

Welcome to this Public Exhibition

The purpose of the exhibition is to inform the public of the Proposed Scheme to improve the A9 at Berriedale Braes following publication of the draft Trunk Road Order and Compulsory Purchase Order on 21st November 2014.

We welcome your comments, feedback and formal representation. Please take your time to consider the presentation and provide any comments you may have on the sheet provided.

A Scheme Summary Report is provided for you to take away and representatives from Transport Scotland and URS, the design consultants, are available to answer any questions.

Formal representation should be addressed to Transport Scotland. For more information see the Scheme Summary Report.



The hairpin bend at Berriedale Braes leads to safety and operational issues. Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) driving in opposite directions cannot pass safely.

In 2013, Transport Scotland appointed URS as design consultant to develop and assess improvement options for the scheme.



View from Berriedale Water looking north



The design phase funding partners for the A9 Berriedale Braes Improvement Scheme; the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, HITRANS, and The Highland Council, have been involved throughout the development of the design.



Need for the Scheme

- Existing sub-standard road geometry - Hairpin bend with tight radius and steep gradient.
- 2 HGVs driving in opposite directions cannot pass on the hairpin bend.
- Potential for serious accident e.g. when an athletics club bus collided with the barrier.



Damage to barrier after bus collision

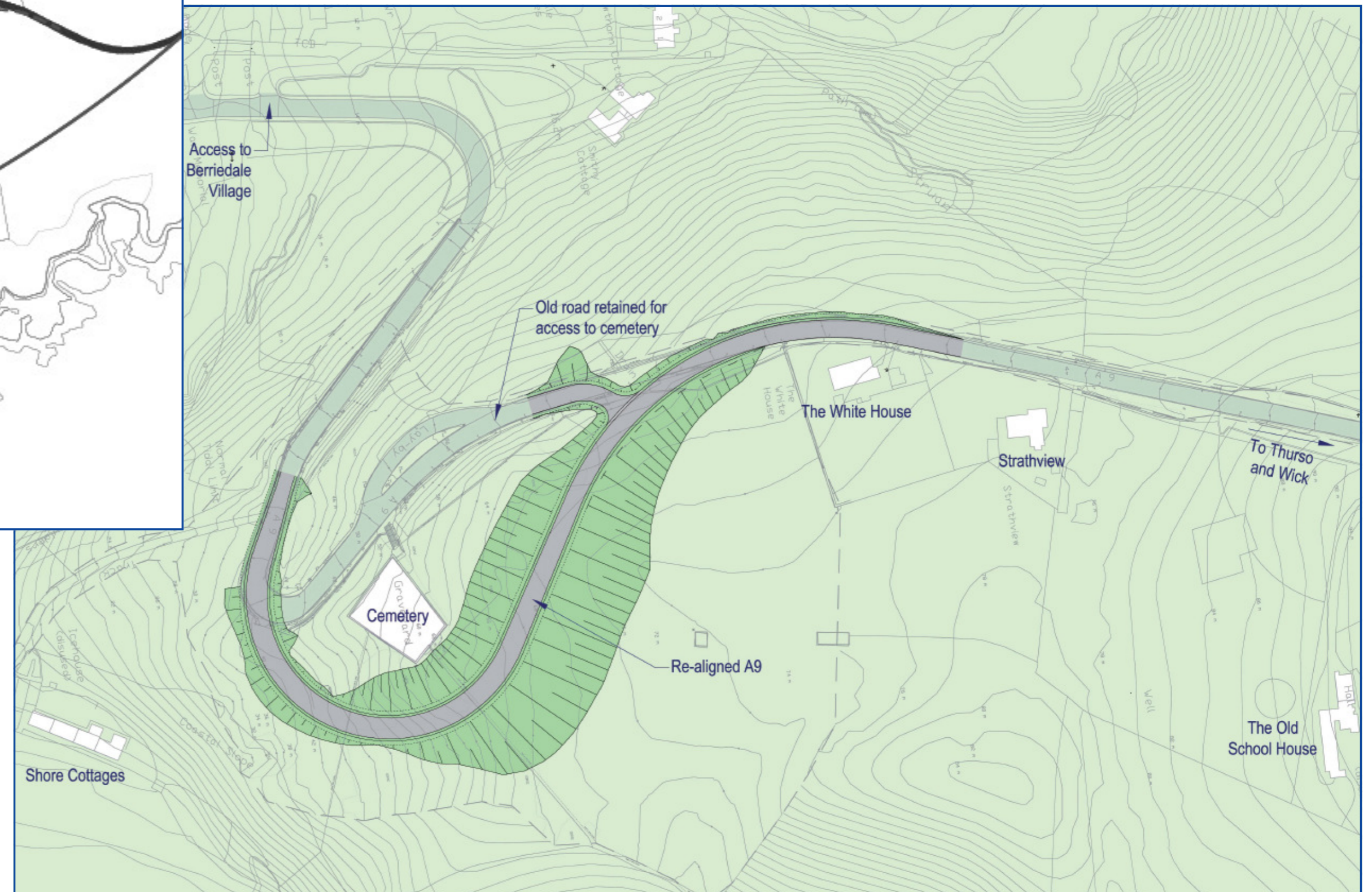
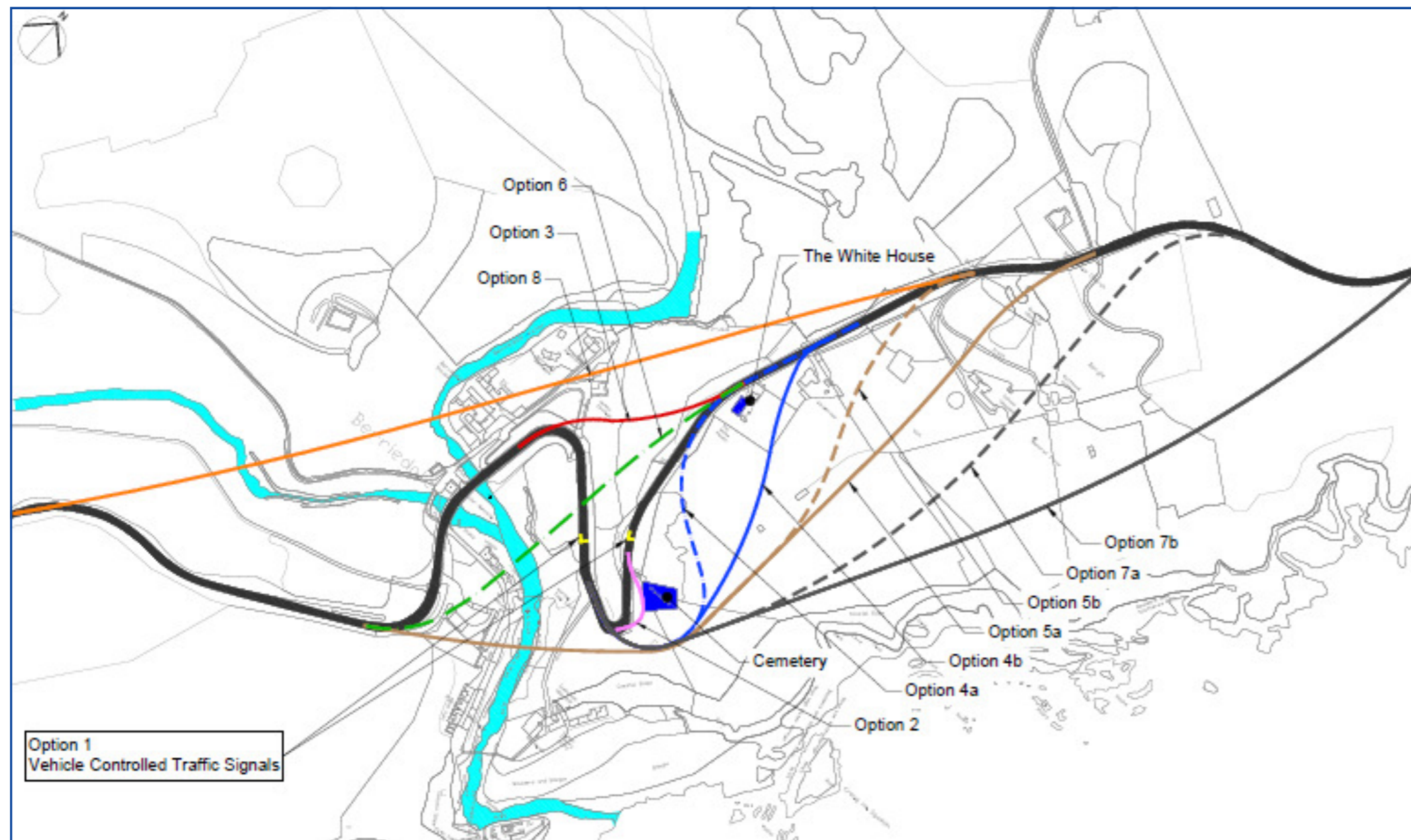


