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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A86 Newtonmore Footway Link

Contents

Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out an installation of a new 23m long and 2m wide footway link along the northbound carriageway of the A86 within Newtonmore. Works are required to link existing pedestrian facilities, as pedestrians are currently walking on an uneven grassy verge adjacent to the A86 which may cause a safety issue. The total area of works forms 0.02ha.

The works are scheduled for delivery within the 2025/2026 financial year, with a proposed start date of end of February 2026. All works will be undertaken during daytime hours over a two-week period. However, the programme is subject to change and start dates or working hours may be revised as required. Excavated earth material will be reused within the scheme extents where possible with the remaining disposed of in a licenced waste facility.

Traffic Management (TM) will consist of lane closure facilitated by two-way traffic lights, and site compound is not required.

Location

The scheme is located along a stretch of the northbound carriageway of the A86 within the village of Newtonmore, in the Highland Council administrative area (see Figure 1) between the following National Grid References (NGRs): NN 71128 98886 - NN 71157 98896.

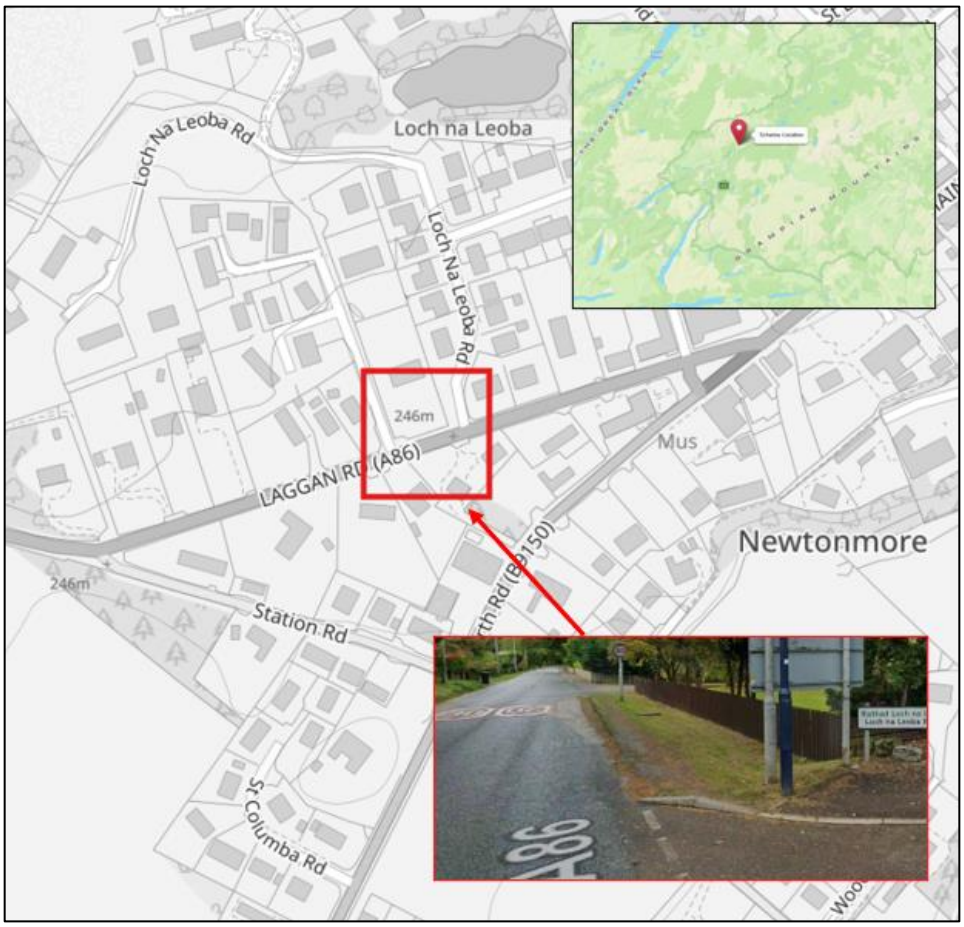

Figure 1: Scheme Location

Description of local environment

Air quality

There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) (Air Quality Management Areas) or Air Quality Monitoring Stations (Scottish Air Quality) within 10km of the scheme. Sites monitoring air quality in the wider areas record bandings to be within the 'green zone' (Low Index 1-3) indicating good baseline air quality.

