scale, distinctive landforms and exposed, boulderstrewn high ground
- The surrounding hills
- The drama of deep corries
- Exceptional glacial landforms
- Snowscapes

3.0 Moorlands

- Extensive moorland, linking the farmland, woodland and the high tops
- A patchwork of muirburn

4.0 Glens and Straths

- Steep glens and high passes
- Broad, farmed straths
- Renowned rivers
- Beautiful lochs

5.0 Trees, Woods and Forests

- Dark and venerable pine forest
- Light and airy birch woods
- Parkland and policy woodlands
- Long association with forestry

6.0 Wildlife and Nature

- Dominance of natural landforms
- Extensive tracts of natural vegetation
- Association with iconic animals
- Wild land
- Wildness

7.0 Visual and Sensory Qualities

- Layers of receding ridge lines
- Grand panoramas and framed views
- A landscape of many colours
- Dark skies
- Attractive and contrasting textures
- The dominance of natural sounds

8.0 Culture and History

- Distinctive planned towns
- Vernacular stone buildings
- Dramatic, historical routes
- The wistfulness of abandoned settlements
- Focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges
- The Royal connection

9.0 Recreation

- A landscape of opportunities
- Spirituality

The schemes do not lie within a National Scenic Area (NSA) ([Scotland's Environment](#)).

The Landscape Character Type (LCT) within the scheme extents is categorized as 'Upland Glen – Cairngorms' (no. 126) ([Scottish Landscape Character Types](#)), which is characterised by:

- Strong evidence of glacial processes, including steepened sides and level floors, shattered rock faces on higher slopes, hummocks of resistant rock on some glen floors and terraces of glacial deposits at the edges of glen floors.
- Often form arrival points into the Cairngorms National Park.
- Size varies from large open passes to narrower, more secluded glens.

- Enclosed predominantly by steep slopes.
- Frequently differing land-use on one side of the glen to the other - linked to aspect.
- Improved, grazed fields on glen floors and floodplains.
- Mostly settled, some only sparsely, but often extensive evidence of past settlement, including prehistoric hut circles and associated field systems, pre-improvement townships, and seasonal shielings.
- Some landmark historic buildings.
- Access varies from narrow roads, estate and forestry tracks to main routes, but most have some form of road running through them.
- Varied experience when passing through glens from open and expansive to sheltered and secluded.
- Views to adjacent uplands; from which parts of the glens are visible and provide contrast.

Historic Environment Scotland's HLAMap ([HLAMap](#)) has highlighted the surrounding landscape is dominated by pastoral farmland.

Biodiversity

Both footbridges lie within a rural setting, surrounded by areas of rough grazing and rush-dominated pastures.

A desktop study using NatureScot SiteLink ([SiteLink](#)) has identified the following designated sites within 300m of A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8:

- River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC) ([SiteLink](#)). A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 spans a minor, unnamed waterbody which forms a part of the River Spey SAC.
- Drumochter Hills SAC ([SiteLink](#)). The SAC lies 280m east of the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8.
- Drumochter Hills Special Protection Area (SPA) ([SiteLink](#)). The SPA overlaps Drumochter Hills SAC and lies 280m east of the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8.
- Drumochter Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) ([SiteLink](#)). The SSSI lies 50m east of the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8.

There are no designated sites noted within 300m of A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6.

There are no records of invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants (as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)), injurious weeds (as listed under the Weeds Act 1959), or invasive native perennials (as listed in the Trunk Road Inventory Manual) found in proximity to A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 using the same search criteria. In addition, Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) confirmed the absence of the invasive and injurious weeds within the scheme extent.

One record of the INNS giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) was noted in proximity to the A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 by using the same search criteria. The record of giant hogweed was noted along the railway line, approximately 1km southeast of the scheme. AMPS did not note any records of invasive or injurious weeds within the scheme extents.

