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SCOTLAND**
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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A96 Brandsbutt Junction

Contents

Project Details	4
Description.....	4
Location	4
Description of local environment.....	6
Air quality	6
Cultural heritage	6
Landscape and visual effects	6
Biodiversity	7
Field Survey	7
Geology and soils	8
Material assets and waste	9
Noise and vibration	10
Population and human health	11
Road drainage and the water environment.....	11
Climate	12
Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation	14
Air quality	14
Impacts.....	14
Mitigation.....	14
Biodiversity	15
Impacts.....	15
Mitigation.....	15
Material assets and waste	15
Impacts.....	15
Mitigation.....	16
Noise and vibration	16
Impacts.....	16
Mitigation.....	16
Population and human health	17
Impacts.....	17
Mitigation.....	17
Road drainage and the water environment.....	17
Impacts.....	17

Mitigation.....	18
Climate	18
Impacts.....	18
Mitigation.....	18
Vulnerability of the project to risks	19
Assessment cumulative effects.....	19
Assessments of the environmental effects	20
Statement of case in support of a Determination that a statutory EIA is not required.....	20
Characteristics of the scheme	20
Location of the scheme	21
Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme	21
Annex A.....	22

Project Details

Description

The works are required to maintain the safety and integrity of a stretch of the A96 carriageway north of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire.

Construction work will involve the milling and replacement of the defective surface course to various depths over an approximate 1.1km stretch of the A96 carriageway including the associated disposal of planed material.

Treatment will involve an inlay treatment of TS2010 (class 1 and class 3) surface course, with possible deeper treatment in some areas (50mm, 100mm and 300mm). AC20 binder and AC32 base will also be used in this scheme. Road markings and studs will also be reapplied as necessary. The approximate total works area for this scheme is 10,100m² (1ha).

The proposed works will entail the following general construction activities:

- Implementation of Traffic Management (TM).
- Removal of existing surface via cold milling to various depths (50mm, 100mm, 300mm).
- Additional bituminous material removed by jack hammer/excavator, where not accessible by planer.
- Resurfacing to permitted depths with TS2010 (class 1 and class 3), AC20 binder and AC32 base.
- Road sweeper to collect any loose material.
- Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) for removal and replacement of material.
- New road markings/chevrons carried out where needed.
- Road studs replaced where necessary.
- Removal of TM.

The works are due to take place on 6th February 2023 for one week (overnight). TM for the scheme will consist of overnight lane closures and convoys are set to be in place for the duration of the scheme (approximately 7 days).

Location

The scheme is located on a semi-rural section of the A96 carriageway north of the town of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire. The NGR co-ordinates are as shown below:

- Scheme Start: NJ 74671 23061

- Scheme End: NJ 74019 23895

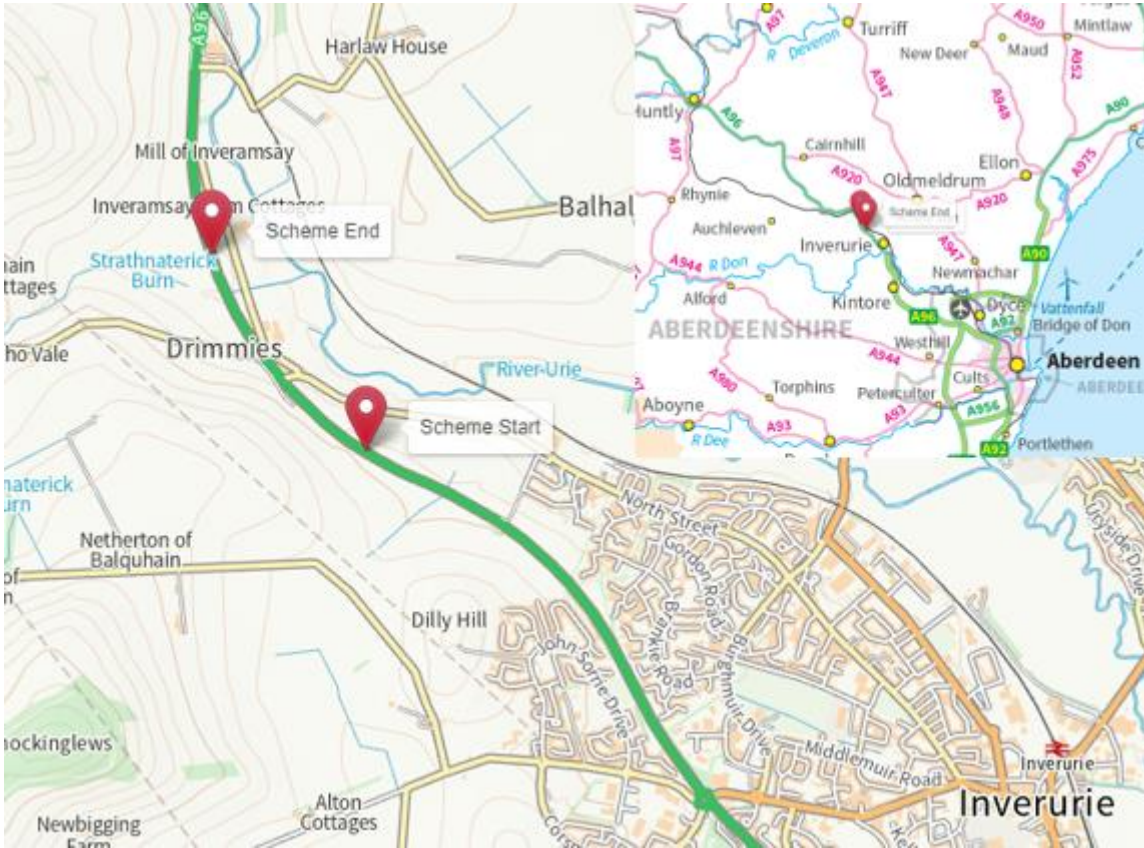


Figure 1: Scheme location.

Description of local environment

Air quality

The scheme is located within a semi-rural area of Aberdeenshire, north of the town of Inverurie. Aberdeenshire Council has not declared any [Air Quality Management Areas](#) (AQMAs).

Multiple residential properties are located within 200m of the scheme extents both on and parallel to the A96 carriageway with the closest of these being approximately 30m distance. These properties are the only immediate sensitive receptors with regard to air quality and the scheme. No other sources of concern are present within 200m of the scheme regarding air quality.

In 2021, this section of carriageway ([manual count point 80024](#)) had an Annual Average Daily Flows (AADF) of 9659 vehicles, with 591 of these being Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV)s.

Cultural heritage

A desktop study using the [Pastmap](#) resource has identified the Battle of Harlaw battlefield (Ref. BTL11) approximately 280m east of the scheme at its closest point. This battlefield is present parallel to the scheme throughout its extents. This desktop study also identified the remains of Balquhain Castle (Scheduled Monument Ref. SM90) approximately 1.1km to the west of the scheme extents. Views of, and from the surrounding area of these sites may be temporarily affected.

Works will be sufficiently distanced from these features of cultural heritage and will have no impact. In addition, all works will be located within the existing carriageway boundary and will not impact any areas of land that have not previously been subjected to engineering activity.

It has been determined that the proposed project does not carry the potential to cause direct or indirect impact to cultural heritage. As such, impact has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Landscape and visual effects

The surrounding landscape has been classified as Rectilinear Fields and Farms by using the [HLA Map Resource](#).

A desktop study using [NatureScot Sitelink](#) and [PastMap](#) online interactive map has not highlighted any areas designated for their landscape quality within 1km of the scheme extents.

Views of and from the road will be temporarily affected during construction due to the presence of works, traffic management and plant. As the works are minor and operating on a like-for-like basis, no permanent changes to landscape features are predicted.

Works will be restricted to the existing carriageway boundary and will not impact upon the surrounding landscape. As such, impact to local landscape has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Biodiversity

The scheme is located along a stretch of the A96 carriageway north of the town of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire within a semi-rural setting. Areas of low-lying vegetation (grassland and scrub) line the areas immediately adjacent to the carriageway with thin immature woodland present in short stretches. These thin areas of vegetation separate the carriageway from arable farmland and waste ground.