There are no sites (which record air pollutant releases) listed on the Scottish Pollution Release Inventory (SPRI) within 10km of the scheme.

Baseline air quality within the scheme extents is primarily influenced by emissions from traffic on the A86 trunk road, local roads and urban activity associated with Newtonmore.

Cultural heritage

A search using the cultural heritage tool Pastmap revealed that a Listed Building 'Newtonmore, Craigmhor Hotel' (Reference: LB7672) lies approximately 200m east of the scheme.

A number of features of lesser cultural value such as Historical Environment Records (HERs) and National Records of the Historic Environment (NRHEs) were identified within 300m of the scheme; the nearest of these is an HER 'Newtonmore, General' (Reference: MHG23899) and lies approximately 120m northwest of the scheme.

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

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme lies within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP; NatureScot Site Code: 8623), which has the following Special General Qualities:

- Magnificent mountains towering over moorland, forest and strath
- Vastness of space, scale and height
- Strong juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes
- A landscape of layers, from inhabited strath to remote, uninhabited upland
- 'The harmony of complicated curves'
- Landscapes both cultural and natural

The scheme does not lie within any National Scenic Areas (NSA), National Nature Reserves (NNR) or Local Nature Reserves (LNR) (SiteLink).

The scheme is located within an area classed as 'Urban area' which is defined as *cities, towns and large villages with their housing, individual shops and places of education or worship, as well as prisons and hospitals, municipal buildings and hotels are noted as urban areas. Very small clusters of houses in the countryside are also included* (HLA Map).

The scheme is located within the Landscape Character Type (LCT) 127 'Upland Strath' which has the following key characteristics:

- Large, broad, flat bottomed strath, with some narrower pinch-point sections.
- Valley floor with the meandering River Spey and frequent lochs and marshes.
- Meadows and wetlands prone to flooding on the valley floor.
- Mixed pastures and broadleaved woodland in more undulating areas.
- Wetlands flanked by mixed woodland and conifer forests.
- Main communication corridor housing A9 trunk road and railway.
- Estate houses and policy landscapes in many parts of the strath.
- A well-settled area with a series of settlements occurs along the northern side of the strath at bridging points over the River Spey. They are popular tourist destinations serving the Cairngorms National Park. Elsewhere farms and houses are frequent along main and minor roads.
- Views to the Cairngorm mountains.
- Noise and activity from busy A9.

The A86 Trunk Road connects Spean Bridge and Kingussie. It commences at the A86 / A82 junction within Spean Bridge leading generally north-eastwards for 65 kilometres to its junction with the A9. The A86 is a single carriageway along its length.

Biodiversity

The River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (NatureScot Site Code: 8365) lies approximately 500m southwest of the scheme.

The River Spey – Insh Marshes Ramsar site (NatureScot Site Code: 8452), Insh Marshes SAC (NatureScot Site Code: 8274) and River Spey – Insh Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA) (NatureScot Site Code: 8571) all lie approximately 1.2km east of the scheme.

There is ecological connectivity between the area of works and the River Spey – Insh Marshes Ramsar site and the River Spey – Insh Marshes SPA due to the mobile nature of the designated features, which may utilise areas within the vicinity of works. As such, a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) Proforma was completed.

The scheme extent is located within an urbanised area with no identified ecological connectivity (via waterways) between the area of works and the River Spey SAC or the Insh Marshes SAC due to the nature of the qualifying species and highly localised area of works. Refer to the Description of Main Environmental Impacts and Proposed Mitigation - Biodiversity section below.

There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 300m of the scheme (SiteLink).

Under the same search criteria, the NBN Atlas holds the following records of invasive and injurious weeds (as listed in the Network Management Contract (NMC):

- Broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*)
- Common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*)
- Creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
- Rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion augustifolium*)
- Spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)

A search on the Transport Scotland Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) holds no records of any injurious weeds or invasive non-native species (INNS).

