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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A9 Luncarty to Bankfoot – VRS Installation

Contents

Project Details	3
Description.....	3
Location	3
Description of local environment.....	4
Air quality	4
Cultural heritage	5
Landscape and visual effects	5
Biodiversity	6
Geology and soils	7
Material assets and waste	7
Noise and vibration	8
Population and human health	8
Road drainage and the water environment.....	9
Climate	10
Policies and plans	10
Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation	12
Air quality	12
Cultural heritage	13
Landscape and visual effects	13
Biodiversity	14
Geology and soils	16
Material assets and waste	17
Noise and vibration	18
Population and human health	19
Road drainage and the water environment.....	20
Climate	21
Vulnerability of the project to risks	22
Assessment cumulative effects.....	22
Assessments of the environmental effects	24
Statement of case in support of a Determination that a statutory EIA is not required.....	24
Annex A.....	27

Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out VRS installation works on the A9 between Luncarty and Bankfoot, north of Perth. The works involve the installation of new VRS at sections of the northbound (NB) and southbound (SB) carriageways and NB on/off-slip. The new VRS will connect with existing VRS on both sides of the carriageway and will provide protection to the adjacent active travel route. The scheme extent is 2.5km in total, with the SB section of VRS 830m in length; and the NB section 470m.

Works are currently programmed to commence in November 2025 for a duration of 2 weeks. Works will be conducted during night-time working hours. Changes in the programme may result in a change to the proposed working hours/commencement dates.

Traffic management (TM) will involve temporary Lane 1 closures on the relevant side of the A9 dual carriageway. The active travel route will remain open for the duration of the works and a pedestrian management plan will be in place.

Location

The scheme is located on a stretch of the A9 between Luncarty and Bankfoot, approximately 4.7km north of Perth in the Perth and Kinross Local Authority area. There is one section of VRS installation on the SB side of the dual carriageway; and one section on the NB side of the dual carriageway, including the NB on/off slip (Figure 1).

National Grid References (NGR's):

- Scheme Start: NO 09066 30692
- Scheme End: NO 08178 32902
 - NB VRS Installation: NO 08314 32354 to NO 08245 32763
 - SB VRS Installation: NO 09055 30833 to NO 08876 31642



Figure 1: Scheme location

Description of local environment

Air quality

Perth ([AQMA](#)) lies approximately 4.2km south of the scheme and measures mean annual particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide.

There are 7 registered sites on the [Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory \(SPRI\)](#) located within 10km of the scheme. The closest of these is Battleby Landfill Site which is located approximately 1.4km south-west of the scheme.

Perth Atholl Street Air Quality Monitoring Station ([AQMS](#)) lies approximately 7.2km south-east of the scheme and records a green band status 'Low (Index 1)' based on the latest readings.

Baseline air quality is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic travelling along the A9; with secondary sources likely derived by the nearby railway, land management activities and traffic and activities associated with the nearby city of Perth and surrounding villages.

Cultural heritage

The following minor cultural heritage features are recorded within 300m of the scheme ([PastMap](#)):

- 30 National Records of the Historic Environment (NRHE), the closest of which overlap the scheme extent:
 - Ordiebank Prisoner of War Camp (WWI) (ref: 332942)
 - Marlehall (ref: 352324)
 - Newmill, Bankfoot (ref: 27007)
- 46 Historic Environment Records (HER's), the closest of which overlap the scheme extent:
 - Cropmarks, Northleys (ref: MPK6337)
 - Milestone, Marlehall (ref: MPK19216)
 - Unenclosed, Settlement, Ladner (ref: MPK2332)
 - Lade, Newmills (ref: MPK20228)

There are no Conservation Areas, Battlefields, World Heritage Sites, Garden and Designed Landscapes, Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments within 300m of the scheme extent.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is not located within a National Park (NP), National Scenic Area (NSA) or any other site designated for its landscape character and visual effects ([SiteLink](#)).

The scheme is located north of Perth between the villages of Luncarty and Bankfoot. The surrounding land is dominated by agricultural land; grazing pastures; and mixed woodland. The A9 trunk road and the Highland Mainline Railway Line are dominant landscape features along with the River Tay to the east. Scattered residential settlements are located close to the A9 and within the wider area.

The majority of the scheme extent lies within the '381 - Lowland River Corridors - Tayside' Landscape Character Type (LCT); with the northern section of the scheme entering into LCT '380 - Lowland Hills- Tayside' ([NatureScot](#)).

