

8 COMMUNITY & PRIVATE ASSETS

8.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 4 – Assessment Methodology, DMRB Volume 11 is currently being modernised and as such there is no new guidance published for the Community and Private Assets Assessment. However, the Interim Advice Note (IAN) (125/09) Supplementary guidance for users of DMRB Volume 11 'Environmental Assessment' provides guidance that this chapter should make reference to DMRB Volume 11: Section 3, Part 6 - Land Use and Part 8 - Pedestrians, Equestrians and Community Effects.

The consideration of the effects on Community & Private Assets directly associated with the A96 Inveramsay Bridge Improvement design has been undertaken with reference to relevant section of the Environmental Assessments Techniques for Land Use and Community Effects.

The scope of the DMRB requirements to be considered for Community & Private Assets includes:-

- Demolition of Private Property and Associated Land-Take
- Loss of Land Used by the Community
- Effects on Development Land
- Effects on Agricultural Land
- Changes in Amenity
- Community Severance

8.2 Approach & Methods

In addition to DMRB guidance, the assessment approach has also relied upon the following:-

- The results from a site visit which is reported in the Baseline Conditions section;
- Desk-top documentation review and web-based information sources (relevant references/links provided).

The Effects on Community and Private Assets methodology embraces a number of key considerations for existing receptors contained within, and in proximity to, the Scheme location and these are highlighted below.

The scope of effects considered in this assessment (*during both the Scheme construction and operational phases*) includes:-

- Identification of the scale of the agricultural land-take required to accommodate the construction of the Scheme alignment and any likely effects on individual farm units;
- Other private asset land-take required to accommodate the construction of the Scheme;
- Loss of any community land used for the purpose of public recreation (formal and informal);
- Access to agricultural land, private properties, business premises and community amenities;
- Loss of land which Aberdeenshire Council (AC) has already designated for future development required as land-take to accommodate the construction of the Scheme;
- Any impacts of the Scheme on the Council's Local Development Plan designations.

8.2.1 **Level of Impacts**

The assessment of the potential effects of the Scheme (**prior to Mitigation**) has been undertaken as follows:

- Identification of a particular Community or Private Asset effect;
- Consideration of the Sensitivity of the receptor – a judgement as to the importance or value of the receptor, and its resilience to cope with changes resulting from the Community or Private Assets effect. A scale of sensitivity of the receptor has been defined as Negligible, Low, Medium, High and Very High;
- Consideration of the Magnitude of the effect (the actual change taking place to the environment). The descriptors adopted for the Magnitude of the Impact, the Significance of Effect Categories and the determination of the Significance of Impact (*considering both the Magnitude of Impact – the Degree of Change – as well as the Sensitivity of the Receptor*) are those recommended in DMRB Volume 11 (Section 2, Part 5 HA205/08) and shown in Table 8.1, Table 8.2 and Table 8.3 respectively:-

Table 8.1 – Magnitude of Impact Scales

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Criteria Descriptors
Major	Loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to key characteristics, features or elements (Adverse).
	Large scale or major improvement of resource quality; extensive restoration or enhancement; major improvement of attribute quality (Beneficial)
Moderate	Loss of resource, but not adversely affecting the integrity; partial loss of/damage to key characteristics, features or elements (Adverse)
	Benefit to, or addition of, key characteristics, features or elements; improvement of attribute quality (Beneficial)
Minor	Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements (Adverse)
	Minor benefit to, or addition of, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements; some beneficial impact on attribute or a reduced risk of negative impact occurring (Beneficial)
Negligible	Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements (Adverse)
	Very minor benefit to or positive addition of one or more characteristics, features or elements (Beneficial)
No Change	No loss or alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact in either direction

Table 8.2 - Descriptors of the Significance of Effect Categories

Significance Category	Typical Descriptors of Effect
Very Large	Only adverse effects are normally assigned this level of significance. They represent key factors in the decision-making process. These effects are generally, but not exclusively, associated with sites or features of international, national or regional importance that are likely to suffer a most damaging impact and loss of resource integrity. However, a major change in a site or feature of local importance may also enter this category.
Large	These beneficial or adverse effects are considered to be very important considerations and are likely to be material in the decision-making

Significance Category	Typical Descriptors of Effect
	process.
Moderate	These beneficial or adverse effects may be important, but are not likely to be key decision-making factors. The cumulative effects of such factors may influence decision-making if they lead to an increase in the overall adverse effect on a particular resource or receptor.
Slight	These beneficial or adverse effects may be raised as local factors. They are unlikely to be critical in the decision-making process, but are important in enhancing the subsequent design of the project.
Neutral	No effects or those that are beneath levels of perception, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.

Table 8.3 – Arriving at the Significance of Effect Categories (*Impacts falling within shaded boxes are considered to be Significant*)

Magnitude of Impact	Sensitivity of Receptor				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Major	Very Large	Large or Very Large	Moderate or Large	Slight or Moderate	Slight
Moderate	Large or Very Large	Moderate or Large	Moderate	Slight	Neutral or Slight
Minor	Moderate or Large	Slight or Moderate	Slight	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight
Negligible	Slight	Slight	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight	Neutral
No Change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

- A qualitative judgment for the determination of Significance has been adopted and only those effects that fall within the “Moderate”, “Large” or “Very Large” categories are considered to be Significant;

The assessment concludes with an assessment of the Residual Impacts of the Scheme on the Community & Private Asset receptors (**following Mitigation**) on a scale defined as No Change, Negligible, Minor, Moderate or Major.

8.3 Baseline Conditions

For this assessment the receptors contained within, or proximity to, the Scheme alignment have been considered. The baseline community facilities and the land uses are detailed below and are illustrated in [Figure 8.1](#) – Community and Private Assets Baseline Conditions. The agricultural land use capability is illustrated in [Figure 8.2](#) – Agricultural Land Use Capability.

