transport.gov.scot

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A9 Dalnamein to Drumochter - Resurfacing

Contents

Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out resurfacing works on a section of the A9 trunk road at Dalnamein (see Figure 1 below). The depth of resurfacing consists of a series of patches comprised of the following: 50mm inlay - 50mm TS2010 surface course; 340mm partial reconstruction – 200mm AC32 base course; and 100mm AC32 base course and 40mm thick TS2010 surface course. Road markings and studs will be installed at the same time. The scheme is 1775m in length and 1.60 hectares.

The works are currently programmed to begin on the 09/06/2024 and will be carried out over 9 nights between the hours of 19.00-06.00.

Traffic management (TM) is currently anticipated to consist of single lane closures facilitated by temporary two-way traffic lights with convoy working. The scheme is located on a trunk road stretch with no pedestrian facilities present and no pedestrian diversions are required.

Location

The scheme is located on the A9 between Dalnamein and Drumochter within the Perth & Kinross Council Local Authority, approximately 8 miles north of Blair Atholl (grid reference: NN 73875 70010 - NN 75568 69590).

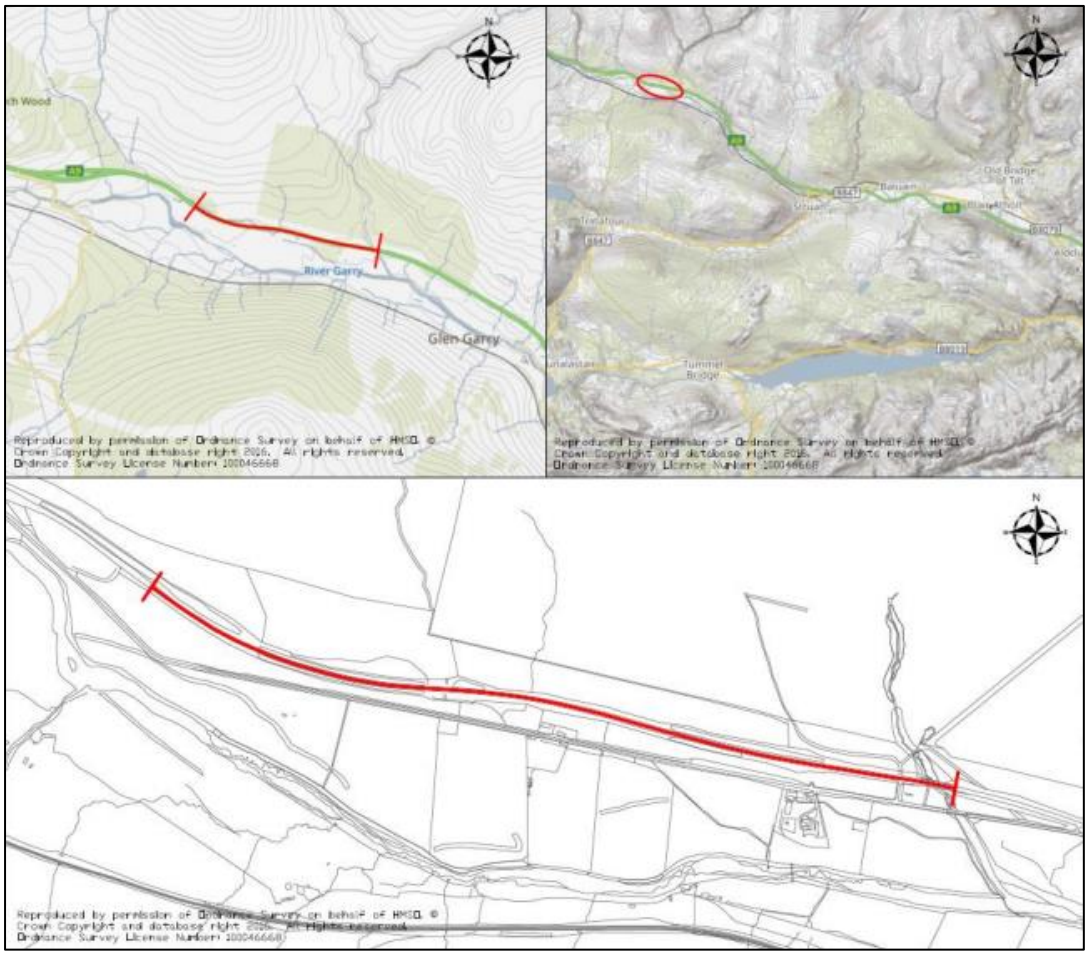

Figure 1: Scheme location

Description of local environment

Air quality

The scheme is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

There are no registered sites on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) located within 10km of the scheme.