The A9 Trunk Road, within the North West, connects Perth with Thurso. It commences immediately north of Inveralmond Roundabout in Perth leading generally northwards for a distance of 357 kilometres to its junction with an unclassified road leading to Holborn Head lighthouse at Scrabster. The A9 is a mixture of single carriageway, '2+1' carriageway and stretches of two-lane dual carriageway. The A9 is dual carriageway at the scheme extent.

Biodiversity

The scheme spans the River Tay Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site ID: [8366](#)).

Due to proximity and ecological connectivity of the works to the River Tay SAC, a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) has been produced and consultation with NatureScot has been conducted. Refer to the relevant assessment section below for details.

There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), or any other locally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity features within 300m of the scheme ([SiteLink](#)).

The [National Biodiversity Network \(NBN\) Atlas](#) holds numerous records of bird species within 2km of the scheme (the search criteria included only records during the past ten years, and which have open-use attributions (OGL-CC0-CC-BY). Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), all wild birds and their active nests are protected, with certain species, such as Schedule 1 birds, receiving additional protections.

The NBN Atlas holds the following records of invasive non-native species (INNS) (as *denoted by **), invasive native perennials and injurious weeds (as listed in the Network Management Contract (NMC)) under the same search criteria:

- Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) *
- Rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*)
- Broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*)
- Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) *

A search using Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) holds two records of common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*) and one record of rosebay willowherb within the verges of the A9 trunk road within the scheme extent.

Habitat in the surrounding area is dominated by agricultural land; grazing pastures; urban areas; freshwater habitat; and mixed woodland.

There are no areas of woodland as listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) within 300m of the scheme ([NatureScot](#)).

There are no areas of trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order ([TPO](#)) by Perth and Kinross Council within 300m of the scheme.

Geology and soils

There are no Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRS's) or SSSI's designated for geological features within 300m of the scheme ([SiteLink](#)).

Component soils surrounding the majority of the scheme are humus-iron podzols. The parent materials are fluvioglacial and raised beach sands and gravels derived from acid rocks. The area surrounding the southern end of the scheme extent is comprised of mineral alluvial soils with peaty alluvial soils. The parent materials in this area are recent riverine and lacustrine alluvial deposits ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

Soils in the area around the scheme extent are Class 0 mineral soils, and peatland habitats are not typically found on such soils ([Carbon and Peatland Map 2016](#)).

Bedrock geology within the scheme extent is comprised of Cromlix Mudstone Formation (mudstone and siltstone) in the south; and Teith Sandstone Formation (sandstone) in the north. Superficial deposits are comprised of Glaciofluvial Ice Contact Deposits (gravel, sand and silt); Alluvium (clay, silt, sand and gravel); and Glaciofluvial Sheet Deposits (gravel, sand and silt) ([Scottish Geology Trust](#)).

Material assets and waste

The VRS installation works are required to provide protection to the adjacent active travel route. Materials used will consist of:

- New VRS safety barriers
- P4 terminals
- Concrete

No waste is anticipated to be generated from the proposed works. Excavated soil will be side casted within the scheme extents.

The requirement for a site compound is to be confirmed.

Noise and vibration

For residential, community and commercial receptors refer to the 'Population and Human Health' section below.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by Transport Scotland's Transportation Noise Action Plan ([TNAP](#)) 2019-2023.

Modelled noise data for the A9 at the scheme extent shows that the day, evening and night levels (Lden) fall between 67-71dB ([Scotland's Noise Map](#)).

Baseline noise levels are likely to be primarily influenced by traffic travelling along the A9; with secondary sources derived from nearby land management activities, the nearby railway and activities associated with nearby urban areas.

Population and human health

The scheme lies on the north-western outskirts of the village of Luncarty; and the south-eastern outskirts of the small settlement of Bankfoot. There are approximately 20 properties and associated outbuildings within 300m of the scheme, the closest of which lie 30m west of the A9 with limited visual and acoustic screening.

The on/off slip towards an unclassified road and overpass lies within the scheme extent. There are no laybys, bus stops or parking areas within the proposed working areas.

An active travel route lies adjacent to the A9 within the scheme extent and the VRS installation will provide protection to this from the dual carriageway.

The Highland Mainline Railway Line lies 200m east of the scheme at its closest point.

There are no [National Cycle Routes](#) within 300m of the scheme.

