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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A92 Westport to Bridge of Muchalls Northbound

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Project Details

Description

Resurfacing works are required to maintain the safety and integrity of a section of the A92 northbound (NB) carriageway, between Stonehaven and Muchalls in Aberdeenshire covering an area of 1.2ha. The works are required as the carriageway is currently displaying various structural defects, such as fretting, rutting, cracking and patching.

Construction activities and the associated plant and machinery required are as follows:

- Implementation of Traffic Management (TM) and marking out site (TM plant);
- Removal of existing surfacing and milling to agreed depths (planer, wagon, lorries);
- Resurfacing to the existing road levels using TS2010 aggregate, AC binder, AC base (paver, roller);
- Reinstatement of road markings, linings, and studs (lorries/wagons and plant); and,
- Removal of TM.

The proposed construction is programmed to be undertaken and completed within the 2025-2026 financial year during nighttime hours.

TM plans are yet to be determined but may include NB closures with a diversion route or an overnight convoy.

Location

The scheme is located along the A92 NB carriageway between Stonehaven and Muchalls in Aberdeenshire. The scheme extents can be found at the following National Grid References (NGRs):

- Scheme Start - NO 89276 90073
- Scheme End - NO 89875 91638

See Figure 1 below.

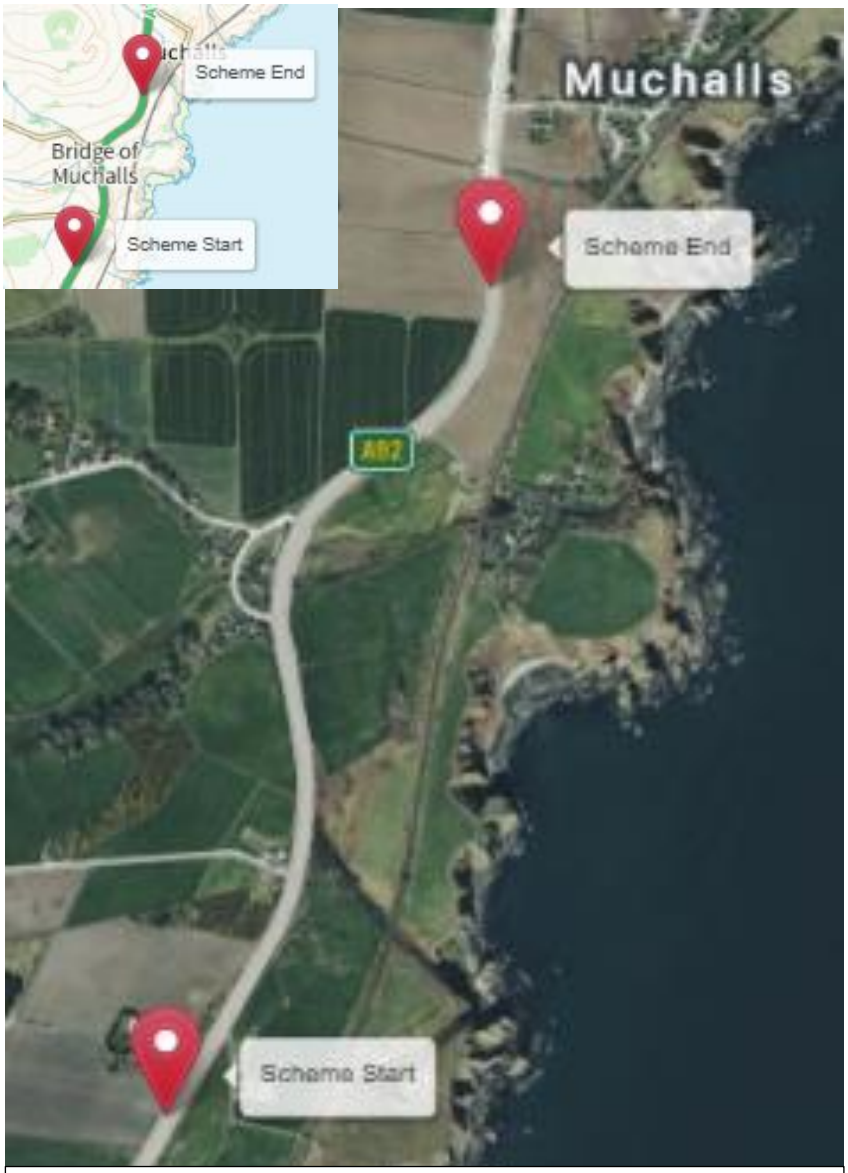

Figure 1: Scheme Location Map

Description of local environment

Air quality

The scheme is located along a rural section of the A92, between Stonehaven and Muchalls in Aberdeenshire. The immediate scheme extents are bordered by localised areas of vegetation and deciduous trees. Where vegetation is sparse, agricultural fields line the carriageway. Beyond this, the broader landscape is predominantly defined by agricultural land and residential developments.

There are approximately 18 residential properties, including farming residences, located within 200m of the works area. The closest property, Cortens Croft, is located 13m west of the A92 carriageway along the scheme extents. The closest farm is Blackhills Farm located 67m east of the scheme extents. There are no other sensitive air quality receptors within 200m of the works.

The primary factor affecting baseline air quality is traffic along the A92 road network, with agricultural activities contributing as a secondary source. Manual count point 91154, located approximately 1.2km north of the scheme extents along the A92, shows that in 2024, the Annual Average Daily Flow (AADF) for all motor vehicles was 21,525 with 2,005 (9%) of these being Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