The scheme extent is located within an urbanised area, with residential properties and their associated gardens on either side of the A86. Habitat in proximity to the scheme is therefore highly limited, restricted to individual trees and tree strips along property boundaries. Freshwater habitat near the scheme is largely absent, with the nearest freshwater feature, Loch na Leoba, located 185m north, beyond a dense belt of residential development.

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

The ‘Laggan Road’ (TPO number HRC08C) Tree Preservation Order (TPO) lies directly adjacent to the scheme.

The proposed works comprise the installation of a 23m long section of a footpath to link existing pedestrian facilities. Pedestrians are currently walking on a uneven, grassy verge adjacent to the A86 which may cause a safety issue. In addition, the works lie within an urbanised area with no suitable habitat for permanent resting

places for sensitive species present. Given the limited habitat for protected species in proximity to the scheme, an environmental site visit was not considered necessary.

Geology and soils

The scheme does not lie within a Geological Conservation Review Site (GCRS), or a geologically designated SSSI (NatureScot Sitelink).

Bedrock Geology within the scheme is listed as 'Loch Laggan Psammite Formation-Micaceous psammite' which is rocks of a sedimentary origin (BGS Geology Viewer).

Superficial deposits within the scheme are listed as 'Glaciofluvial sheet deposits-Sand, gravel and boulders' (BGS Geology Viewer).

Component soils within the scheme are listed as humus-iron podzols (Scotland's Soils).

The soils within the scheme extent are recorded as being of Carbon and Peatland 'Class 0', which refers to mineral soils where peatland habitats are not typically found on such soils (Scotland's Peatland Map).

Material assets and waste

The proposed works will entail the installation of a new footway link with material used to consist of:

- New kerbs
- Footway Type 1 materials
- Bitumen seal

Excavated earth material will be reused within the scheme extents with the remaining to be disposed of in a licenced waste facility.

Noise and vibration

The scheme does not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP) (transportation-noise-action-plan).

Noise modelled data from Environmental Noise Directive (END) Round 4 Noise Mapping Indicates 24 hour annual average noise level (Lden) between 60 and 65dB on the A86 at the scheme location (Scotland's Noise).

It is expected that the baseline noise levels within the scheme extents are mainly influenced by vehicles travelling along the trunk road and local road, and urban activities within the village of Newtonmore.

Population and human health

The scheme lies within an urban area dominated by residential properties. Residential properties and their associated gardens lie on either side of the A86 at the scheme with the nearest being 10m northeast. Properties situated nearest to the scheme have no or only limited screening from the works provided by individual trees, ornamental shrubs and hedging where present.

Three access ways are located within the scheme extent, with one situated on the north end of the scheme, and two located at the south end. The southern access way serves a residential area and a single residential property, while the northern access way provides access to a single residential property. In addition, a number of access ways and junctions are present within 300m of the scheme extent.

Paved pedestrian footpaths are present south and north of the scheme with the scheme extents linking these via grassed verge.

Street lighting is present along the full extent of the scheme.

The National Cycle Network (NCN) 7 lies parallel to the scheme 65m south of the works.

There are no routes listed on WalkHighlands or Core Paths within 300m of the scheme.

No other public assets, such as bus stops are located within the scheme extent.

A traffic vehicle counter nearest to the scheme lies 475m west, ‘A86 Laggan to Newtonmore (Site ID: 0000ATC01051), and recorded and Average Dailly Traffic (ADT) count of 1,021 vehicles, 19.9% of which were Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in 2025.

Road drainage and the water environment

The scheme is underpinned by the Upper Spey Sand and Gravel groundwater (ID: 150814). It is 252.4 square kilometres in area and was classified by Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) as having an overall status of ‘Good’ in 2024.

No surface waterbodies classified by SEPA under the WFD lie within 300m of the scheme.

Loch na Leoaba (unclassified by SEPA) lies approximately 185m north of the scheme. There is no hydrological connectivity between the scheme and Loch na Leoaba.