8.3.1 Population

Scotland’s Census Results Online (SCROL) publishes population data for the West Garioch ward of the Aberdeenshire Council administrative area. The total ward population in 2007 was 10,239 but this covers a significantly larger area than that around the A96 Inveramsay Bridge location. However analysis of the published postcode population profiles produced by SCROL which cover the Scheme area and the surrounding environs (e.g. Whiteford and Pitcaple) indicates the following:-

- A total resident population of c.356 comprising 179 males and 177 females;
- 25% of the population (89 people) are aged between 0 and 15 years of age; 39% (139) are aged between 16 and 44 years; 18% (63) are aged between 45 and 59 with

the remaining 18% (66) aged 60 years and over. Therefore 64% of the area’s population is under 45 years of age – which is higher than the figures for the West Garioch ward (61.7%), Aberdeenshire (59.4%) and Scotland (59.6%).

8.3.2 **Community Facilities, Services & Private Assets**

There is only one community facility located within a 1km radius of the Scheme alignment:-

Pitcaple Wood

Pitcaple Wood (also known locally as “Govals”) is located directly west of the A96 at the Inveramsay Bridge with vehicle access and vehicle parking taken directly from the A96 on the south-west side of the railway bridge (a shared entry access road with Govals Farm):-



The woods are managed by Forestry Commission Scotland and provide a forestry track and paths. Although the main track surface and width and the gated access from the car park makes Pitcaple Wood suitable for use by walkers, dog walkers cyclists and equestrians –site visits did not identify any evidence of use of the Wood by the latter two categories.



From Pitcaple Wood a pedestrian bridge over the Aberdeen – Inverness railway line links the woods via a track to the A96 and across to a footpath (claimed Right of Way) which runs to the River Urie at the northern end of the Scheme.

Within a wider (c.2km) radius of the Scheme, there are a limited number of additional community and visitor facilities for which the section of the A96 north of Inverurie is a route access option and therefore it is relevant to highlight them in the baseline review:-

- North Aberdeenshire Dance Academy (NADC) - The contact address for the NADC is Home Farm, Pitcaple (*Ref 1.3*) which is located adjacent to the A96/Whiteford junction at the north-west boundary of the study area. The Academy provides dancing tuition for children (3+ years) and adults.
- The Pitscurry Project and the Pitcaple Environmental Project - The Pitscurry Project is an Aberdeenshire Council day service for adults with learning disabilities and is located east of Pitcaple Quarry on the northern boundary of the study area. The site comprises a six acre garden with a number of themed garden areas, plant and produce growing area. The site includes a building and produces a range of hand produced crafts including cards, paper and art work.
- Chapel of Garioch Primary School - The Chapel of Garioch Primary School is located south of the village of Pitcaple and comprises three classrooms, a general purpose room, cloakroom and toilets, staff room and an office for the Head Teacher. Outside there is a hard playground area and a large playing field surrounded by pine trees. The school pupil roll in the school year 2010/2011 was 42 and the school catchment area includes Inveramsay and Pitcaple.
- Chapel of Garioch Parish Church - The Church of Scotland parish church and graveyard is located south of the north-western end of the study area. Services are held on a Sunday from 11.00am.
- Logie Durno Primary School - The Logie Durno Primary School is located north of Whiteford and the school pupil roll in the school year 2010/2011 was 33. The school catchment area includes Whiteford and Pitcaple. Adjacent to the school is a Community Hall and a public open space comprising grass football pitches and a children's play area.
- Inverurie Academy and Meldrum Academy, Oldmeldrum - Although neither Inverurie Academy nor Meldrum Academy are located within a 2km radius of the Scheme alignment, they are nevertheless relevant as both schools catchment areas cover the study area and the adjacent communities of Pitcaple and Whiteford. Some pupils travelling to these secondary schools by car or bus may require to travel along the section of the A96 covered by the study area.

8.3.3 **Scheduled Bus Services**

There are no bus stops located along the A96 Inveramsay Bridge Improvement Scheme corridor although the scheduled bus service operator provides a "flag-down" service on the A96 between designated bus stops for passengers. The nearest bus stop is located on the A96 – west of the A96/Whiteford minor road junction. South of the Scheme, there are no bus stops located on the A96 between Mill House and Inverurie. A summary of the scheduled bus services which use the section of the A96 between Pitcaple and Inveramsay is provided in Table 8.4 below.

Table 8.4 – A96 Scheduled Bus Services

Service	Number	Availability			Operator
Aberdeen-Huntly (to Inverness)	10/ 10A/ X10	Monday to Friday (16 services per day)	Saturday (16 services)	Sunday (10 services)	Stagecoach Bluebird (Timetable from 12 th March 2012)
and		Monday to Friday	Saturday	Sunday	

Service	Number	Availability			Operator
		(17 services per day)	(17 services)	(11 services)	
Huntly to Aberdeen (from Inverness)					
Inverurie – Huntly and Huntly - Inverurie	306	Monday to Friday (10 services per day)	Saturday (4 services)	Sunday (No services)	Stagecoach Bluebird (Timetable from 12 th September 2011)
		Monday to Friday (10 services per day)	Saturday (4 services)	Sunday (No services)	
Inverurie to Outlying Villages (including Pitcaple & Whiteford)	A2B Dial-a-Bus	Monday-Wednesday-Friday 10.00 to 14.15 (pre-booked)			Aberdeenshire Council

Through consultation with local residents it is know that very small numbers of people catch the bus outside or opposite their property.

8.3.4 **Footpaths and Cycleways**

There are no existing footways on either side of the A96, there are also no obvious pedestrian desire lines other than crossing of the single carriageway road opposite some of the houses. This is due in to some demand for the local bus service to Inverurie and Aberdeen.

A review of the cycle routes from Sustrans show there are no cycle routes within, or crossing, the study area section of the A96 trunk road corridor, this was confirmed in a consultation response from Sustrans in July 2011.

8.3.5 **Aberdeen to Inverness Railway**

A scheduled rail service operated by First ScotRail runs between Aberdeen and Inverness crossing over the A96 on the Inveramsay Rail Bridge, however, there is no rail station within the study area. The frequency of this service (*December 2011 to December 2012 timetable*) is summarised in Table 8.5 below.

