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# Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

## A82 Laggan & A82 Aberchalder Access Platforms

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# Project Details

## Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out installation of access platforms to the A82 Laggan and A82 Aberchalder swing bridges to allow safe access to the bridges during the times of open deck position. The works will include installation of foundations and access to the platforms and adjustment to the fencing.

Steel access platforms will be constructed offsite and delivered to site for installation.

Approximately 1 tonne of soil will be excavated from approach footing. The soil is to be reused on site in landscaping.

The scheme consists of 0.01ha areas for each site.

The works are programmed to commence on 24th February 2025 over a period of two weeks utilising a daytime working pattern. The works form part of the A82 Laggan and A82 Aberchalder Winter Works 2024-25 which are currently being undertaken on site.

No traffic management is anticipated on the A82 carriageway live lines as the works are around / beneath the bridge. Pedestrians and non-motorised users (NMUs) will be accommodated within the working area. Telehandler or Hydrauliska Industri AB (HIAB) will be operating from adjacent Scottish Canals land, to lift components into place during installation.

Canal navigation closure is in place from 4th November 2024 – 21st March 2025 (approved by Scottish Canals).

## Location

The scheme consists of access platform installation works at A82 Laggan swing bridge (NGR: NN 29988 98318) and A82 Aberchalder swing bridge (NGR: NH 33847 03528). Both bridges carry the A82 trunk road over the Caledoian Canal within the Highland Council area (Figure 1).