Aberdeenshire Council has not declared any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). There are no sites registered on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) located within 1km of the scheme extents. Additionally, there are no Air Quality Monitoring Stations located within 200m of the works area.

Cultural heritage

A desk-based assessment has been undertaken using Pastmap online mapping tool. The study area covered a 300m radius for designated cultural heritage assets and a 200m radius for non-designated cultural heritage assets. Full details of designated and non-designated assets can be found in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

Table 1: Designated Cultural Heritage Assets within 300m

Name	Reference number	Description	Distance from scheme
Bridge of Muchalls Over Muchalls Burn	LB9350	Listed Building – Cat C	Approx. 65m west of the scheme extents
Old Schoolhouse, Bridge of Muchalls	LB9351	Listed Building – Cat C	Approx. 210m west of the scheme extents
Muchalls	N/A.	Conservation Area	Approx. 23m east of the scheme extents

Table 2: Non-designated Cultural Heritage Assets within 200m

Name	Reference number	Description	Distance from scheme
Blackhills	NO88NE0118	Historic Environment Record (HER) - Inscriptions, Milestones	Approx. 130m south of the scheme extents
Blackhills	NO89SE0058	HER - Crofts, Dams, Ponds	Approx. 100m east of the scheme extents
Hillhead of Cowie	NO89SE0139	HER - Farmsteads	Approx. 63m west of the scheme extents
Bridge of Muchalls, Burn of Muchalls, Bridge of Muchalls	37129	Canmore - Road Bridge (Period Unassigned)	Approx. 62m west of the scheme extents
Bridge of Muchalls	NO89SE0134	HER - Bridges	Approx. 62m west of the scheme extents
Bridge of Muchalls	NO89SE0129	HER - Smithies	Approx. 98m west of the scheme extents
Bridge of Muchalls, Cottages	37132	Canmore - Cottage(S) (Period Unassigned)	Approx. 98m west of the scheme extents
Muchalls, Muchalls Golf Club	348904	Canmore - Golf Course (20th Century)	Approx. 49m east of the scheme extents

Landscape and visual effects

The immediate scheme extents are bordered by localised areas of vegetation and deciduous trees. Where vegetation is sparse, agricultural fields line the carriageway. Beyond this, the broader landscape is predominantly defined by agricultural land and residential developments with the North Sea located approximately 420m east of the carriageway.

Burn of Muchalls flows through the scheme extents at NGR NO 89493 91084 and Souter Head to Garron Point is located 420m east of the scheme extents.

There are no distinctive cultural landscape or historical landscape features within the scheme extents.

Scotland's Environment Web has identified that Pityot Wood Ancient Woodland (ID: 30) is located approximately 166m west of the scheme extents.

There are no other Ancient Woodlands, National Scenic Areas (NSAs), Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or any Gardens and Designed Landscapes located within 500m of the works area.