Table 8.5 – Scheduled Rail Services

Service	Monday – Saturday (per day)	Sunday
Aberdeen- Inverness (via Inverurie and Inch)	11	5
Inverness to Aberdeen (via Inch and Inverurie)	11	5

The Aberdeen Inverness Railway runs parallel with the existing A96 within the study area, crossing from the east to the west of the A96 at the Inveramsay Rail Bridge. On the north-east side of the bridge there is a gated access leading to former railway sidings which are in private ownership and which appear to be used currently as a storage compound for chopped logs, machinery, abandoned vehicles etc :-



South-east of the former railway sidings, between the Aberdeen – Inverness railway line and agricultural land is an allotment area:-



8.3.6

Residential Properties

There are a total of 15 residential properties around the baseline section of the A96 corridor in proximity to the Scheme alignment. These are detailed in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6 – Residential Properties in Proximity to the Scheme

Location	Residential Property	Total
North & East side of A96	Mill House Uryview Milton Cottage Milton of Inveramsay (farm-house) Pitcaple Castle Lodge Pitcaple Castle	6
South & West side of A96	Dockendale Dier Cottage Dunmuir Station Cottages (1 to 4) Rowan Cottage The Govals (farmhouse)	9

In the wider, geographic area (c.2km radius of the Scheme) there are approximately an additional 100 residential properties. These are relevant as residents travelling to/from these properties may require to travel along the section of the A96 included in the study area. The

villages of Whiteford and Pitcaple account for a total of over 90% of these additional residences.

8.3.7 Industrial/Business Premises

There are no industrial or non-agricultural business premises located in proximity to the Scheme. The nearest such premises are:-

- The Pitcaple VW & Audi Centre (Garage repairs) which is located on the A96 west of the A96/Pitcaple minor road junction, approximately 1.5km north-west of the northern boundary of the Scheme;
- The “Wooden Shop” adjacent to Station Cottage at the A96/Pitcaple minor road junction. Although the property is in a significantly dilapidated condition, the business is still listed as a Chimney Sweep. The premises are located approximately 1.5km north-west of the northern boundary of the Scheme:-



- Aberdeenshire Council’s Pitcaple Quarry which although located approximately only 1km north of the northern boundary of the Scheme, is located on the opposite side of the River Urie.

In addition, there are three mobile phone mast installations (Vodafone, O2 and 3/T-Mobile) located along the field access track – which runs westwards from the A96 (at the A96/ Harlaw road junction) towards Chapel of Garioch:-



8.3.8 ***Agricultural Operations***

Land to the East of the existing A96

At the northern end of the Scheme between the A96 alignment and the River Urie, the agricultural land is predominantly rough grass with a single field of arable crop growing land. Current access to these fields from the A96 is via the hard standing area adjacent to the north-east side of the Inveramsay Bridge:-



The agricultural land to the south-east of the existing A96 Inveramsay Bridge is a combination of arable crop production, grassland and animal grazing (*at Milton of Inveramsay Farm*):-



Land to the West of the existing A96

The agricultural land to the west of the existing A96 is exclusively in arable crop production use:-



8.3.9 Land Use Capability for Agriculture

Volume 11 of DMRB, Section 3, Part 6 – Land Use recommends that the assessment of roads and bridge schemes should give an appreciation of the likely consequences of land take on agricultural land. The Macaulay Land Capability for Agriculture (LCA) classification is the official agricultural classification system widely used in Scotland as a basis of land evaluation. The Macaulay Land Use Research Institute (*now part of the James Hutton Institute*) classifies agricultural land into seven use capability classes with four of the classes further subdivided into divisions:-

- 1) Very Wide Range of Crops
- 2) Wide Range of Crops
- 3) Moderate Range of Crops
- 4) Narrow Range of Crops
- 5) Used as Improved Grassland
- 6) Used Only as Rough Grazing
- 7) Very Limited Agricultural Value

The “best and most versatile (BMV) land” is classified as Class 1, 2 and 3.1 – this is the land which is most flexible, productive and most likely to deliver future crops.

A desktop review of the Macaulay Institute’s “Land Capability for Agriculture – Aberdeen (Sheet 38)” map indicates that the agricultural land classification around the Scheme corridor is as follows:-

Land to the East of the existing A96

Predominantly Class 3.2 (land capable of producing a moderate range of crops of average production but high yields of barley, oats and grass are often obtained) with Class 3.1 land bordering the River Urie (land capable of producing a moderate range of crops of consistently high yields but of a narrow range – principally cereals and grass – and/or moderate yields of a wider range including potatoes, field beans and root crops).

Land to the West of the existing A96

Predominantly Class 3.2 with a small area of Class 3.1 land located west of the Rowan Cottage, Station Cottages (x4) and Dunmuir residential properties and also around the baseline A96/U81c Harlaw road junction.

8.3.10 **Woodland**

The land use to the west of the existing A96 at in the north of the study area is predominantly woodland – Pitcaple Wood. Much of Pitcaple Wood is predominantly mature tree growth designated as Ancient Woodland (long established – of plantation origin). Pitcaple Wood is a commercial forest area managed by the Moray & Aberdeenshire District of the Forestry Commission. Operations are carried out every 5 years for about a four month period. This includes road maintenance, timber harvesting and haulage:-



For the remainder of the Scheme study area there are only limited areas of tree planting e.g. east of Rowan Cottage, the Station Cottages, and the Dunmuir residential properties and within the Class 3.2 agricultural land located south-east of the A96 Inveramsay Rail Bridge:-



8.3.11 **Plans and Policies**

National Planning Framework 2 (2009)

The National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) guides Scotland’s development to 2030, setting out strategic development priorities to support the Scottish Government’s central purpose of sustainable economic growth.

Strategic objectives of the NPF2 to 2030 include:-

- Supporting sustainable growth in the rural economy;
- Promoting development which helps to improve health, regenerate communities and enable disadvantaged communities to access opportunities;
- Encouraging a sufficient supply of homes which are affordable in places where people want to live.