View from hairpin bend looking south

Existing Conditions

- The existing road geometry means HGVs negotiating the hairpin bend create safety issues for other road users.
- Northbound HGVs occupy the Southbound lane and are often forced to stop.
- Once stopped they find hill starts difficult on the steep slopes, exacerbated in winter weather.

- Several Options were originally considered.
- Options 1, 3, 6 & 8 were discounted early in the process.
- Options crossing the river were also discounted.
- Options 4a & 5b were taken forward to Full Stage 2 Assessment (March 2014).



- Option 4a was chosen as the preferred option in April 2014.

URS Design Development Since April 2014

1. Services

diverted to new road with old road dug up and landscaped.

2. Junction with old road removed and lay-by provided.

3. Footpath with viewpoint added with access to cemetery.

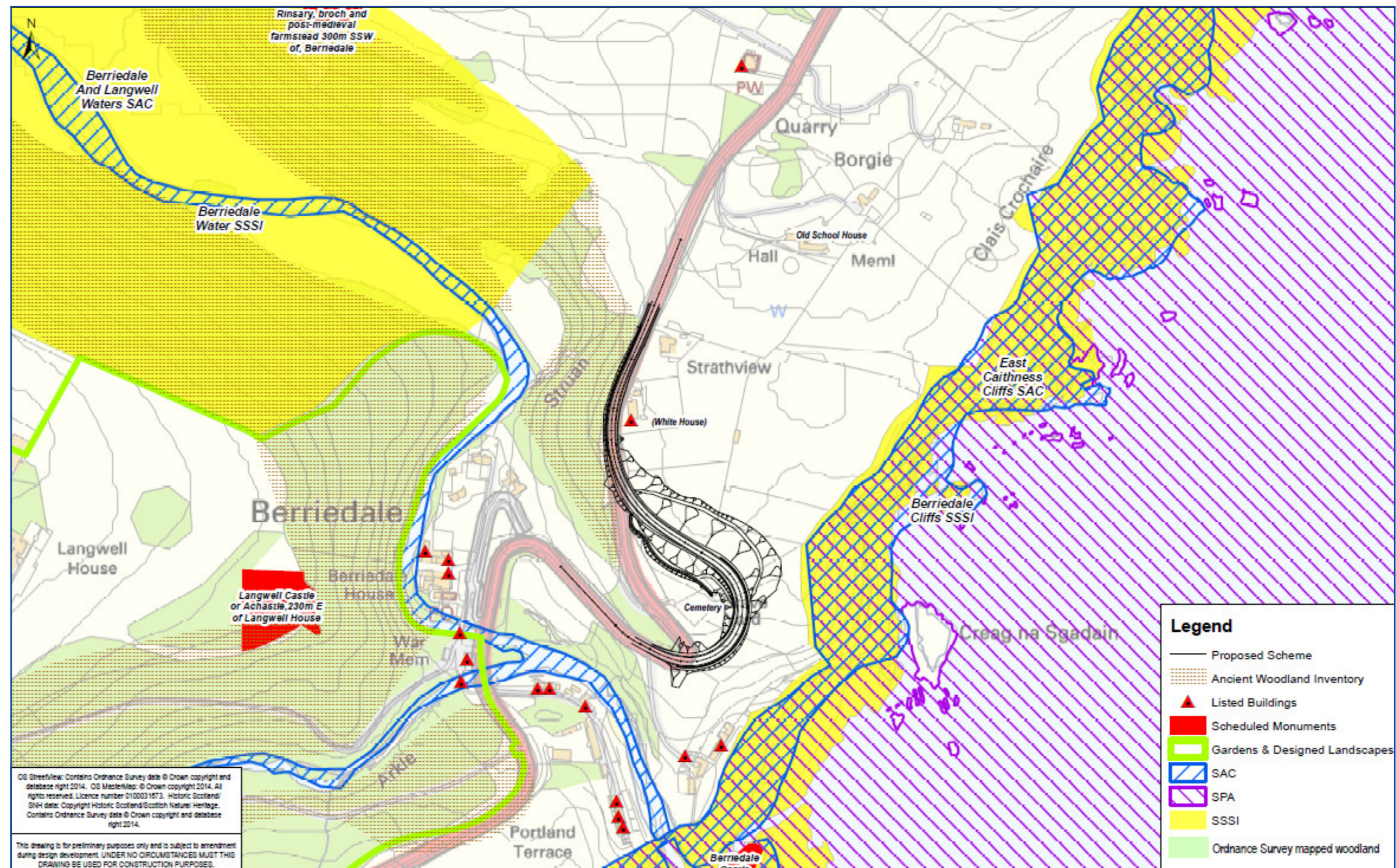


4. Length of scheme extended to improve access from the White House.

5. High containment safety barrier at bend.

6. Three levels of treatment to road drainage including a drainage basin.

- The **East Caithness Cliffs** are European protected designations, the **Special Protection Area (SPA)** is designated for breeding birds and the **Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** is designated for its vegetated Sea Cliffs.
- The **Berriedale and Langwell Water SAC** is designated for Atlantic Salmon.
- The **Berriedale Cliffs Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI)** is a nationally important site for breeding birds.
- The **Berriedale Water SSSI** is designated for its broad- leaved, mixed and yew woodland.
- The **Scheduled Monuments** include Berriedale Castle and Langwell House.
- Langwell House is also designated as a **Garden and Designed Landscape**.
- There are a number of **listed buildings** within Berriedale (Categories B & C).



Landscape - Some localised significant effects during construction, however as proposed planting matures effects will be reduced over time. Long term effects are expected on the views from Berriedale Castle and Beacon Tower.

Materials - Extensive excavation of material required, some of which will be re-used on site where possible but the rest (approx. 60,000m³) will be removed from site.

Road Drainage and the Water Environment - No significant impacts are expected as a result of the Scheme.