A search on Scotland's Landscape Character Type (LCT) Map has highlighted that the LCT within the scheme extents, along the A92, can be categorised as the following:

- Fragmented Rocky Coast characterised by a narrow band close to the coast with steep rugged slopes and cliffs.
- Farmed Moorland Edge - Aberdeenshire characterised by upland areas and the lowland agricultural heartlands of Aberdeenshire.

Scotland's Historic Land Use Assessment (HLA) Map has identified that the land within the scheme extents is currently being used as 'Motorway and Major Roads' providing links between major cities, they cover considerable areas of land. The land within the scheme extents has been historically used as 'Rectilinear Fields and Farms' involving the enclosure of arable land as well as the building of slate roofed farm steadings and associated buildings. There are no direct causes of historic land contamination from these works.

Visual

In the absence of adequate topographic and vegetative screening, several residential properties are expected to have direct views of the construction activities. The most affected are properties situated approximately 84m to the east, such as Joiners Cottage and Deepheather. Blackhills Farm and Hillhead of Cowie Farm will also have views of the works. No other visual receptors have been identified.

Transient visual receptors include road users (motorists, public transport users) travelling along the A92, who will experience brief and intermittent views of the scheme. Typically, the views from the carriageway are pockets of woodland, with agricultural fields in the wider area.

Biodiversity

Protected areas

A desktop study using NatureScot's online research tool, Sitelink, has identified that the Garron Point Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (ID:8671) is located approximately 1.1km south of the scheme extents.

There are no national designations, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves or any National Nature Reserves, within 200m of the scheme extents.

No Tree Preservation Orders are located within 500m of the scheme extents.

Watercourses

Burn of Muchalls flows through the scheme extents at NGR NO 89493 91084. Souter Head to Garron Point is located 420m east of the scheme extents.

Field survey

An ecological field survey has been scoped out by a qualified ecologist due to the transient nature of the works and their containment within the trunk road boundary, indicating a low likelihood of significant ecological impact.

Invasive plants

Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) has recorded rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), an injurious weed and Transport Scotland (TS) target species along the NB verge of the A92 carriageway within the scheme extents.

No Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) are recorded within 500m of the scheme extents.

Geology and soils

Geology

There are no Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRS), Local Geodiversity Sites or any Geological SSSIs that have connectivity or are within 200m of the scheme extents as noted by NatureScot's Sitelink.

According to Britain's Geology Viewer, the geology along the A92, within the scheme extents, consists of the following:

Bedrock Geology

- Glen Lethnot Grit Formation - Psammite, micaceous. Metamorphic bedrock formed between 1000 and 541 million years ago between the Tonian and Ediacaran periods.

Superficial Deposits

- Banchory Till Formation - Diamicton. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.
- Drumlithie Sand and Gravel Formation - Sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.
- River Terrace Deposits - Gravel, sand, silt and clay. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.

Soils

According to Scotland's Soil Map, the component soil within the scheme extents consists of Humus-iron podzols' found on undulating lowlands and hills with gentle and strong slopes: non- and slightly rocky.

Land use

The national scale land capability for agriculture within the works areas consists of the following:

- 3.2 - Land capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained. Grass leys are common.
- 2 - Land capable of producing a wide range of crops.

There are no operational landfill sites located within 1km of the scheme extents.

Material assets and waste

Materials

Materials required are detailed within Table 3 below.

Table 3: Key Material Required for Activities

Activity	Materials Required	Sources
Construction	• TS2010 surface course • AC20 bituminous binder • AC32 bituminous base • Fuels and oils • Road paint • Road studs	• TS2010 Surface Course allows a wider array of aggregate sources to be considered when compared to typical Stone Mastic Asphalt (SMA). As a result, the use of TS2010 will reduce the usage of imported aggregates and increase the use of a wider range of sustainable aggregate sources. • A proportion of reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP) is used in asphalt production. Typical RAP values for base and binder are 10% -15% with up to 10% in surface course. • Some material may be derived from primary resources, such as the road paint.

Materials will be obtained from recycled, secondary, or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion and associated emissions. For example, the binder and base courses used for resurfacing will contain a percentage of recycled material.