Goals are included that relate to creating sustainable places and communities in urban and rural areas. Paragraph 204 in the Spatial Perspectives section for the East Coast of Scotland states that: *“The primary aim for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire is to grow and diversify the economy, making sure the region has enough people, homes, jobs and facilities to maintain and improve its quality of life..... Strategic growth is being focused on the city and the Aberdeen to Peterhead and Huntly to Laurencekirk corridors”.*

Scottish Planning Policy (2010)

SPP includes planning policy for a number of topics relevant to the consideration of development impacts on community and private assets e.g.:-

- The planning system should enable the development of well designed, energy efficient, good quality housing in sustainable locations and allocate a generous supply of land to meet identified housing requirements across all tenures;
- The planning system has a significant role in supporting sustainable economic growth in rural areas. The aim should be to enable development in all rural areas which supports prosperous and sustainable communities whilst protecting and enhancing environmental quality. Planning authorities should be realistic about the availability or likely availability of alternatives to access by car as not all locations, particularly in remoter areas, can be served by public transport;
- Rural areas provide a wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities, many of which are closely linked to the quality of the environment. Planning authorities should support, protect and enhance open space and opportunities for sport and recreation. Statutory access rights under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 apply to most land and inland water in Scotland, underpinning opportunities for outdoor recreation. Planning authorities should consider access issues and should protect core and other important routes and access rights when preparing development plans and making decisions on planning applications;
- The SPP states that prime quality agricultural land is a finite national resource. Development on prime agricultural land should not be permitted unless it is an essential component of the settlement strategy or is necessary to meet an established need, for example for major infrastructure development, where no other suitable site is available.

Aberdeen City & Shire Structure Plan (2009)

The Aberdeen City & Shire Structure Plan (Approved August 2009) is applicable to the Scheme area. The Plan sets out a vision that “by 2030, Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, work and do business”.

The Plan contains a number of aims including help create sustainable mixed communities, and the associated infrastructure, which meets the highest standards of urban and rural design and cater for the needs of the whole population. In the strategic growth areas (the study area is contained within the Huntly to Laurencekirk strategic growth area) services and facilities for the community must be a part of development and the Plan does not support development activity which fails to provide facilities and services which help to make successful and sustainable communities.

The Structure Plan identifies the area’s towns and villages as important assets and whilst rural industries such as farming and forestry will remain important sectors there is a need to diversify and grow the economy to meet local needs. Tourism is identified as an economic sector of particular growth potential.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (2012)

Aberdeenshire Council adopted its Local Development Plan (ALDP) on the 1st June 2012 and this replaced the Aberdeenshire Local Plan (2006). Along with the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009), the ALDP formally, and legally, became the development plan for Aberdeenshire setting out the ground rules for the development of land in Aberdeenshire until 2023. The main purpose of the ALDP is to set out statements of the policies that will be used by Aberdeenshire Council in assessing planning applications. It provides *“firm guidance for the period up to 2016”*, by which time the land allocation requirements at that time will have been reviewed.

The ALDP adopts the vision of the Aberdeen City & Shire Structure Plan and sets out a number of aims and objectives. This includes:-

- Making sure that the area has enough development land to provide for people, homes and jobs to support services and facilities;
- Promoting sustainable mixed communities with the highest standards of design;
- Making efficient use of the transport network.

Policy 1 (Business Development) of the ALDP supports the development of business and sustainable economic growth in all areas by taking account of the economic benefits of proposed development when Aberdeenshire Council makes decisions in development management.

Policy 3 (Development in the Countryside) of the ALDP is centred upon creating a welcoming approach to development in the countryside which meets the needs of rural communities by contributing to their overall social and economic wellbeing and by promoting vigorous and prosperous rural settlements.

The Garioch Area Proposals Map that accompanies the adopted ALDP does not identify any specific Community or Private Asset related proposals within, or adjacent to the Scheme. The nearest specific proposals are for the protection of land from development at Whiteford and protected land and proposed housing development sites at Chapel of Garioch.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2013 - Proposed Plan)

The proposed Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (ACSSDP) sets out a 20 year vision and objectives (to 2035) for the whole of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire - except that part within the Cairngorms National Park. The proposed ACSSDP was issued for public consultation from February to April 2013 and had not been finalised at the time of the writing of this ES chapter.

The ACSSDP vision is that:

“Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and do business. We will be recognised for:-

- *our enterprise and inventiveness, particularly in the knowledge economy and in high-value markets;*
- *the unique qualities of our environment; and our high quality of life.*

We will have acted confidently and taken the courageous decisions necessary to further develop a robust and resilient economy and to lead the way towards development being sustainable, including dealing with climate change and creating a more inclusive society”.

The proposed ACSSDP identifies four “Strategic Growth Areas” – one of which is the corridor between Aberdeen and Huntly (includes Pitcaple). The proposed Plan states that *“significant development will take place in the 31-mile road and rail corridor stretching from Huntly to*

Blackburn” and that developments will be supported by new infrastructure including “improvements on the A96 corridor”. Short-term improvements will also be made “such as replacing the Inveramsay Bridge to allow two-way traffic” before the more comprehensive upgrade planned for later in the ACSSDP period.

8.4 Predicted Impacts, Disruption due to Construction and Mitigation

For ease of reference, the assessment of the predicted impacts during both the Construction and Operational phases of the Scheme are presented in a tabular format (Table 8.7 below) using the criteria/terminology identified in the Approach & Methods section (section 8.2).

Table 8.7 also includes proposed Mitigation measures to be incorporated into the project design, implementation and operation to mitigate the impacts described on Community or Private Assets. The mitigation is designed to prevent, reduce, and where possible offset the potential effects upon the Community and Private Assets baseline conditions. Residual impacts post mitigation measures are also identified in this table.

[Figure 8.1](#) – Community and Private Assets Baseline Conditions highlights the receptors identified in the study area which are referred to in the following assessment.

Table 8.7 – Predicated Construction and Operation Impacts, Mitigation and Residual Impacts

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
Agricultural Land (Access)	<p>Construction Impacts</p> <p>Temporary disruption during construction of two agricultural field accesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural access to fields east of the A96 (existing access is to the north east of the existing Inveramsay Bridge). Agricultural access to fields west of the A96 (existing access is opposite the A96/Harlaw Junction). Note this access track is also used for maintenance access for three mobile phone masts. 	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	<p>Pre-construction, consultation to be undertaken with affected landowners and temporary access arrangements agreed. Ensure field accesses are maintained at all times during the Scheme construction phase.</p> <p>Construction programme timing to ensure that the new field accesses (including the accommodation underpass) are in place before the existing accesses are closed to avoid temporary severance of field access for the Milton of Inveramsay farming operations.</p>	<p>Negligible adverse residual impact – although access to fields will be maintained during construction.</p>
	<p>Operational Impacts</p> <p>Realigned agricultural field accesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural access to fields east of the A96 will be via new gated field access (right/left stagger with ghost island) Agricultural access to fields west of the A96 will be via new access track to replace stopped up access. This track will also 	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	<p>Provision of alternative access arrangements as integral part of Scheme Design.</p>	<p>Minor adverse residual impact due to new access arrangements and slightly longer travel distances to access agricultural land.</p>