Habitat in the surrounding area is dominated by temperate shrub heathlands, acid alpine, subalpine and extensive grassland ([Scotland's Environment](#)). Freshwater habitat within the area is provided by the unnamed watercourses which are spanned by footbridges and larger watercourses downstream of the schemes, e.g., River Garry, River Truim and Allt Coire Bhotie. Tree cover is generally absent in proximity to the scheme extents with a thin highly artificial coniferous tree belt lying 70m east of the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8.

Ecological surveys

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out in May 2022 by the BEAR Scotland environmental team. The PEA included survey of habitats that might be impacted by the works, and a search for INNS and protected species around the works area. The survey also included a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of any structures and trees within 30m of the works. Below is a summary of the key observations from this survey:

- While a number of bridges and culverts are present within 30m of both footbridges, all of these had negligible bat roost potential for both the summer and the winter. As such, bats are not considered a potentially sensitive receptor for these works.
- The watercourse under the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 was of exceptionally low flow and did not retain a coherent shape, disappearing into marshy ground. As such, the watercourse at the bridge location was not considered suitable for freshwater fish. Additionally, there is limited suitable habitat for foraging semi-aquatic species, as well as an absence of suitable resting place structures. No signs of semi-aquatic species were observed on site. No additional surveys were deemed to be required for the validity period of this walkover.

- The watercourse under the A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 was extremely narrow with a very low flow and was assessed to be unsuitable for freshwater fish. However, the bridge is located approximately 100m north of the River Garry; as such, semi-aquatic species may be present in the landscape but no signs were observed on site.
- No INNS were observed in proximity to either footbridge. The landscape is generally quite barren with very little other than grass species present. This also meant a general absence of good breeding bird habitat; however, birds could also nest within longer grass or potentially within the structure of footbridges. As such, nesting bird checks will be undertaken if works fall within the breeding bird season (March to August inclusive).
- This walkover survey carries a validity period of 18 months, and if works have not commenced by 30th November 2024, then an updated ecological walkover survey will be conducted.

Consultation with the Spey District Salmon Fishery Board (DSFB) was carried out to seek comments on the proposed in-stream works. A response was received on 28th April 2023 which confirmed that fish rescue for A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 is not required. Both footbridges span very minor waterbodies which are of exceptionally low flow, do not retain a coherent shape and disappear into marshy grounds further downstream. As such, these watercourses are highly unlikely to support fish.

Geology and soils

The schemes do not lie within a Geological Conservation Review Site ([GCRS](#)) or geological Site of Special Scientific Interest ([SSSI](#)).

The Generalised Soil Type at both scheme locations is identified as peaty podzols ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

A desktop study using the British Geological Survey Map ([BGS GeoIndex](#)) identifies the local geology type as a combination of the following:

- Bedrock Geology:
 - Gaick Psammite Formation (psammite), which is a metamorphic bedrock.
- Superficial Deposits:
 - Hummocky (moundy) Glacial Deposits (diamicton, sand and gravel), which is a sedimentary superficial deposit.

- Alluvial Fan Deposits (gravel, sand, silt and clay), which is a sedimentary superficial deposit.

Material assets and waste

The proposed works will include repairs to footbridge elements and repair of scour damage at both sites. Materials used will consist of:

- Concrete
- Rock filter bags
- Soluform Concrete

The main waste produced will be 0.6 tonne of concrete (European Waste Code 17-01-01), wood material (European Waste Code 17-02-01) and earth material (European Waste Code 17-05-04). Concrete material will be recycled, earth material will be reused within the site boundaries and wood material will be disposed at a suitably licenced facility. In instances of other waste, all recyclable materials will be recycled, with any other wastes disposed of at a suitably licenced facility.

A Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for these works is not required.

Noise and vibration

Both footbridges lie within rural settings within Perth and Kinross Council and Highland Council with grassland bordering the scheme extents. There are no sensitive receptors located within 300m of either footbridge.

Baseline noise levels at the scheme locations are likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A9 trunk road. Secondary sources are likely derived from day-to-day agricultural activities. A section of railway line 'Blair Atholl to Dalwhinnie' lies 60m to 230m from the scheme extents. Railway movements will also have an impact on the local noise levels.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (Road Maps) ([Transportation Noise Action Plan \(TNAP\)](#)).