A desktop study using [Nature Scot's Sitelink](#) online interactive map has not highlighted any designated sites within 2km of the proposed scheme extents.

[The National Biodiversity Network's \(NBN\) Atlas Scotland website](#) has not highlighted any records of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) within the scheme extents however, Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan Balsam (*Inpatiens glandulifera*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzeianum*) and Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) have been recorded within 2km of the scheme, particularly to the north west by Harlaw House.

Field Survey

A field survey was undertaken by the Amey E&S team consisting of a preliminary ecological walkover and a preliminary bat roost assessment. These assessments were carried out within and beyond the scheme extents on 15 November 2022 by an Ecologist and Assistant Environmental Consultant.

Areas of vegetation were identified in an isolated area between the A96 and residential properties. Trees in this area are short and semi-mature with little to no evidence of bat roost or other species.

An overbridge was inspected approximately 1km to the north of the scheme extents for bat roost potential. This structure is mainly concrete and was noted as being well sealed with evidence of damp from the carriageway. This structure had negligible potential for bat roosts.

A line of sycamore trees located southbound were found to provide negligible bat roost features as was a line of semi-mature/mature trees and scrub.

A single beech tree with cracks in the main stem was identified approx. 600m north of the scheme with a main stem crack that may be suitable for bat roosting. No bats were spotted during the inspection and the feature was noted as having low potential.

Access to the River Urie was halted due to the presence of Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and encountering private land thus meaning that a thorough investigation of the river (situated 200m away from the proposed scheme extents) could not be undertaken. Strands of Giant Hogweed were also noted with a single stand at the roadside to the north of the scheme (approx. 700m).

No other signs of protected or invasive species were noted during the survey. A follow up survey was not deemed required for this scheme.

Geology and soils

No Geological Conservation Review Sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)s are present within 2km of the site extents. [The Bedrock Geology and Superficial Deposits](#) surrounding the scheme are as follows:

- Bedrock Geology
 - Aberdeen Formation - Psammite and semipelite. Metamorphic bedrock formed between 1000 and 541 million years ago between the Tonian and Ediacaran periods.
 - Unnamed Metamorphosed Igneous Rocks, Pre-caledonian To Caledonian - Amphibolite and hornblende schist. Metamorphic bedrock formed between 4000 and 419.2 million years ago between the Archean Eon and Silurian period.
- Superficial Deposits:
 - Banchory Till Formation - Diamicton. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

- Glaciofluvial Sheet Deposits - Gravel, sand and silt. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.

[The National Soil Map of Scotland](#) lists the soils surrounding the scheme extents as a mixture of Alluvian and Brown Earth soils.

As a result of the works taking place strictly within the existing man-made footprint, it has been determined that the proposed project does not carry the potential to cause direct or indirect impact to geology or soils. As such, impact has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Material assets and waste

Table 1: Key materials required for activities

Activity	Material Required	Origin/ Content
Site Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road surfacing (aggregate and binder) • Bitumen • Road paint • Lubricant • Vehicle fuel • Oil 	<p>TS2010 Surface Course allows a wider array of aggregate sources to be considered when compared to typical Stone Mastic Asphalt (SMA). As a result, the use of TS2010 will reduce the usage of imported aggregates and increase the use of a wider range of sustainable aggregate sources.</p> <p>A proportion of reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP) is used in asphalt production. Typical RAP values for base and binder are 10% -15% with up to 10% in surface course.</p>

Table 2 – Likely waste arising from activities

Activity	Waste Arising	Disposal/ Regulation
Site Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road planings • Removed iron/metal components 	<p>Uncontaminated road planings generated as a result of the required works, will be fully recycled in accordance with the criteria stipulated within SEPA document ‘Guidance on the Production of Fully Recoverable Asphalt Road Planings.</p> <p>Following on-site coring investigations and testing, no coal-tar was identified within the surfacing of the carriageway within the scheme extent. As such, road planings generated as a result of the works may be recovered in accordance with the criteria stipulated within SEPA document ‘Guidance on the Production of Fully Recoverable Asphalt Road Planings’.</p>

Noise and vibration

The scheme is located on a rural section of the A96 carriageway, north of the town of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire. This section of the A96 carriageway is flanked by farmland and various cottages/farm properties throughout the carriageway extents. In 2021, this section of carriageway ([manual count point 80024](#)) had an AADF of 9659 vehicles, with 591 of these being HGVs.

