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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A86 Creag Meagaidh – Rock Slope Remedial Works

Contents

Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out rock slope remedial works, at A86 Creag Meagaidh. The works will consist of the following operations:

- Removal of vegetation (70m^2) at the crest and slope, toe of slope and on-slope
- Scaling of rock slope
- Removal of failed and scaled materials (20m^2).

The works are currently programmed to be completed within the 2023/2024 financial year however, if the programme charges, the scheme might get postponed into the 2024/2025 financial year. Works are expected to be completed over 5-days, by operating during the daytime (08:00 – 18:00) working hours.

Traffic management (TM) will involve single lane closures, facilitated by temporary traffic lights (TTLs). If the programme changes, this may result in amendments to the exact TM requirements. Where required, alternative pedestrian routes will be included in the TM setup.

Location

The scheme is located on the A86 Creag Meagaidh between Laggan and Spean Bridge in the Central Scotland Highlands (National Grid Reference: NN 46978 85776) within the (Figure 1). The nearest population centre, the hamlet of Aberarder, lies 2km north of the scheme.

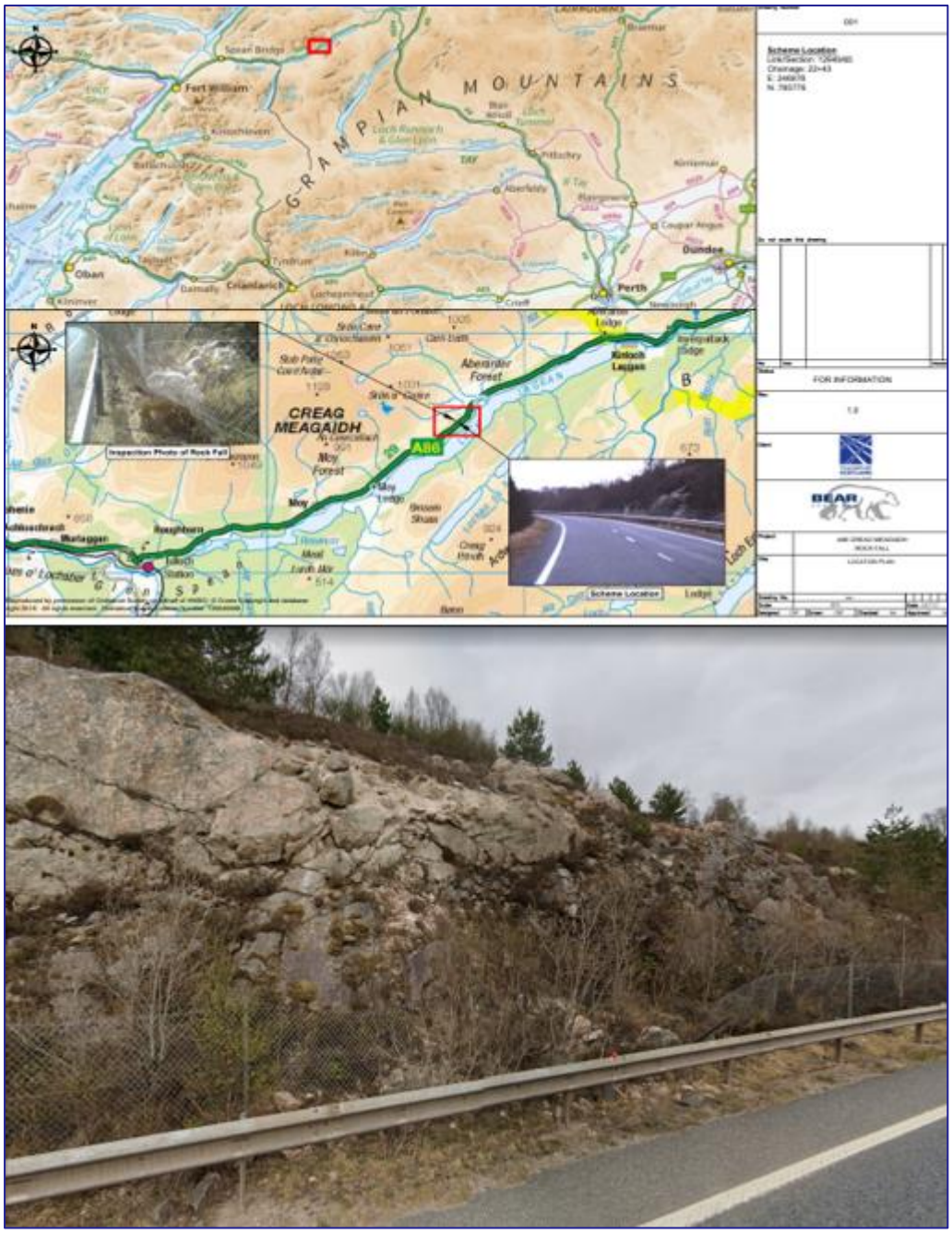

Figure 1. Location and scheme extent of the proposed rock slope remedial works at A86 Creag Meagaidh. Source: BEAR Scotland. F108 – Environmental Assessment Request (Scheme ref: 21/NW/0309/009).