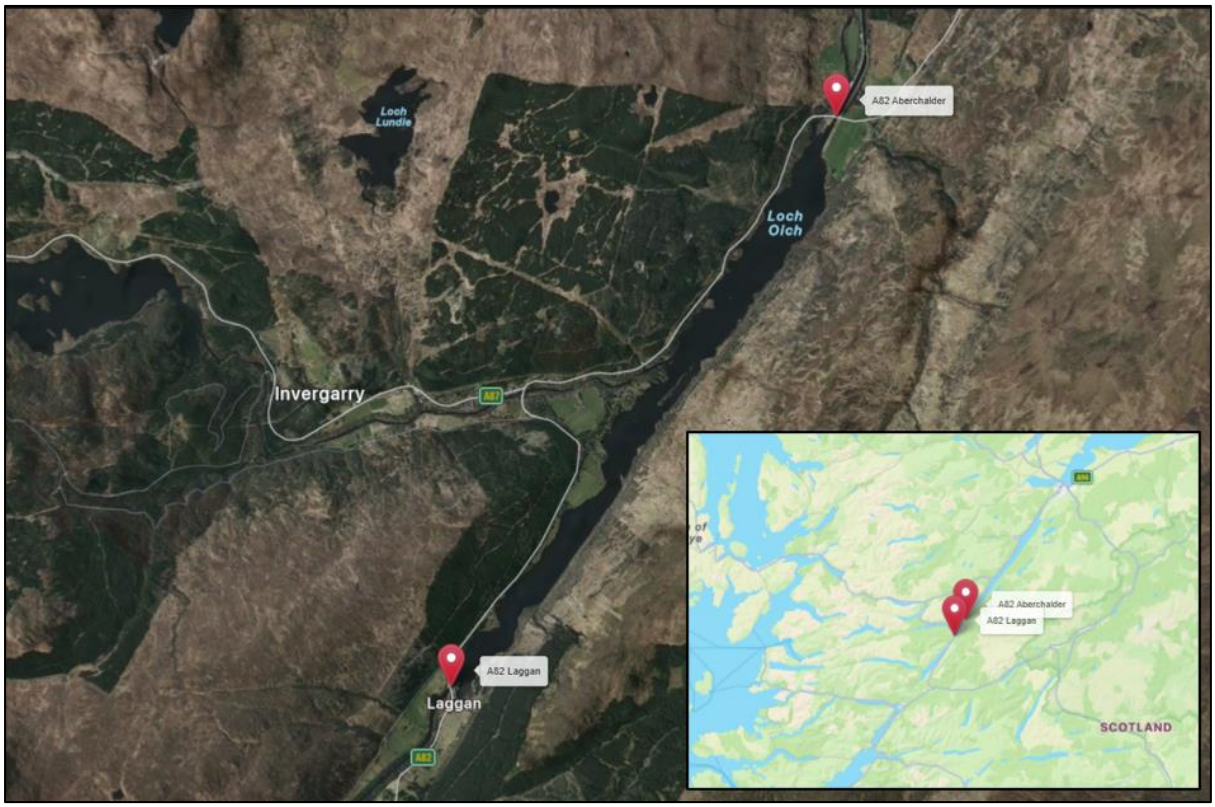


Figure 1. Location of A82 Laggan and A82 Aberchalder swing bridges.

# Description of local environment

## Air quality

Neither of the sites are located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) declared by the Highland Council (Air Quality in Scotland).

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

No Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) sites (which record air pollutant releases), are located within 10km of the scheme (Scotland's Environment).

Baseline air quality at the scheme location is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A82 trunk road and Caledonian Canal. Secondary sources are likely derived from day-to-day urban and agricultural activities.

## Cultural heritage

A desktop study using Historic Environment Scotland's PastMap has identified the following features of cultural heritage within 300m of the A82 Laggan swing bridge:

- A82 Laggan swing bridge lies within the borders of Scheduled Monument 'Caledonian Canal, Laggan Locks to Loch Oich' (SM6494).
    - The area to be scheduled includes all the canal in water and the strip of ground extending up to 20m from the water on either side and containing the towpaths and embankments and any associated capstans, bollards, mooring hooks, mile posts, weirs and overflows.
    - The scheduled area excludes the plate girder swing bridge at Laggan, all modern moorings, pontoons, slipways, walls and fences, power cables, lampposts and other street furniture.

- The scheme extent is located within Blar Na LéIne Inventory Battlefield (ID: BTL29).

Of lesser cultural heritage value, seven Historic Environment Records (HERs) and nine records on Canmore database lie within 300 m of the scheme extents. Two of these, a HER and a Canmore, pertain to the A82 Laggan swing bridge. There is no connectivity between the scheme and remaining cultural heritage records as the nearest of these lies approximately 50m east of the scheme.

No Garden & Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, or World Heritage sites were identified within 300m of the A82 Laggan swing bridge (PastMap).

The following features of cultural heritage lie within 300m of the A82 Aberchalder swing bridge (PastMap):

- A82 Aberchalder swing bridge lies within the borders of Scheduled Monument 'Caledonian Canal, Loch Oich to Cullochy Lock' (SM6495).
    - The monument comprises that stretch of inland waterway known as the Caledonian Canal running from Loch Oich north-eastward to Cullochy Lock
    - The area to be scheduled includes all the canal in water and the strip of ground extending up to 20m from the water on either side and containing the towpaths and embankments and any associated capstans, bollards, mooring hooks, mile posts, weirs and overflows.
    - The scheduled area also includes the abutments belonging to the former accommodation swing bridge to the north of the road swing bridge at Aberchalder but excludes that road swing bridge as well as all modern moorings, pontoons, slipways, walls and fences, power cables, lampposts and other street furniture.

- Category A Listed Building 'Oich, Old Bridge Over River Oich' (LB1872), is a bridge and lies 70m northwest of the scheme.

- Category B Listed Building 'Oich, Bridge Of, Over River Oich' (LB1873), is A82 bridge and lies 80m west of the scheme.
- Category C Listed Building 'Caledonian Canal, Abercalder Cottage (Swing Bridge Keeper's Cottage)' (LB1878) lies 25m northeast of the scheme.

Of lesser cultural heritage value, eleven Historic Environment Records (HERs) and nine Canmore records lie within 300m of the scheme extents. Two of these, a HER and a Canmore, pertain to the A82 Aberchalder swing bridge. There is no connectivity between the scheme and the remaining cultural heritage records e.g. the nearest of these lies approximately 20m northeast of the scheme.

No Garden & Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Battlefields, or World Heritage sites were identified within 300m of the A82 Aberchalder swing bridge (PastMap).

## Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is not located with a National Park or National Scenic Area (SiteLink).