The River Calder is a river (ID: 23145) in the River Spey catchment of the Scotland river basin district and lies approximately 500m west of the scheme. The main stem is approximately 30.5 kilometres in length and forms a part of the River Spey SAC at this location. It was given an overall status of 'Moderate' in 2024 by SEPA. There is no hydrological connectivity between the scheme and the River Calder.

One area listed as having a high likelihood (10% chance each year) of surface water and small watercourse flooding is located within the scheme extents (SEPA Flood Maps).

Climate

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

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

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

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

Policies and plans

This Record of Determination (RoD) 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 during the works are likely to be dust generated by excavation and 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 quality are considered to be low.

- A water-assisted dust sweeper will sweep the carriageway after dust-generating activities, and waste will be contained and removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Materials that have a potential to produce dust will be removed from site as soon as possible, and vehicles that remove earth material from site will have sheeted covers.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems and 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.
- Material stockpiles will be reduced as far as is reasonably practicable by using a ‘just in time’ delivery system. All material will also be stored on made ground.
- Any stockpiled material on site will be monitored daily to ensure no risks of dust emissions exists.
- Materials will be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.

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

Cultural heritage

Although there are no recorded Cultural Heritage features within the footprint of the scheme, the works will involve earthworks which may uncover unrecorded historical artifacts. However, all works are confined to the verge adjacent to the A86 carriageway where construction of the A86 road corridor is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present. Therefore, the likelihood of encountering historical artifacts associated with these records is considered to be low.

It is assessed that the planned works will not adversely impact the value of cultural heritage interests with the following mitigation measures in place:

- In the event of any unexpected archaeological finds, all works will cease immediately, the area will be cordoned off, and a member of the BEAR Environment Team will be contacted for advice.
- Laydown areas will be sensitively located (e.g., on areas of made ground) to avoid areas of cultural heritage interest where possible.
- There will be no storage of plant, materials or equipment against buildings, bridges, walls or fences.

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

Landscape and visual effects

The works are located within the CNP, consequently CNP will be notified prior to the works and any advised mitigation measures will be noted in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP).

There is potential for minor, temporary adverse visual impacts to the local landscape during the construction phase due to presence of vehicles and machinery, material storage or obstructed views. However, the works are of a short duration with all machinery confined to the immediate works location situated within man-made ground on the A86 trunk road boundary where possible.

The works will also result in permanent changes associated with the construction of the new pedestrian footpath section. However, these changes are anticipated to be

positive, as the verge is currently used informally by pedestrians as a walking route between two existing sections of footway. The provision of a formal footpath will improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, and user comfort, while reducing the risk of trampling and ongoing disturbance to the verge. Overall, the proposed works are considered to represent a beneficial and appropriate improvement to existing site use.

Although Laggan Road TPO lies adjacent to the scheme, no vegetation or branch trimming is required for the proposed works, therefore, there is no risk to the TPO.

In addition, the following mitigation measures will be put in place during works to reduce impacts on the local landscape:

- CNP will be notified of the works and any additional mitigation measures, if received, will be adhered to.
- 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.
- All works will be strictly within the trunk road boundary. If access to land out with the trunk road boundary is required, BEAR Scotland NW Environment team will be consulted. This includes general works, storage of equipment/containers and parking.
- The working area and site compound location will be appropriately reinstated following works.
- 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 works are located within 2km of the River Spey SAC, River Spey – Insh Marshes Ramsar site, River Spey – Insh Marshes SPA, and Insh Marshes SAC. However, there is a lack of ecological connectivity between the River Spey SAC and Insh Marshes SAC and the area of works due to the distance from the scheme and nature of the qualifying features. No impacts on these sites are expected as a result of works.

Ecological connectivity was identified between the area of works and the River Spey – Insh Marshes Ramsar site and the River Spey – Insh Marshes SPA due to the mobile nature of the qualifying features. Therefore, an HRA Proforma was undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the works on the designated features of these sites. The HRA Proforma concluded that the risk of impacts on the qualifying features was low due to the distance from the sites, lack of supporting habitat within the area of works, minor nature of the works, and lack of in-water works in addition to employment of standard good practice measures to reduce noise on site. Consequently, no LSE were identified on the designated features of the SPA and Ramsar site as a result of proposed works.