Scotland's strategic noise maps show that day-time noise levels for the A9 carriageway within the scheme extents range between 65 and 70 decibels with levels dropping to below 50 decibels at both footbridges. Night-time noise levels for the A9 carriageway within the scheme extents range between 60 and 65 decibels with levels dropping to below 50 decibels at both footbridges ([Scotland's Noise Scotland's Environment](#)).

The noise impact from the construction works at both footbridges is not predicted to significantly exceed current noise levels within the area. Furthermore, the works are daytime, of short duration and there are no sensitive receptors within proximity of either footbridge. As such, impacts as a result of noise has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Population and human health

The works are located in rural settings of Perth and Kinross Council and Highland Council. There are no residential or commercial properties in proximity to the scheme.

The A9 Trunk Road, within the North West NMC, connects Perth with Thurso. It commences immediately north of Inveralmond Roundabout in Perth leading generally northwards for a distance of 357 kilometres to its junction with an unclassified road leading to Holborn Head lighthouse at Scrabster. The A9 is a mixture of single carriageway, '2+1' carriageway and stretches of two-lane dual carriageway. The A9 at the 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 is a dual carriageway, and the A9 at the 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 is a single carriageway.

A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 forms a part of Core Path ID: 11908 (Path code: BAST/100) ([Scotland's Environment](#)) and National Cycle Network Route 7 ([OS Maps](#)).

A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 forms a part of numerous Core Paths ID: 3356, ID: 31217, ID: 5468, ID: 11408, ID: 18015, ID: 27635 and ID: 32996 (Path code: UBS28) ([Scotland's Environment](#)).

There are no walking routes listed on WalkHighlands ([WalkHighland](#)) or other community facilities within 300m of the footbridges.

Road drainage and the water environment

A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 spans a minor, unnamed, and unclassified surface waterbody (not shown on the 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey (OS) maps) (further referred to as 'waterbody 1'). During the site visit, waterbody 1 was of exceptionally low flow and did not retain a coherent shape, disappearing into marshy ground. However, during higher water levels, it likely flows for 22m in a southerly direction where it discharges into Allt Coire Bhotie. Allt Coire Bhotie is unclassified by SEPA but is visible on the 1:50,000 OS map.

Approximately 100m downstream of the confluence of waterbody 1 and Allt Coire Bhotie, the Allt Coire Bhotie joins the River Truim (from source to Allt Cuaich confluence) (ID: 23638).

The River Truim (from source to Allt Cuaich confluence) is a river in the River Spey catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The main stem is approximately 15.6km in length and was last classified in 2020 as having an overall status of 'Moderate' ([SEPA water environmental hub](#)). The waterbody has been designated as a heavily modified water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on water storage for hydroelectricity generation.

A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 falls within the 'Strathnairn, Speyside and Cairngorms' groundwater body which was classified by SEPA in 2020 as having an overall status of 'Good' ([SEPA water environmental hub](#)).

Surrounding land, at A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8, has been highlighted as being at high risk of fluvial flooding ([SEPA Flood Map](#)).

A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 spans a minor, unnamed, and unclassified surface waterbody (not shown on the 1:50,000 scale OS maps) (further referred to as 'waterbody 2'). During the site visit, Waterbody 2 was extremely narrow with a very low flow. However, during higher water levels, it likely flows for 100m in a southerly direction where it discharges into Allt Chaorach Beag. Allt Chaorach Beag is unclassified by SEPA but is visible on the 1:50,000 OS map.

Approximately 120m downstream of the confluence of the waterbody 2 and Allt Chaorach Beag, the Allt Chaorach Beag joins the River Garry (from Loch Garry to Garry Intake) (ID: 6912).

The River Garry (from Loch Garry to Garry Intake) is a river in the River Tay catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The main stem is approximately 7.0 kilometres in length and was last classified in 2020 as having an overall status of 'Poor' ([SEPA water environmental hub](#)). The water body has been designated as a heavily modified water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on water storage for hydroelectricity generation.