The scheme does not fall within a [Candidate Noise Management Area \(CNMA\)](#).

Baseline noise is likely to be influenced by vehicle traffic from the A96 carriageway and nearby agricultural/industrial activities (with potential for urban activities to influence baseline noise levels toward the southern extent of the scheme). [Modelled noise levels](#) around the scheme extents show levels ranging from 65 – 70 dB within the immediate vicinity of the carriageway and 55dB to 65dB within around 100m of the carriageway.

The only noise sensitive receptors in the area are likely to be that of the residential properties within the immediate vicinity of the carriageway. These properties include those in the hamlet of Drimmies at 40m, 120m and 240m distance from the carriageway, Drimmies Farm at 70m distance, Inveramsay Farm at 135m from the carriageway and Inveramsay Farm Cottages 230m from the carriageway extents. Screening in the form of vegetation is present between these properties and the carriageway.

Population and human health

Multiple residential properties (approximately seven) are present within the immediate vicinity of the carriageway:

- Drimmies (hamlet)
 - Four properties located at 40m, 120m and 240m distance.
 - Accessed within the scheme extents via the A96 carriageway (west). Access via A96 likely to be restricted by the works.
 - Alternative access via the town of Inverurie.

- Drimmies Farm
 - Property and farm structures located 70m distance (east).
 - Accessed within the scheme extents via Crawford Road and out with via Inveramsay Farm Cottages (230m north of the scheme's northern extent).
 - Access via Crawford Road likely to be restricted by the works.

- Inveramsay Farm
 - Single property located 135m east of the scheme.
 - Access road 230m north of the scheme's northern extent.
 - Access will not be impacted by the scheme.

A layby area is present prior to the scheme start point (approximately 20m south). Southbound and Northbound access to Crawford Road (Brandsbutt) is available within the scheme extents.

No [core paths or cycle routes](#) are present within the scheme extents.

Road drainage and the water environment

A desktop study using the [Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\) Water Classification Map](#) has identified the River Urie (site ID: 23282) which runs parallel to the scheme to the east as having good ecological potential. This watercourse is approximately 200m away from the proposed scheme at its closest point. The Strathnaterick Burn (unclassified by SEPA's Water Classification Map) runs below the scheme at NJ 74073 23737.

[SEPA's Flood Mapping System](#) has identified that the carriageway at the southern extent of the scheme is susceptible to surface water flooding (particularly in the southbound lane) with an approximate 10% risk of flooding each year. The area of

which the carriageway passes over the Strathnaterick Burn is also susceptible to flooding with a similar 10% chance approximation.

Drainage is provided by filter trenches on both sides of the carriageway throughout the scheme.

Climate

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act sets out the target and vision set by the Scottish Government for tackling and responding to climate change. The Act includes a target of reducing CO₂ emissions by 80% before 2050 (from the baseline year 1990).

The Scottish Government has since published its indicative Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to set out how it will instead reach net-zero by 2045, working to reduce emissions of all major greenhouse gases (GHG) by at least 75% by 2030. By 2040, the Scottish Government is committed to reduce emissions by 90%, with the aim of reaching net-zero by 2045 at the latest.

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

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

Amey are working towards a contractual commitment to have carbon neutral depots on the SW NMC network by 2028. Amey have set carbon goals for the NE NMC contract as a whole to be net-zero carbon by 2032.

Monitoring, Management and Opportunities

To support our journey towards carbon neutral and zero waste we include potential opportunities for enhancement utilising circular economy principals within assessment of material assets.

Amey (working on behalf of Transport Scotland) undertake carbon monitoring. Emissions from our activities are recorded using Transport Scotland's Carbon Management System.

Further information identifying how Amey will obtain the above Carbon Goals can be viewed within the Carbon Management and Sustainability Plan Roadmap to net-zero: STRNMC – North East.

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Impacts

- On site construction activities carry a potential to produce airborne particulate matter and generate emissions that may have a slight impact on local air quality levels.