Description of local environment

Air quality

The scheme does not fall within any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) (Air Quality Scotland). The nearest air quality monitoring site to the scheme is located in Fort William, approximately 37km southwest of the scheme, which records local

concentrations of Ozone (O_3), Nitric oxide (NO) and Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). The levels at the time of the search were recorded as low (Air Quality Scotland). Pollution levels in the general vicinity of works are anticipated to be lower than those at the monitoring station in Fort William due to the remote nature of the scheme location.

No sites registered on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) (Scotland's Environment) are located within 10km of the works.

Average Annual Daily Flow (AADF) for the A86 carriageway approximately 6.2km southwest of the scheme extents accounted for 967 vehicles in 2022, of which 7.3% were heavy goods vehicles (HGV) (Road Traffic Statistics).

Baseline air quality is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A86 trunk road.

Cultural heritage

There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Garden and Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Inventory Battlefields, Historic Environment Records or Canmore features identified within 300m of the scheme (PastMap).

All works are restricted to the rock face along the A86 carriageway and will include removal of vegetation and scaling of the rock slope; therefore the works do not include any alterations that would affect the historic and architectural character of any features of cultural heritage interest in a wider area. It has been determined that the proposed project does not carry the potential to cause direct or indirect impact to features of cultural heritage importance further afield.

As such, impact has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is not located within a National Park (NP) (SiteLink) or National Scenic Area (NSA) (Scotland's Environment).

The Landscape Character Type (LCT) within the scheme extents is categorized as 'Broad Loch and Glen' (no. 89) (Scottish Landscape Character Types), which is characterised by:

- Very long, narrow, slightly curved loch, channelled between high mountains to the north-west and lower craggy hills to the south-east.

- Mainly steep slopes on the north-west side, and some more gently sloping land on the south-east side, with flatter land occurring at the junction of occasional side tributaries on both sides of the loch.
- A high proportion of tree cover, which is most extensive on the south-east side, consisting of stands of native woodland and forest cover on lower slopes close to the loch.
- Distinct tiers of landcover on the north-west side, with low-lying stands of native woodlands, open areas of mainly heather and grassland landcover, rising to high alpine cover.
- Areas of smaller scale managed fields and woodlands with buildings around estates, contrasting with the large scale of surrounding landcover patterns.
- Strong contrast in land use between the opposite shores of the loch, related to the presence and busy nature of the trunk road on the north side, and the extent of forest cover on the south side.
- Limited settlement of mainly traditional style buildings occurring on lower ground near the loch, usually associated with estates and often occurring where the intersection with a tributary glen creates an area of flatter ground or requires a bridging point.
- Variety in texture, patterns and colour associated with the different landcover and varying openness and enclosure of landforms.
- Views to distant, distinctive, landmark hills along the loch and in more open areas.
- The dramatic combination of the loch, forests, woodlands and peaks with occasional estate buildings.

Historic Environment Scotland's HLAMap (HLAMap) has highlighted that the surrounding landscape is dominated by rough grazing.

Biodiversity

A desktop study using NatureScot SiteLink (SiteLink) has identified that the scheme extents lies within the Creag Meagaidh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (SiteLink). Negatives pressures for the SSSI features are noted to be natural events, invasive species, overgrazing, trampling and recreation (disturbance).

The works lie within the boundary of Creag Meagaidh National Nature Reserve (NNR) (SiteLink), which is fully overlayed by the SSSI. The NNR is noted as one of the best of Scottish wildlife sites. At the heart of the Monadhliath mountains, Creag Meagaidh stretches from the shores of Loch Laggan to the extensive mountain ridges and steep cliffs of Coire Ardair. It has some of the most varied habitats in the Highlands, including rare alder woodland and an Arctic mountain plateau.