A82 Laggan swing bridge is located within 'Broad Forested Strath' Landscape Character Type (LCT) (LCT No. 235) and A82 Aberchalder swing bridge is located within 'Broad Steep-Sided Glen' LCT (LCT No. 225) (NatureScot).

The LCT No. 235 has the following key features:

- Broad, low-lying straths with rolling relief and sculptural glacial landforms.
- Simple, large scale mosaic of forested ridges, rolling pastures and heather moorland, but dominated by swathes of forestry.
- A comparatively densely settled landscape with villages, houses and sporadic commercial development.
- Quarries hidden amongst the woodland cover.
- Strong communication and service corridors.
- Long distance views from surrounding hills over the glens, which are framed by steep glen sides.
- Lochs, rivers or canals on glen floor have often been engineered or substantially altered by man.

The LCT No. 225 has the following key features:

- A clearly defined, broad, linear, steep sided, V-shaped glen and deep loch cutting through mountains and hills, with limited areas of flatter ground.

- Large-scale conifer forests with small areas of open moorland covering most of the glen sides, particularly the lower slopes.
- Small patches of broad-leaved woodlands, mostly in side glens and close to the shore.
- Agricultural land on less steep slopes, glen intersections and alluvial plains.
- A few settlements, with a well-defined core, located at glen intersections and on gentler slopes, separated by long stretches of relatively uninhabited land.
- Contrast between the busy trunk road and larger settlements on the west side and the quiet minor road on east side which has fewer settlements separated by large undeveloped areas.
- Strong evidence of past settlement in the number and diversity of archaeological and historic sites from prehistoric times to the 20th Century.
- Contrast between the visual and seasonal diversity of broadleaf woodland and bright, open pockets of farmland and the forested and moorland surroundings.
- Contrast between the smaller scale landscapes of settled, lower slopes and the large-scale moorland and forested backdrop.
- A simple linear and enclosed visual composition of bands of land, water and sky, with long skylines of even height, and the glen and loch as unifying features.
- Visual focus directed along the linear route of the glen or across the water to the opposite shore and up to the skyline.

Both bridges lie within a semi-rural area, with land use surrounding the scheme a mixture of agriculturally improved, re-seeded and heavily fertilised grassland, scattered urban development and road network. Woodland is a prominent land feature further afield from both bridges. The Caledonian Canal forms a major landscape feature within the area.

The A82 Trunk Road, within the North West, connects Alexandria with Crianlarich, Fort William and Inverness. It commences immediately north of Tullichewan Roundabout in Alexandria leading generally northwards for a distance of 243 kilometres to its junction with the A9 at (but excluding) Longman Roundabout in Inverness. The A82 is predominantly single carriageway along its length, with some lengths of ‘2+1’ carriageway. The A82 is a single carriageway at both swing bridges.

## Biodiversity

There are no European designated sites located within 2km of the scheme (SiteLink).

South Laggan Fen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (EU Site Code: 135097) lies 10m east of Laggan swing bridge. The SSSI is designated for transition open fen habitat (SiteLink).

There are no other locally or nationally designated sites (i.e. SSSI, National/Local Nature Reserves) within 300m of the scheme sites (SiteLink).

A search of NBN Atlas did not identify any records of invasive and injurious plants (as listed in the NMC Contract) under the same search criteria. In addition, Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) did not highlight any records of invasive and injurious plants within 300m of the scheme extents.

Expanses of woodland listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) as 'other' (on 'Roy' map) and 'ancient' (of semi-natural origin) lie within 300m of the scheme sites (Scotland's Environment).

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

A82 Laggan swing bridge spans the Caledonian Canal at its mouth to Loch Oich and A82 Aberchalder swing bridge spans the Caledonian Canal 325m north of Loch Oich. Freshwater habitat within the area is a dominant feature and provides a wide variety of habitat for fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.

A range of ecological surveys have been carried out by (or undertaken by subcontractor on behalf of) BEAR Scotland at the A82 Laggan and Aberchalder swing bridges over the past several years. The most recent surveys were undertaken in winter and summer 2023.