The connecting Core Paths, 'B8063 west of Battleby via Cramflat to A9 near Northleys' (LUNC/122) and 'B9099 at Ordie Burn under viaduct to A9 near Northleys' (LUNC/123), pass under the A9 immediately south of the scheme extent. Core Path

'Old A9 from south of East Mains to B867 at A9 junction' (AGVN/115) lies adjacent to the NB carriageway, utilising the active travel route, at the northern end of the scheme extent ([Perth and Kinross Council Core Paths](#)).

There are no walks as designated by [WalkHighlands](#) within 300m of the scheme.

TM will involve temporary Lane 1 closures on either side of the carriageway dependent on the VRS installation location (i.e. NB or SB). The active travel route will remain open for the duration of works and a pedestrian management plan will be in place.

Road drainage and the water environment

The scheme extent and surrounding area is underpinned by the Isla and Lower Tay Sand and Gravel groundwater (ID: 150740). This is 253.7 square kilometres in area and in 2023, was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([SEPA](#)).

Ordie Burn (ID: 6518) is a river in the River Tay catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The main stem is approximately 27.5km in length and it is culverted under the A9 within the scheme extent; also forming part of the River Tay SAC. This water body has been designated as a heavily modified water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on the drainage of agricultural land. In 2023, it was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD ([SEPA](#)).

Shochie Burn (Ordie Burn Confluence to R Tay) (ID: 6517) is a river in the River Tay catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The main stem is approximately 900m in length and it lies 530m south-east of the scheme with hydrological connectivity via Ordie Burn. It also forms part of the River Tay SAC. In 2023 it was assigned 'High Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD ([SEPA](#)).

The River Tay (R Isla to R Earn Confluences) (ID: 6498) is a river in the River Tay catchment of the Scotland river basin district. The main stem is approximately 31.5km in length and it lies 1km east of the scheme at its closest point, with hydrological connectivity via Ordie Burn and Shochie Burn. It also forms part of the River Tay SAC. In 2023, it was assigned 'Moderate Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD ([SEPA](#)).

There are several other unclassified waterbodies, drains, springs, ponds and culverts in proximity to the scheme and culverted under the A9 within the scheme extent ([SEPA](#)).

[SEPA Flood Map](#) has highlighted a medium to high risk of river water flooding in the areas around Ordie Burn (i.e. a 0.5-10% chance of flooding each year). There are also areas of high risk of surface water flooding (i.e. a 10% chance) towards the northern end of the scheme extent.

Climate

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

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

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

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

Policies and plans

This Record of Determination has been undertaken in accordance with all relevant regulations, guidance, policies and plans, notably including the Environment and Sustainability Discipline of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges ([Design](#)

[Manual for Roads and Bridges \(DMRB\)](#)) and Transport Scotland's Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance ([Guidance - Environmental Impact Assessments for road projects \(transport.gov.scot\)](#))).

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to temporarily cause local air quality impacts. The main sources are likely to be dust generated by excavations, as well as exhaust emissions from ancillary plant and vehicles. As a result, there is potential for dust, particulate matter, and exhaust emissions to be emitted to the atmosphere. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to air are considered to be low.

- Ancillary plant, vehicles and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM will be switched off when stationary to prevent exhaust emissions (e.g., there will be no idling vehicles).
- Cutting, grinding, and sawing equipment (if required) will be fitted or used in conjunction with suitable dust suppression techniques e.g., local exhaust ventilation system that fits directly onto tools.
- Regular monitoring (e.g., by engineer or Clerk of Works) will take place when activities generating air pollution are occurring. In the unlikely event that unacceptable levels of air pollution are emanating from the site, the operation will, where practicable, be modified and re-checked to verify that the corrective action has been effective. Actions to be considered include: (a) minimizing cutting and grinding on-site, (b) reducing the operating hours, (c) changing the method of working, etc.
- All delivery vehicles carrying material with dust potential will be covered when travelling to or leaving site, preventing the spread of dust beyond the work area.
- Material stockpiles will be reduced as far as is reasonably practicable by using a 'just in time' delivery system. All material will also be stored on made ground.
- Any stockpiled material on site will be monitored daily to ensure no risks of dust emissions exists.
- Materials will be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.

- Cement bags will remain closed when not in use to prevent cast off to the surrounding environment.

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

Cultural heritage

Although there are several features of minor cultural heritage interest within 300m of the scheme; any excavation works associated with the proposed works are restricted to the already engineered carriageway boundary, and as such, the potential for exposure of unrecorded cultural heritage features is considered to be negligible. Construction of the A9 road corridor, and recent dualling of the A9 at this location, is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present.