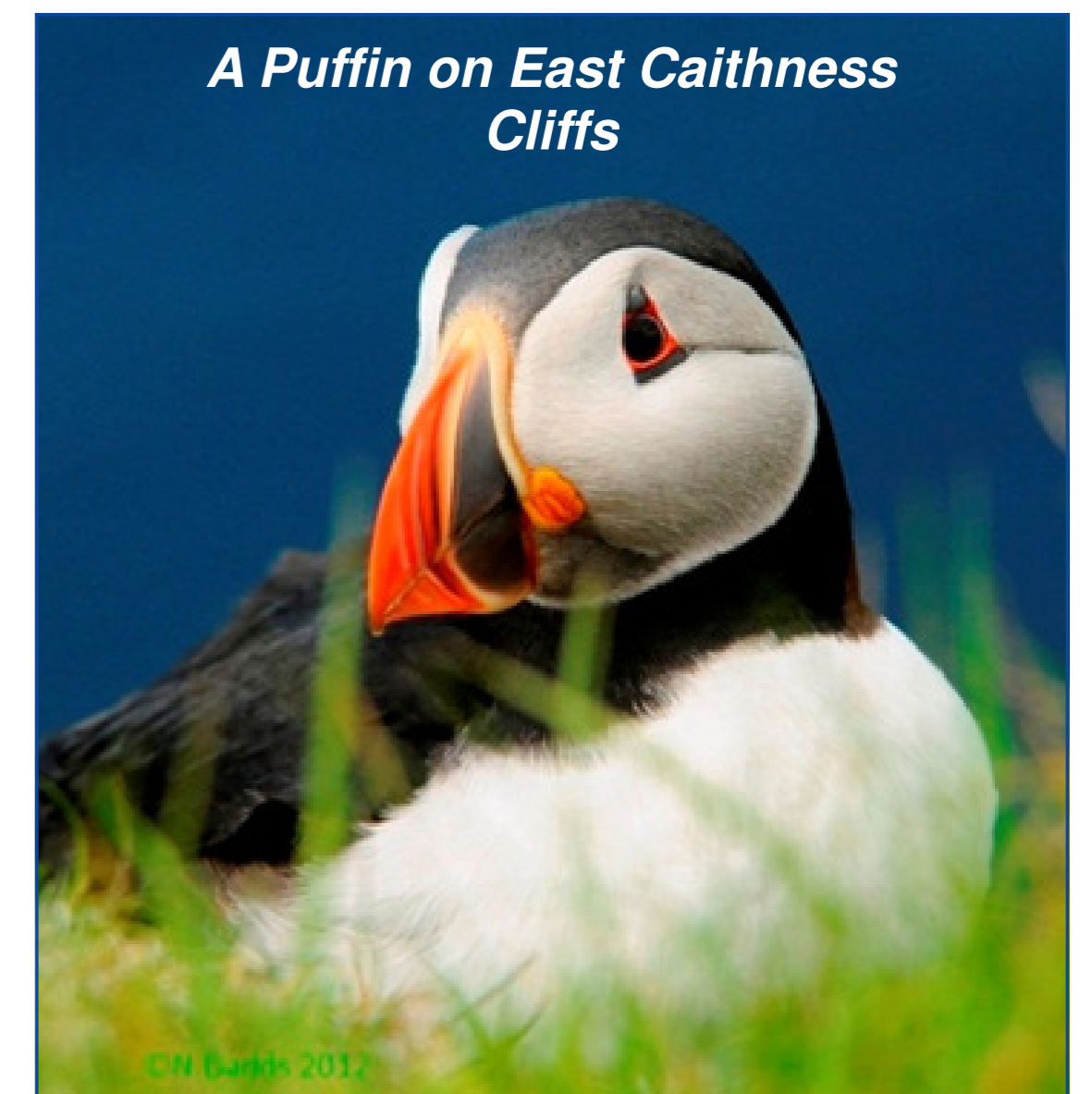
Noise and Vibration - Construction impacts are expected, however only minor traffic noise impacts once the Scheme is operational.

Nature Conservation - No significant impacts expected on ecology or on the designated sites.

Cultural Heritage - Some impact on the setting of Berriedale Castle Scheduled Monument, however, no other significant impacts expected.



East Caithness Cliffs SPA and SAC



A Puffin on East Caithness Cliffs

A number of mitigation measures have been included to minimise environmental impact.