No Air Quality Monitoring Stations (AQMS) are located within 10km of the proposed works.

Baseline air quality is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A9.

Cultural heritage

A desktop study using Historic Environment Scotland's Pastmap has identified the following features of cultural heritage within 300m of the scheme:

- Five Historic Environment Records (HER's): General Wade's Military Road runs parallel to the A9 along the scheme extent and crosses the footprint of the works near the Dalnamein junction. The remaining four HER's do not lie within the scheme extent.
- Four Canmore records: the military road as above which lies within the scheme extent.
- Two Listed Buildings which do not lie within the footprint of the works; the nearest of which (a bridge carrying the former Military Road over Allt Anndeir,) is located 40m north of the A9 carriageway.

No Garden & Designed Landscapes; Conservation Areas; Battlefields; Scheduled Monuments; or World Heritage Sites were identified within 300m of the scheme.

The construction of the A9 trunk road will likely have exposed any potential items of cultural heritage interest present within the upper engineered layers and, as such, the likelihood of presence of undiscovered features is considered to be low.

Landscape and visual effects

The Scheme is located within the Cairngorms National Park, site code 8623. The National Park has the following List of Special Qualities:

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

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, boulder-strewn high ground
- The surrounding hills
- The drama of deep corries
- Exceptional glacial landforms
- Snowscapes

Moorlands

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

Glens and Straths

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

Trees, Woods and Forests

- Dark and venerable pine forests
- Light and airy birch woods
- Parkland and policy woodlands

- Long association with forestry

Wildlife and Nature

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

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

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

Recreation

- A landscape of opportunities
- Spirituality

There are no National Scenic Areas or other sites designated for their landscape character or quality located within 300m of the scheme.

The scheme is located on a rural stretch of the A9 carriageway, located approximately 7km north of Calvine. Land surrounding the scheme is dominated by

areas of mixed woodland (including forestry plantations); grazing pastures; and arable land.

The A9 Trunk Road 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 is a single carriageway within the scheme extent.

Biodiversity

The scheme is not located within 300m of any Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or any other nationally or locally designated for biodiversity features.

There are no sites of European designation within 2km of the scheme extent.

The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas holds records of several bird species within 2km of the scheme (the search criteria included only records during the past ten years, and which have open-use attributions (OGL-CCO-CC-BY). Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), all wild birds and their active nests are protected, with certain species receiving additional protections.

The NBN Atlas has no records of invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants within 2km of the works scheme under the same criteria.

A search using Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) returned three records of common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), an injurious weed, within 300m of works. No records for INNS or invasive perennials were returned within 300m of the scheme.

Habitat in the surrounding area comprises mixed woodland (including forestry plantations), arable land and grazing pastures.

No areas of woodland as listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) are located within 300m of the scheme extent.

There are no areas of woodland or individual trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) within 300m of the scheme extent (Perth & Kinross Council).

Geology and soils

The scheme does not lie within a Geological Review Site (GCRS) or any SSSI designated for geological features (NatureScot).

Soils within the scheme extent are recorded as brown earths with humus-iron podzols. The parent material is recorded as drifts derived from schists, gneisses, granulites and quartzites, principally of the Moine Series. The landform is recorded as hummocky valley moraines: often bouldery (Scotland's Soils).

Geology within the scheme extent is varied and consists of the following throughout (British Geological Society):

- Bedrock:
  - Gaick Psammite Formation-Psammite. Metamorphic bedrock formed between 1000 and 541 million years ago between the Tonian and Ediacaran periods.
  - Tummel Psammite Formation- Psammite and semipelite. Metamorphic bedrock formed between 1000 and 541 million years ago between the Tonian and Ediacaran periods.
- Superficial deposits:
  - River Terrace superficial deposits comprising of sand, silt and clay. Sedimentary superficial deposit is recorded as being formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.
  - Alluvium superficial deposits comprising of clay, silt, sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 11.8 thousand years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.
  - Hummocky (moundy) glacial superficial deposits comprising of diamicton, sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

Material assets and waste

The proposed works are required to resurface the worn carriageway, remove the surface course and repair structural defects. Road markings and studs will also be installed. Materials used will consist of:

- Asphaltic materials (TS2010 surface course and warm mix AC20 binder course)
- Bituminous emulsion bond coat
- Milled in road studs
- Thermoplastic road marking paint.

