

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. The A9 Trunk Road forms a strategic link between Central Scotland and the Scottish Highlands and is vital to the growth and development of northern Scotland. The A9 serves settlements along the corridor, providing access to local services, employment and tourism.
- 1.1.2. The A9 is used by a range of vehicle types including passenger vehicles, coaches and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) for strategic, local, agricultural and commercial uses. Tourists also contribute to significant traffic volumes along the A9 during the summer months and holiday periods. The A9 between Perth and Inverness is 177km long of which 129km is single carriageway, with isolated sections of dual carriageway and Wide Single 2+1 (WS2+1) consisting of two lanes in one direction and a single lane in the opposite direction.
- 1.1.3. In 2009, the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR)ⁱ identified dualling of the A9 as a priority Trunk Road intervention. Following this, the Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) 2011ⁱⁱ and IIP 2015ⁱⁱⁱ committed to dualling the A9 trunk road between Perth and Inverness by 2025 (see Volume 3, Figure 1.1). The delivery of the Tomatin to Moy Project (see Volume 3, Figure 1.2) forms part of this commitment.
- 1.1.4. Following the IIP, two corridor-wide strategic studies were commissioned by Transport Scotland, including the Preliminary Engineering Support Services Report (PES), and the Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA). The PES and the SEA together form an equivalent assessment to the level of Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1, and identify likely engineering and environmental constraints, issues, risks, and opportunities for the A9 Dualling Programme. These commissions have informed progression of the Tomatin to Moy Project.
- 1.1.5. The PES report identified the proposed A9 Dualling as a Category 7A All Purpose Dual Carriageway road standard. The DMRB describes a Category 7A road as an all-purpose dual carriageway (D2AP), and recommends layout features and junction types in broad terms, including, inter alia:
- limited access, except for isolated existing access with left turns only
 - no gaps in the central reserve
 - grade separation of major junctions

1.2. The Proposed Scheme

- 1.2.1. This Environmental Statement (ES) relates to the Tomatin to Moy project which has now progressed to a Stage 3 level of design in accordance with the DMRB.
- 1.2.2. The A9 Dualling Tomatin to Moy DMRB Stage 3 engineering design assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and reported in this ES is hereafter referred to as 'the Proposed Scheme' and is shown in Figure 5.1a-b in Volume 3.
- 1.2.3. The Proposed Scheme is approximately 9.6km in length and at its southern end extends from the tie-in with the existing dual carriageway in the vicinity of the village of Tomatin, past the village of Moy to the east, through sparsely populated agricultural, forestry and moorland areas, to the tie-in with the existing dual carriageway north of Moy.

- 1.2.4. The majority of the existing road is a single carriageway 7.3m wide with 0.7m hardstrips. However, there is a WS2+1 between the Moy Rail Bridge and the Lynebeg Junction that was constructed in 2010. The WS2+1 is approximately 0.8km long and it provides an overtaking lane for northbound vehicles.

1.3. Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.3.1. The requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is set out by the European Commission Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, relating to the assessment of the environmental effects of certain public and private projects and Directive 2003/35/EC regarding public participation. The EIA (Scotland) Regulations 1999, as amended (iv and v) implemented the Directive in Scotland. The EIA Directive has recently been updated and a new EU Directive (2014/52/EU) was adopted in May 2014 and this was transposed into UK legislation on the 16 May 2017. A new set of Regulations, the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, implement Directive 2014/52/EU in relation to construction projects for new roads or improvement and maintenance of existing roads in Scotland.
- 1.3.2. Transitional arrangements are, however, in place such that road projects subject to a scoping procedure before 16 May 2017 will be considered in accordance with the requirements for EIA of certain road construction or improvement projects as set out in the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984^{vi}, as amended by the EIA (Scotland) Regulations 1999, hereafter referred to as the EIA Regulations¹. The Proposed Scheme was subject to scoping in July 2016.
- 1.3.3. The EIA Regulations categorise developments according to their requirement for an EIA. Schedule 1 of the Regulations lists the types of developments where EIA is always required and comprises large scale and impact developments. Schedule 2 lists developments that may or may not require an EIA depending on the potential for significant effects on the environment because of factors such as its nature, size or location.
- 1.3.4. The Proposed Scheme has an affected area exceeding one hectare (this being one of the threshold set out in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations). It has therefore been subject to screening using the EIA Regulations Schedule 3 criteria to determine whether a formal EIA is required under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, as amended by the EIA (Scotland) Regulations 1999. It was concluded by the screening exercise that an EIA was needed for the Proposed Scheme, as recorded in the signed Record of Determination.
- 1.3.5. The assessments reported in the ES have followed the guidelines set out in DMRB, Volume 11 (Highways Agency, 1999; as amended), including relevant DMRB Interim Advice Notes (IAN). In addition to DMRB, other applicable guidance has also been considered, where relevant, such as the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2016). Further details on the guidance applicable to the individual assessment chapters are referenced in the relevant ES chapters.