The impacts identified will be a temporary for the duration of the works only and therefore no change is predicted on air quality.

Mitigation

The following best practice as outlined in the Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction (2014) published by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), which includes the following mitigation relevant to this scheme should be followed:

- All vehicles will switch off engines when stationary; there will be no idling vehicles.
- All plant and fuel-requiring equipment utilised during construction will be well maintained in order to minimise emissions.
- Planing operations will be wetted to reduce dust arising.
- Drop heights to haulage vehicles and onto conveyors will be minimised where practicable.
- Lorries will be sheeted when carrying dry materials.
- Surfaces will be swept where loose material remains following planing.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on local air quality; providing all works operate in accordance with current best practice, the residual impact for air is considered neutral.

Biodiversity

Impacts

- There is potential for disturbance to protected species that may be active within the local surrounding area.
- During night-time programming, misdirected site lighting could cause disturbance to any surrounding nocturnal species.

Mitigation

- All temporary lighting will be directional and pointed away from sensitive ecological receptors.
- Vehicles or machinery will not be parked or left to rest on any of the soft verges.
- In the event of observing a protected species on the live working site, all works will temporarily stop until the animal has moved on. The site control room will be contacted for environmental record.
- The noisiest works will be completed before 23:00 where feasible.
- Plant/machinery will be fitted with silencers/mufflers.
- No plant, vehicles or machinery will be left idling when not in use.
- Briefings on noise and vibration will be delivered to all site operatives prior to works commencing.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on biodiversity; providing all works operate in accordance with current best practice, the residual impact to biodiversity is considered to be neutral.

Material assets and waste

Impacts

- The design life for the TS2010 surfacing proposed is estimated to be 20 years. This will reduce the requirement for maintenance to this section of road over the period.
- The works will result in contribution to resource depletion through use of virgin materials.
- Transportation and recovery of materials/waste will require energy deriving from fossil fuel, a non-renewable source.

Mitigation

- Materials will be derived from recycled, secondary or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion and associated emissions.
- Uncontaminated road planings arising from the works will be fully recycled in accordance with guidance on the Production for Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings.
- Any waste containing coal tar will be classed as special waste. This will require landfill disposal to a site capable of accepting coal tar contaminated waste.
- The disposal of special waste is also subject to obtaining a SEPA consignment note and providing advance notice of at least three days prior to any waste movement.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on the consumption of material assets or creation of waste.

Noise and vibration

Impacts

- TS2010 road surfacing is shown to have superior durability and noise reducing features compared to standard road surfacing mixes. Vehicle travellers and nearby residential properties will benefit from improved road surfacing as a result of the scheme.
- If works are required during night-time hours, then this could cause disturbance for residential properties in close proximity, and for the nearby amenity users.

Mitigation

- The Amey E&S team will contact Aberdeenshire Council's Environmental Health Team prior to the commencement of the works.
- Properties in proximity will be notified in advance of the works. Pre-notification will include details of proposed timings and duration of the works.
- The noisiest works will be completed before 23:00 where feasible.
- Plant/machinery will be fitted with silencers/mufflers.
- No plant, vehicles or machinery will be left idling when not in use.
- Briefings on noise and vibration will be delivered to all site operatives prior to works commencing.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on noise and vibration; provided that mitigation measures and best practice is followed, the residual impact on noise and vibration is deemed neutral.

Population and human health

Impacts

- TM for the works will involve lane closures facilitated by a convoy system.
- Vehicle users may experience delays due to presence of TM, which may lead to driver frustration.
- Given the high percentage of HGVs at this location, TM may disturb HGV movement along this route.
- There is potential for the layby at the scheme's southern extent to be out of use/blocked.
- Access roads/tracks to properties may be affected by the scheme.

Mitigation

- TM restrictions/arrangements and any expected travel delays will be publicised within the local and wider area, in an effort to minimise disturbance to vehicular travellers.
- Layby closures, if required, will be advertised on approach.
- Properties affected by the scheme will be notified in advance of the works. Pre-notification will include details of proposed timings and duration of the works. Properties with access points likely to be affected will also be notified with access being granted if no alternative routes are available.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on population and human health Provided that mitigation measures and best practice is followed, the residual impact on population and human health is deemed neutral.