As the value of the scheme does not exceed £350,000 a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required.

The 1.60ha scheme involves the removal of the surface course and localised areas of binder course. Planings will be reused under SEPA approved methods in accordance with the Paragraph 13 exemption, described in Schedule 3 of the Waste Management Licensing Regulations (exemption number: WML/XS/2008282).

No site compound is required for these works. Storage of plant and equipment will be within TM on the A9 carriageway.

Noise and vibration

For residential, community and commercial receptors refer to the 'Population and Human Health' section below.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by Transport Scotland's Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP) 2019-2023.

Noise modelled data for the A9 carriageway at the scheme extents records 'Day, Evening, and Night' (Lden) levels at the scheme extent as between 65 and 75 decibels (dB) (SE Map).

Baseline noise levels are likely to be primarily influenced by traffic travelling along the A9.

Population and human health

There are four residential properties within 300m of the A9 carriageway, including Tigh-na-Coille cottage, approximately 45m from the scheme. A narrow strip of woodland shelters the cottage from the A9, and an embankment and strip of woodland shelters the three other properties. Keepers Cottage and Dalnamein Lodge sit approximately 70m from the northbound carriageway and a steep embankment, a strip of forestry and the military road separate it from the A9. There are no properties adjacent to the southbound carriageway.

There are two lay-bys within the scheme extent (one on either side of the carriageway) and the Dalnamein junction towards the south of the scheme extent on either side.

The Highland Mainline railway line runs parallel to the A9 northbound carriageway at a distance of approximately 380m at its closest point for the full scheme extent.

This section of the A9 lies adjacent to National Cycle Route 7 which is a 540 mile stretch between Sunderland and Inverness. There is one walking route listed on Walk Highlands within 300m of the scheme extent: Gaick Corbetts: An Dun and Meall Creag an Loch. There are no core paths within 300m of the scheme extent.

TM will involve night-time single lane closures, facilitated by, 2-way traffic lights with convoy system in place.

Road drainage and the water environment

The river Garry (SEPA ID: 6911) runs parallel to the scheme extent at a distance of 180m east at its closest point. This section of the river (Garry intake to Errochty Water confluence) forms part of the River Tay catchment in Scotland's River basin district. The main stem is approximately 13.2km in length and it has been designated as a 'heavily modified' body of water on account of physical alterations which cannot be addressed without significant impact on water storage for hydroelectricity generation. In 2022, this section of the river was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD).

The Allt Anndeir river (SEPA ID: 6608) crosses the A9 within the scheme extent, running from the east into the river Garry. The main stem is approximately 33km in length and has also been designated as a heavily modified water body. In 2022, the Allt Anndeir was assigned 'Poor Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD.

There are numerous unclassified surface waterbodies and drainage features that lie within 300m of the scheme and Loch Errochty is approximately 5km to the west at its closest point.

SEPA Flood Map has highlighted a high risk of river water flooding on the A9 carriageway within the scheme extents, which means that there is a 10% chance of flooding each year.

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 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. The main sources are likely to be dust generated by cold milling in preparation of carriageway resurfacing, as well as exhaust emissions from ancillary plant and vehicles. As a result, there is potential for dust, particulate matter, and exhaust emissions 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.

- A water-assisted dust sweeper will sweep the carriageway after dust-generating activities, and waste will be contained and removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Materials that have a potential to produce dust will be removed from site as soon as possible, and vehicles that remove cold-milled material from site will have sheeted covers.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM will be switched off when stationary to prevent exhaust emissions (e.g., there will be no idling vehicles).
- Cutting, grinding, and sawing equipment (if required) will be fitted or used in conjunction with suitable dust suppression techniques e.g., local exhaust ventilation system that fits directly onto tools.
- Regular monitoring (e.g., by engineer or Clerk of Works) will take place when activities generating air pollution are occurring. In the unlikely event that unacceptable levels of air pollution are emanating from the site, the operation will, where practicable, be modified and re-checked to verify that the corrective action has been effective. Actions to be considered include: (a) minimizing cutting and grinding on-site, (b) reducing the operating hours, (c) changing the method of working, etc.
- 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 far as is reasonably practicable by using a ‘just in time’ delivery system. All material will also be stored on made ground.