The scheme falls within the 'Rannoch' groundwater body which was classified by SEPA in 2020 as having an overall status of 'Good' ([SEPA water environmental hub](#)).

Surrounding land, at A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8, has not been highlighted as having risk of flooding ([SEPA Flood Map](#)).

Climate

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 sets out the target and vision set by the Scottish Government for tackling and responding to climate change ([The Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)). The Act includes a target of reducing CO₂ emissions by 80% before 2050 (from the baseline year 1990). The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 amended the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to bring the target of reaching net-zero emissions in Scotland forward to 2045 ([Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)).

The Scottish Government has since published its indicative Nationally Determined Contribution (iNDC) to set out how it will reach net-zero emissions by 2045, working to reduce emissions of all major greenhouse gases by at least 75% by 2030 ([Scotland's contribution to the Paris Agreement: indicative Nationally Determined Contribution - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)). By 2040, the Scottish Government is committed to reducing emissions by 90%, with the aim of reaching net-zero by 2045 at the latest.

Transport Scotland is committed to reducing carbon across Scotland's transport network and this commitment is being enacted through the Mission Zero for Transport ([Mission Zero for transport | Transport Scotland](#)). Transport is the largest contributor to harmful climate emissions in Scotland. In response to the climate emergency, Transport Scotland are committed to reducing their emissions by 75% by 2030 and to a legally binding target of net-zero by 2045.

Policies and plans

This Record of Determination (RoD) has been undertaken in accordance with all relevant regulations, guidance, policies and plans, notably including the Environment and Sustainability Discipline of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges ([Design Manual for Roads and Bridges \(DMRB\)](#)) and Transport Scotland's Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance ([Guidance - Environmental Impact Assessments for road projects \(transport.gov.scot\)](#)).

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to temporarily cause local air quality impacts. Activities undertaken on site may cause dust and particulate matter to be emitted to the atmosphere. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to air are considered to be low.

- Activities which may result in dust creation (such as cutting/breaking out works) will be appropriately managed to reduce emissions, including use of on-tool extraction systems or dampening down where required.
- All plant, machinery and vehicles associated with the scheme will be maintained to the appropriate standards and will be switched off when not in use.
- All delivery vehicles carrying material with dust potential will be covered when travelling to or leaving site, preventing the spread of dust beyond the work area.
- Material stockpiles will be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable by using a 'just in time' delivery system. All material will also be stored on made ground.
- Green driving techniques will be adopted, and effective route preparation and planning shall be undertaken prior to works.
- Any stockpiled material on site will be monitored daily to ensure no risks of dust emissions exists.
- Materials shall be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any air quality effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Cultural heritage

Although there are features of cultural heritage interest within the scheme extents and within 300m of the schemes, construction of the A9 road corridor is likely to have

removed any archaeological remains that may have been present. Therefore, the potential for the presence of unknown archaeological remains in the study area has been assessed to be low. Some minor works will take place within the footprint of adjacent HER and Canmore feature (classified as road bridge); however, the works are deemed to be essential to ensure the stability of the structures (including the culvert noted as road bridge by HER and Canmore records) and safety of public users. When the works are complete, there will be no significant visual impact to the culvert, with repaired concrete being the only visual change. The following good practice measures will be in place to reduce the risk of impacts to undiscovered features of cultural heritage interest:

- Should any unexpected archaeological evidence be discovered, works will stop temporarily in the vicinity and the BEAR Scotland Environment Team contacted for advice.
- People, plant, and materials shall, as much as is reasonably practicable, only be present on areas of made / engineered ground. Where access outwith these areas is required for the safe and effective completion of the scheme, it shall be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable and ideally be limited to access on foot. There shall be no storage of vehicles, plant, or materials against any buildings, walls or fences.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any cultural heritage effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Landscape and visual effects