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	provide maintenance access for the three mobile phone masts.					
Construction Impacts						
Private Properties and Business Premises (Access)	<p>Temporary disruption during the construction period for a number of residential properties along the existing A96 and alteration of some accesses including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uryview • Milton Cottage • Milton of Inveramsay Farm <p>Access to these properties may be disrupted during the construction works. In addition the direct rear access from the A96 to Milton Cottage and Milton of Inveramsay Farm is to be stopped up; however, rear access will still be available from the Harlaw Road.</p>	Minor Adverse	High	Slight Adverse	<p>Pre-construction, consultation to be undertaken with affected private property owners and ensure property access is maintained at all times during the Scheme construction period. Construction programme timing to ensure works regarding the re-grading of the A96/U81c Harlaw road junction and "stopping-up" the direct vehicular access to/from the A96 are staggered to avoid any temporary severance of access to the Milton of Inveramsay Farm, Milton Cottage and Uryview private properties.</p>	Negligible adverse residual impact – although access will be maintained during construction.
	<p>Temporary disruption during the construction period for a number of residential properties along the existing A96 and alteration of some accesses including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station Cottages • Dunmuir • Rowan Cottage • Dier Cottage • Dockendale Cottage • Govals Farm 	Minor Adverse	High	Slight Adverse	<p>Pre-construction, consultation to be undertaken with affected private property owners and ensure property access is maintained at all times during the Scheme construction period e.g. via the baseline A96 access under the Inveramsay Rail Bridge. Construction programme timing to ensure the works are staggered to avoid any temporary severance of</p>	Negligible/Minor adverse residual impact – although access will be maintained during construction.

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	<p>During the construction period access may be disrupted and will alter when travelling northwards as properties will no longer have direct frontal access onto the A96 and will need to be accessed via the existing Inveramsay Bridge (i.e. travelling from the south residents will need to go north on the new proposed A96 to the Inveramsay Bridge before turning southwards on the existing de-trunked A96 to access properties.</p>				<p>frontage access to the identified properties.</p>	
	<p>Potential disruption during the construction period of the existing access to the former railway sidings (currently a storage compound in private ownership). Current access is located adjacent to the existing Inveramsay Bridge and it should be noted that this access also links to the old disused railway track and allotments near to Milton of Inveramsay Farm. The allotments can also be accessed via the Inveramsay Farm railway underpass which is not affected by the Scheme.</p>	<p>Minor Adverse</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Slight Adverse</p>	<p>Pre-construction, consultation to be undertaken with affected private premises owner and ensure access is maintained at all times during the Scheme construction period. Construction programme timing to ensure existing gated access upgrade work and creation of the new priority junction is staggered to avoid any temporary severance of access to the former railway sidings land area and the old disused railway track.</p>	<p>Negligible adverse residual impact – although access will be maintained during construction.</p>
Operational Impacts						
	<p>During Scheme operation access to the following properties will be from the existing A96 to the Harlaw Road:</p>	<p>Negligible Adverse</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Slight Adverse</p>	<p>Provision of alternative access arrangements as integral part of Scheme Design.</p>	<p>Permanent stopping up of direct rear access from the A96 to Milton Cottage and</p>

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uryview • Milton Cottage • Milton of Inveramsay Farm <p>A new accommodation underpass and access track will be provided for the Milton of Inveramsay Farm which links back to the existing A96 and a new access track.</p>					<p>Milton of Inveramsay, however, access can still be gained from Harlaw Road.</p> <p>Negligible adverse residual impact due to very minor increase in travel distance for owners of these properties.</p>
	<p>During Scheme operation access to the following properties will not be affected when travelling from the north. Travelling from the south however, residents will use the new realigned A96, turning left at the existing Inveramsay Bridge before travelling southwards to access properties. This applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station Cottages • Dunmuir • Rowan Cottage • Dier Cottage • Dockendale Cottage • Govals Farm <p>It should be noted, however, that the removal of direct access onto the trunk road and rationalisation of access to one junction results in safer access and better visibility for residents.</p>	Minor Adverse	High	Slight Adverse	Provision of alternative access arrangements as integral part of Scheme Design.	<p>Minor adverse residual impact due to minor increase in travel distance for owners of these properties.</p>

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	Access to the existing access to the former railway sidings (currently a storage compound in private ownership). Current access is located adjacent to the existing Inveramsay Bridge and it should be noted that this access also links to the old disused railway track and allotments near to Milton of Inveramsay Farm. The allotments can also be accessed via the Inveramsay Farm railway underpass which is not affected by the Scheme.	No Change	No Change	No Change	Existing gated access to old railway sidings to be upgraded as integral part of Scheme design.	Negligible beneficial residual impact – through the upgrading of the existing access.
Access to Community Facilities/ Amenities.	Construction Impacts Access to 'flag-down' bus for all residents along existing A96. During construction works it is likely that the buses will continue to use the existing A96 for a period before using the new A96 alignment.	No Change	High	Neutral		No change – as access to existing A96 "flag-down" bus services maintained <i>then</i>
	Once the new alignment is operational residents will have to walk further to access the trunk road to catch the bus however pedestrian access will be along the de-trunked A96 to the junction at the existing bridge or at Harlaw Road.	<i>then</i> Minor Adverse	High	Slight Adverse	Once the new A96 alignment is in place the current scenario will not change in that buses will be able to stop informally on the trunk road. The junctions at either end of the Scheme can be used as informal pick up/drop off areas.	Minor adverse residual impact with associated walking distance once buses use the realigned A96.