Wastes

There is a possibility that coal tar may be found during investigation stages. Anticipated wastes from the proposed works are listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Key Waste Produced by Activities

Activity	Waste Produced	Disposal
Construction	• Asphalt planings • Road paint	• Uncontaminated road planings arising from the works will be fully recycled under a SEPA

Activity	Waste Produced	Disposal
	• Road studs • Possibility of coal tar	Paragraph 13(a) Waste exemption in accordance with guidance on the Production for Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings. • From 1st November 2025 these exemptions will be phased out in favour of Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations (EASR). However, where planings meet SEPA's criteria, they will be fully recycled. • All special waste, such as coal tar and road paint, must be transport by suitable licenced contractor and must be accompanied by correctly completed special waste consignment note (SWCN) providing information about the waste, the producer and the person the waste is being handed to; the SWCN must be kept for three years, the Site Responsible Manager is responsible for ensuring these are retained onsite.

The proposed scheme will require a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) should works exceed £350,000.

Noise and vibration

The scheme is located in a rural area, where the baseline noise levels are primarily influenced by traffic on the A92, with secondary sources from agricultural activities. For the AADF details, please refer to the Air Quality section above.

There are approximately 18 residential properties, including farming residence, located within 300m of the works area. The closest property, Cortens Croft, is located 13m west of the A92 carriageway along the scheme extents. The closest farm is Blackhills Farm located 67m east of the scheme extents. There are no other sensitive noise and vibration receptors within 300m of the works.

According to Scotland's Noise Map, the noise level during daytime hours (L_{day}) has been recorded to be 60dB at the nearest receptor to the carriageway and approximately 72dB within the carriageway boundary. The noise level during

nighttime hour (L_{night}) has been recorded to be 49dB at the nearest receptor and 60dB within the carriageway boundary.

A search on Transport Scotland's Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP) (2019 – 2023) has highlighted that the works are not located within or adjacent to a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA).

Population and human health

Due to the like-for-like, transient and short-term nature of the resurfacing of the works, a study area of 300m was considered appropriate to determine baseline.

The primary land use within the surrounding area is used for agricultural purposes. The closest main town providing community facilities is Newtonhill located 1.2km north of the scheme extents.

There are approximately 18 residential properties, including farming residences, located within 300m of the works area. The closest property, Cortens Croft, is located 13m west of the A92 carriageway along the scheme extents. The closest farm is Blackhills Farm located 67m east of the scheme extents. There are no key community assets within 300m of the works. There are four access/egress points located along the scheme extents of the A92, one of which is the sole access point to Hillhead of Cowie residence at NGR NO 89321 90165.

There are no Core Paths, National Cycles Network Routes or any bridleways located within 300m of the scheme extents. There are also no footways or any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) located within the scheme extents.

There are two laybys located within the scheme extents along the northbound carriageway of the A92. Streetlights border either side of the A92 carriageway within the works area.

Two bus stops are located along the scheme extents, these run routes to Aberdeen and Aberdeen Airport.

Road drainage and the water environment

Surface water

The following watercourses have been classified under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (SEPA's Water Classification Hub) within 500m of the scheme extents:

- Burn of Muchalls (ID: 23252) flows through the scheme extents at NGR NO 89493 91084. This watercourse has an overall moderate ecological potential.
- Souter Head to Garron Point (ID: 200518) is located 420m east of the scheme extents with an overall high ecological value.

There are three ponds located within 250m of the scheme extents, the closest being 190m east of the works area.

Drainage within the scheme extents along the A92 consists of gullies.

Flood risk

Several localised sections within the scheme extents are anticipated to have a high likelihood (10%) of surface water flooding, as indicated by SEPA's Flood Risk Map. Burn of Muchalls is also subject to a high risk of river flooding, with the affected area extending into the scheme extents.

Groundwater

The groundwater underlying the scheme extents is classified as Portlethen groundwater (ID: 150625), which is currently designated as having an overall 'Good' quality under the WFD classification.

The works do not fall within a Scottish Government Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ).

Climate

Carbon Goals

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, as amended by the Scottish Carbon Budgets Amendment Regulations 2025 sets out the statutory framework for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Scotland. The prior annual and interim targets have been replaced by five-year carbon budgets, which sets limits on the amount of GHGs that can be emitted in Scotland.

The proposed carbon budgets are aligned with advice from the UK Climate Change Committee (CCC) and calculated in accordance with the 2009 Act. The 2025 Regulations define the baseline years for emissions reductions as 1990 for greenhouse gases including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, and 1995 for others such as hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulphur hexafluoride (as set out in Section 11 of the Act). The budgets are as follows:

- 2026 - 2030: Average emissions to be 57% lower than baseline.