There is potential for minor, temporary visual impacts to the local landscape during the construction phase as a result of obstructed views due to vehicles and machinery. Proposed works will be restricted to the A9 carriageway boundary and will include works on the scour damage at localised areas around A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841 F Millennium Foot Bridge B6. Minor visual changes will occur due to repaired scours and damaged footbridge elements; however, these will remain within the existing trunk road boundary and will be in keeping with surrounding furniture. Furthermore, consultation with Cairngorms NP confirmed that the park supports the proposed works and does not have any concerns in regard to landscape impacts on the Cairngorms NP. In addition, the following mitigation measures will be put in place during works:

- Throughout all stages of the works, the site will be kept clean and tidy, with materials, equipment, plant and wastes appropriately stored, reducing the landscape and visual effects as much as possible.

- The working area and site compound location (if required) will be appropriately reinstated following works.
- Works will avoid encroaching on land and areas where work is not required or is not permitted. This includes general works, storage of equipment/containers and parking.
- Where applicable, upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape shall be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- The site will be left clean and tidy following construction.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Biodiversity

Designated Sites

A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 spans a minor waterbody which is just within the boundary of the River Spey SAC. The footbridge is also located in proximity to Drumochter Hills SAC, SPA and SSSI. BEAR Scotland carried out a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) to assess potential impacts of a range of maintenance activities (including scour repairs) on the Drumochter Hills and River Spey European Sites and produced an HRA Proforma document. The HRA Proforma outlines standard good practice measures to reduce the risk of pollution or disturbance to qualifying features of these designated sites. The HRA Proforma concluded that the maintenance activities (including scour repairs) would not result in Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on the qualifying features of the European Sites and was approved by NatureScot and Transport Scotland in 2020. The HRA Proforma is currently being updated and will be submitted to NatureScot and Transport Scotland for approval prior to works. The conclusion of no LSE is expected to be maintained on the updated version of the HRA Proforma, provided that all standard good practice measures are adhered to. These measures will be detailed in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) and adhered to during works. As such, the works are not expected to result in LSE on the qualifying features of the Drumochter Hills and River Spey European Sites by virtue of the following factors:

- The scheme at A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 will require in-stream working; however, the watercourse is considered to be unsuitable for freshwater fish and the works will be restricted to June-September 2023, outwith the sensitive period for salmonids.

- In-stream works will be carried out within a dry working area with appropriate containment measures (e.g., silt fencing, straw bales) in place to prevent pollutants or construction materials from entering the water environment and River Spey SAC.
- Due to the A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 being located downstream of Drumochter Hills SAC, SPA and SSSI, the hydrological connectivity between the scheme and these sites are somewhat limited.
- The location of the work and the limited hydrological connectivity to the Drumochter Hills SAC, SPA and SSSI means there are few pathways to disturbance and a highly reduced risk of pollution. Therefore, no direct impacts to any of these sites are anticipated.
- Works will not promote the known negative pressure on the various designated species.
- Given the rural location and limited suitable habitat of the scheme it is anticipated that designated species would easily avoid the works area if any disturbance was created from noise, as there is an abundance of alternative habitat present in the landscape suitable for foraging.
- A pre-construction survey and pre-construction nesting bird checks will be carried out prior to works commencing.
- No significant dust, particulate matter, and exhaust emissions (DPMEE) sources will be introduced by the works, and standard pollution prevention measures will be in place during works.

Terrestrial Ecology

Ecological surveys did not highlight the potential for, or evidence of, bat roosts within the structures, or protected species shelter within proximity of the footbridges. As a result, no significant impacts are predicted to roosting bats or other protected species from the proposed work and there is no requirement for a licence to be obtained from Nature Scot.

Although, no bird nests were noted within the potential works disturbance area, nearby grassland provide suitable habitat for ground nesting birds. As such, relevant ecological checks will be undertaken prior to works starting.

Works will be restricted to the A9 carriageway boundary (A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6) and will not entail any tree felling. Pollution controls will be in place to ensure there is no loss of containment to the local environment.

The walkover surveys noted no presence of invasive or injurious species within the scheme extents.