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	Operation Impacts					
	Increased walking distance for local residents to access 'flag-down' bus on A96 trunk road.	Minor Adverse	High	Slight Adverse	The de-trunked road will become a quiet residential road with some use by agricultural vehicles. It will be a much safer environment for pedestrians. The residents of Dier Cottage and Dockendale will be able to access the trunk road via the access path at the south east end of the de-trunked A96 to the edge of the new road opposite the junction at Harlaw Road.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with increased walking distance.
	Construction Impacts					
Access to Community Facilities/ Amenities and Commercial Forestry Operations	Potential disruption during construction of access to Forestry Commission owned Pitcaple Wood for recreational and commercial purposes	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Pre-construction consultation to be undertaken with Forestry Commission and ensure that access to Pitcaple Wood is maintained throughout construction period.	Negligible adverse residual impact – although access will be maintained during construction.
	Operational Impacts During operation access to Pitcaple Wood will be as existing, however visitors travelling from the south will have to travel to the existing Inveramsay Bridge and then access the de-trunked road to gain access to the Pitcaple Wood car park.	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Provision of a designated area at the north side of the existing Inveramsay Bridge for Forestry Commission (or their sub contractors) to use as a loading/unloading area for machinery being transported to	Minor adverse residual impact due to altered arrangements for commercial forestry activities.

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	During operation as access to Pitcaple Wood when travelling both from the north and south is under the existing Inveramsay Bridge this entails a height restriction of 4.4m for commercial forestry plant.				Pitcaple Wood on low-loader vehicles. Machinery with sufficient height clearance would then be driven below the existing rail bridge and thereby avoiding any severance issues.	(Note – Access for such machinery is only required approximately every 5 years for about a 4 month duration).
Construction Impacts						
Access to Community Facilities/ Amenities and Private Properties/ Business Premises for non-motorised users	The existing A96 will be subject to disruption during the construction period; however access will be maintained for all users.	Minor Adverse	Medium/ High	Slight Adverse	Access to all facilities/amenities and private properties/ business premises should be maintained during the construction period, with alternative access arrangements as necessary.	Minor adverse residual impact with the use of alternative temporary access arrangements as necessary
	Operational Impacts Once the Scheme is operational the de-trunked section of the existing A96 will be used only by local traffic and will therefore become a quieter and safer environment for non-motorised users.	Moderate Beneficial	Medium/ High	Moderate Beneficial	It is proposed as part of the Scheme design that the de-trunked section of the A96 will be used as a shared facility and designated footways/cycleways will not be required.	Moderate beneficial residual impact due to de-trunked section of the A96 to be used only by local traffic
Land-take of Private Assets	Construction and Operational Impacts					
	(Note the operational land take may be less than the construction land take to accommodate site compounds etc but the exact amount of land that will be available to be transferred back to the land owners is not known at this time. Therefore a worse case scenario is considered for this assessment as the land to be Compulsory Purchased to allow construction of the Scheme. Agricultural land take at Milton of Inveramsay Farm (to east of the existing	Major Adverse	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private	Moderate adverse

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
	Inveramsay Rail Bridge) of approximately 0.54ha .				land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	residual impact associated with the permanent loss of agricultural land.
	Agricultural land take to the east of the existing A96 at the northern end of the Scheme of approximately 0.07ha .	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of agricultural land.
	Agricultural land take at the south east of the Scheme to accommodate part of new access track of approximately 0.02ha .	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of agricultural land.
	Agricultural land take at Milton of Inveramsay Farm to accommodate Scheme alignment and new agricultural underpass of approximately 4ha .	Major Adverse	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Moderate adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of land.
	Land take at north western end of Scheme to accommodate new alignment tie-in of approximately 0.11ha .	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of land.
	Land take at Uryview to accommodate embankment at southern end of the Scheme of approximately 0.03ha .	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of agricultural land.

Receptor	Predicted Impacts	Magnitude of Predicted Effect	Sensitivity of Receptor	Determination of Impact Significance (prior to Mitigation)	Proposed Mitigation	Residual Impact Following Mitigation (see also section 8.5)
						permanent loss of land.
	Land take of Network Rail land to accommodate abutments for new A96 bridge over Aberdeen to Inverness railway of approximately 0.10ha	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of land.
	Land take of land between the existing A96 and the Aberdeen to Inverness Railway and along the disused railway line of approximately 1.27ha (0.7 ha of which is agricultural land)	Minor Adverse	Medium	Slight Adverse	Appropriate compensation to land owner for permanent loss of private land area required to accommodate Scheme design.	Minor adverse residual impact associated with the permanent loss of land some of which is agricultural.

8.5 Residual Impacts

The residual impacts of the Scheme on the Community and Private Asset receptors following mitigation will be the:-

- **Minor Adverse** residual impact during operation due to new agricultural access arrangements and slighter longer travel times (agricultural access at the southern end of the Scheme is also used for maintenance access for three mobile phone masts) .
- **Negligible Adverse** residual impact during operation due to permanent stopping up of direct rear access from the A96 to Milton Cottage and Milton of Inveramsay Farm resulting in a minor increase in travel time, however, rear access can still be gained from Harlaw Road and new accommodation underpass provides access to the detrunked A96.
- **Minor Adverse** residual impact during operation relating to a minor increase in travel time to access properties for Station Cottages, Dunmuir, Rowan Cottage, Dier Cottage, Dockendale and Govals farm, however that rationalisation of access to these properties will result in a safer environment.. (Note there are also a number of benefits associated with the realignment of the A96 away from these properties, mainly with regards to noise, air and landscape impacts and these are discussed in the relevant chapters of this ES).
- **Minor Adverse** residual impact during operation relating to an increased walking distance for local residents to 'flag-down' bus on re-aligned A96 trunk road.
- **Moderate Beneficial** residual impact during operation relating to the de-trunked section of the existing A96 being used only by local traffic and therefore becomes a quieter and safer environment for non-motorised users.
- **Minor Adverse** residual impact during operation due to altered arrangements for commercial forestry activities. (Note – Access for such machinery is only required approximately every 5 years for about a 4 month duration).
- **Moderate Adverse** impact for permanent loss of agricultural land (Class 3.1 and Class 3.2) totalling around 5.33ha, (approximately 4ha of which is at Milton of Inveramsay Farm) to accommodate the Scheme alignment and a new agricultural underpass;
- **Minor Adverse** impact for permanent loss of land area at Uryview (totalling around 0.03ha) to accommodate the embankment section at the southern end of the Scheme alignment;
- **Minor Adverse** impact for permanent loss of land area on a number of landowners (totalling around 0.78 ha) to accommodate the Scheme alignment.