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

- There will be no storage of vehicles, plant, or materials against any buildings, walls or fences.
- Should any unexpected archaeological evidence be discovered, works will stop temporarily in the vicinity and the BEAR Scotland NW Environment Team contacted for advice. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) will be notified as required.
- People, plant, and materials will, as much as is reasonably practicable, only be present on areas of made / engineered ground. Where access out with these areas is required for the safe and effective completion of the scheme, it will be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable and ideally be limited to access on foot. There will be no storage of vehicles, plant, or materials against any buildings, walls or fences.

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

Landscape and visual effects

The works are not located within a National Park, National Scenic Area or any other site designated for its visual character. There will be a short-term impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the site as a result of the presence of construction plant, vehicles, and TM. There will be permanent change to local

landscape due to installation of new VRS. However, all change is within the A9 trunk road boundary and will be within the character of the road, tying in with existing VRS. In addition, people, ancillary plant, vehicles and materials will be restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A9 and the works will be of short duration (2 weeks) and will move progressively along the scheme extent. As such, the temporary visual impact of the works will be somewhat reduced and there will be no residual impacts i.e. when complete, the visual appearance will remain largely unaffected with new VRS being the only change.

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

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

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

Biodiversity

The A9 spans the River Tay SAC at the scheme extent. Due to the proximity of the works to the SAC, a HRA was produced. The HRA concluded that with best practice and mitigation measures implemented, there will be no Adverse Effects on Site Integrity.

Large pockets of the invasive non-native species, Himalayan balsam, were recorded within the survey area along the Ordie Burn watercourse and the pond. However, no INNS or injurious weeds were recorded on the verges of the A9 trunk road. As works do not require importing soils or vegetation clearance or accessing areas of noted INNS, there is minimal risk of spread or introduction of INNS or invasive perennials within the scheme extent.

Although no other protected species were identified in proximity to the scheme during the survey, habitat close to the works does provide foraging opportunities for a variety of species. Activities undertaken on site could potentially have temporary

adverse impacts on biodiversity in the area as a result of increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats. However, works are restricted to the A9 trunk road and adjacent active travel route and the number of construction vehicles and construction operatives required on site is low given the scale and scope of the works. In addition, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle movements on the A9. Furthermore, the scheme is of short duration (2 weeks) and will move progressively along the 2.5km scheme extent. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore considered to be low.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site. The following mitigation measures, in addition to the ones detailed in the HRA, will be put in place to minimise impacts on biodiversity features in the area:

- Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and to carry out the works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- All construction operatives will be briefed through toolbox talks prior to works commencing, which will be included in the SEMP. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of any protected species throughout the works period. Should a protected species be noted during construction, works will temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently moved on. Any sightings of protected species will be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. If required, NatureScot will be contacted for advice.
- Personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of INNS or injurious weeds in road verges throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in working areas, works will be restricted to a 7m buffer of any growth where reasonably practicable.
- A 'soft start' will be implemented on site each day. This will involve switching on vehicles and checking under/around vehicles and the immediate work area for mammals prior to works commencing to ensure none are present and that there is a gradual increase in noise.
- Any excavations, exposed pipes/drains, or areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g. storage containers) will be covered over when not in use, at the end of each shift, and following completion of the works to avoid animals falling in and becoming trapped.

- If fencing is utilised at any point during the works, a gap of 200mm from ground level will be provided, allowing free passage for mammals and preventing entrapment.

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

Geology and soils

The works will involve minor excavations within the trunk road verge in preparation for the installation of new VRS and excavated material will be reused on site where possible. Therefore, the works are not anticipated to have an adverse impact on geology and soils. However, the following mitigation measures will be adhered to on site:

- Excavations will be restricted to the engineered ground of the A9 carriageway, and all machinery will operate from road level without entering ground outside the man-made surface of the A9.
- Excavated material will be kept to a minimum and reused on site where possible.
- The parking of machinery/vehicles and storage of equipment on road verges will be minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Mitigation measures to prevent contamination of soils through loss of containment will be strictly adhered to.
- All relevant soil management toolbox talks will be included in the SEMP and sediment control measures will be in place to prevent soil erosion and loss of containment.
- Additional pollution prevention measures as outlined in the 'Road drainage and the water environment' section will be adhered to on site.