Road drainage and the water environment

Impacts

- If not adequately controlled, debris and run off from the works could be suspended in the surface water. In the event of a flooding incident, this debris may be mobilised and could enter the road drainage having a detrimental effect on the surrounding local water environment.
- Potential for spills, leaks or seepage of fuels and oils associated with plant to escape and reach drainage systems and watercourses if not controlled, which may negatively affect the water environment.
- Should flooding occur, this may delay the scheduled works.

Mitigation

- All debris which has the potential to be suspended in surface water and wash into the local water environment will be cleared from the site following the works.
- Debris and dust generated as a result of the works will be prevented from entering the drainage system. This can be via the use of drain covers or similar.
- Appropriate measures will be implemented onsite to prevent any potential pollution to the natural water environment (e.g., debris, dust, and hazardous substances). This will include spill kits being present onsite at all times, and the use of funnels and drip trays when transferring fuel etc.
- Visual pollution inspections of the working area will be conducted in regularly especially during heavy rainfall and wind.
- Weather reports will be monitored prior and during all construction activities. In the event of adverse weather/flooding events, all activities will temporarily stop, and only reconvene when deemed safe to do so, and run-off/drainage can be adequately controlled to prevent pollution.
- All site operatives will be briefed on the [Guidance for Pollution Prevention \(GPP\)](#) documents (namely, GPP 1, GPP 2, GPP 5, PPG 6, GPP 8 and GPP 22) prior to working on site. This guidance will be adhered to on site at all times.

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects on road drainage and water environment. Providing all works operate in accordance with current best practice, as demonstrated by SEPA's GPPs, the residual impact on the local water environment is considered to be neutral.

Climate

Impacts

- GHG emissions will be emitted through the use of machinery, vehicles and materials used (containing recycled and virgin materials) and transporting to and from site.

Mitigation

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

It has been determined that the proposed project will not have direct or indirect significant effects to climate.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

As the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the carriageway structure, there will be no change in vulnerability of the road to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.

It has been determined that the proposed project is not expected to alter the vulnerability of the existing trunk road infrastructure to risk of major accidents or disasters.

Assessment cumulative effects

The [Scottish Road Works Commissioner](#) Interactive Map has not highlighted any ongoing works during the proposed timescale and at the location of the proposed works.

[Aberdeenshire Council's planning portal](#) does not highlight any proposed developments or planning applications on the A96 carriageway within proximity to the scheme.

Amey's current programme of works has not highlighted any ongoing works during the proposed timescale and at the location of the proposed works.

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

Assessments of the environmental effects

Following assessment as detailed within this Record of Determination, and provided that mitigation measures are in place and best practice is followed, the residual impact is deemed neutral and there will be no significant effects on the environment.

The following environmental surveys/reviews have been undertaken:

- An Initial Environmental Review of the scheme, undertaken by the Environment and Sustainability Team at Amey in January 2023.

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 the approximate 10,500m² (1.1ha) area of existing carriageway.
- At end of life, components can be recycled, reducing waste to landfill.
- Any uncontaminated road planings will be recycled in accordance with Guidance on the Production for Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings.
- Materials will be derived from recycled, secondary or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications.
- The chosen material TS2010 Surface Course allows a wider array of aggregate sources to be considered when compared to typical SMA.

- The design option conveys sustainability benefits by significantly reducing the quantity of maintenance interventions required at the location.

Location of the scheme

- The scheme will be confined within the existing carriageway boundaries and as a result will not require any land take and will not alter any local land uses.
- The scheme is not situated in whole or in part in a “sensitive area” as listed under regulation 2 (1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 (as amended).

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme

- As the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the structural components, there is no change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.
- The successful completion of the scheme will afford benefits to carriageway users and residential properties in proximity, due to improved condition and ride quality of the carriageway surface.

The use of TS2010 road surfacing affords the benefits of a reduction in mid to high frequencies of traffic noise and a reduction in ground vibrations. As a result, ambient noise levels should decrease post construction.

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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