8.6 Compliance with Policies and Plans

DMRB Volume 11: Section 3, Part 12 (Impact of Road Schemes on Policies & Plans) provides guidance on how to assess a proposed road scheme in terms of the wider context of national, regional, strategic and detailed planning policies. The guidance highlights the importance of assessing the impact of a proposed scheme on land-use policies and proposals at all levels of the planning process and states that the purpose is *“to assess how the achievement of policy objectives would be hindered or facilitated if a scheme were to be constructed”*.

Having detailed in section 8.3.11 the relevant policies and plans in the context of the Community & Private Assets considerations for the A96 Inveramsay Bridge Improvement Scheme, the purpose of section 8.4 is to assess the significance of the proposed Scheme on these relevant policies.

National Planning Framework 2 (2009)

The proposed Scheme will contribute to improving the A96 transportation corridor and supporting the NPF2 objectives of developing sustainable growth of the rural economy and strengthening communities. NPF2 identifies the Huntly to Laurencekirk corridor as a key strategic growth area and the A96 is a main arterial route through this corridor. Therefore the proposed Scheme improvements to the A96 should have a beneficial impact on facilitating the community and private asset related objectives of NPF2.

Scottish Planning Policy (2010)

The proposed Scheme will not adversely impact upon the housing and outdoor sport and recreation policy objectives of SPP, nor will it lead to a significant loss (in terms of scale) of prime agricultural land which the SPP categorises as a “*finite national resource*”. The proposed Scheme will contribute to improving the A96 transportation corridor and supporting the SPP objective of developing sustainable economic growth in rural areas, and in this respect, the proposed Scheme should have a beneficial impact on facilitating the SPP delivery.

Aberdeen City & Shire Structure Plan (2009)

A key aim of the AC&SSP is to create sustainable mixed communities, and the associated infrastructure. The Plan supports the strategic growth areas (which includes the Huntly to Laurencekirk corridor) identified in the NPF2 and requires development activity to provide facilities and services which help to make successful and sustainable communities. The A96 is a main arterial route through the Huntly to Laurencekirk corridor and the proposed Scheme improvements to the A96 should have a beneficial impact on facilitating the development of this strategic growth area. In addition, the proposed Scheme should have a beneficial impact upon facilitating the AC&SSP policy objective of sustainable community development by enhancing the A96 transport route for local community and business users e.g. improving accessibility and linkages.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (2012)

The proposed Scheme will not adversely impact upon the community or private asset development proposals for the Garioch area which are detailed in the adopted ALDP. The proposed Scheme should, however, support the sustainable mixed communities and socio-economic policy objectives of the ALDP which promote “*vigorous and prosperous rural settlements*” by improving the A96 transportation corridor and enhancing accessibility and linkages for local community and business users. Therefore the proposed Scheme improvements to the A96 should have a beneficial impact on facilitating these ALDP policy objectives.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan – Proposed Plan (2013)

At the time of writing this ES chapter, the ACSSDP had not been adopted. Nevertheless it is a proposed Plan which is of material consideration in the community and private asset context due to its vision which includes the further development of a “*robust and resilient economy*” and “*creating a more inclusive society*”. The ACSSDP identifies the corridor between Huntly and Aberdeen (which includes Pitcaple) as a key strategic growth area, and that over the 20 year Plan life-span, development within this corridor will be supported by new infrastructure including improvements to the A96. The replacement of the A96 Inveramsay Bridge is identified as a specific improvement in the short-term and therefore the proposed Scheme would have a beneficial impact on facilitating the delivery of the ACSSDP.