The following European Sites are located within 2km of the scheme extents:

- Creag Meagaidh Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (SiteLink). The SAC is overlapped by Creag Meagaidh SSSI and lies 1km west of the scheme.
- Creag Meagaidh Special Protection Area (SPA) (SiteLink). The SPA fully lies within the Creag Meagaidh SAC and Creag Meagaidh SSSI, 1.8km west of the scheme.

The NBN Atlas holds no records of invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants, as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA), injurious weeds, as listed under the Weeds Act 1959, or invasive native perennials, as listed in the Trunk Road Inventory Manual.

A search with Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) also did not identify any invasive or injurious plant species within the scheme extents.

Habitats in the surrounding area are dominated by a combination of mixed (mainly broadleaved) woodland, alpine grassland and rocky cliffs, with large areas of temperate shrub heathland present further beyond the northbound carriageway. Loch Laggan lies to the south of the scheme (80m at its nearest point) which provides some freshwater habitats in the surrounding area.

The rock slope is covered by an Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) woodland (44.87ha), which is listed as ancient (of semi-natural origin) (Scotland's Environment). There are no trees with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) within 300m of the scheme (Spatial Hub).

A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) and a roped endoscope inspection on a rock slope were carried out on 28/03/2023 and 01/09/2023 (respectively) by Highland and Ecology Development (HED) Limited.

Geology and soils

The Creag Meagaidh SSSI is noted for rocky slopes, which is a geological feature (SiteLink). Negative pressures for rocky slopes are noted to be natural events.

The scheme does not lie within a Geological Conservation Review Site (GCRS) (SiteLink).

The Generalised Soil Type at the scheme location is identified as peaty gleys (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:

- Scottish Highland Ordovician Minor Intrusion Suite (pegmatite), which is an igneous bedrock.

Superficial Deposits:

- Hummocky (moundy) Glacial Deposits (diamicton, gravel, sand and silt), which is a sedimentary deposit.

Material assets and waste

The proposed works will include remedial works of the rock slope. Produced waste will include the following:

- Cleared wooded material.
- Failed and scaled rock slope material.

The scheme design intends to clear approximately 70m^2 large area of shrubs and small trees prior to the rock slope scaling works. It is anticipated to scale back a 60m^2 large area of rock slope and remove failed material from the toe of the slope. In total, 20m^3 of rock material will be removed from the site, which is intended to be reused and recycled where possible.

The scheme is executed by the operating company as site operations e.g. 'As-of-Right' scheme of value less than £350,000. As a result, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required.

Noise and vibration

The scheme extent lies within a rural setting with no residential or commercial properties located within 300m of the scheme. The scheme extent is somewhat screened from the wider landscape by surrounding woodland and the rock slope.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP).

Scotland's strategic noise map does not report data for the A86 within the scheme extents (Scotland's Noise Scotland's Environment). However, given the rural nature of the area and the low AADT flow, it is considered likely that baseline noise levels will be low.

Baseline noise levels at the scheme location are likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A86 trunk road.

Population and human health

There are no residential or commercial properties within 300m of the scheme. The nearest population centre, the hamlet of Aberarder, lies 2km north of the scheme.

There are no pedestrian facilities (core paths (Scotland's Environment), National Cycle Network (NCN) routes (OS Maps), walking routes as listed on WalkHighlands (WalkHighland), or other pedestrian facilities) within the scheme extent.

The A86 Trunk Road connects Spean Bridge and Kingussie. It commences at the A86 / A82 junction within Spean Bridge leading generally north-eastwards for a distance of 65 kilometres to its junction with the A9. The A86 is a single carriageway along its length.

Road drainage and the water environment

There are no waterbodies (classified or unclassified) spanned or culverted beneath the A86 within the scheme extents (SEPA water environmental hub).

Loch Laggan (ID: 100198) lies 80m east of the scheme. Loch Laggan is a loch which has been classified by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) in 2020 as having an overall classification of 'Good'. Loch Laggan is 7.6km^2 in area and 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 (SEPA water environmental hub).

There are several minor (unclassified) surface waterbodies/drainage ditches that lie within 300m of the scheme.

The scheme falls within the 'Upper Glen Coe' groundwater body which was classified by SEPA in 2020 as having an overall status of 'Good' (SEPA water environmental hub) and is also a Drinking Water Protected Area (Ground) (DWPA).

The A86 at the scheme extents 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 CO_2 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.