- 2031 - 2035: Average emissions to be 69% lower than baseline.
- 2036 - 2040: Average emissions to be 80% lower than baseline
- 2041 - 2045: Average emissions to be 94% lower than baseline.

These budgets are legally binding and will be supported by a new Climate Change Plan, which will outline the specific policies and actions required to meet the targets.

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

Amey's Company Wide Carbon Goal is to achieve Scope 1 and 2 net-zero carbon emissions, with a minimum of 80% absolute reduction on our emissions by 2035. Amey is aiming to be fully net-zero, including Scope 3 emissions, by 2040.

Amey are working towards a contractual commitment to have carbon neutral depots on the South West Network Management Contract (SW NMC) network by 2028. Amey have set carbon goals for the SW NMC contract as a whole to be net-zero carbon by 2032.

Policies and Plans

This Record of Determination (RoD) has been undertaken in accordance with Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (RSA EIA Regulations) along with Transport Scotland's Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance (Guidance – Environmental Impact Assessments for road projects (transport.gov.scot)). Relevant guidance, policies and plans accompanied with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)) LA 101 and LA 104 were used to form this assessment.

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Impacts

- TM implemented during the scheme may result in an increase in vehicle emissions through idling vehicles and increased congestion. This may result in a temporary deterioration in local air quality.
- During construction, including removal of the road surface, there is the potential for an increase in dust and emissions from plant and machinery and an increase in airborne particulate matter. This is likely to cause a slight deterioration in air quality within the local area.
- Residents along the diversion route roads, should they be required, may experience a deterioration in air quality due to the increased volume of traffic.
- The impacts identified will be temporary for the duration of the works only and therefore no permanent change is predicted on air quality.
- Post construction there will be no change to the traffic volume, speed or road alignment as works are like-for-like.

Mitigation

- Mitigation measures will follow best practice from the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), from the 'Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction (2024)',including:
    - Site layout will be planned (including plant and vehicles) so that machinery and dust causing activities are located away from receptors, as far as reasonably practicable;
    - Materials that have a potential to produce dust, such as excavated material, will be removed from site as soon as possible, unless being re-used on site;
    - Drop heights from conveyors and other loading or handling equipment will be minimised;
    - Vehicles entering and leaving the work area will be covered/sheeted to prevent escape of materials during transport;
    - Equipment will be readily available on site to clean any dry spillages and clean up spillages as soon as reasonably practicable after the event using wet cleaning methods.

The following additional mitigation measures will be implemented:

- Green driving techniques will be adopted, and effective route preparation and planning undertaken prior to works.
- Plant, vehicles and Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) will be regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems to ensure such fuel operated equipment is not generating excessive fumes.

No significant effects are anticipated and therefore no further assessment in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 105: Air Quality is required.

Cultural heritage

Impacts

- There are no designated cultural heritage features within the scheme extents, and no land acquisition is required.
- All works are confined to the existing carriageway surface, and due to the limited nature and scale of the activities, significant vibration effects are not anticipated. Consequently, no impacts are anticipated on the listed building listed in Table 1.
- The non-designated assets listed in Table 2 are not expected to be impacted, as the works involve like-for like resurfacing with a transient short construction duration. Additionally, the original construction of the A92 is likely to have removed any archaeological remains. Overall, the potential for uncovering new assets is considered low.

Mitigation

The following mitigation measures will be in place throughout the period of works:

- All plant and machinery will be stored within the carriageway boundary where practicable.
- If any archaeological finds are discovered, the works will be suspended, and the relevant stakeholders will be contacted.

No significant effects are anticipated to cultural heritage. Therefore, in line with DMRB Guidance document LA 106: Cultural Heritage, no further assessment is required.

Landscape and visual effects

Impacts

- There will be no operational impacts on visual receptors as works entail the like-for-like resurfacing of the A92 carriageway within the scheme extents.
- There will likely 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.
- Views from the carriageway will be temporarily affected during construction due to the presence of works, TM and plant.
- As works will be contained within the carriageway boundary, there will be no impact to Pityot Wood Ancient Woodland mentioned above.