During routine maintenance, activities undertaken on site could potentially have a temporary adverse impact on biodiversity as a result of an increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site. Any protected species in the area are likely to be accustomed to road noise on the A9 and the scheme is of short duration. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity are considered to be low:

- Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and completion of works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- All construction operatives will be briefed through toolbox talks prior to works commencing. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species.
- No works will take place within nearby woodland areas.
- Any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to road noise on the A9. Relevant toolbox talks will be included in the SEMP. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore somewhat diminished.
- Site personnel shall remain vigilant for the presence of any protected species throughout the works period. Should a protected species be noted during construction, works shall temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently moved on. Any sightings of protected species shall be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team.
- If works fall within the nesting bird season March – September (inclusive but subject to species and seasonal variations), a pre-works nesting bird survey will be carried out to ensure that there are no nests present in areas that will be immediately affected by the works.
- Artificial lighting (if required) will also be directed away from road verges, woodland, and waterbodies as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of potentially unrecorded instances of INNS or injurious weeds in road verges

throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in working areas, no works will take place within 7m of these areas until the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team can provide further advice on additional mitigation measures.

- A 'soft start' will be implemented on site each day. This will involve switching on vehicles and checking under/around vehicles and the immediate work area for mammals prior to works commencing to ensure none are present and that there is a gradual increase in noise. Any excavations, exposed pipes/drains, or areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g., storage containers) will be covered over when not in use, at the end of each shift, and following completion of the works to avoid animals falling in and becoming trapped.
- If fencing is utilised at any point during the works, a gap of 200mm from ground level will be provided, allowing free passage for mammals and preventing entrapment.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any biodiversity effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Geology and soils

Although scour works include minor movement of bed and bank material at both watercourses, construction activities are restricted to localised areas and all excavated material will be reused within the working areas. Therefore, the works are not anticipated to have an adverse impact on geology and soils. With the following mitigation measures in place, the likelihood of significant impacts on the geology and soils is low.

- Excavated material will be kept to a minimum and side-casted within the scheme extents.
- The parking of machinery/vehicles and storage of equipment on road verges will be minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape (i.e., damage to grass verges, waterbodies banks) will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Mitigation measures to prevent contamination of soils through loss of containment will be strictly adhered to.
- Additional pollution prevention measures as outlined in Road drainage and the water environment will be adhered to during construction.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any geology and soils effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Material assets and waste

There is potential for impacts as a result of resource depletion through use and transportation of new materials. However, materials will be sourced locally where possible and the following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- Materials will be sourced from recycled origins as far as reasonably practicable within design specifications.
- Care will be taken to order the correct quantity of required materials to prevent the disposal of unused materials.
- Where possible, minimal packaging shall be requested on required deliveries to reduce unnecessary waste and production of packaging materials.

There is potential for impacts during works as a result of the improper storage or disposal of waste. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- The subcontractor will adhere to waste management legislation and ensure they comply with their Duty of Care.
- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- All wastes and unused materials will be removed from site in a safe and legal manner by a licensed waste carrier upon completion of the works, unless otherwise stated. The appointed waste carrier will have a valid SEPA waste carrier registration, a copy of which will be provided to and retained by BEAR Scotland as early as possible.
- Re-use and recycling of waste shall be encouraged, and the subcontractor will be required to fully outline their plans and provide documentary evidence for waste arising from the works (e.g. waste carrier's licence, transfer notes, and waste exemption certificates).
- Staff will be informed that littering will not be tolerated. Staff will be encouraged to collect any litter seen on site.
- Where applicable, all temporary signage will be removed from site on completion of the works.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any material assets and waste effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site may have temporary adverse impacts on vehicle travellers and non-motorised road users (NMUs) as a result of vehicle noise and delays due to traffic management measures. There are no residential or commercial properties in proximity to either scheme location and access to both footpaths will be maintained during the works. Road users will be informed of works through a media release, which will provide details of construction dates and times. The works will be of short duration (up to 10 days). With the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low:

- Any changes of schedule will be communicated within the local area throughout the programme.
- Appropriate provisions / measures shall be implemented within the traffic management to allow the safe passage of NMUs of all abilities through the site.
- Journey planning information will be available for drivers online at the trafficscotland.org website. Journey planning information will also be available for drivers online through BEAR's social media platforms.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any population and human health effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Road drainage and the water environment

The works will include repairs to existing concrete elements, and additional works to prevent further scour at both structures. Works will not involve replacement of natural bed. Construction and maintenance of a surface waterbodies on minor watercourses are permitted under SEPA's General Binding Rules (GBRs) and do not require additional authorisation under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (CAR); therefore no authorisation from SEPA is required for the works to be undertaken, provided that relevant GBRs are adhered to during construction.

During these works, there is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment. Potential changes in water quality from pollution events (either by

accidental spillage of sediments, particulate matter, chemicals, fuels or by mobilisation of these in surface water caused by rain or tidal movements) during works have the potential to have a direct or indirect effect on the surrounding waterbodies. The following mitigation measures will be put in place to reduce the risk of pollution incidents as a result of works:

- No works will be undertaken during times of spate/heavy rain to avoid silt washing into the clean water.
- Standard working practices and relevant GBRs to comply with the CAR Regulations 2011 (as amended) for works in or near water are detailed in the SEMP and will be adhered to on site.
- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems are permitted. Appropriate containment measures will be in place to prevent any loss of construction materials into the water environment.
- An incident response (contingency) plan will be put in place to reduce the risk from pollution incidents or accidental spillages. All necessary containment equipment, including suitable spill kits (for oil and chemicals) will be available on site, quickly accessible if needed, and staff trained in their use.
- All spills shall be logged and reported. In the event of any spills into the water environment, all works will stop and the incident will be reported to the project manager and the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. SEPA will be informed of any such incident as soon as possible using the SEPA Pollution Hotline.
- All plant and equipment will be regularly inspected for any signs of damage and leaks. A checklist will be present to make sure that the checks have been carried out.
- Storage of hazardous material, oil and fuel containers shall be distanced more than 10m away from any watercourses.
- If required, a designated refuelling area shall be identified. Fuel bowsers shall be stored on an impermeable area and will be fully bunded. This shall be distanced more than 10m from any watercourses.
- During refuelling of smaller mobile plant, a funnel shall be used, and drip trays will be in place. Care will be taken to reduce the chance of spillages. Spill kits will be quickly accessible to capture any spills should they occur. The ground / stone around the site of a spill will be removed, double bagged and taken off site as special contaminated waste.

- Generators and static plant may have the potential to leak fuel and / or other hydrocarbons and will have bunding with a capacity of 110%. If these are not banded then drip trays shall also be supplied beneath the equipment with a capacity of 110%.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any road drainage and the water environment effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Climate

Construction activities associated with the proposed scheme works have the potential to cause local air quality impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of vehicles and machinery, material use and production, and transportation of materials to and from site. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- BEAR Scotland will adhere to the Carbon Management Policy.
- The works will be undertaken utilising a daytime work pattern to reduce the requirement for additional lighting.
- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gas emitted as part of the works.
- Where possible, materials will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be disposed at local landfill.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any climate effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Major Accidents and Disasters

There are flooding issues noted at A9 884 F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and surrounding land. However, works are programmed to be undertaken during June-September 2023 when water levels are likely to be low.

Works are restricted to the A9 carriageway boundary, and any traffic management will be designed in line with existing guidance. The proposed works are anticipated to last up to 10 days (for each footbridge). TM within the schemes will consist of temporary single lane closure on the northbound dual carriageway and temporary single lane closure on the northbound single carriageway to set up and take down site compound. The layby located nearest to the footbridges will be closed to

facilitate site access for contractors. Both footbridges will remain open for pedestrians and cyclists.

These measures, along with mitigation measures and standard working practices, will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site.

As the works will be limited to scour repairs with an improvement element, there will be no change in vulnerability of the road to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. The vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and disasters is considered to be low.

Assessment of cumulative effects

The proposed works are not anticipated to result in significant environmental effects. Due to the nature of the proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity of either footbridge.