¹ Although the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 consolidated, updated and replaced Part II of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999, Parts III and IV of the 1999 Regulations concerning Roads, Bridges and Land Drainage, remained extant.

1.4. Content of the Environmental Statement

- 1.4.1. This ES presents the findings of the EIA process undertaken for the Proposed Scheme (as described in Chapter 5). The assessments presented in the ES have followed the guidelines contained in DMRB, Volume 11^{vii}.
- 1.4.2. Regulation 4(1) of the EIA Regulations stipulates requirements relating to the information to be included in an ES. Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations details the requirements under Parts I and II.
- 1.4.3. Regulation 4(1) indicates that an ES must include information referred to in Part II and such information referred to in Part I of Schedule 4 as is reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development, having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment. The ES has been prepared in accordance with Parts I and II.
- 1.4.4. The information required along with an indication of the chapter in which the relevant information can be found in this ES, is provided below:
- a description of the Proposed Scheme including details of the site and the road design, land use requirements, and an estimate by type and quantity of any emissions arising (Chapter 5)
 - an outline of the main alternatives and the main reasons for the choice of the Proposed Scheme, taking into account the environmental effects (Chapter 3)
 - a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly impacted by the Proposed Scheme (Chapters 8 to 20)
 - a description of the likely significant impacts of the Proposed Scheme on the environment, including direct and indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, beneficial and adverse effects, and a description of the forecasting methods used to assess the effects on the environment (Chapters 8 to 20 and 22)
 - a description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment (Chapters 4 and 8 to 21)
 - an indication of any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information (Chapters 8 to 20)
 - a non-technical summary of the above information

1.5. Structure of the Environmental Statement

- 1.5.1. The ES is divided into three volumes as follows:
- Volume 1 – the non-technical summary and the main report
 - Volume 2 – appendices containing additional technical information that supports the main report
 - Volume 3 – graphics supporting the information presented in Volumes 1 and 2, illustrating the Proposed Scheme and environmental information
- 1.5.2. The information contained in Volume 1 is presented in
- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the Proposed Scheme and the ES.
 - Chapter 2 summarises the need for the scheme.

- Chapter 3 provides a review of the scheme alternatives that were considered.
- Chapter 4 outlines the development of the Proposed Scheme design and how this has been informed by environmental aspects.
- Chapter 5 comprises a description of the Proposed Scheme.
- Chapter 6 contains a summary of the general approach and methods used for the various assessments reported in Chapters 8 to 20.
- Chapter 7 provides a summary of the consultation and scoping process, identifying the key issues raised and how these have been considered in the ES.
- Chapters 8 through to 20 report the findings of the studies and assessments which have been undertaken for the Proposed Scheme. These assessments are generally presented in a standardised format which is described in Chapter 6.
- Chapter 21 presents a summary of the environmental mitigation measures proposed.
- Chapter 22 provides a summary of the significant residual effects remaining after successful implementation of mitigation that are still considered to be significant.

1.5.3. A glossary of terms and list of abbreviations are also provided at the front of Volume 1.

1.5.4. The graphics contained in Volume 3 are numbered in accordance with the chapters in Volume 1 or the appendices in Volume 2.

1.5.5. A Non-Technical Summary is bound into the front of Volume 1 and is also available as a separate document.

1.6. The Environmental Assessment Team

1.6.1. The EIA was undertaken and compiled by Atkins Mouchel Joint Venture, with additional specialist input to some technical assessments as identified within the relevant ES chapters.

1.7. Environmental Statement Review and Comments

1.7.1. The ES is available for public viewing at the following locations during normal working hours:

Transport Scotland
Reception
9th Floor
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 0HF

The Highland Council
(Service Point)
Castle Street
Inverness
IV1 1JJ

High Life Highland
Aviemore Community Centre
Muirton

Aviemore
PH22 1SF

Tomatin Community Shop
Old Mill Road
Tomatin
Inverness
IV13 7YW

- 1.7.2. The ES can be viewed on the Transport Scotland website:
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/projects/a9-dualling-perth-to-inverness/a9-tomatin-to-moy/>
- 1.7.3. Printed copies of the ES may be obtained at a charge of £150 or a CD version for £10 by from the above address, or by email to: info@transport.gov.scot. Copies of the Non-Technical Summary are available free of charge.
- 1.7.4. Any person wishing to comment on the ES should write to the address above. Written responses are invited within six weeks of the advertised date of the publication of the ES.

1.8. References

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- ⁱ Scottish Government (2008); Strategic Transport Projects Review.
ⁱⁱ Scottish Government (2011); Infrastructure Investment Plan 2011.
ⁱⁱⁱ Scottish Government (2015); Infrastructure Investment Plan 2015.
^{iv} Scottish Government (1999); Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.
^v Scottish Government (2011); Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011.
^{vi} Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.
^{vii} Highways Agency et al. (1999); Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 11 Environmental Assessment, as amended.