In general, activities associated with the works could potentially result in temporary adverse effects on biodiversity in the wider area, primarily due to increased vehicle movements and the potential for noise, light disturbance, and accidental pollution affecting surrounding habitats and protected species. However, the works are located within an urbanised area within the village of Newtonmore, which is subject to high levels of human activity, including dog-walkers. Although there may be some habitat suitable for protected species in the wider area, permanent sheltering, breeding, or resting places for such species are unlikely to be present in the vicinity of the scheme due to the urban and residential surroundings. Additionally, works are restricted to the A86 trunk road boundary and the number of construction vehicles and operatives required on site is low given the small scale and duration (two weeks) of the works. Furthermore, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle, pedestrian and non-motorised user (NMU) movements on the A86 carriageway. Considering the above, and with appropriate standard mitigation measures in place to reduce noise on site, significant adverse effects on biodiversity are not anticipated.

Pollution control and good practice measures to minimise potential impacts on the local environment will be detailed within the SEMP and adhered to throughout the works. Works will be temporary and undertaken during daylight hours over a period of up to two weeks. Standard containment measures will be in place to reduce the risk of pollution incidents to the surrounding environment. Therefore, with the mitigation measures set out below in place, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity is considered to be low.

- Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and 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. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species.

- No tree-felling or in-stream works will be permitted.
- 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 shall be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team.
- Artificial lighting used during low light levels will be directed away from road verges, woodland, and waterbodies as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of potentially unrecorded instances of INNS or injurious weeds in road verges throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in working areas, no works will take place within 7m of these areas until the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team can provide further advice on additional mitigation measures.
- 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

Although works will include excavation, construction activities are restricted to a short strip of verge on engineered ground adjacent to the A86 which currently is used as an unofficial footpath between two existing sections of footway. Furthermore, the scheme is not located within a GCRS or SSSI designated for geological features. Due to this, the proposed works are not anticipated to have an adverse impact on geology and soils. With the following mitigation measures in place, the likelihood of significant impacts on the geology and soils is low.

- Excavated soil material will be reused within the scheme extents where possible.
- The parking of machinery/personnel 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 (i.e., damage to grass verges) will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Topsoil and subsoil reused on site will be spread evenly in a single layer <200mm in height to ensure the soil profile is maintained across the works location and grass seeded.
- Multiple handling of soil derived from excavations will be minimised.
- Topsoil reused on site will not be traversed by heavy machinery.
- Mitigation measures to prevent contamination of soils through loss of containment will be strictly adhered to.
- Additional pollution prevention measures as outlined in Road drainage and the water environment will be adhered to during construction.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any geology and soils 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 works have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities.

The works are programmed to take place during daytime working hours over a two-week period. As such, the proposed scheme is anticipated to result in temporary minor adverse noise impacts for local receptors. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- 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.

- Local properties will be notified in advance of works, and notification will include details of proposed timings and durations of the works.
- 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.
- 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.

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 NMUs as a result of vehicle noise and delays due to traffic management measures. Although, the section of the A86 at the scheme extents does not have a formal footpath, a Pedestrian Management Plan will be in place to direct users of the verge section. Additionally, the current grass verge that is being utilised by pedestrians is currently unsafe to the public, as such the works will result in a positive impact for NMUs due to the provision of a new, safer footway.

Road users will be informed of works through a media release, which will provide details of construction dates and times. 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. Information will provide contact details (office phone number and e-mail address) for the Project Engineer as well as a 24-hour contact number for the BEAR Scotland Control Room.
- Local access will be granted as required.