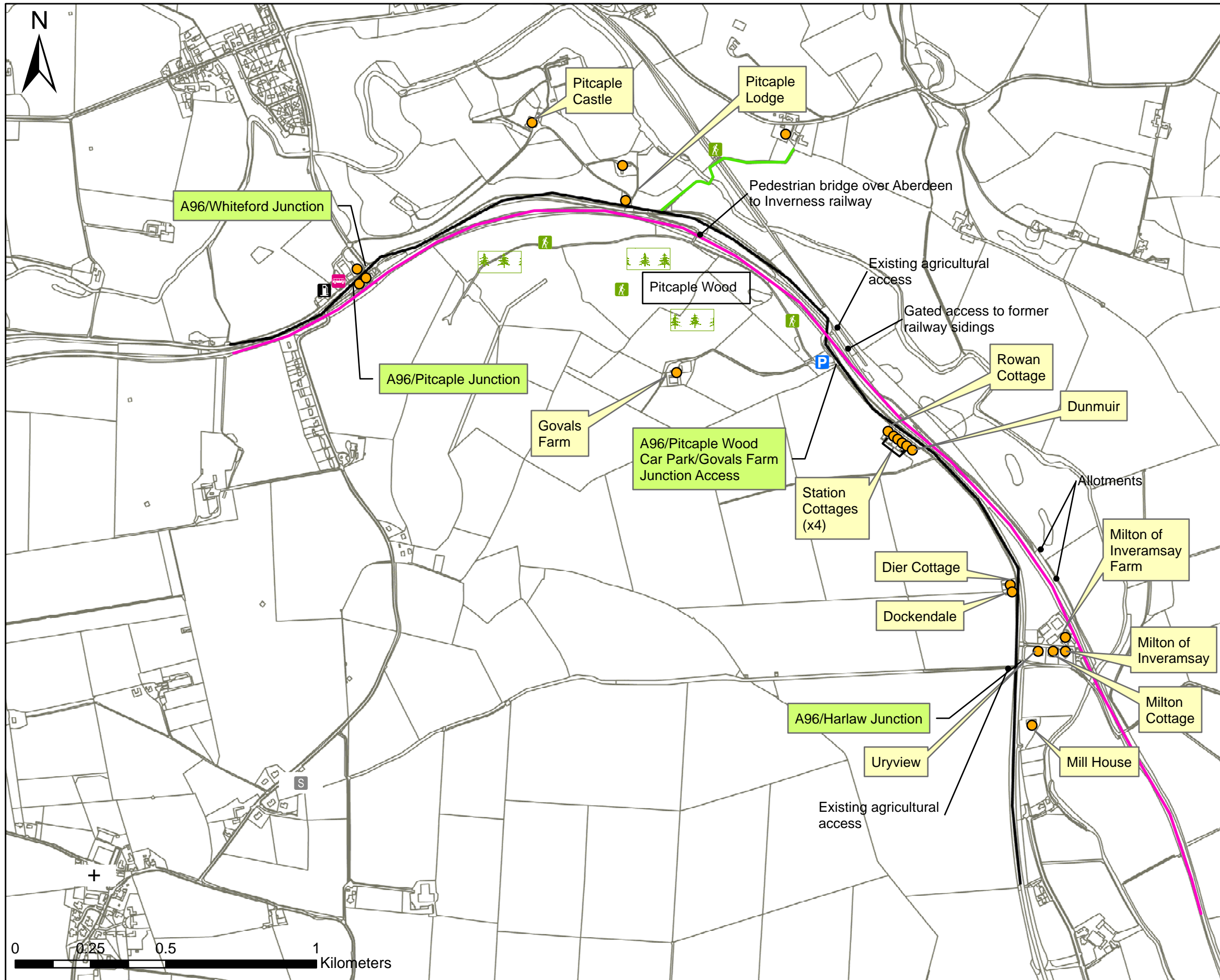
8.7 Summary

The impacts associated with the Scheme relate land take of agricultural land and private land, realigned access arrangements and some minor increases in travel times to access properties

and local facilities. Moderate adverse residual impacts remain with regard to permanent land take required for the Scheme.







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LEGEND

Community Facilities

-  Bus Stops (on A96)
-  Church
-  School
-  Pitcaple Wood Car Parking
-  Outdoor Recreation Facilities
-  Garage

**Landuse
(Excluding Agriculture
Land Capability Use - see Figure 10.2)**

-  Residential
-  Forestry (Pitcaple Wood)
-  A96 Trunk Road
-  Aberdeen - Inverness Railway
-  Footpath
-  Minor Junctions
-  Residential / Business Property Names

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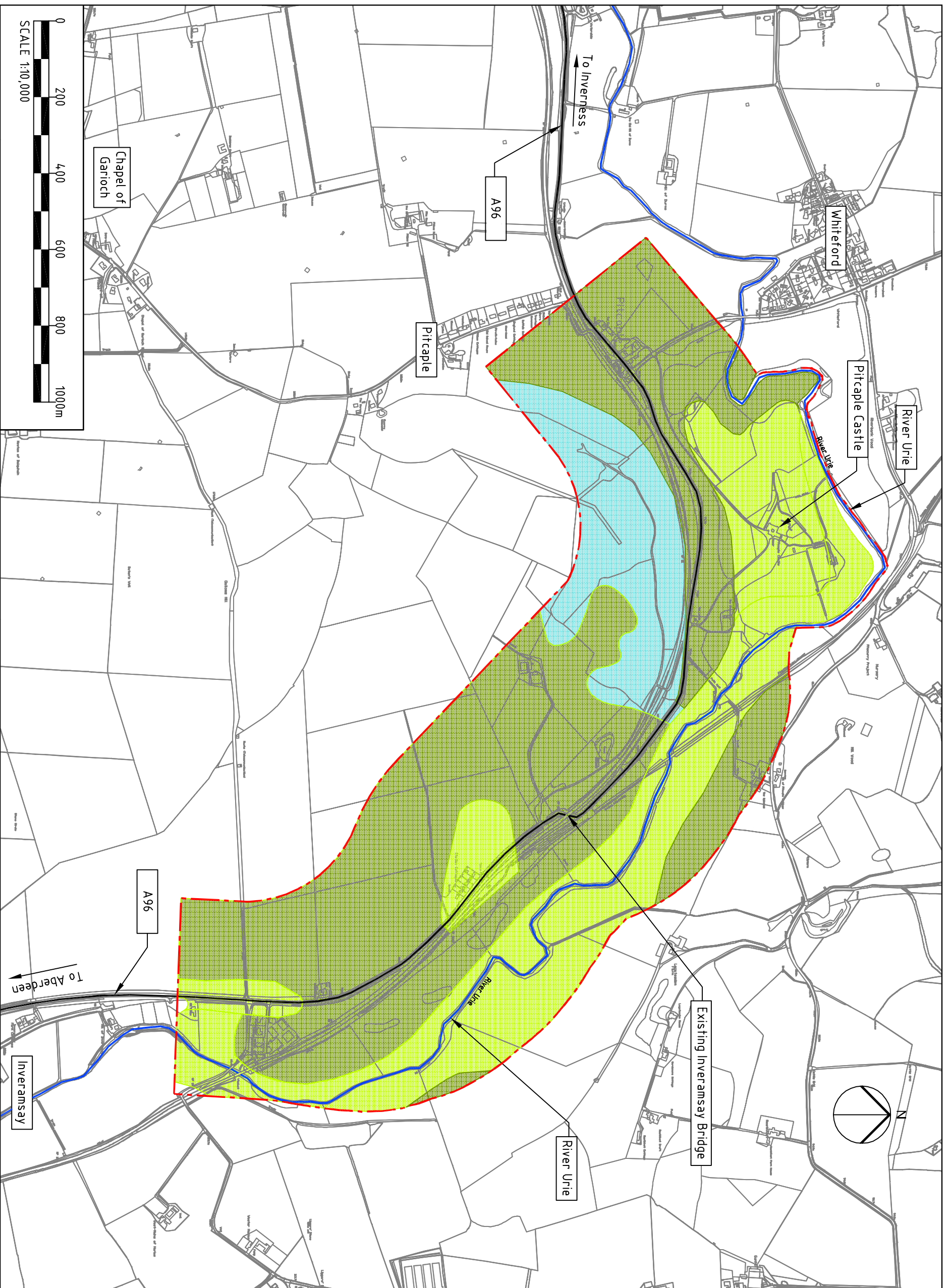
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A96 Inveramsay Bridge Improvement

**Community and Private Assets
Baseline Conditions**



FIGURE 8.1



Key	Description
3	Land capable of producing a moderate range of crops
3z	Land capable of producing a moderate range of crops
4	Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops

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A96 Inveramsay Bridge Improvement

Agricultural Land Use Capability



Figure 8.2