- 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.

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 Record of Determination (RoD).

Cultural heritage

Although there are records of cultural heritage interest within 300m of the scheme extents and one within the scheme extent; any excavation works associated with the scheme are restricted to the already engineered carriageway boundary, and as such the potential for exposure of cultural heritage features is considered to be negligible; construction of the A9 road corridor is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present.

As standard, the following good practice measures will be in place to reduce the risk of impacts to undiscovered features of cultural heritage interest:

- There shall be no storage of vehicles, plant, or materials against any buildings, walls or fences.
- 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 out with 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 will be a short-term impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the site as a result of the presence of construction plant, vehicles, and TM.

However, people, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A9, and construction works are programmed to be undertaken at night (9 nights) on a rolling programme. As such, the visual impact of the works will be somewhat reduced. No consultation with The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) is deemed necessary, as the scheme is restricted to the carriageway resurfacing and TM will be temporary. Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts are anticipated e.g., when complete the visual appearance will remain largely unaffected, with a renewed road surface being the only discernible change.

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.
- Works will avoid encroaching on land and areas where work is not required or 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

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.

The scheme is not located within 300m of any sites of European designation or any SSSI designated for biodiversity features. It is located wholly within Cairngorms National Park; however, works will be restricted to the like-for-like replacement of the A9 carriageway, and no works will be undertaken within the soft-ground within this site, therefore, preventing direct removal or damage to habitat features associated with the qualifying features of the site as detailed above.

No INNS or invasive perennial records were returned during the desktop study within 300m of the scheme and, as such, potential disturbance and/or spread of INNS during the works is negligible. Three records of common ragwort, an injurious weed, were recorded on Transport Scotland's AMPS within 300m of the scheme; however,

works will be confined to the trunk road surface and road verges which are subject to cyclic landscape management activities; therefore, the risk of disturbance or spread of injurious weeds is considered low.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the Site Environmental Management Plan (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 (9 nights) and will be undertaken on a rolling programme. 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 to carry out the 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, which will be included in the SEMP. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species.
- 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 will be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team.
- Artificial lighting will be directed away from areas of woodland and waterbodies as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
- Personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of INNS or injurious weeds in road verges throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in working areas, works will be restricted to a 7m buffer of any growth where reasonably practicable.
- 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

Works will be restricted to the A9 carriageway, and as such are not anticipated to result in change to or have an adverse impact on geology and soils. With the following mitigation measures in place, the likelihood of significant impacts on geology and soils is low.

- The parking of machinery/personnel 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) will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Mitigation measures to prevent contamination of soils through loss of containment will be strictly adhered to.

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 will 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.
- Road planings will be re-used or recycled under a SEPA Paragraph 13(a) waste exemption and in line with BEAR Scotland's Procedure 126: The Production of Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings.
- 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. 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 shall 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 scheme have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities. However, the works are not located within a CNMA, and the proximity of road space suggests that residents within the local area will have a degree of tolerance to noise and disturbance. Works will also be completed over 9 nights on a rolling programme, with the aim being to complete the noisiest works by 23:00. Works with the potential to induce worst-case scenario noise and vibration will also be intermittent, temporary, transient and short-lived.

The road surface is in a poor condition, with a series of defects. Replacing the life-expired surface course with TS2010 road surfacing affords the benefits of a reduction in mid-to-high frequency traffic noise and a reduction in ground vibrations. As a result, upon completion of the work, noise associated with the movement of vehicles on the trunk road should decrease post construction.