Mitigation

- 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.
- Plant, vehicles, and materials will be contained to hardstanding areas within the carriageway boundary (as far as reasonably practicable). Should damage to the landscape occur, reinstatement will be carried out.
- Temporary site lighting will be directional and pointed at the works area only.

With mitigation measures and best practice in place, it is anticipated that any landscape and visual effects associated with the works will not be significant. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 107: Landscape and Visual Effects, no further assessment is required.

Biodiversity

Impacts

- An increase in noise levels from construction activities and misdirected site lighting has the potential to disturb any protected species within the scheme surroundings.
- Works will be confined to the carriageway boundary, involving like-for-like carriageway resurfacing with no site clearance or earthworks. As such, there is limited potential to spread or introduce INNS or target species.
- As works will be contained within the carriageway boundary, the Ancient Woodlands and watercourses listed above will likely not be impacted significantly.

- A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) was undertaken and has concluded that there will be no Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on the Garron Point SAC. Due to the following:
  - The proposed works areas do not border and are physically separated from habitats suitable.
  - Potential changes in water quality or air quality will be addressed by standard mitigation measures as part of the proposed scheme.
  - The proposed works will not lead to habitat or species fragmentation. Works will be confined to within the carriageway boundaries, and the immediate habitats are not suitable.
  - The proposed works will not reduce species density, as the proposed works are confined to the existing carriageway boundaries, which are physically separated from habitat suitable.

Mitigation

The following mitigation measures will be in place:

- Due to night-time programming, where lighting is required, hoods will be used and lights directed at works and away from ecological receptors including any woodland areas and watercourses, to minimise disturbance to nocturnal species.
- Vehicles and materials will not be stored or parked on grass verges where possible. Where damage occurs, the reinstatement of the grass verge will be carried out.
- 'Soft start' techniques will be utilised with noise heavy equipment/plant/machinery in order to avoid disturbance to any potential noise sensitive species present in the area.
- As part of the Network Management Contract, Amey, on behalf of transport Scotland, has been asked to keep a record of various INNS and target species, including rosebay willowherb. Works will not be carried out in the carriageway verge where these are present, if this is not possible and works are likely to result in the spread of this species through disturbance, Amey's Landscaping Team will be consulted.
- Should a protected species be spotted during construction, works will stop, and the Amey ET&S Team will be contacted.
- Additional pollution prevention measures are detailed in the Road Drainage and the Water Environment section.

With the above mitigation measures and best practice being adhered to, no significant effects on biodiversity are anticipated. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 108: Biodiversity, no further assessment is required.

Geology and soils

Impacts

- All works are contained to the engineered layers of the existing carriageway, resulting in limited potential for soil disturbance.
- There will be no impacts upon the surrounding agricultural land.
- There is a potential for soils from accidental spills or leaks of fuels and oils from construction plant and machinery. However, with mitigation in place the impact is considered minor and temporary.

Mitigation

The following mitigation measures will be in place during the works:

- Vehicles and materials will not be stored or parked on grass verges where possible. Where damage occurs, reinstatement will be undertaken.
- Pollution prevention measures outlined in the Road Drainage and the Water Environment section will be followed during construction.

With mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are anticipated on geology and soils. Therefore, in line with DMRB Guidance document LA 109: Geology and Soils no further assessment is required.

Material assets and waste

Impacts

- Transportation and recovery of materials/waste will require energy deriving from fossil fuel, a non-renewable source.
- The design life for the TS2010 surfacing proposed is estimated to be 20 years. This will reduce the requirement for maintenance to this section of road over the period.
- There is potential for the works to contribute to resource depletion through use of transportation of primary materials such as aggregates.
- There will be an increase in waste sent to landfill sites if waste materials are not recycled or reused.

Mitigation

- The Contractor will comply with all ‘Duty of Care’ requirements, ensuring that any surplus materials or wastes are stored, transported, treated, used, and disposed

of safely without endangering human health or harming the environment. All waste transfer notes and/or waste exemption certificates will also be completed and retained

- Materials will be derived from recycled, secondary or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion and associated emissions. Where possible all materials will be reused throughout the network, if not possible they will be recycled locally at a suitably licenced waste management facility.
- Materials will be delivered on site when required.
- Uncontaminated road planings arising from the works will be fully recycled under a SEPA Paragraph 13(a) Waste exemption in accordance with guidance on the Production for Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings.
- Use of TS2010 will reduce the usage of imported aggregates and increase the use of a wider range of sustainable aggregate sources thus reducing GHG emissions.
- All special waste will be transport by suitable licenced contractor and will be accompanied by correctly completed special waste consignment note (SWCN) providing information about the waste, the producer and the person the waste is being handed to; the SWCN will be kept for three years, the Site Responsible Manager is responsible for ensuring these are retained onsite.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on the consumption of material assets or creation of waste. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 110: Material Assets and Waste, no further assessment is required.