## Geology and soils

The scheme does not lie within a Geological Conservation Review Site (GCRS), or a geologically designated SSSI (NatureScot).

Bedrock within the A82 Laggan swing bridge is comprised of Great Glen Fault Zone (cataclasite), which is a metamorphic bedrock (BGS GeoIndex). Bedrock within the A82 Aberchalder swing bridge is comprised of West Highland Granite Gneiss Intrusion (granite, gneissose), which is a metamorphic bedrock (BGS GeoIndex).

Superficial deposits within the A82 Laggan swing bridge is comprised of Glaciofluvial Deposits (gravel, sand and silt), which are sedimentary superficial deposits (BGS GeoIndex). Superficial deposits within the A82 Aberchalder swing bridge are comprised of Alluvium (sand, gravel and boulders) and Lacustrine Shoreface and

Beach deposits (gravel, sand, silt and clay), which are sedimentary superficial deposits (BGS GeoIndex).

The local soil type at both sites is recorded as mineral podzols (Scotland's Environment Map).

Soils within both sites are recorded as being 'Class 0', as displayed on Scotland's Peat Map. Class 0 are mineral soils with no peat present.

## Material assets and waste

The works will require the installation of access platforms which consist of galvanised steel supporting framework with Glass-Reinforced-Plastic (GRP) grid walkway surface. Small areas of precast concrete (PCC) flags / blocks will form the approach ramp and timber fencing and gate.

The value of the scheme does not exceed £350,000 (currently valued at £132,000) and therefore a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required.

It is expected that the works will produce approximately 1 tonne of excavated soil material which will be reused within the site and approximately 10kg of concrete dust arising from anchor-bolt holes which will be disposed of in a licenced waste facility.

## 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 the Transportation Noise Action Plan (Road Maps) (TNAP).

Round 4 Noise Mapping shows the average day, evening and night-time noise levels (LDEN) at the schemes to be between 55 and 65dB (SEPA).

Baseline noise levels are likely to be influenced by traffic travelling along the A82 trunk road and Caledonian Canal. Secondary sources are likely derived from day-to-day urban and agricultural land activities.

## Population and human health

Several residential properties lie within 300m of the swing bridges, with the nearest being 20m-50m from the works at either bridge. Properties are generally screened from the scheme by intervening tree belts and/or topography with exception of the

properties nearest to the swing bridges. The access road to the properties nearest to the scheme lies adjacent to either swing bridge.

National Cycle Network (NCN) route Nr78 (OS Maps), also noted as a Core Path (Scotland's Environment) and a walking route listed on WalkHighlands crosses the A82 within scheme extents at both bridges (WalkHighland).

The area in proximity to the Caledonian Canal is popular with tourists and outdoor recreationists.

No traffic management is anticipated on the A82 carriageway live lines – the works are around / beneath the bridge. Pedestrians and non-motorised users (NMUs) will be accommodated within the working area.

All works  lie within the Scottish Canals land. Canal navigation closure is in place from 4th November 2024 – 21st March 2025 (approved by Scottish Canals).

## Road drainage and the water environment

A82 Laggan swing bridge spans the 'Caledonian Canal - Loch Oich catchment boundary', a classified waterbody (ID: 20250) at its mouth to Loch Oich, a classified loch (ID: 100188) (SEPA water environmental hub). Caledonian Canal - Loch Oich catchment boundary is a canal in the River Ness catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The water body has been designated as an artificial waterbody on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on navigation (SEPA water environmental hub). Loch Oich lies 20m north of the A82 Laggan swing bridge and is a lake in the River Ness catchment of the Scotland river basin district. It is 1.9 square kilometres in area. Both Caledonian Canal - Loch Oich catchment boundary and Loch Oich have been assigned a Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) overall classification of 'Good' (in 2023) (SEPA water environmental hub).

The A82 Aberchalder swing bridge spans 'Caledonian Canal - Loch Oich to Loch Ness', which is a classified waterbody (ID: 20249) 325m north of Loch Oich, a classified loch (ID: 100188) (SEPA water environmental hub). Caledonian Canal - Loch Oich to Loch Ness boundary is a canal in the River Ness catchment of the Scotland river basin district and has been designated as an artificial water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on navigation (SEPA water environmental hub). Loch Oich lies 325m south and is a lake in the River Ness catchment of the Scotland river basin district. Both, Caledonian Canal - Loch Oich to Loch Ness and Loch Oich have been assigned a WFD overall classification of 'Good' (in 2023) (SEPA water environmental hub).

River Oich, classified waterbody (ID: 20253) lies parallel to the canal, 70m west of the A82 Aberchalder swing bridge. River Oich is a river in the River Ness catchment of the Scotland river basin district and has been assigned a WFD 2000/60/EC overall classification of 'Good' (in 2023) (SEPA water environmental hub).

Numerous minor unclassified surface waterbodies considered to be minor drainage channels, tributaries and ponds lie within 300m of the scheme extents.

Both sites are underlain by the 'Northern Highlands' groundwater body, which was classified by SEPA in 2023 as having an overall status of 'good' (SEPA Water Classification Hub). This groundwater body is also recorded as a Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA) (Ground) (Scotland's Environment).

A search of SEPA Flood Maps records that the banks of the Caledonian Canal at the A82 Laggan and A82 Aberchalder swing bridges have high risk of fluvial flooding, and as such, these areas have a 10% chance (high risk) of flooding each year (SEPA Flood Maps).

# 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 excavation of soil material and drilling within the concrete and emissions from transportation of materials, the presence of construction traffic and vehicles idling. 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 quality are considered to be low.

- Ancillary plant, vehicles and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems. These will also 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.
- The use of pre-cast concrete will be prioritised over cast-in-place.

- Cement bags will remain closed when not in use to prevent cast off to the surrounding environment.

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

Both sites are located with the boundaries of the Caledonian Canal Scheduled Monument; however, the swing bridges and its associated mechanical and electrical elements are excluded from the scheduled area. The majority of works are confined to the unscheduled elements, however there is requirement for excavation works and alteration to the structure which may have an impact on the local landscape and therefore the Scheduled Monument. Consultation with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is currently ongoing to determine whether Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) is required to permit these works. If required, no works requiring SMC will be carried out until SMC is in place.

Although several Listed Buildings lie within proximity to the scheme, there will be no works carried out on or near the Listed Buildings and no impacts are expected.

The works at Laggan swing bridge lie within the Blar Na LéIne Inventory Battlefield, all works are confined to previously engineered ground with minimal excavation required. Therefore, the likelihood of encountering historical artifacts associated with the Battlefield is considered to be low. Any advice from HES regarding the Battlefield will be followed.

It is assessed that the planned works will not adversely impact the cultural heritage value of the Scheduled Monument or any nearby sites of cultural heritage interest with the following mitigation measures in place:

- All requirements (e.g., SMC) advised by HES will be implemented. If required, BEAR Scotland will obtain SMC and/or other relevant consents and no works requiring these consents will take place until these are in place.
- All site personnel will be briefed on the importance of cultural heritage value within the area.
- If there are any unexpected archaeological finds, works will stop temporarily in the vicinity, the area will be cordoned off and a member of the BEAR Environment team will be contacted for advice.
- Laydown areas will be sensitively located (e.g., on areas of made ground) to avoid areas of cultural heritage interest where possible.

- There will be no storage of plant, materials or equipment against buildings, bridges, walls or fences.

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

## Landscape and visual effects

There will be a minor impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the site as a result of the proposed works and presence of construction plant, vehicles, and TM (if required). The works will include installation of access platforms at the swing bridges; however, the platforms are designated within the visual character of the existing bridges. Therefore, no significant visual changes to the local landscape are expected following completion of the works.

Works will be carried out in line with good practice measures for managing the construction environment as outlined in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) as follows:

- Throughout all stages of the works, the site will be kept clean and tidy, with materials, equipment, plant and wastes appropriately stored, minimising the landscape and visual effects.
- 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.
- The working area and site compound location will be appropriately reinstated following works.
- 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

The scheme is not situated within a ‘sensitive area’ designated for biodiversity features e.g., Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, Ramsar, SSSI, etc.

Although the swing bridges have potential to support nesting birds, the works are programmed to commence outside of the breeding bird season, however will trail into the beginning of March when the breeding bird season starts. Considering the

ongoing works at the site, any birds that choose to nest within the proximity of the scheme will be appropriately acclimatised to the ongoing disturbance from the proposed works. Any such instance of birds establishing nests during the works phase will be reported to BEAR Scotland's Environment Team, who will advise on any suitable mitigation required.

Previous site visits did not identify any INNS, invasive native perennials or injurious weeds within the scheme extents. There is no requirement to import topsoil and the excavated material will be reused on the site. As such, there is limited potential to spread or introduce INNS, invasive native perennials, or injurious flowering plant species.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site. Any protected species in the area are likely to be accustomed to road noise on the A82, boat traffic on the Caledonian Canal, and operation of the swing bridges. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity are considered to be low:

- A pre-construction survey will be undertaken.
- Relevant toolbox talks for working with protected species will be included in the SEMP.
- No in-water works will be permitted. Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and the works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- No works will take place within nearby AWI woodland.
- 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 Environment Team.
- Artificial lighting, if required during low light levels, will be directed away from road verges, woodland, bridge and waterbodies as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
- If an active bird nest (e.g., eggs or young present, adult sitting on nest) is identified on site, all works within 30m of the nest must stop until the BEAR Scotland NW Environment Team can provide advice.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.

Taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the good site practice mitigation measures which will be adopted during the works, it is anticipated that any biodiversity effects associated with the proposed works will not be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

## Geology and soils

The scheme is not located within a GCRS or geological SSSI. Although the works will entail excavation to install foundations for access platforms, this will be on engineered ground along the Caledonian Canal. In addition, any excavations will be carried out with good practice measures detailed in the SEMP as follows:

- Excavated material will be reused within the scheme extents.
- Upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Mitigation measures to prevent contamination of soils through loss of containment will be strictly adhered to.
- The parking of machinery/vehicles and storage of equipment on grass will be minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.
- All relevant soil management toolbox talks will be included in the SEMP and sediment control measures will be in place to prevent soil eroding into the unnamed waterbody and travelling downstream.
- Additional pollution prevention measures as outlined in Road drainage and the water environment will be adhered to during construction.

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

## Material assets and waste

During construction, there will be a temporary impact as a result of material consumption and waste production. 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.

Provided the following mitigation measures are followed during works, impacts during construction are not anticipated to be significant:

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- Bulk material will be delivered to site without packaging where possible.
- Supplies are to be requested to minimise all packaging where possible.
- Care is to be taken to only order the correct quantity of required materials, preventing disposal of unused materials.
- Materials will be reutilised where possible.
- Facilities on site will be provided in a designated area to enable the correct segregation of waste, maximising recycling on site. These are to be clearly marked and labelled.
- Wastes not suitable for recycling will be sent to landfill or special waste treatment facilities, depending on the nature of the waste.
- All waste stored on site will be adequately protected against the elements and vermin.
- All appropriate waste documentation must be present on-site and be available for inspection.
- All wastes and unused materials will be removed from site in a safe 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 retained by BEAR Scotland. A copy of the waste transfer is also to be provided to BEAR Scotland as early as practicably feasible and retained.
- If required, an exemption from SEPA will be secured to allow for the reuse of materials.
- During the site induction, all staff will be informed that littering is not tolerated. Staff are also encouraged to collect any litter seen on site.
- Where applicable, all temporary signage will be removed from site on completion of the works.

- All hazardous material will be stored in line with Road Drainage & Water Environment.
- 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).
- Any contaminated ground as a result of the works will be removed and transferred off site as special waste.
- Any special waste (if generated) will be removed from site by a licenced waste carrier. Special waste will not be mixed with general waste and/or other recyclables.