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

Material assets and waste

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

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

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

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- The subcontractor will adhere to waste management legislation and ensure they comply with their Duty of Care.
- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- All wastes and unused materials will be removed from site in a safe and legal manner by a licensed waste carrier upon completion of the works. The appointed waste carrier will have a valid SEPA waste carrier registration, a copy of which will be provided to and retained by BEAR Scotland as early as possible.
- All appropriate waste documentation will be present on site and be available for inspection. A copy of the Duty of Care paperwork shall be provided and filed appropriately in accordance with the Code of Practice (as made under Section 34 of Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended).
- Re-use and recycling of waste will be encouraged, and the subcontractor will be required to fully outline their plans and provide documentary evidence for waste arising from the works (e.g., waste carrier's licence, transfer notes, and waste exemption certificates).
- Staff will be informed that littering will not be tolerated. Staff will be encouraged to collect any litter seen on site.
- Where applicable, all temporary signage will be removed from site on completion of the works.

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

Noise and vibration

Construction activities associated with the proposed scheme have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities. However, the works are not located within a CNMA or CQA, and the proximity of road space suggests that residents within the local area will have a degree of tolerance to noise and disturbance. Works will also be completed over 2 weeks and move progressively along the 2.5km stretch of A9 carriageway. Works will be conducted utilising a nighttime working pattern. Noise is not likely to be a defining feature of the works based on the proposed working activities and potential to induce worst-case scenario noise and vibration will also be intermittent, temporary and short-lived.

The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

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

- Where ancillary plant such as generators are required, they will be positioned so as to cause minimum noise disturbance. Where deemed necessary, acoustic screens will be utilised.

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

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site may have temporary adverse impacts on local residents, vehicle travellers, and non-motorised road users (NMUs) as a result of construction presence, and associated noise and delays due to traffic management measures. Road users and users of the active travel route will be informed of the works through media release, which will provide details of construction dates and times. The active travel route will remain open throughout works and a pedestrian management plan will be implemented.

There are approximately 20 residential properties in total in proximity to the scheme, with the closest being 30m west of the A9 with limited visual and acoustic screening. Therefore, there is potential for disturbance from noise and vibration.

However, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low:

- Notification will be issued to local residents and local public transport operators prior to commencement of the works, advising of any proposed works and expected restrictions.
- Local access will be granted as required.
- Any changes of schedule will be communicated to local residents throughout the programme.
- Construction lighting used during night-works will be directed onto the area of works and avoid direct illumination of surrounding properties where possible.
- Given the proximity of the works to residential properties, the toolbox talk 'Being a Good Neighbour' will be briefed prior to works commencing.
- Appropriate provisions / measures will be implemented within the traffic management to allow the safe passage of NMUs of all abilities through the site.
- Journey planning information will be available for drivers online at the [trafficscotland.org](https://www.trafficscotland.org) website. Journey planning information will also be available for drivers online through BEAR's social media platforms.

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

Road drainage and the water environment

The proposed works entail the installation of new VRS adjacent to the A9 trunk road and active travel route. There is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment due to operation of plant within proximity to watercourses, which may lead to potential changes in water quality from pollution events (either by accidental spillage of sediments, particulate matter, chemicals, fuels or by mobilisation of these in surface water caused by rain). No in-water works are required and there is no requirement for abstraction or transfer of water from, or discharges to, a water body. As such, the potential for a direct pollution incident within a water body is unlikely. Experience gained from BEAR maintenance schemes elsewhere on the network have shown that, where standard good working practice is adopted (e.g. adherence to SEPA good practice guidance, utilisation of drain covers or similar, etc), water quality is protected.

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

- The scheme will not entail any in-stream works.
- Standard working practices to comply with The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) for works in or near water will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site.
- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems will be permitted. Appropriate containment measures will be in place to prevent any loss of construction materials into the water environment.
- An incident response (contingency) plan will be put in place to reduce the risk from pollution incidents or accidental spillages. All necessary containment equipment, including suitable spill kits (for oil and chemicals) will be available on site, quickly accessible if needed, and staff trained in their use.
- All spills will be logged and reported. In the event of any spills into the water environment, all works will stop, and the incident will be reported to the project manager and the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. SEPA will be informed of any such incident as soon as possible using the SEPA Pollution Hotline.
- All plant and equipment will be regularly inspected for any signs of damage and leaks. A checklist will be present to make sure that the checks have been carried out.