Noise and vibration

Impacts

- Noise and vibration levels are expected to increase during nighttime construction hours for properties within 300m of the scheme and those near the diversion route, should one be required. This is due to the use of heavy plant and machinery, such as rollers, and increased HGV movements. However, these levels are not anticipated to significantly exceed existing ambient conditions or cause notable disturbance.
- TS2010 road surfacing offers enhanced durability and noise reducing properties compared to standard surfacing materials. As a result, both road users and nearby receptors are expected to benefit from the improved surface quality over the long term.
- Post-construction, the works are not expected to alter existing baseline noise levels for any sensitive receptors.

Mitigation

Mitigation measures follow Best Practicable Means as outlined in British Standard (BS) 5228:2009+A1:2014. The standard provides specific detail on suitable measures for noise control in respect to construction operations, for example:

- On-site construction tasks will be programmed to be as efficient as possible, with a view to limiting noise disruption to local sensitive receptors. The noisiest works will be undertaken before 23:00 where possible.
- Effects from noise will be kept to a minimum through the use of appropriate mufflers and silencers fitted to machinery. All exhaust silencers will be checked at regular intervals to ensure efficiency.
- A 'soft start' to works will be in place, whereby plant/machinery/vehicles are started sequentially as opposed to simultaneously.
- The site supervisor will monitor the effects of noise and vibration levels during the works and make necessary working arrangements.

The following further mitigation measures related to noise and vibration will be in place:

- Amey's Energy Transition & Sustainability Team has notified Aberdeenshire Council in advance of the works.
- A letter drop will be delivered to residents within 300m to notify them of upcoming works, timings and duration.
- Amey's environmental briefing on Noise and Vibration will be delivered to site operatives prior to construction.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, and due to the works being of a minor, transient nature, no significant effects are predicted for noise and vibration. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 111: Noise and Vibration, no further assessment is required.

Population and human health

Impacts

- Traffic management (TM) measures implemented during the works have the potential to result in temporary disruption to road users, including increased congestion and extended travel times. Additionally, journey distance may be lengthened due to the use of the diversion routes, should one be required, however, this will be for the duration of the works only.
- No land acquisition, either permanent or temporary, is required for the delivery of this scheme. Consequently, there will be no direct impacts on private property,

commercial facilities, agricultural land, or users of active travel routes including walkers, cyclists, and horse riders (WCH), nor on community facilities.

Mitigation

- Local residents and road users will be informed of traffic management restrictions/arrangements and any expected travel delays will be publicised within the local and wider area, in an effort to minimise disturbance to vehicular travellers.
- Site specific control measures regarding noise and vibration, landscape and visual effects and air quality can be found in the relevant sections (above).
- Temporary site lighting used throughout the scheme will be directional and pointed only at the area of works.
- Access to local properties will be maintained.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects associated with Population and Human Health are predicted. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 112: Population and Human Health, no further assessment is required.

Road drainage and the water environment

Impacts

- If not adequately controlled, debris and run off from the works could be suspended in the surface water. In the event of a flooding incident or heavy rainfall, this debris may be mobilised and could enter the road drainage having a detrimental effect on the surrounding local water environment.
- Potential for spills, leaks or seepage of fuels and oils associated with plant to escape and reach drainage systems and watercourses if not controlled, which may adversely impact the water environment.
- The resurfacing works will not increase flood risk as they are limited to the existing impermeable carriageway surface, with no alteration to drainage infrastructure or surface water runoff patterns. No other post construction impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation

The following best practice and pollution prevention measures will be in place:

- All debris which has the potential to be suspended in surface water and wash into the local water environment will be cleaned from the site following the works.
- Debris and dust generated as a result of the works will be prevented from entering the drainage system. This can be via the use of drain covers or similar.