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

During the works, there is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment. 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) during works have the potential to have a direct or indirect effect on the surrounding waterbodies. The following mitigation measures will be put in place 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 Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations (EASR) 2018 (as amended) for works in or near water are detailed in the SEMP and will be 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.
- All hazardous material utilised on site will undergo assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002. These assessment(s) will contain a section on environment which highlights any precautions and storage requirements.
- Storage of hazardous materials, oil and fuel containers will be distanced more than 10m away from any watercourses.
- If required, a designated refuelling area will be identified. Fuel bowsers will be stored on an impermeable area and be fully bunded. This will be distanced more than 10m from any watercourses.
- During refuelling of smaller mobile plant, a funnel will be used, and drip trays will be in place. Care will be taken to reduce the risk 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 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 its Carbon Management Policy.
- Any artificial lighting will be limited to only the amount required to carry out the works, and any plant will be switched off when not in use.
- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gas emitted as part of the works.

- Where possible, materials will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be disposed at a local licenced waste facility.

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

Weather reports will be monitored and the works will not be undertaken during heavy rain events.

Works are restricted to the A86 carriageway boundary, and any TM will be designed in line with existing guidance. TM will consist of single lane closure facilitated by two-way traffic lights. Where required, alternative pedestrian/cyclist measures of passage will be included in the traffic management setup, to minimise impact of the works on NMUs.

The works will not result in any change in vulnerability of the A86 carriageway, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.

These measures, along with 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 impacts.

A search of the Highland Council Planning Portal (Map Search) identified that there is one planning application within 300m of the scheme that was approved within the last 6 months. The planning application is for an erection of a replacement porch 180m south of the scheme (Reference: 25/02793/FUL). However, due to the distance and the nature of the works, it is not anticipated that this will cause any in-combination or cumulative effects on the surrounding environment.

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.

Due to the minor nature of the proposed works, 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 a significant cumulative effect with any other future works in the area.

Assessments of the environmental effects

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

The HRA completed to assess potential impacts of the works has concluded that the works will not result in LSE on the qualifying features of the River Spey – Insh Marshes SPA or the River Spey – Insh Marshes Ramsar as a result of the works. No ecological connectivity was identified between the scheme and the River Spey SAC or River Spey – Insh Marshes SAC; therefore, no impacts on these sites are expected as a result of works.

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

The scheme 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 safety and is located within the Cairngorms National Park, 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 EIA is required under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (as amended by The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017). Screening using Annex III criteria, reference to consultations undertaken, and review of available information has not identified the need for a statutory EIA.

The project will not have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as:

Characteristics of the scheme:

- Construction activities are restricted to an approximate area of 0.02ha.
- The works will be temporary, localised, and completed during day-time hours over up to two-week period.
- The works involve construction of an official pedestrian footpath on a grass section of the road verge currently being used by pedestrians, and as such the change to the local landscape has been deemed necessary for public safety.

- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- No in-combination or cumulative effects have been identified.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered low.
- A site compound is not required for this scheme.
- TM will consist of lane closure facilitated by two-way traffic lights.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme is located within the CNP. The Park Authority has been notified of the works and any advice provided will be followed.
- The scheme is located within the existing trunk road boundary and as such, no land take will be required.
- The scheme is located within 2km of the River Spey SAC and Insh Marshes SAC. There is no ecological connectivity (via waterways) between the scheme and these sites; therefore, no impacts on these SACs are expected as a result of works.
- The scheme is located within 2km of the River Spey – Insh Marshes Ramsar and the River Spey – Insh Marshes SPA. An HRA Proforma was completed to assess potential impacts of the works on these sites and concluded that the works will not result in LSE on the designated sites due to the localised, minor nature of the works, lack of in-water works, lack of supporting habitats within the scheme extent, and distance to the sites.
- There are no Cultural Heritage features of licensable nature located within the scheme extents.
- The scheme is not located within any areas of ancient woodland or Conservation Areas and does not require felling or trimming of trees protected by a TPO.
- The works are located within a residential area within Newtonmore. Local access will be granted to residents and the works will not restrict access to residential properties.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Any potential adverse impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- The works lie within an urban area with limited habitat present and as such, the works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the area.

- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works. The works are expected to result in residual beneficial effects for NMUs in the area in the operational phase, due to provision of a new, safe footway linking existing sections of footway.
- Mitigation measures detailed above and in the SEMP are put in place with the objective to prevent and, if required, subsequently control any potential impacts on sensitive receptors.

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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