A search of the Highland Council Planning ([Map Search](#)) and Perth and Kinross Planning ([Map Search](#)) Portals did not identify any planning applications within 300m of the scheme locations.

A search of the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner's website ([Map Search](#)) has identified that no other roadworks are currently ongoing, or noted as being planned, on the trunk road at the same time as these schemes. Due to the nature of the proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity of either footbridge.

BEAR Scotland programme all of their proposed works in line with appropriate guidance and contractual requirements. All schemes are programmed to take into account existing and future planned works, with a view of limiting any cumulative effects relating to traffic management. As a result of this exercise, where a potential for cumulative impacts is identified, BEAR will reprogramme schemes to avoid / limit any cumulative effects or will utilise existing traffic management to complete multiple schemes at once. This approach allows BEAR Scotland to effectively manage the potential cumulative effects as a result of traffic management, resulting in minimal disruption to users of the Scottish trunk road network.

Overall, it is unlikely that the proposed works will have a significant cumulative effect with any other future works in the area

Assessments of the environmental effects

As detailed in the Description of Main Environmental Impacts and Proposed Mitigation section within this Record of Determination, there are no significant effects anticipated on any environmental receptors as a result of the proposed works.

Statement of case in support of a Determination that a statutory EIA is not required

This is a relevant project in terms of section 55A(16) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 as it is a project for scour works on the A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 which are located within the Cairngorms NP and River Spey SAC (A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 only) which are sensitive areas within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

The projects have been subject to screening using the Annex III criteria to determine whether a formal EIA is required under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (as amended by The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017). Screening using Annex III criteria, reference to consultations undertaken, and review of available information has not identified the need for a statutory EIA.

The projects will not have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as:

Characteristics of the scheme:

- Construction activities are restricted to the <1ha areas of existing carriageway boundary (A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6).
- Both footbridges span minor unclassified surface waterbodies, which are not shown on the 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey maps. As such, in-stream works are permitted under SEPA GBRs and no additional authorisation from SEPA is required for the works to be undertaken.
- The works will not include full replacement of the natural bed of the watercourses.
- The works will be temporary and localised.

- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment, including the River Spey SAC.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.

Location of the scheme:

- Although the works at A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 are located within the boundaries of the River Spey SAC and lie in proximity to the Drumochter Hills SAC and Drumochter Hills SPA, the HRA Proforma concluded that the works would not result in any LSE on the qualifying features of these sites.
- The works at A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 will not result in any direct impact on Drumochter Hills SSSI.
- The works at the A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6 are not located within or connected to any designated sites.
- Works will not result in any adverse visual impact. Consultation with Cairngorms NP confirmed that the park supports the proposed works and does not have any concerns in regard to landscape impacts on the Cairngorms NP.
- The works will be restricted to the existing carriageway boundaries (A9 884F Millennium Foot Bridge A8 and A9 841F Millennium Foot Bridge B6), and all removed material and waste will be stored, transported, treated, used, and disposed of safely without endangering human health or harming the environment.
- Any impacts to the local landscape during the construction phase will be minor, temporary and not considered significant. In addition, no operational impacts are anticipated.
- The site compound will be located on made ground (A9 northbound layby).

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.

- No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works. The works are expected to result in positive impacts on road users during the operational phase.
- Mitigation measures detailed above (and in the SEMP) will be put in place with the objective to prevent and, if required, subsequently control any potential impacts on sensitive receptors.

Annex A

“sensitive area” means any of the following:

- land notified under sections 3(1) or 5(1) (sites of special scientific interest) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- land in respect of which an order has been made under section 23 (nature conservation orders) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- a European site within the meaning of regulation 10 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994
- a property appearing in the World Heritage List kept under article 11(2) of the 1972 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
- a scheduled monument within the meaning of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- a National Scenic Area as designated by a direction made by the Scottish Ministers under section 263A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- an area designated as a National Park by a designation order made by the Scottish Ministers under section 6(1) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.



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