- Appropriate measures will be implemented onsite to prevent any potential pollution to the natural water environment (e.g., debris, dust, and hazardous substances). This will include spill kits being present onsite at all times, and the use of funnels and drip trays when transferring fuel etc.
- The control room will be contacted if any pollution incidences occur on (available 24 hours, 7 days a week).
- Visual pollution inspections of the working area will be conducted in frequency, especially during heavy rainfall and wind.
- Weather reports will be monitored prior and during all construction activities. In the event of adverse weather/flooding events, all activities will temporarily stop, and only reconvene when deemed safe to do so, and run-off/drainage can be adequately controlled to prevent pollution.
- Prior to works commencing, all operatives will be aware of SEPA's Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPP).

With mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are anticipated on the water environment. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 113: Road drainage and the water environment no further assessment is required.

Climate

Impacts

- Construction activities may result in GHG emissions from vehicles, machinery, material use and production, and transportation.

Mitigation

The following mitigation measures will be in place:

- Local suppliers will be used as far as reasonably practicable to reduce travel time and GHG emitted as part of the works.
- Vehicles/plant will not be left on when not in use to minimise and prevent unnecessary emissions.
- Further actions and considerations for this scheme are detailed in the above Material assets and waste section.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, the residual significance of effect on climate is considered to be neutral. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 114: Climate, no further assessment is required.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

Construction activities are confined to the carriageway boundary, and maintenance is carried out on a like for like, basis. This will reduce the risk of major accidents or environmental disasters that could negatively impact the surrounding environment.

Improvement of the road surface following carriageway resurfacing works will enhance skid resistance, and thus overall road safety on completion of the scheme.

Considering the above and mitigation measures adhered to, the vulnerability of the project to major accidents and disasters is considered to be low.

Assessment cumulative effects

Amey's Northeast Current Works Schedule has highlighted that there are no works scheduled along the A92 in proximity to the scheme extents within the proposed timescales.

Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Portal has not identified any extant planning applications surrounding the scheme extents that would result in any in-combination effects.

The Scottish Road Works Commissioner also does not identify any scheduled works that are set to take place within the scheme extents, within the same timescale, of the proposed works.

Any future schemes will be programmed to take into account already programmed works, and as such any effect (such as from TM arrangements and potential construction noise) will be limited.

Overall, it is unlikely the proposed works will have a significant cumulative effect with any other proposed works in the local area. Considering the nature and scale of the maintenance works being undertaken, no cumulative or in combination effects are anticipated.

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 works.

The following environmental surveys/reviews have been undertaken:

- An Environmental Scoping Assessment (ESA) of the scheme, undertaken by the Energy Transitions & Sustainability Team at Amey in October 2025.
- A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) undertaken by the Ecology Team at Amey in October 2025.

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) exceed 1 hectare in area.

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:

- As the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the structural components, there is no change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works.

- The successful completion of the scheme will afford benefits to carriageway users and residential properties in proximity, due to improved condition and ride quality of the carriageway surface.
- The use of TS2010 road surfacing affords the benefits of a reduction in mid to high frequencies of traffic noise and a reduction in ground vibrations. As a result, ambient noise levels will decrease post construction.
- Construction activities are restricted to the existing carriageway boundary within made ground and as such there will be no residual change to the local landscape as a result of the works.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- At end of life, components can be recycled, reducing waste to landfill.
- The design option conveys sustainability benefits by significantly reducing the quantity of maintenance interventions required at the location.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme will be confined within the existing carriageway boundaries (total area 1.2ha.) and as a result will not require any land take and will not alter any local land uses.
- Works are not located within an area designated for its specific landscape character or quality.
- The scheme is not situated in whole or in part in a sensitive area.
- A HRA was undertaken and has concluded that there will be no LSE on the Garron Point SAC located approximately 1.1km south of the works.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding water environment and drainage.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste and any uncontaminated road planings will be recycled in accordance with Guidance on the Production for Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings.
- Materials will be derived from recycled, secondary or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.

References of supporting documentation

The following environmental surveys/reviews have been undertaken:

- An Environmental Scoping Assessment (ESA) of the scheme, undertaken by the Energy Transitions & Sustainability Team at Amey in October 2025.
- A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) undertaken by the Ecology Team at Amey in October 2025.

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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