- Storage of hazardous material, oil and fuel containers will be distanced more than 10m away from any watercourses.
- If required, a designated refuelling area will be identified. Fuel bowzers will be stored on an impermeable area and be fully bunded. This will be distanced more than 10m from any watercourses.
- During refuelling of smaller mobile plant, a funnel will be used, and drip trays will be in place. Care will be taken to reduce the chance of spillages. Spill kits will be quickly accessible to capture any spills should they occur. The ground / stone around the site of a spill will be removed, double bagged and taken off site as special waste.
- Generators and static plant may have the potential to leak fuel and / or other hydrocarbons and will have bunding with a capacity of 110%. If these are not bunded then drip trays will also be supplied beneath the equipment with a capacity of 110%.

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

Climate

Construction activities associated with the proposed scheme works have the potential to cause local air quality impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of vehicles and machinery, material use and production, and transportation of materials to and from site. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- BEAR Scotland will adhere to their Carbon Management Policy.
- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gas emitted as part of the works.
- Where possible, materials will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be removed to local waste management facilities.

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

Vulnerability of the project to risks

There will be no change to the likelihood of flooding on the A9 within the scheme extent upon completion of the works and works will be programmed, as far as is reasonably practicable, to avoid periods of adverse weather or heavy rainfall.

Works are restricted to areas of made ground of the A9 trunk road boundary with access to the scheme gained via the A9. TM will involve temporary Lane 1 closures on the relevant side of the dual carriageway and NMUs will be accommodated within the TM set up. Local residents will be notified of working hours and provided with appropriate contact information. Pedestrians or other NMUs will be accommodated within the TM setup if required. The active travel route will remain open throughout works and a pedestrian management plan will be implemented.

The works will not result in any change in vulnerability of the A9 carriageway or active travel route to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. The installation of new VRS is designed to protect the active travel route from the A9 trunk road and will have a beneficial impact on road users.

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

Assessment cumulative effects

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

A search of the [Perth and Kinross Council Planning Portal](#) identified no approved planning applications within 300m of the scheme within the last six months.

A search of the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner website ([Map Search](#)) has identified that there are no roadworks planned for the same period as the proposed works and no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity.

BEAR Scotland programme all of their proposed works in line with appropriate guidance and contractual requirements. All schemes are programmed to take into account existing and future planned works, with a view of limiting any cumulative effects relating to traffic management. As a result of this exercise, where a potential for cumulative impacts is identified, BEAR will reprogramme schemes to avoid / limit

any cumulative effects or will utilise existing traffic management to complete multiple schemes at once. This approach allows BEAR Scotland to effectively manage the potential cumulative effects as a result of traffic management, resulting in minimal disruption to users of the Scottish trunk road network.

Overall, it is unlikely that the proposed works will have significant cumulative effects with any other future works in the area.

Assessments of the environmental effects

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

A HRA Proforma was conducted due to proximity and ecological connectivity with the River Tay SAC. The assessment concluded that the proposed works will not result in AESI.

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) are partially situated within the River Tay SAC which is a sensitive area within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

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:

- Works are localised to the trunk road VRS installation works.
- Construction activities are restricted to two locations along a 2.5 km section of the A9 trunk road, covering a total area of 1.3 km.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to nearby receptors or protected species that may be present in the wider area, out with those detailed in the HRA Proforma AA.

- No INNS were recorded along the verges of the trunk road within the scheme extents during the ecological survey.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Residual impacts are considered to be beneficial for the travelling public which may use this stretch of carriageway. In addition, VRS installation will improve road safety following the works.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme fully lies within the existing A9 trunk road boundary. The A9 spans the River Tay SAC within the scheme extent. Due to the localised, minor nature of the works and mitigation measures, no AESI are predicted on the qualifying features of the SAC, as concluded in the HRA.
- There are no GCRS or a geologically designated SSSI within 300m of the works.
- There are no features of cultural heritage importance within 300m of the scheme; however, there are several minor cultural heritage features which overlap the scheme extent.
- The requirement for a site compound is still to be confirmed; however, will most likely be located within TM on the made ground, if required.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- It is not anticipated that any wastes will be generated during works and excavated material will be reused on site.
- There will be permanent visual impacts as a result of the installation of new VRS; however, this will be in keeping with the visual quality of the current road furniture.
- Works are programmed to be of short duration and undertaken during night-time hours; the works will also move progressively along the scheme.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- Mitigation measures detailed above and, in the SEMP, will be put in place with the objective to prevent and, if required, subsequently control any potential impacts on sensitive receptors.

- In the event that INNS are found on site, measures to prevent potential INNS spread will be implemented.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.

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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