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

With the implementation of the following mitigation, noise and vibration impacts during the construction phase are not predicted to be significant:

- The best practicable means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites, will always be employed to reduce noise to a minimum.
- Where possible, inherently quiet plant will be selected for construction works.
- All plant, machinery and tools will be well maintained, including parts relating to noise minimisation.
- All plant, machinery, and vehicles will be switched off when not in use.
- Where ancillary plant such as generators are required, they will be positioned so to cause minimum noise disturbance.
- Movement of plant onto and around the site will have regard to minimising noise and will not be left running if not required for immediate use.
- All plant will be operated in a mode that minimises noise emissions and will have been maintained regularly to comply with relevant national and international standards.

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 have the potential to have temporary adverse impacts on local residents, vehicle travellers, and NMUs. TM is not expected to be required as the works are set-back from the trunk road. Pedestrians and NMUs will be accommodated within any TM if required. The Caledonian Canal is closed to boat navigation from 4th November 2024 – 21st March 2025, which has been approved by Scottish Canals. The works will be undertaken out with the season for canal travelling and the works will not impact travellers on the A82. Furthermore, following the works, access to the swing bridges during its operation will be improved which will have a positive impact on users of the bridges following the completion of the works.

A number of properties lie within 300m of the scheme, with the nearest of these located just 20m from the scheme extents and therefore there is potential for disturbance from noise and vibration.

With the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low:

- Works are currently programmed for daytime hours. The works schedule and any changes to this will be communicated to local residents prior to and throughout the programme.
- Given the proximity of urban development to the scheme extents, the Toolbox Talk TTN-042 Being a Good Neighbour will be briefed prior to works commencing.
- 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'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 the 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/flooding) 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:

- 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 are detailed in the SEMP and will be 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 or sediment into the water environment.
- Pollution prevention measures will be checked daily and more regularly during periods of heavy rainfall to ensure they remain effective.
- 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 will 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 contaminated waste.
- Generators and static plant may have the potential to leak fuel and / or other hydrocarbons and will have bunding with a capacity of 110%. If these are not bunded then drip trays must also be supplied beneath the equipment with a capacity of 110%.

- All hazardous material utilised on site is required to undergo assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002. These assessment(s) will contain a section on environment which highlights any precautions and mitigation requirements.

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

During the works there is potential for impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of equipment, vehicles, material use and production and transportation of materials and wastes. However, considering the nature, short-term duration, size and scale of the scheme, and the mitigation detailed below, the risk of significant impacts to climate are considered to be low.

Proposed climate mitigation measures:

- All mitigation measures detailed within ‘Air Quality’ and ‘Material Assets and Waste’ will be adhered to.
- BEAR Scotland will adhere to its Carbon Management Policy.
- Where possible, materials will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be disposed at local landfill, where required.

## Vulnerability of the project to risks

The works will be programmed as far as is reasonably practicable to avoid periods of adverse weather or heavy rainfall. The works require installation of foundation for the access platforms; however, the installed impermeable footprint is insignificant when taken into the account surrounding landscape. Therefore, increased flooding issues at the scheme extents are not anticipated following the works.

No TM is anticipated on the A82 carriageway live lanes; therefore, no impacts on A82 road users are expected. The works are around and beneath the bridge and relevant works safety zones will be in place. Access to pedestrian and NMUs routes will be maintained. Access to the nearby residential properties will be maintained.

The works at the A82 Aberchalder and A82 Laggan swing bridges will be undertaken out with the Caledonian Canal operation season and as such the works impact on boat traffic within the canal will be negligible.

A SEMP will be put in place which will set out a framework to reduce adverse impacts from construction activities on sensitive environmental receptors. The SEMP will set out the commitments and constraints and will identify the procedures and measures that will be used to manage and control these aspects. The Contactor will be required to comply with all conditions of the SEMP.

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

Winter Works 2024-25 are currently underway at both swing bridges. However, the proposed access platform works are not expected to significantly contribute to the total cumulative effects. It is expected that access platform works will contribute to the cumulative effects, however these effects are confined to a single project which is managed in line with appropriate guidance and contractual requirements. Furthermore, a search of the Highland Council Planning Portal (Map Search) identified no approved planning applications within 300m of the both sites, in the last 6 months. Therefore, the cumulative effects are confined to an existing ongoing project with no presence of other developments in the vicinity.

A search of the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner website (Map Search) has identified a number of other short-term roadworks within 5km of the scheme as being programmed in the near future and if delayed may be undertaken at the same time as this scheme. However, the scheme does not require TM to be present on the A82 and as such, no cumulative effects associated with the traffic restrictions are anticipated.

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 TM. 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 TM to complete multiple schemes at once. This approach allows BEAR Scotland to effectively manage the potential cumulative effects as a result of TM, resulting in minimal disruption to users of the Scottish trunk road network.

Overall, the cumulative effect of the scheme is confined to inter-related effects of a single project which is managed in line with appropriate guidance and contractual requirements. There are no other developments programmed in vicinity to the works

and as such no significant unexpected projects are expected. Therefore, the works will not have a significant cumulative effect with any other future works in the area.

# Assessments of the environmental effects

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

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

This is a relevant project in terms of section 55A(16) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 as it is a project for 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) do not exceed 1 hectare in area, but are situated within the Scheduled Monument 'Caledonian Canal, Loch Oich to Cullochy Lock' (SM6495) and' Caledonian Canal, Laggan Locks to Loch Oich' (SM6494) which are sensitive areas 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:**

- The scheme installation of access platforms at A82 Aberchalder and A82 Laggan swing bridges. The works will also involve installation of foundations and access to the platforms and adjustment to the fencing.
- Construction activities are restricted to an area of 0.01ha at each site and will be undertaken out with the tourist peak season.
- The works will be undertaken during daytime hours over two weeks.
- The scheme proposes to install access platforms which will be manufactured off site and delivered for assembly prior to the works commencing. The design of the

platforms are in line within the character of the swing bridges and therefore will not have an adverse impact on the local landscape.

- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.

**Location of the scheme:**

- The works are within the Scheduled Monuments stated above. Consultation with HES is ongoing to determine if SMC is required to permit works within the boundary of the Scheduled Monuments. If required, no works requiring SMC will commence until SMC is in place.
- The scheme does not lie within 2km of a European site. There is also no ecological connectivity with a European site out with the 2km buffers.
- The works lie within the Blar Na LéIne Inventory Battlefield; however, all works are confined to previously engineered grounds with minimal excavation required. HES have been advised on the works and any advice or requirements will be followed.
- South Laggan Fen SSSI (EU Site Code: 135097) lies 10m east of the scheme extents, which is designated for transition open fen habitat. No works will take place within the SSSI and as such no ORC from NatureScot is required.
- The works will not restrict access to nearby residential properties.
- A pedestrian and NMUs route, which accommodates NCN route Nr73 and Core Paths, lie within and in proximity to the scheme. Works will be undertaken out with the tourist peak season and access will be maintained.
- The site compound will be located on made ground.

**Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:**

- The works will not result in negative impacts on the Caledonian Canal Scheduled Monument provided that good practice measures and any advice from HES are followed.
- Any impacts on air quality or noise levels are minor, short-term and temporary during the construction period. With mitigation measures in place, the potential impacts on local receptors are minor and not significant.
- Any short-term impacts on pedestrians, cyclists or equestrians are considered negligible, particularly as works will be completed outside of the key tourist period.
- The works will not result in loss of habitat as all works will take place on the swing bridge or on surrounding engineered ground. Following completion of the generator cabin works, the area will be reinstated into permeable ground in use for Caledonian Canal visitors.

- No in-water works will be undertaken. However, there is a potential for an impact on water quality during construction as a result of potential spillage of fuels, oils and mobilisation of silt. However, with pollution prevention measures in place, this risk is considered to be negligible.
- No impacts on breeding birds are anticipated; the works will commence out with the bird breeding season which will trail into the start of the bird breeding season. Any birds that may nest in the area at the start of the bird breeding season will be in acceptance of the ongoing disturbance levels within the area.
- No cumulative effects with projects within vicinity of the scheme has been identified.
- With pollution prevention measures in place, there are no risks to human health from water contamination or air pollution.
- No impacts on geology and soils are anticipated.
- During construction, there will be a temporary impact as a result of materials and waste.

# 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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