- 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.
- No significant dust, particulate matter, and exhaust emissions (DPMEE) sources will be introduced by the works.
- Green driving techniques will be adopted, and effective route preparation and planning will be undertaken prior to works.
- Any stockpiled material on site will be monitored daily to ensure no risks of dust emissions exists.
- Materials will be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.
- Drop heights to haulage vehicles and onto conveyors will be minimised.
- Surfaces will be swept where loose material remains.

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.

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 A86 rock slope, which lies adjacent to the northbound carriageway and will include rescaling of the slope. Minor visual changes will occur due to the rescaled rocks and cleared vegetation; however, these will be minor and remain in harmony with the surrounding landscape. Furthermore, consultation with NatureScot confirmed that the proposed works and does not have any concerns in regard to landscape impacts on the Creag Meagaidh

NNR provided that Scot pine trees located above the top of the rocky face are left untouched. 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 scaling of the rock slope will be kept to a minimum.
- Vegetation management will be kept to a minimum and Scot pine trees above the rock slope will be left uncut and roots untouched.
- 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 (including chain link fencing which is located at the scheme) will 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

Consultation with NatureScot was carried out in August 2022 to assess potential impacts of the proposed works on the Creag Meagaidh NNR and SSSI, which cover the scheme extents. NatureScot confirmed that the proposal is not likely to damage the protected natural features of Creag Meagaidh SSSI and therefore does not require consent. NatureScot has also confirmed that the works are unlikely to have a significant impact on the NNR. In addition to best practice measures, site specific working methods and access restrictions will be followed as outlined in the mitigation section for biodiversity below. Further details will be included in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP). Please refer to geology and soil sections for information on geological features.

In addition, a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) was undertaken to assess the potential impacts on the European Sites located within 2km of the scheme. The HRA concluded that there would be no Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on their qualifying features, by virtue of the following factors:

- The SPA and SAC are set-back at least 1km from the scheme extents.
- All works are restricted to the rock slope along the A86, with only minor scaling of slope and clearance of vegetation being undertaken which will not involve dramatic change of the natural landscape or its processes.
- There is no requirement for land take (or resources) or site clearance from within the SAC or SPA and no works are required within any part of the SAC or SPA.
- The use of herbicides on felled tree stumps will not be permitted.
- There will not be any in-stream works and the qualifying features of the SAC and SPA are also mainly non-mobile in nature. Furthermore, the SPA is suitably set-back and screened from the scheme extents.
- A daytime working pattern will be adhered to and any species at the scheme extent (and within the surrounding environment) will be accustomed to daily traffic flow/vehicle presence on the A86 carriageway at this location, levels of which will not be exacerbated due to presence of works.
- 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

Although, no bird nests were noted within the potential works disturbance area, nearby areas provide suitable habitat for nesting birds. As such, relevant ecological checks will be undertaken prior to works starting, if the works are to proceed during the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive).

It is projected that any tree/vegetation clearance will produce less than $5m^3$ of timber, therefore a felling licence from Scottish Forestry (SF) is not required. However, if additional tree felling is required and more than $5m^3$ of timber will be felled from third-party land, a felling licence from SF will be obtained prior to works.

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

Work activities undertaken on site could potentially have a temporary adverse impact on biodiversity in the area as a result of an increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats. However, any protected species in the area are likely to be accustomed to traffic noise on the A86. 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. 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.
- No in-stream works will be permitted.
- 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 and INNS.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of any protected species throughout the works period. Should a protected species be noted during construction, works will temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently moved on. Any sightings of protected species shall be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team.
- Artificial lighting (if required) will be directed away from surrounding 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.
- The existing chain link fence along the road verge will be reinstated following the works.

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

There is potential for rock slope remedial works to impact the protected geological features in Creag Meagaidh SSSI; consequently, consultation with NatureScot was undertaken in August 2022 and determined that consent was not required, however numerous mitigation measures were advised. In addition to NatureScot advised mitigation measures, the following measures will be in place during works to reduce the risk of impacts to the SSSI:

- Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and repair works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- Machinery required for works will only enter the SSSI as needed and will be stored outwith the SSSI when not in use.
- Scaling works in the SSSI will be limited to the minimum area of the rock slope. These activities will not affect the geological feature of the SSSI associated with the rocky slopes.
- The site compound (if required) and designated storage areas will be located outwith the boundary of the SSSI.

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:

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.

- All appropriate waste documentation will be present on site and be available for inspection. A copy of the Duty of Care paperwork will be provided and filed appropriately in accordance with the Code of Practice (as made under Section 34 of Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended).
- Re-use and recycling of waste will 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.

