



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A99 Hempriggs

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Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned on behalf of Transport Scotland to undertake resurfacing and structural maintenance works on a section of the A99, approximately 1.5km south of the town of Wick covering a length of 2,015m. The works will include the following:

- Milling out and inlaying bituminous material of up to 300mm.
- Reinstatement of road markings.

Key plant and equipment to be used on site include a paver, planer, 3CX JCB, two rollers, bowser, road sweeper and emulsion sprayer. A welfare unit with a generator will be established on site within traffic management (TM), and heavy good vehicles (HGVs) will be required for the transport of materials and waste.

The resurfacing and structural maintenance procedure is as follows:

- Set up TM and mark out site
- Mill out old surface course
- Lay new surface course
- Roll surface and allow it to set
- Install road markings and studs
- Remove TM and open road

The works at A99 Hempriggs are scheduled for delivery within the 2026/27 Financial Year. This scheme is currently set to commence on the 29th of June 2026 for a duration of 10 days, between the working hours of 07:00 – 19:00. However, changes to the programme may result in revised start dates or working hours.

TM will consist of a road closure with regular amnesties to allow traffic to pass through. Pedestrian access will be maintained throughout. Should the programme be revised, the TM arrangements may also be subject to change.

Location

The scheme is located on the A99 trunk road within the Highland Council Administrative area, between the following National Grid References (NGRs): Start: ND 34736 46555; End: ND 35624 48354 (Figure 1). The surrounding habitat is

primarily agricultural fields with grassland surrounding Burn of Newton that runs beneath the A99, with Loch Hempriggs to the west of the scheme.

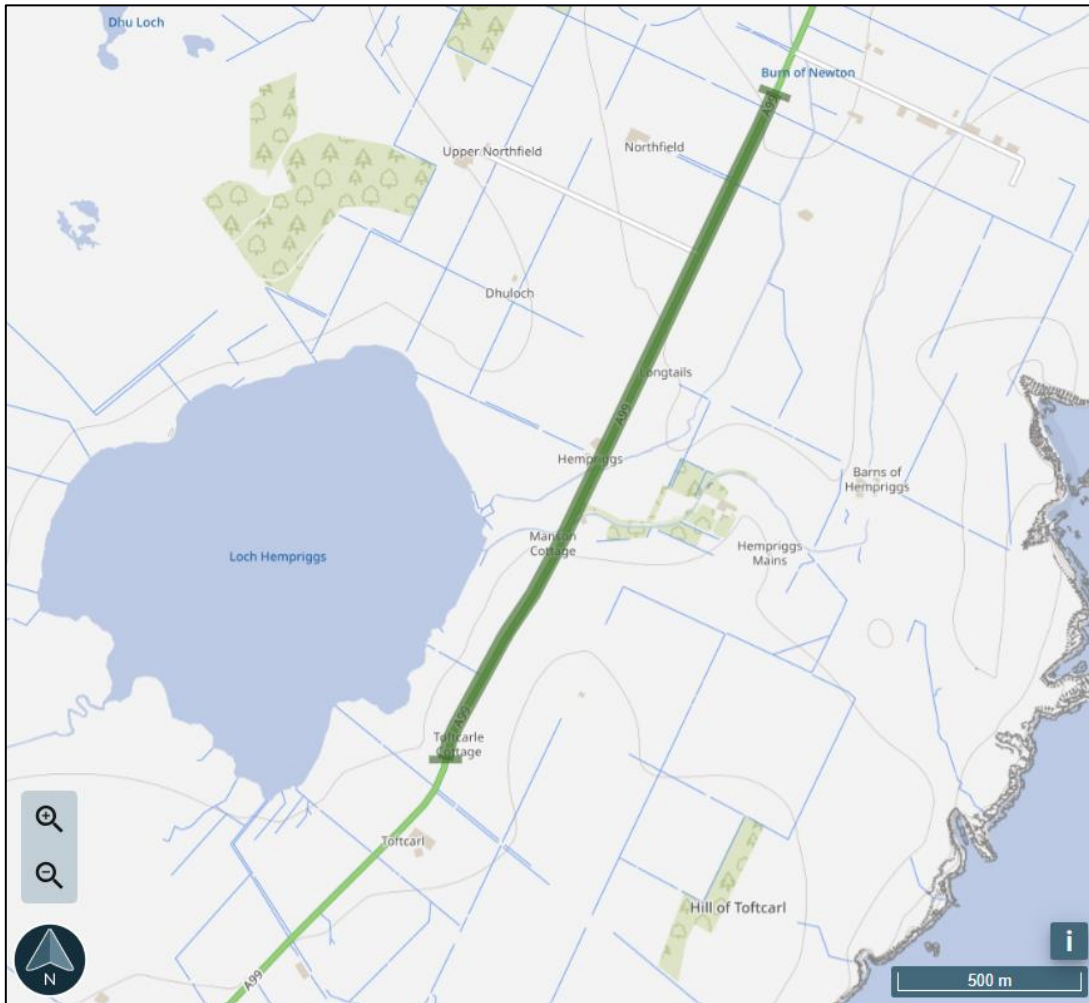


Figure 1: Scheme Extents

Description of local environment

Air quality

There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) declared by the Highland Council within 300m of the scheme ([Air Quality Management Areas](#)).

There are no air quality monitoring sites within 10km of the scheme ([Scottish Air Quality](#)).

There are no air pollutant release sites listed on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) within 10km of the scheme ([Scottish Pollution Release Inventory](#)).

Baseline air quality for this scheme is primarily influenced by traffic along the A99 trunk road and agricultural activities associated with the nearby farms. Secondary releases are likely delivered by small settlements within the wider area.

Cultural heritage

A search through the cultural heritage mapping tool [PastMap](#) revealed that a Scheduled Monument and Listed Building lie within 300m of the scheme. 'Hempriggs, Broch 200m S Of' Scheduled Monument (Reference: SM883) lies approximately 40m east of the scheme and 'Hempriggs, Cottage Opposite Main Entrance Drive, Facing A9 Road' category C Listed Building (Reference: LB14078) lies approximately 10m west of the scheme.

Of lesser cultural value, several Historic Environment Records (HERs) and National Records of the Historic Environment (NRHEs) lie within 300m of the scheme, the closest of which are listed below:

Runs directly beneath the scheme extent:

- Mill Lade, Hempriggs HER
- Classification: LADE
- Reference: MHG13749

Lies directly adjacent to the scheme:

- Hempriggs NRHE
- Classification: Burgh (medieval)
- Reference: 75259

There are no Garden & Designed Landscapes, Battlefields, Conservation Areas or World Heritage Sites within 300m of the scheme.

During the construction of the A99, it is likely that all cultural heritage features were identified, and the proposed works will be confined to the A99 trunk road boundary.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme does not fall within a National Park (NP) or National Scenic Area (NSA) ([SiteLink](#)).

The land use types surrounding the scheme are as follows ([HLAMap](#)):

- Planned rectilinear fields and farms
- Designed landscape
- Planned smallholdings

The Landscape Character Type (LCT) within the scheme extent is classed as 'Coastal crofts & small farms' ([LCT 144](#)), which has the following key characteristics:

- Narrow, settled and farmed coastal fringe with subtle variations in topography, from long stretches of strongly contained coastal shelves and raised beaches, to smaller pockets at river mouths and squeezed between dunes and areas of Cnocan – Caithness & Sutherland.
- Pastures and occasional arable fields, most often divided by post and wire fences, with the division of fields marked by crop colour and texture rather than boundaries.
- Low stone walls enclosing fields on the shelf above the High Cliffs and Sheltered Bays between Dunbeath and Wick.
- Little woodland within the more exposed east and north Caithness coasts.
- Small woodlands and clumps of trees present at the outlet of more sheltered straths or along the eastern shores of Kyle of Tongue and Loch Eriboll.
- Settlement most concentrated where this Landscape Character Type broadens at the mouths of major rivers along the east coast, where larger farms and crofts are concentrated.
- Small, hunkered-down croft houses and outbuildings loosely clustered or sometimes aligned in a linear fashion on the top of terraces or ridges above the coast or a river floodplain.
- More dispersed settlement pattern on the east coast to the north of Brora.
- Newer housing most evident to the south of Brora with larger modern houses often infilling spaces between older croft houses and contrasting with the size and form of these original buildings. A number of settlements, often located at

bridging points and at the junction with the straths, many with harbours particularly on the east coast of Sutherland and Caithness.

- Major communications routes on the east coast including the A9, the railway and transmission line aligned along the edge of this landscape.
- A number of historic sites including churches, castles, mills and cemeteries.
- Highly visible landscape, seen from major roads and, on the east Sutherland coast, the railway.
- Complex visual composition of views tending to focus on the detail of houses, field patterns and crops, yet with the wider context of backdrop hills and sea adding diversity.

The A99 trunk road connects Latheron with Wick. It commences at the A99/A9 junction in Latheron leading generally north-eastwards for 27 kilometres to its junction with the A882 (Thurso Street/Dempster Street) in Wick. The A99 is a single carriageway along its length.

Biodiversity

The scheme lies approximately 950m west of the East Caithness Cliffs Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (site code: [8248](#)). Which is designated for vegetated sea cliffs.

The scheme lies approximately 950m west of the East Caithness Cliffs Special Protection Area (SPA) (site code: [8492](#)).

Additionally, the scheme lies approximately 4.9km northeast of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC (Site code: [8218](#)), RAMSAR site (Site code: [8412](#)) and SPA (Site code: [8476](#)).

Due to the proximity and ecological connectivity between the scheme and East Caithness Cliffs SPA and Caithness and Sutherland SAC/SPA/RAMSAR, a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) has been completed to assess potential impacts of the works on these European sites. Further details are provided in the 'Biodiversity' section below.

There are no Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), National Nature Reserves (NNR) or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) ([SiteLink](#)) within 300m of the scheme.

Numerous bird species were recorded on NBN Atlas within 2km over a ten-year period. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA), all wild birds and their active nests are protected.

The NBN Atlas returned no records of the invasive plants or injurious weeds as listed in the Network Management Contract (NMC) using the same search criteria.

Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) does not hold any records of invasive plants or injurious weeds within 300m of the scheme.

The works are located within a semi-rural area south of the town of Wick with very sparse tree cover in proximity to the works. There are agricultural fields used predominantly for grazing, pockets of scrub and lochs, as well as sea cliffs and littoral habitat.

There are no woodlands listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory ([Ancient Woodland Inventory Scotland](#)) within 300m of the scheme.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) present within 300m of the scheme ([Highland Tree Preservation Orders](#)).

An ecological constraints survey (ECS) was completed by the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team on 28/04/2026.

Geology and soils

There are no Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRS) or SSSIs within 300m of the scheme extent ([SiteLink](#)).

Bedrock geology within the scheme extent is comprised of Berriedale Sandstone Formation-Siltstone (mudstone and sandstone) and Lybster Flagstone Formation-Siltstone (mudstone and sandstone) ([Geology Viewer](#)). There are no superficial deposits recorded within the scheme extent.

Soils within the scheme extent are recorded as being of Carbon and Peatland 'Class 0' (mineral soil where peat is not typically found) as displayed on Scotland's Peat Map ([Carbon and Peatland map](#)).

Soils within the scheme extents are recorded as noncalcareous gleys rankers ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

Works will be restricted to previously engineered ground within the A99 trunk road boundary. Therefore, this receptor has no constraints (as identified in Environmental Baseline) that are likely to be impacted by the proposed works and as such, 'geology and soils' is scoped out and is not discussed further within this RoD.

Material assets and waste

The resurfacing works are necessary to replace the worn carriageway surface and to undertake general maintenance of the A99 trunk road. In addition to resurfacing, the works will include structural maintenance.

Materials used will consist of:

- Asphaltic material
- Bituminous emulsion bond coat
- Milled in road studs
- Thermoplastic road marking paint

The value of the scheme does not exceed £350,000 therefore, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required and will not be completed as part of these works.

A site compound is not required for this scheme.

Wastes are anticipated to be primarily planings from the carriageway surface course which will be reused off-site to improve local farm roads. All road planings will be treated in line with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) Low Risk Waste Activity (LRWA) 3 and will be recycled in line with SEPA's Guidance for End-of-Waste for Recycled Aggregates (WAS-G-DEF-05).

Noise and vibration

Noise modelled data from Environmental Noise Directive (END) Round 4 Noise Mapping indicates a day-evening-night noise level (LDEN) between 65 and 70dB on the A99 at the scheme location ([Scotland's Noise](#)).

The scheme does not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP) ([Transportation Noise Action Plan - 2024-2028](#)).

The works are scheduled to take place in a semi-rural area located on the northeast coast of Scotland within an area surrounded by agricultural land. It is considered likely that the baseline noise levels will be low, with noise mainly influenced by vehicles travelling along the A99 and agricultural activities.

Population and human health

Approximately fourteen residential properties lie within 300m of the scheme extents, the closest of which lies approximately 10m west of the scheme. The garden of this property lies directly adjacent to the scheme.

Additionally, within the scheme extent there are nine access ways that lead to residential homes and/or farms, five access ways that lead to farmland, and one layby on the northbound carriageway.

There are no other public assets such as street lighting, bus stops, or public footpaths within the scheme extent.

There are no non-motorised road user (NMU) provisions, such as National Cycle Network (NCN) routes, Core Paths ([OS Maps](#), [Highland Council](#)) or paths listed on [WalkHighlands](#) within 300m of the scheme.

Road Traffic Statistics counter (ATC01335), located approximately 14.5km northwest of the scheme along the A99, recorded a total average daily traffic (ADT) count of 1,779 motor vehicles in 2025 as average daily flow, of which 18.4% were Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) (Transport Scotland).

Road drainage and the water environment

'Caithness' (ID 150692) is a groundwater body, in the Scotland river basin district, which underlies this scheme. It was given an overall status of 'good' in 2024 by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) ([Water Classification Hub](#)).

'Loch Hempriggs' (ID: 100034) is in the Wick Coastal catchment of the Scotland river basin district. It is 0.9 square kilometres in area and lies approximately 145m east of the scheme. It was given an overall status of 'Bad' in 2024 by SEPA.

'Milton Burn (also known as Burn of Newton) - d/s Loch Hempriggs' is a river (ID: 23637) in the Wick Coastal catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The main stem is approximately 5km in length and runs directly beneath the scheme extent. The water body has been designated as a heavily modified water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on the drainage of agricultural land and was given an overall status of 'Poor ecological potential' in 2024 by SEPA.

One watercourse (unclassified by SEPA) runs beneath the scheme extent.

Numerous areas within and adjacent to the scheme extent have a high likelihood (10% chance each year) of flooding due to surface water and small watercourses flooding ([SEPA Flood Maps](#)).

Climate

The [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) ('The Act'), and its subsequent amendment under the [Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#), sets the framework for the Scottish Government to address climate change. The Act has an ambitious target to reach Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, with any residual emissions balanced by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This is five years earlier than the rest of the UK due to the greater potential for carbon sequestration in Scotland.

The Act was amended to replace interim targets with carbon budgets. Carbon budgets are legally binding caps on greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland over five-year periods. In line with the Act, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) published advice on the level of Scotland's four carbon budgets, covering the period 2026 to 2045, recommending what the Scottish Government sets its carbon budgets at for annual average levels of emissions. These recommendations are based on an ambitious but credible route to Net Zero for Scotland by 2045.

Emissions reductions from surface transport are the largest contribution to meeting the first two carbon budgets. The pathway for surface transport emission reduction is primarily driven by the uptake of electric vehicles, in addition to measures to enable a shift from car use to public transport and active travel, which all play a role in reducing emissions from fossil fuel cars. Ensuring efficiency of existing transport infrastructure and improving/providing new active travel facilities is therefore important to support these carbon reduction budgets.

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 the above noted legally binding target of net-zero by 2045. 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](#)).

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. Activities undertaken on site may cause dust and particulate matter to be emitted to the atmosphere. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to the air are considered to be low.

- A water-assisted dust sweeper will sweep the carriageway after dust-generating activities, and waste will be contained and removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Materials that have a potential to produce dust will be removed from site as soon as possible, and vehicles that remove waste from site will have sheeted covers.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles, and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM will be switched off when stationary to prevent exhaust emissions (e.g., there will be no idling vehicles).
- Cutting, grinding, and sawing equipment (if required) will be fitted or used in conjunction with suitable dust suppression techniques e.g., local exhaust ventilation system that fits directly onto tools.
- Regular monitoring (e.g., 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) minimising cutting and grinding on-site, (b) reducing 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 the site, preventing the spread of dust beyond the work area.
- Material stockpiles will be reduced as far as is reasonably practicable by using a 'just in time' delivery system. All material will also be stored on made ground.
- Any stockpiled material on site will be monitored daily to ensure no risks of dust emissions exists.

- Materials will be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any air quality effects associated with the proposed works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this Record of Determination (RoD).

Cultural heritage

Of significant cultural value, 'Hempriggs, Broch 200m S Of' Scheduled Monument lies approximately 40m east of the scheme and 'Hempriggs, Cottage Opposite Main Entrance Drive, Facing A9 Road' Listed Building lies approximately 10m west of the scheme. As works are restricted to the A99 carriageway boundary, no impacts on these features are expected as a result of works.

Although there are some minor features of cultural heritage interest immediately adjacent to the scheme, the works comprise like-for-like renewal of the road surface and structural maintenance. Any excavation works associated with the scheme are restricted to the already engineered ground within the carriageway boundary, and construction of the A99 trunk road is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present. As such, the potential for significant effects on these features and exposure of unrecorded cultural heritage features is considered to be low.

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

- All site personnel will be briefed on the importance of cultural heritage value within the area.
- People, plant, and materials will, as much as is reasonably practicable, only be present on areas of made / engineered ground. Where access outwith these areas is required for the safe and effective completion of the scheme, it will be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable and ideally be limited to access on foot.
- 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 short-term impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the site as a result of the presence of construction plant, vehicles and TM. However, people, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A99, and construction works are programmed to be of short duration (10 days). As such, the visual impact of the works will be minimal.

Upon the completion of the works, no significant residual impacts are anticipated e.g., when complete the visual appearance will remain largely unaffected, with a renewed road surface being the only discernible change, and as such, any visible change is considered to be negligible.

In addition, the following mitigation measures will be put in place during works:

- Throughout all stages of the works, the site will be kept clean and tidy, with materials, equipment, plant and wastes appropriately stored, minimising the landscape and visual effects as much as possible.
- Works will avoid encroaching on land and areas where work is not required or not permitted. This includes general works, storage of equipment/containers and parking.
- Where applicable, upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- The site will be left clean and tidy following construction.

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

Biodiversity

The East Caithness Cliffs SAC and SPA lie approximately 950m east of the scheme extents and the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC, SPA, and RAMSAR site lie approximately 4.9km southwest of the scheme. As the East Caithness Cliffs SAC is designated only for vegetated sea cliff habitat, no pathway to effect was identified for this feature as a result of works and it was not considered further in the HRA. However, ecological connectivity was identified between the scheme and the East

Caithness Cliffs SPA and the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC, SPA, and RAMSAR site.

The HRA assessment concluded that the works would not result in Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on the qualifying habitats, vegetation features, or invertebrate features of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC/RAMSAR/SPA. Similarly, no LSE was identified on any of the qualifying species of the East Caithness Cliffs SPA for the following reasons:

- No works will take place within the boundaries of any of the above designated sites and no in-water works are required.
- The scheme is located approximately 950m from East Caithness Cliffs SPA and 4.9km from Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC/RAMSAR/SPA.
- Hydrological connectivity is highly limited and the scheme is located downstream of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC/RAMSAR/SPA.
- The area surrounding the scheme extent lacks suitable nesting habitat for qualifying bird species associated with East Caithness Cliffs SPA, which are likely to nest on the sea cliffs east of the scheme.
- Standard good practice measures to prevent pollution will be implemented during construction.

The HRA concluded that with the below mitigation measures in place, there would be no adverse effects on site integrity (AESI), and that the conservation objectives will be met:

- If artificial lighting is required during periods of low light levels, it will be directed onto the area of works and will avoid nearby watercourses and habitats as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
- If mammals are observed in the area of works, works will pause or not commence until they have moved at least 50m away.
- Plant, machinery, and equipment fitted with effective silencers will be utilised for the works. Where fitted, and where permitted under Health and Safety requirements, white noise reversing alarms will be utilised during construction.
- Where possible, inherently quiet plant will be selected for construction works. Where appropriate, pumps and generators will be sound-reduced models with fitted, lined, and sealed acoustic covers.
- All plant will be operated in such a way that minimises noise emissions and be switched off when not in use.
- All ancillary plant such as generators will be positioned so as to cause minimum noise disturbance. Where deemed necessary, acoustic screens will be utilised.

Activities undertaken on site could potentially have a temporary adverse impact on biodiversity that may be present in the area as a result of an increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats. However, works are restricted to the A99 carriageway and the number of construction vehicles and construction operatives required onsite is low given the scale and scope of works. In addition, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle movements on the A99 and the scheme is of short duration (10 days) and will be undertaken on a rolling programme. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore considered to be low.

All works will be restricted to the A99 carriageway surface and will not entail any in-stream works or vegetation clearance. There are no significant earthworks associated with the scheme, and the scheme does not require permanent or temporary land-take, accommodation works, site clearance or locally gained resources, and there is no requirement to import topsoil. As such, there is limited potential to spread or invasive non-native species (INNS) of plant, invasive native perennials, or injurious flowering plant species, such as curled dock, should these be present in adjacent verges

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the Site Environment Management Plan (SEMP) and adhered to on site. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place in addition to those mentioned above, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity are considered to be low:

- No in-water works will be permitted. Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and to carry out the works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- All construction operatives will be briefed through toolbox talks prior to works commencing, which will be included in the SEMP. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of any protected species, throughout the works period. Should a protected species be noted during construction, works will temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently moved on. Any sightings of protected species will be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team.
- 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 will stop until the BEAR Scotland NW Environment Team can provide advice.
- Personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of INNS or injurious weeds in road verges throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in

working areas, works will be restricted to a 7m buffer of any growth where reasonably practicable.

- A 'soft-start' will be implemented on site each day. This will involve switching on vehicles and checking under/around vehicles and the immediate work area for mammals prior to works commencing to ensure none are present and that there is a gradual increase in noise.
- Any excavations, exposed pipes/drains, or areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g. storage containers) will be covered over when not in use, at the end of each shift, and following completion of the works to avoid animals falling in and becoming trapped.
- If fencing is utilised at any point during the works, a gap of 200mm from ground level will be provided, allowing free passage for mammals and preventing entrapment.

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.

Material assets and waste

There is potential for impacts as a result of resource depletion through use and transportation of new materials. However, materials will be sourced locally where possible and the following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- Materials will be sourced from recycled origins as far as reasonably practicable within design specifications.
- Care will be taken to order the correct quantity of required materials to prevent the disposal of unused materials.
- Where possible, minimal packaging will be requested on required deliveries to reduce unnecessary waste and production of packaging materials.

There is potential for impacts during works as a result of the improper storage or disposal of waste. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- The subcontractor will adhere to waste management legislation and ensure they comply with their Duty of Care.
- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.

- All road plainings will be treated in line with LRWA 3 and be recycled in line with SEPA's WAS-G-DEF-05 Guidance for End-of-Waste for Recycled Aggregates.
- All wastes and unused materials will be removed from site in a safe and legal manner by a licensed waste carrier upon completion of the works. The appointed waste carrier will have a valid SEPA waste carrier registration, a copy of which will be provided to and retained by BEAR Scotland as early as possible.
- All appropriate waste documentation will be present on site and be available for inspection. A copy of the Duty of Care paperwork will be produced and filed appropriately in accordance with the Code of Practice (as made under Section 34 of Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended).
- Re-use and recycling of waste will be encouraged, and the subcontractor will be required to fully outline their plans and provide documentary evidence for waste arising from the works (e.g., waste carrier's licence, transfer notes, and waste exemption certificates).
- Staff will be informed that littering will not be tolerated. Staff will be encouraged to collect any litter seen on site.
- Where applicable, all temporary signage will be removed from site on completion of the works.

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

Noise and vibration

Construction activities associated with the proposed scheme have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities. However, the works are not located within a CNMA or CQA and the proximity of road space suggests that residents within the local area will have a degree of tolerance to noise and disturbance. Works will be completed on a rolling programme during day-time working hours. Works with the potential to induce worst-case scenario noise and vibration will also be intermittent, temporary, transient and short-lived.

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

The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- Local residents that are likely to be affected by the works will be notified in advance of the works, likely by a letter drop, which will contain details of the proposed timings and duration of the works, in addition to contact details for the Site Supervisor.
- The Best Practicable Means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, will be employed at all times to reduce noise to a minimum.
- On-site construction tasks will be programmed to be as efficient as possible, with a view to limiting noise disruption to local sensitive receptors.
- All site personnel will be fully briefed in advance of works regarding the need to minimise noise during works and of the site-specific sensitivities.
- Drop heights from vehicles and NRMM will be kept to a minimum to minimise noise when unloading.
- All plant, machinery and vehicles will be switched off when not in use.
- All plant will be operated in such a way that minimises noise emissions and will have been maintained regularly to the appropriate standards.
- Where fitted, and where permitted under Health and Safety requirements, white noise reversing alarms will be utilised during construction.
- Where ancillary plant such as generators are required, they will be positioned so as to cause minimum noise disturbance. Where deemed necessary, acoustic screens will be utilised.

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

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site have the potential to have temporary adverse impacts on local residents, vehicle travellers, and NMUs. The A99 will not be fully closed during the works. Although the single lane closure on one side of the carriageway will take place during the day, the ADT on the A99 is low; therefore, no significant congestion issues are noted during the proposed construction hours. In the event of local access restrictions to residential properties, access will be granted as requested.

Approximately fourteen residential properties lie within 300m of the scheme extents. The nearest of which lies approximately 10m west of the scheme, with minimal screening present. As such, there is potential for disturbance from noise and vibration. However, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low:

- Notification will be issued to local residents and local public transport operators prior to commencement of the works, advising of any proposed works and expected restrictions.
- Any changes of schedule will be communicated to local residents and public transport operators throughout the programme.
- Given the proximity of residential properties to the scheme extents, the Toolbox Talk TTN-042 'Being a Good Neighbour' will be briefed prior to the works commencing.
- Local access will be granted as required.
- Any changes of schedule (e.g. change from daytime works to nighttime works) will be communicated to travelling public throughout the programme.
- Appropriate provisions / measures will be implemented within the traffic management to allow the safe passage of NMUs of all abilities through the site.
- Journey planning information will be available for drivers online at the trafficscotland.org website. Journey planning information will also be available for drivers online through BEAR's social media platforms.

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

Road drainage and the water environment

There is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment due to operation of plant within proximity to watercourses and/or drainage systems, which may lead to potential changes in water quality from pollution events (either by accidental spillage of sediments, particulate matter, chemicals, fuels or by mobilisation of these in surface water caused by rain).

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

However, the following mitigation measures will be put in place to reduce the risk of pollution incidents as a result of works:

- No work has been identified that would require entering any surface waterbodies. If such a need were identified onsite, BEAR Scotland's

Environmental Team will be contacted (before the works commence) to allow consideration of potential environmental effects.

- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems will be permitted. Appropriate containment measures will be in place to prevent any loss of construction materials into the water environment.
- Standard working practices to comply with the Water Activities Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations (EASR) 2018 for works near water are detailed in the SEMP and will be adhered to on site.
- Appropriate measures will be implemented during resurfacing operations to limit the potential for wastes (i.e. road planings) and materials (i.e. new asphalt) to enter any gullies present on site. On completion of resurfacing operations, any gullies present on site will be visually checked to ensure they have not become blocked as a result of the scheme.
- An incident response (contingency) plan will be put in place to reduce the risk from pollution incidents or accidental spillages. All necessary containment equipment, including suitable spill kits (for oil and chemicals) will be available on site, quickly accessible if needed, and staff trained in their use.
- All spills will be logged and reported. In the event of any spills into the water environment, all works will stop, and the incident will be reported to the project manager and the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. SEPA will be informed of any such incident as soon as possible using the SEPA Pollution Hotline.
- All plant and equipment will be regularly inspected for any signs of damage and leaks. A checklist will be present to make sure that the checks have been carried out.
- Storage of hazardous material, oil and fuel containers will be distanced more than 10m away from any watercourses.
- If required, a designated refuelling area will be identified. Fuel bowsers will be stored on an impermeable area and be fully bunded. This will be distanced more than 10m from any watercourses.
- During refuelling of smaller mobile plant, a funnel will be used, and drip trays will be in place. Care will be taken to reduce the chance of spillages. Spill kits will be quickly accessible to capture any spills should they occur. The ground/stone around the site of a spill will be removed, double bagged and taken off site as special waste.
- Generators and static plant may have the potential to leak fuel and/or other hydrocarbons and will have bunding with a capacity of 110%. If these are not bunded then drip trays will also be supplied beneath the equipment with a capacity of 110%.

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

Climate

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:

- BEAR Scotland will adhere to its Carbon Management Policy.
- All mitigation measures detailed within 'Air Quality' and 'Material Assets and Waste' will be adhered to.
- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gas emitted as part of the works.
- Where possible, materials will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be disposed at local facilities, where required.

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

Vulnerability of the project to risks

Numerous areas lie directly adjacent to the scheme, and across the scheme that have a high likelihood (10% chance each year) of flooding due to surface water and small watercourses flooding. Works will be programmed as far as is reasonably practicable to avoid periods of adverse weather or heavy rainfall. There will be no change to the likelihood of flooding on the A99 within the scheme extents upon completion of the works.

Works are restricted to areas of engineered ground of the A99 trunk road and TM will be designed in line with existing guidance. TM will consist of a lane closure with regular amnesties. Local residents will be notified of working hours and provided with appropriate contact information. Pedestrians or other NMUs will be accommodated within the traffic management setup.

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

The works will not result in any change in vulnerability of the A99 carriageway to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. The resurfacing and structural maintenance of the A99 carriageway is designed to protect users of the A99 trunk road and will have a beneficial impact on road users.

These measures along with mitigation measures and standard working practices will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site. The vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and disasters is considered to be low.

Assessment of cumulative effects

The proposed works are not anticipated to result in significant environmental effects. Due to the nature of the proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity.

A search of the Highland Council Planning Portal ([Highland Council Planning Portal](#)) identified no planning applications within 300m of the scheme that have been accepted within the last 6 months.

A search of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner website ([Scottish Road Works Online](#)) identified one set of roadworks on the A99, however, it is scheduled for 06/05/2026, for a duration of one day. Due to the short duration of these works, and the dates not overlapping, it is unlikely that the roadworks will cause significant cumulative effects.

BEAR Scotland programme all of its 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 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, it is unlikely that the proposed works will have a significant cumulative effect with any other future works in the area.

Assessments of the environmental effects

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

The HRA assessment concluded that with additional mitigation in place, the works would not result in AESI on these sites.

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

This is a relevant project in terms of section 55A(16) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 as it is a project for the improvement of a road and the completed works (together with any area occupied by apparatus, equipment, machinery, materials, plant, spoil heaps, or other such facilities or stores required during the period of construction) 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:

- Construction activities are restricted to an area of 1.41ha along a 2.015km stretch of the A99 trunk road.
- The works will be temporary, transient, localised and completed during day-time hours on a rolling programme.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.

- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- Removal of the carriageway defects will provide this part of the A99 carriageway with another life cycle and significantly improve the ride quality which will result in safer conditions for road users.
- The works will include the resurfacing and structural maintenance of the A99 by milling out and replacing of up to 300mm of bituminous material and reinstatement of road markings.

Location of the scheme:

- The works will be carried out within the existing A99 road boundary and as such, no land take will be required.
- The HRA concluded that works with appropriate mitigation and containment measures in place, the works are not expected to result in AESI on these sites.
- The scheme is not located within a NP, NSA, or any other sites designated for landscape character or quality. Works entail like-for-like resurfacing; no change to the visual landscape is expected.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant and limited to the construction phase.
- No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works. The works are expected to result in positive impacts on road users and human receptors during the operational phase.
- As the works will be limited to the like-for-like resurfacing, there will be no change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- Mitigation measures detailed above and in the SEMP are put in place with the objective to prevent and, if required, subsequently control any potential impacts on sensitive receptors.
- In the event that INNS presence is located on site, measures to prevent potential INNS spread will be implemented.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.

References of supporting documentation

“A99 Hempriggs Habitat Regulations Appraisal (HRA) Proforma Appropriate Assessment”. BEAR Scotland, May 2026.

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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