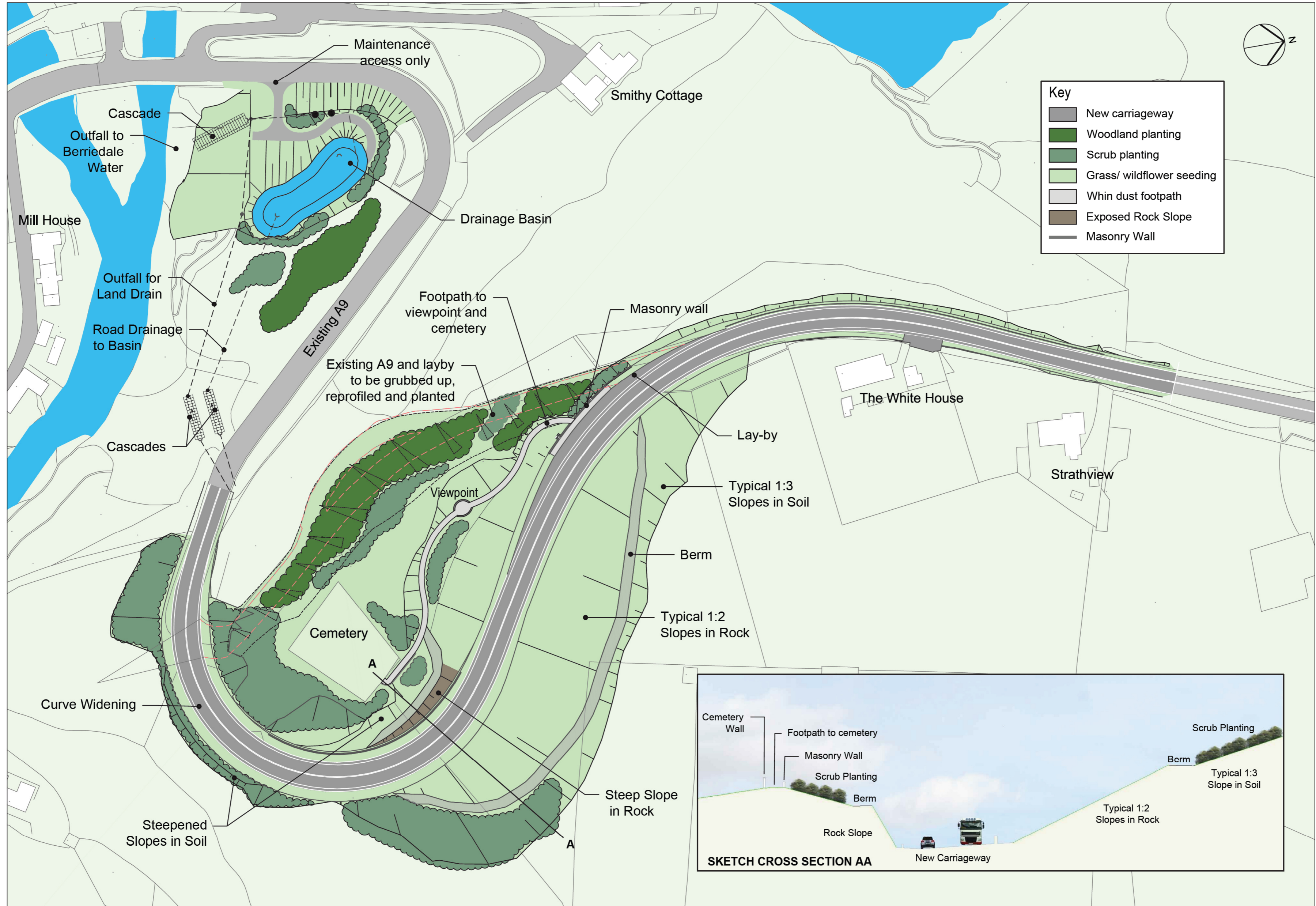
Design Mitigation Measures

- Landscape planting to provide partial screening and to help integrate the Scheme into the landscape and minimise impacts on the setting of Berriedale Castle.
- Provision of a new lay-by including access to the Cemetery and a viewpoint.
- Provision of new sustainable drainage measures including three levels of drainage treatment.

Construction Mitigation Measures

- Vegetation clearance & any rock-blasting/piling will be programmed outside breeding bird season.
- The contractor will be required to adhere to the mitigation measures set out in the Environmental Report and prepare a plan, in consultation with SEPA and The Highland Council, for managing:
 - Pollution (water, noise, dust etc.).
 - Waste.
 - Working hours and communication with local residents.







Existing view



Photomontage showing scheme once constructed

Following the publication of draft Road Orders, members of the public may comment on the proposals until the 16th January 2015.

All comments on the proposals shall be considered and resolved where possible. In the event that resolution is not possible the Scottish Ministers may instruct that a Public Local Inquiry (PLI) into the draft Statutory Orders be held. If this is necessary all interested parties shall be informed of the arrangements and notices shall be placed in the local press to allow all members of the public the opportunity to attend.

Please ensure you take a copy of the Scheme Summary Report and that you understand the proposals being presented. If you wish to support, comment on or object to the draft Orders and Scheme Proposal, you should write to Transport Scotland at the address given in the leaflet, to arrive no later than:

16th January 2015

Thank you for your time.