Noise and vibration

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities. Works will be undertaken over daytime working programme. Furthermore, there are no residential/commercial properties or pedestrian facilities within the 300m of the scheme and the works are also somewhat screened from the wider landscape by rock slope and woodland. The proposed scheme is anticipated to result in temporary minor adverse noise impacts. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- The Best Practice Means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, will be employed at all times to reduce noise to a minimum.
- All site personnel will be fully briefed in advance of works regarding the need to minimise noise during works and of the site-specific sensitivities.
- Road users will be informed of works through a media release, which will provide details of construction dates and times.
- On-site construction tasks will be programmed to be as efficient as possible, with a view to limiting noise disruption to local sensitive receptors.
- All plant, machinery and vehicles will be switched off when not in use.

- All plant will be operated in such a way that minimises noise emissions and will have been maintained regularly to the appropriate standards.
- Where fitted, and where permitted under Health and Safety requirements, white noise reversing alarms will be utilised during construction.
- Where ancillary plant such as generators are required, they will be positioned so as to cause minimum noise disturbance. Where deemed necessary, acoustic screens will be utilised.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any noise and vibration 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. Road users will be informed of works through a media release, which will provide details of construction dates and times. The works will be minor and of short duration (5-days). With the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low:

- Appropriate provisions / measures will be implemented within the traffic management to allow the safe passage of NMUs of all abilities through the site (if required).
- 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 Scotland'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

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:

- Standard working practices to comply with The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) for works near water are detailed in the SEMP and will be adhered to on site.
- The scheme will not entail any in-stream works.
- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems will be 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 will 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 will be distanced more than 10m away from any watercourses.
- If required, a designated refuelling area will be identified. Fuel bowsers will be stored on an impermeable area and be fully bunded. This shall be distanced more than 10m from any watercourses.
- During refuelling of smaller mobile plant, a funnel will be used, and drip trays will be in place. Care will be taken to reduce the chance of spillages. The ground / stone around the site of a spill will be removed, double bagged and taken off site as special 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 bunded, 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 their Carbon Management Policy.
- 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 material 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

The trunk road, within the scheme extents, is not at risk of surface water flooding.

Works are restricted to the rock slope along the A86 northbound carriageway and traffic management will be designed in line with existing guidance. The proposed works are anticipated to last 5 days. TM will involve single line closures, facilitated by TTLs.

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP), which includes measures to avoid or reduce disruption to road traffic, will be produced in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual (Department of Transport 2009). The TMP will ensure that there is no severance of community assets, access routes or residential development.

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

A search of the Highland Council Planning (Map Search) Portal did not identify any planning applications within 300m of the scheme location.

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 this scheme. There are also no local authority road networks in proximity to the scheme. Due to the nature of the proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity.

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 Scotland 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.

The Habitats Regulations Appraisal concluded that there would be no LSE on the designated sites.

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 the improvement of a road and the completed works (together with any area occupied by apparatus, equipment, machinery, materials, plant, spoil heaps, or other such facilities or stores required during the period of construction) is situated in whole, or in part, within the Creag Meagaidh SSSI, which is noted as a sensitive area within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

The project has been subject to screening using the Annex III criteria to determine whether a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (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 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 area.
- The felling of the timber will not exceed 5m^3, therefore felling licence from Scottish Forestry (SF) is not required.
- 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 user safety during the operational phase.
- The works entail rock slope remedial works to eliminate rockfall on the trunk road including beyond the trunk road boundary, therefore the works will

increase road safety and prevent severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.

- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- The works will be temporary, localised and completed during daytime hours and out of the tourist peak season, when the traffic count is at its lowest levels.
- 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.
- By removing the failed rock slope material and other rocks at risk of failing, works will result in safer conditions for road users. Removal of failed material will also enable to fix damaged section of chain link fencing.

Location of the scheme:

- Works will not result in a significant visual change, and as such, will have no change to the landscape of the Creag Meagaidh NNR.
- Consultation with NatureScot confirmed that the works will not result in an adverse impact on the Creag Meagaidh SSSI (including the NNR).
- Although the works lie in close proximity to the Creag Meagaidh SPA and SAC, the HRA concluded that the works would not result in any LSE on the qualifying features of these sites.
- No earthworks are required, and the scheme does not lie within any sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.
- The scheme will be confined to the previously rescaled rock slope along the A86 carriageway and will not require any land take or alter any local land uses.
- 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.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.

- In the event that INNS are found on site, measures to prevent potential INNS spread will be implemented.
- 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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