The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- Where possible, the noisiest work operations (e.g., cold milling, using breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, use of rollers, etc.) will be completed before 23:00.
- The Environmental Health Officers (EHO) from Perth & Kinross Council will be notified of works.
- Local residents (i.e., those within 300m) will be notified in advance of the works, likely by a letter drop, which will contain details of the proposed timings and duration of the works, in addition to contact details for the Site Supervisor.
- 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. 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 site personnel will be fully briefed in advance of works regarding the need to minimise noise during works and of the site-specific sensitivities.
- Operatives will be briefed using the 'Being a Good Neighbour' toolbox talk prior to commencement of the works.
- Drop heights from vehicles and NRMM will be kept to a minimum to minimise noise when unloading.
- 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 local residents, vehicle travellers, and non-motorised road users (NMUs) as a result of construction presence, and associated noise and delays due to traffic management measures. Some access points are located within the scheme extent, however local access will be granted where required.

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 limited duration and will move progressively along the full scheme extent. With the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low:

- Notification will be issued to local residents and local public transport operators prior to commencement of the works, advising of any proposed works and expected restrictions.
- Local access will be granted as required.
- Any changes of schedule (e.g. change from night-time works to daytime works) will be communicated to local residents throughout the programme.
- Appropriate provisions / measures will 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 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

There is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment due to operation of plant within proximity to watercourses, which may lead to 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). No in-water works will take place and there is no requirement for the abstraction or transfers of water from, or discharges to, a waterbody. As such, the potential for a direct pollution incident within a waterbody is unlikely. Experience gained from BEAR maintenance schemes elsewhere on the network has shown that where standard good working practice is adopted (e.g., adherence to SEPA good practice guidance, utilisation of drain covers or similar, etc.), water quality is protected.

The works may result in potential direct or indirect effects on surrounding waterbodies. The following mitigation measures will be put in place to reduce the risk of pollution incidents as a result of works:

- The scheme will not entail any in-stream works.

- Standard working practices to comply with The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) for works in or near water will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site.
- 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 will 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. 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 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 will 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 materials movement, and waste will removed to local waste management facilities.

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.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

There will be no change to the likelihood of flooding on the A9 within the scheme extents upon completion of the works.

Works are restricted to areas of made ground on the A9 carriageway surface, with access to the scheme gained via the A9. TM will employ lane closures facilitated by temporary traffic lights and convoy working. Local residents will be notified of working hours and provided with appropriate contact information. Pedestrians or other NMUs will be accommodated within the TM setup.

The works will not result in any change in vulnerability of the A9 carriageway or active travel route to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.

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 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 Perth & Kinross Council Planning Portal (Map Search) identified no approved planning applications within 300m of the scheme within the last six months.

A search of the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner website (Map Search) has identified that there are currently BEAR Scotland works ongoing south of the scheme extent (A9 Killiecrankie to Dalreoch); however, these are proposed to be finished by

the 15/05/2024 and no other roadworks are noted as being planned, on the trunk road at the same time as this 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 significant cumulative effects 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 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) are situated in whole within the Cairngorms National Park, which is 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 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 project will not have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as:

Characteristics of the scheme:

- Works are restricted to like-for-like replacement of worn road surface, with all works restricted to made ground on the A9 carriageway.
- Construction activities are restricted to an area of 1.60 ha along the A9 for a length of 1775m.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to nearby receptors or protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- No INNS have been recorded within the scheme extents.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.

- Residual impacts are considered to beneficial for the travelling public which may use this stretch of carriageway. In addition, improved road surface will reduce the road noise levels and in turn will reduce disruption to the receptor located in proximity to the scheme.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme will be located within the existing A9 road boundary (carriageway surface) and as such, no land take will be required.
- The scheme is located within the Cairngorms National Park Authority. Works entail like-for-like resurfacing and no change to the visual landscape is expected.
- The scheme does not lie within or in proximity to any designated European, national or local sites (excluding the Cairngorms National Park).
- There is one HER/Canmore within the scheme extent (a military road); however, the construction of the A9 trunk road is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present.
- The site compound will be located on made ground within TM.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- Works are programmed to only take 9 nights to complete on a rolling programme, with the aim being to complete the noisiest works by 23:00.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- 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.
- In the event that INNS are found on site, measures to prevent potential INNS spread will be implemented.

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.

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Further copies of this document are available, on request, in audio and visual formats and in community languages. Any enquiries regarding this document / publication should be sent to us at info@transport.gov.scot

This document is also available on the Transport Scotland website: www.transport.gov.scot

Published by Transport Scotland, June 2024

Follow us:

transcotland

@transcotland

transport.gov.scot

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot