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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A7 North of Langholm

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Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out resurfacing of the A7 carriageway. The works will consist of resurfacing to a maximum inlay depth of 260mm and reinstatement of road markings for a length of approximately 1347m (1.02ha). The works will involve resurfacing over A7 Factory/Highmill Bridge and A7 Whiteshiels culvert. Construction activities for the resurfacing procedure are as follows:

- Set up traffic management (TM) and mark out site,
- Milling of existing bituminous material by road planer,
- Jackhammer and compressor for breaking up surfaces not accessible by planer (e.g., around gullies),
- Loader/excavator used to collect and move excess material,
- Sweeper to collect loose material and provide clean laying surface,
- Milled out/excavated materials all taken off site,
- Tack/bond coat laid,
- Base/binder material laid and compressed by paver (where required),
- Material compacted using a heavy roller,
- New bituminous surface course material laid by paver,
- Material compacted using a heavy roller,
- Mechanical sweeper to collect loose material,
- HGV for removal and replacement of material,
- Road markings and studs applied where necessary,
- Remove TM and open road.

The works are programmed to be completed within the 2026/27 financial year with works expected to begin on the 5th of October 2026 for approximately five nights (19:30 – 06:00). TM will involve a full road closure with signed diversion via the A6088, B6357, and B7201. This will result in an additional 7.4 miles and 19 minutes travel time.

Location

The scheme is located on the A7 carriageway, approximately 800m north of the village of Langholm within the Dumfries and Galloway Council area (Figure 1.)

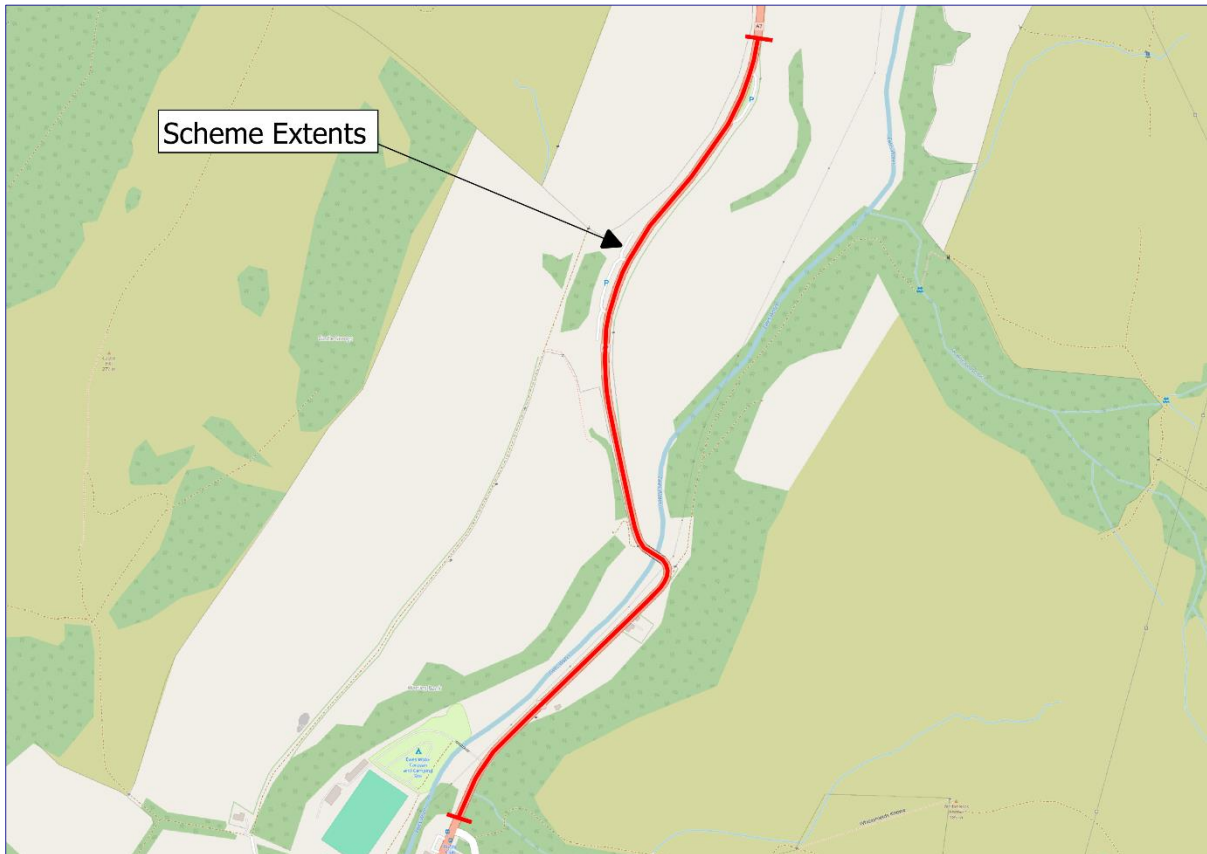


Figure 1. Extents of the Works. - Source: Asset Management Performance System (AMPS). © Europa Technologies Ltd. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.

Description of local environment

Air quality

For properties within 300m of the scheme refer to “Population and Human Health.

A search of the [Air Quality in Scotland](#) online mapping tool records show air quality in the wider bandings to be within the ‘green zone’ (Low Index 1-3).

The scheme is located within the Dumfries and Galloway Council boundary which reports no active [Air Quality Management Area \(AQMA\)](#) within their administrative boundary. The nearest AQMA, “High Street, Musselburgh”, lies approximately 85.95km north of the scheme extents and has been declared for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

There are no sites registered on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory ([SPRI](#)) for air pollutant releases within 10km of the scheme extents in the last 10 years.

Baseline air quality within the scheme extents is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A7 carriageway. Secondary sources are most commonly derived from motor vehicles travelling along local network roads and day-to-day agricultural land management activities.

Cultural heritage

The [PastMap](#) and [Historic Environment Scotland](#) (HES) online mapping tools record one designated cultural heritage asset within 300m of the scheme extents. “Highmill Bridge (A7 Over Ewes Water)” (ID: LB9758) is a Category B Listed Building which lies within the scheme extents.

Of lesser concern, nine undesignated cultural heritage assets (UCHA) are located within 300m of the scheme extents. Of these, four are located entirely or partially within the scheme extents:

- “Highmill Bridge (A7 Over Ewes Water)” Historic Environment Record (HER) site (ID: MDG20753) is located within the scheme extents.
- “Highmill Bridge / Ewes Water” HER site (ID: MDG7899) is located within the scheme extents.
- “Highmill Bridge” National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) (ID: 67599) site is located within the scheme extents.

- “Whiteshiels Mill” HER site (ID: MDG27048) partially overlaps with the southern side of the scheme extents.

The next closest UCHA is located approximately 140m northwest of the scheme extents.

Construction of the A7 is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present within the trunk road boundary. The potential for the presence of unknown archaeological remains in the study area has therefore been assessed to be low.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is not located within a National Park (NP) or National Scenic Area (NSA) ([SiteLink](#)).

The [Landscape Character Type \(LCT\)](#) within the scheme extents is categorised as “Upland Glens – Dumfries & Galloway” (LCT – 166) which has the following key characteristics:

- Deep u-shaped (and partially v-shaped) valleys with steep sides and narrow flat valley floors.
- Enclosed and often narrow, contained by steep sides which rise to form irregular ridgelines
- Features of traditional upland farming, with isolated farmsteads surrounded by trees, small to medium sized fields and enclosures with drystone dykes, fanks, stells and shelterbelts.
- Rough grassland and moor above improved pastures.
- Medium scale conifer forests (or parts of larger forests) on the glen sides.
- Single track road access.

The Historic Land-use Assessment ([HLA](#)) classifies the land-use within 300m of the scheme extents as:

- Rectilinear Fields and Farms.
- Plantation.
- Managed Woodland.
- Unenclosed Improved Pasture.
- Recreation Area.
- Industrial or Commercial Area.
- Rough Grazing.

The [national scale land capability for agriculture](#) classifies land surrounding the scheme as being:

- “Class 4.2” - Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily on grassland with short arable breaks of forage crops.

There are three areas of ancient woodland recorded on the [Ancient Woodland Inventory](#) within 300m of the scheme extents. Their details are:

- A 21.91ha area (ID: 50 – 40,790) of ancient (of semi-natural origin) (ANSO) woodland which has been continuously wooded since at least 1860. This area of woodland borders the A7 with the scheme extents at the south side.
- A 6.35ha area (ID: 44 – 40,792) of ANSO1860 woodland. This area is located approximately 40m southwest of the scheme extents at its closest point.
- A 9.15ha area (ID: 50 – 40,785) of ANSO1750 woodland. This area is located approximately 125m east of the scheme extents.

The [Native Woodland Survey of Scotland](#) records three areas of native woodland within 300m of the scheme extents. The closest of these is a 1.68ha area of mature lowland mixed deciduous woodland which is located adjacent to the west of the A7 carriageway at the south side of the scheme extents. The next closest area of native woodland is located approximately 80m east of the scheme.

Additionally, there are four areas of “Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site” (PAWS) within 300m of the scheme extents, two of which lie adjacent to the scheme extents.

There are no individual trees or areas of woodland covered by a [Tree Preservation Order \(TPO\)](#) within 300m of the scheme extents.

The existing trunk road is a prominent linear landscape feature. The trunk road corridor, for example, has a distinct character shaped by fast-flowing traffic, road markings, safety barriers, signage, landscaping, etc. The scale of the trunk road detracts from the quality and character of the wider landscape

Biodiversity

The Langholm - Newcastleton Hills Special Protection Area (SPA) is located approximately 1.44km southeast of the scheme extents at its closest point. There are no other European designated sites lie within 2km of the scheme extents, i.e., SPAs, Special Area of Conservation (SACs), or Ramsar Sites. However, the Solway Firth SPA and SAC, and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site have hydrological connectivity with the scheme via Ewes Water, which passes below the A7 within the scheme extents, and flows into the River Esk, which drains into the Solway Firth.

Additionally, the scheme lies within the buffer zone of qualifying features of the Solway Firth SPA and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site.

The Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA is underpinned by the Langholm - Newcastleton Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The Solway Firth SPA is underpinned by the Upper Solway Flats and Marshes SSSI.

The NBN atlas also holds records of numerous bird species within 2km over a ten-year period. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA), all wild birds and their active nests are protected.

A search of the NBN online mapping tool records no invasive or injurious plant species as listed within the Network Management Contract (NMC) within 2km of the scheme extents (within the last 10-years).

A search of the Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) online mapping tool records one instance of the invasive native perennial rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*) within the scheme extents, and no instances of injurious weeds or invasive non-native species (INNS).

The habitat immediately bordering the A7 North of Langholm consists primarily of agricultural/pastural fields, and Ewes Water and its associated riparian area, with rough grazing and heathland present in the wider area. While there is high availability of roadside vegetation such as neighbouring woodland, the surrounding habitat is assessed to be of reduced ecological value, due to the high likelihood of disturbances from low-volume, fast-flowing traffic and the A7 carriageway which also limits the connectivity and continuity for species between their potential habitats on either side of the road.

An ecological constraints survey (ECS) was conducted by BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team in April 2023 on a stretch of the A7 carriageway. A further survey was conducted on the 24th of April 2024. An updated ECS was conducted on the 27th of July 2026 by BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team. The survey area included the River Esk and its banks to the south of Factory/Highmill Bridge, with an approximate 200m buffer.

Due to narrow verges, the areas immediately adjacent to the carriageway could not be surveyed, however, numerous invasive non-native species including giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), and Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) have been identified to the south of the village of Langholm, approximately 1.5km south of the scheme, and may be present within the area. While not directly adjacent to the carriageway, large stand of Japanese knotweed and several

instances of giant hogweed were identified on the banks of the River Esk within the survey area.

Geology and soils

There are no geological SSSIs or Geological Conservation Review Sites within 300m of the scheme extents ([SiteLink](#)). Additionally, there are no [Local Geodiversity Sites](#) (LGS) with connectivity to the scheme extents.

The major soil groups and generalised soil types within the scheme extents are classified as “Brown soils” and “Alluvial soils” ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

Bedrock geology within the scheme extents is classified as “Riccarton Group-Wacke and mudstone” and “Southern Scotland Dinantian Plugs And Vents Suite-Agglomerate”. There are superficial deposits of:

- Mouldy Hills Gravel Formation-Gravel, sand, silt and clay.
- Langholm Till Formation-Diamicton.
- Alluvium-Sand, silt and clay.

([Geology Viewer](#)).

There is no evidence of historical industrial processes or the storage of hazardous materials that could have given rise to significant land contamination.

Given the restriction of the works to the A7 carriageway boundary, and the lack of any excavation works, local geology and soils are unlikely to be affected by the proposed works. Therefore, “Geology and Soils” has been scoped out of further environmental assessment.

Material assets and waste

Materials used will consist of:

- TS2010 10mm Site Class 1.
- AC20 Dense Binder 40/60.
- Tack/Bond coat.
- Thermoplastic Road Markings.
- Embedded Road Studs.

The value of the scheme is greater than £350,000 and as such, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is required.

The 1347m scheme involves the removal of surface and binder course. In total, approximately 2300 tonnes of bituminous material will be removed from site, approximately 262 tonnes of which is classified as hazardous material containing coal tar. The coal tar will be removed from site and stored prior to be reused within a separate M8 resurfacing scheme.

Noise and vibration

There are commercial and residential properties within 300m of the scheme extents. For further details see “Population and Human Health”.

The works do not fall within a candidate quiet area ([CQA](#)).

The nighttime noise levels (LNGT) modelled within the scheme extents range between 50 and 60 decibels (dB), remaining at similar levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptor (NSR) (residential) ([Noise Map Viewer](#)).

Baseline noise and vibration in the study area is mainly influenced by vehicles traveling along the A7 trunk road. Secondary sources are derived from vehicles travelling along nearby local network roads and day-to-day agricultural activities.

Population and human health

There are four residential and several commercial properties within 300m of the scheme extents. The closest property is a residential property located adjacent to the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents. It receives no screening from the scheme extents.

There are no core paths within 300m of the scheme extents ([Dumfries and Galloway Core Paths](#)).

A footpath is present adjacent to the northbound side of the carriageway at the southernmost end of the scheme.

There are two laybys within the scheme extents, one on the northbound side and one on the southbound side, both located towards the north of the scheme.

Several local/farm access routes are present within the scheme. In addition, access to one residential property, two commercial and one community facility are found within the scheme extents.

There are no bus stops, street lighting, or other community assets within the scheme extents. However, two bus stops are located immediately south of the scheme extents.

The scheme extents are located on the A7 carriageway, which is a single carriageway with the national speed limit applying throughout. The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) flow is low (2,090 motor vehicles (ID: [ATC09001](#), 2026 data)) ([Transport Scotland](#)).

Road drainage and the water environment

There is one [SEPA](#) classified waterbody within 300m of the scheme extents. “Ewes Water” (ID: 10681) is a river in the River Esk catchment area which passes below the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents. It has a main stem approximately 19.1km in length and was given an overall status of “Good” by SEPA in 2024.

There are numerous unclassified surface waterbodies located within 300m of the scheme extents. Of these, four are located within 30m of the scheme extents:

- “Near Whitshiels Cleuch” is a burn which passes below the A7 carriageway and drains into Ewes Water at the southernmost end of the scheme extents.
- “Drain 1” is a drainage waterbody which passes below the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents and drains into Ewes Water near the north of the scheme.
- “Drain 2” is a drainage waterbody located approximately 20m east of the scheme extents.
- “Drain 3” is a drainage waterbody located approximately 30m west of the scheme extents.

A search of the [SEPA Flood Map](#) online mapping tool shows that there are several areas of increased flood risk within or adjacent to the scheme extents. These areas range between a low (0.1%) and high (10%) likelihood of flooding each year.

The scheme extents lie within the “Eskdale Sand and Gravel” (ID: 150760) and “East Dumfrieshire” (ID: 150690) groundwater bodies, both of which were classified as “Good” by [SEPA](#) in 2024.

A search of the [Scotland's Environment \(SE\)](#) determined that the trunk road, within the scheme extents, does not lie within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ).

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](#)).

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

During the construction phase, activities undertaken on site could potentially have some minor localised and short-term air quality impacts in proximity to the works. The construction phase will, for example, require a range of ancillary plant, vehicles, and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) which will contribute to local dust and air pollutants. The main sources are likely to be dust generated by cold milling in preparation of carriageway resurfacing, as well as exhaust emissions from ancillary plant and vehicles. As a result, there is potential for impacts to local air quality.

However, considering the nature and duration of the scheme, along with implementation of mitigation detailed below, the proposed works' impacts on local air quality levels during the construction period are assessed to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the works, no residual air quality impacts are anticipated.

Air quality mitigation measures:

- 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 cold-milled material from site will have sheeted covers.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and 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 that have the potential to impact local air quality are occurring. In the unlikely event that unacceptable dust or exhaust emissions 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.

Cultural heritage

The scheme is located on Factory/Highmill Bridge, which is a Category B Listed Building. As such, there is potential for impacts to the bridge and features of the bridge which are relevant to its status as a cultural heritage asset. However, the works are restricted to like-for-like replacement of the carriageway surface to the existing boundary and depth, and are not permitted to leave the carriageway at any time. As such, there is no requirement for alterations to the Listed Building and therefore Listed Building Consent is not required. Given the mitigation measures detailed below, the impacts to Factory/Highmill Bridge are considered to be not significant.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed below, impacts to features of cultural heritage are assessed to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the works no residual impacts on features of cultural heritage are anticipated e.g., when complete, Factory/Highmill Bridge will remain largely unchanged, with a renewed road surface being the only discernible change.

Cultural heritage mitigation measures:

- Site operatives will be made aware of the location and sensitivity of Factory/Highmill Bridge prior to the commencement of the works.
- Care will be taken during the works to ensure that no damage occurs to the bridge e.g. stone parapets.
- Access outwith the existing carriageway will be limited as far as practicable. No plant, equipment or materials will be stored on the bridge, and equipment and tools may not be rested against the bridge.
- People, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials will be restricted to the areas of made/engineered ground on the A7 carriageway.

Landscape and visual effects

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. However, people, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A7, and construction works are programmed to be undertaken at night (five nights). As such, the visual impact of the works will be somewhat reduced.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed below, impacts on landscape and visual effects are assessed to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts on landscape and visual effects are anticipated e.g., when complete the visual appearance will remain largely unaffected, with a renewed road surface being the only discernible change.

Landscape and visual effects mitigation measures:

- The site will be monitored regularly for signs of litter and other potential contaminants, and litter will be removed before and after works take place.
- The site will be left clean and tidy following construction.
- Where possible, construction vehicles will not be left in places where soil or vegetation can be damaged. If damage to road verge occurs this will be lightly cultivated or graded (upon completion of the works) to allow natural recolonization by local species and promote integration with existing landscape character.

Biodiversity

A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) screening has been undertaken which ruled out Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on the qualifying features of the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA, Solway Firth SPA and SAC, and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site due to the restriction of the works to the A7 carriageway, as well as the relatively minor nature of the works. As such, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) was not required.

Also identified within the survey were a large stand of Japanese knotweed, and several stands of giant hogweed within the banks of the River Esk adjacent to the scheme, with large numbers of rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, and both of the above species identified in the wider Langholm area. Of lesser concern, one instance of the invasive native perennial rosebay willowherb has been identified within the verge within the scheme extents. As such, unmitigated, there is potential for impacts relating to invasive and injurious plant species. However, given the restriction of the works to the A7 carriageway, and the mitigation measures detailed below, no impacts relating to invasive plant species are expected.

A temporary short-term increase in noise levels may cause disturbance to local wildlife if present in the vicinity of the works. Disturbance to local wildlife may occur through the use of plant, vehicles and NRMM which will emit noise and create vibrations. In addition, the works will also require delivery of materials and the presence of personnel to facilitate the improvements to the road surface, which could

result in disturbance. However, the number of construction vehicles and construction operatives required onsite is low given the scale and scope of works. In addition, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle movements on the A7, furthermore, the scheme is of short duration (five nights) and will be undertaken on a rolling programme. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore somewhat diminished.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed above, the proposed works impacts on biodiversity throughout the construction period are therefore assessed to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts are anticipated in relation to biodiversity.

- Toolbox Talks will be briefed to all site operatives prior to the commencement of the works.
- Numerous instances of INNS have been identified within the banks of the River Esk adjacent to the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents, and within the wider area outside of the scheme. As such, Toolbox Talk TTN-009 Working with Injurious Weeds and Invasive Plants will be briefed to all site operatives prior to the commencement of the works, and site operatives will remain vigilant for any INNS adjacent to the A7 carriageway.
- Where possible, artificial lighting used during night works will be sufficiently screened and aligned so as to minimise the potential for direct illumination of neighbouring habitat (e.g., Ewes Water, woodland etc.) to ensure minimal impact on nocturnal species. Lighting will also be screened from the south parapet of Factory/Highmill Bridge.
- The works are not permitted to disturb or destroy any active birds' nests. If an active birds' nest is identified onsite that will be impacted by works, the Environmental Team will be contacted.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for protected species and will not approach or touch any animals seen on site. Any sightings of protected species will be reported to BEARs Environmental Team. Should a protected species be encountered or move within 50m of the active works (including compounds), works will be temporarily halted until the animal(s) move at least 50m away from the construction site, or until BEAR's Environmental Team can provide advice.
- The Contractor will employ 'soft start' techniques for all noisy activity to avoid sudden and unexpected disturbance during works. Each time the activity is started up after a period of inactivity, the noise levels will be gradually increased over a period of 30 minutes to permit animals to move away from the disturbance.

- All equipment stored onsite, if necessary, will be checked at the start of each workday to ensure mammal species are not present. Any storage containers/plant within the compound will also be secured overnight to prevent exploration by mammal species. Any areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g., storage containers) will also be covered at the end of each working day.
- People, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials will be restricted to areas of made/engineered ground (as much as is reasonably practicable). If during works unforeseen access to the surrounding environment is required, works will cease in this area and BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted to allow consideration of potential environmental effects.
- BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted to allow consideration of potential environmental effects if:
 - unforeseen site clearance is required,
 - unplanned works must be undertaken out with the carriageway boundary,
 - there is any deviation from the agreed plan, programme and/or method of working,
 - nesting birds are found onsite.
- BEAR Scotland's Control Room will be contacted if there is a pollution incident.

Material assets and waste

Minimising impacts arising from construction materials are focussed upon making the most efficient use of materials onsite to reduce the need for imported primary materials and minimise the creation and disposal of waste through (i) reduction, (ii) re-use, and (iii) recycling. Potential impacts have been assessed for both the construction and operational phases of this scheme. It is anticipated that most material impacts are likely to arise during construction, though long-term residual impacts could occur post construction during the operational phase e.g., during the disposal of materials arising from routine maintenance operations.

However, the detailed design will reduce the requirements for primary materials e.g., the carriageway surfacing, and subbase will be carefully considered to minimise the requirements for importing primary material. Materials will also be derived from recycled, secondary, or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion. Specifying TS2010 surface course also allows a wider array of aggregate sources to be considered when compared to typical stone mastic asphalt (SMA). As a result, the use of TS2010 should reduce the usage of imported aggregates and increase the use of a wider range of sustainable aggregate sources. The design life for the TS2010 surfacing is also estimated to be 20 years. The enhanced durability of TS2010 therefore reduces

reoccurring routine maintenance and associated levels of traffic disruption to this section of road over the period. In addition, the re-use of coal tar bound materials within a separate BEAR Scotland site will see a reduction in the volume of materials going to landfill.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation detailed below, the proposed works impacts on material assets and waste throughout the construction period are therefore assessed to be non-significant. Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts are anticipated on materials or waste.

Material assets and waste mitigation measures:

- Good materials management methods (e.g., 'just-in-time' delivery) will be implemented wherever possible.
- All non-hazardous road planings will be treated in line with LRWA 3 and be recycled in line with SEPA's WAS-G-DEF-05 Guidance for End-of-Waste for Recycled Aggregates.
- BEAR Scotland's subcontractor Tarmac will gain any necessary permissions under EASR from SEPA prior to the storage or re-use of coal tar bound materials.
- The re-use of the coal tar bound planings will be undertaken in line with SEPA's Position Statement on Cold Recycling – Treatment Storage and Use of Asphalt Waste Containing Coal Tar WAS-PS-06.
- A SWMP will be completed by the Designer and Contractor as required. The SWMP will provide details of the following:
 - The quantity and type of waste that will be produced.
 - How waste will be minimised, reused, recycled, recovered, or otherwise diverted from landfill.
 - How materials that cannot be reused, recycled, or recovered will be removed from site and consigned, transported and disposed of in full accordance with all relevant UK legislation.
- The Contractor will comply with all 'Duty of Care' requirements, ensuring that any surplus materials or waste are stored, transported, treated, used, and disposed of safely without endangering human health or harming the environment. Waste transfer notes and/or waste exemption certificates (if required) will also be completed and retained.
- Designated areas will be identified within which all materials and personnel, including construction compounds, where necessary, will be contained to limit environmental disturbance during construction works. This will include a designated area (if required) for segregation and reuse of waste materials.
- The selection of areas for materials stockpiling will avoid sensitive locations such as road drainage. Stockpiled materials with leachate potential, for example, will

be stored away from road drainage to prevent cross-contamination with other materials, wastes, or groundwater.

- Materials will be stored with the appropriate security to prevent loss, theft, or vandalism.
- All temporary road signs and traffic cones will be removed from site on completion of works.
- Wastewater from welfare facilities (if required) will be subject to effluent treatment followed by tanker removal.
- If hazardous substances are used onsite, each substance will be subject to assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002. Hazardous substances will also be clearly labelled, and disposed of, in line with the relevant waste regulations. Special waste will also not be mixed with general waste and/or other recyclables.

Noise and vibration

Activities undertaken on site could potentially have some localised and short-term noise impacts in proximity to the works. The road works will, for example, require a range of ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM for cold milling in preparation for carriageway resurfacing. Noise will also be generated by using breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, use of rollers, etc. As a result, there is potential for noise and vibration effects to commercial and residential properties in the area, the closest of which is a residential property located adjacent to the scheme extents. However, the works are not located within a CQA, and works will also be completed over five nights on a rolling programme with the aim being to complete the noisiest works by 23:00.

The road surface is in a poor condition, with a series of defects. Replacing the life-expired surface course with TS2010 road surfacing affords the benefits of a reduction in mid-to-high frequency traffic noise and a reduction in the ground vibrations. As a result, upon completion of the work, noise associated with the movement of vehicles on the trunk road should decrease post construction.

Considering the likely sources of noise and vibration, with the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation detailed below, it is unlikely that noise and vibration associated with the works will lead to significant impacts, disruption and/or complaints. The proposed scheme is therefore anticipated to result in non-significant noise impacts.

Noise and vibration mitigation measures:

- The local authority environmental health department will be notified of nighttime working by BEAR Scotland's design engineer.

- Where possible, the noisiest work operations (e.g., cold milling, using breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, use of rollers, etc.) will be completed before 23:00.
- If unacceptable noise is emanating from the site the operation will, where possible, 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) repositioning equipment, (d) changing the method of working etc. Corrective actions will be actioned through the non-conformance reporting procedure, which ensures a root-cause analysis is carried out on each incident. The non-conformance procedure also ensures that appropriate corrective and preventative action measures are agreed and implemented in a timely fashion with all parties, and are recorded and actioned through to closeout, and fully auditable and traceable.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM with directional noise characteristics will (where practical) be shut down in intervening periods between site operations.
- The use of paving breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, etc. will be avoided (except where there is an overriding justification), and if used will be fitted with mufflers or silencers of the type recommended by the manufacturer.
- Drop heights from vehicles and NRMM will be kept to a minimum to minimise noise when unloading.
- All ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM used onsite will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of silencers and acoustic enclosures.
- All compressors will be 'sound-reduced' models fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers which will be kept closed when in use.
- HGV, site vehicles and NRMM will be switched to the minimum setting required by HSE and, where possible, will utilise 'broadband non-tonal' or 'directional sound reversing' alarms. Speed limits will also be reduced through the works

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site have the potential to have temporary adverse impacts on local residents and road users. However, TM will only be in place for five nights (when traffic flows will be at a minimum), as such no congestion issues are predicted during the proposed construction hours.

There are residential and commercial properties located adjacent to the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents which receive no screening from the A7. As such there is potential for impacts to these residents and businesses. However, the proximity of the properties to the A7 suggest a tolerance to road traffic disturbance for the residential properties, and the works will be undertaken outside of normal business hours. As such, with the mitigation measures detailed below, the potential for impacts to local residents is considered to be reduced, and the impacts to local businesses is considered non-significant.

Two bus stops are located immediately to the south of the scheme extents. Given the requirement for a full road closure and diversion, there is potential for impacts to local residents in the form of disrupted public transport routes. However, the final bus at the southbound bus stop is scheduled for 17:35, and the final bus for the northbound bus stop is scheduled for 19:26, with the earliest bus at either stop scheduled for after 07:00. As such, given the works are scheduled to start at 19:30, the likelihood of impacts to local public transport is considered minimal. With the mitigation measures detailed below, the likelihood of impacts is further reduced.

A footpath is present adjacent to the northbound side of the A7 carriageway at the southern side of the scheme extents. As such there is potential for impacts to local residents and non-motorised users (NMUs) who are utilising the footpath. However, the works will be undertaken at night, when foot traffic is likely to be reduced. With the mitigation measures detailed below, the likelihood of impacts relating to the footpath is considered to be minimal.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation described above, impacts on population and human health are assessed to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the works, there will be a positive impact in relation to population and human health due to the improvement of usability and safety provided by the new carriageway surface.

Population and human health mitigation measures:

- Given the proximity of residential properties to the scheme extents, Toolbox Talk TTN-042 “Being a Good Neighbour” will be briefed to all site operatives prior to the commencement of the works.
- Provisions will be made to allow safe passage of buses through the site. This will involve an escort of the bus through the site by a TM vehicle.
- Provisions will be made to allow the safe passage of local residents with property access within the scheme extents to access their properties and to allow NMUs to safely utilise the footpath located at the south side of the scheme. If the footpath must be closed, then an alternate route to properties located along the footpath will be arranged.
- Where appropriate, a communication strategy (e.g., social media, consultation with local authority and other stakeholders, letter drop (for night-time works), etc.) will be initiated to keep local residents and/or businesses informed of the proposed working schedule, particularly the times and durations of noisy construction activities. The communication strategy will also provide a 24-hour contact number for the BEAR Scotland Control Room.
- Advanced signage will be strategically placed on the trunk road to notify stakeholders of the road closure and diversion.

- A Traffic Management Plan (TMP), which includes measures to avoid or reduce disruption to road traffic, will be produced in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual (Department of Transport 2009). The TMP will ensure that there is no severance of community assets, access routes or residential development.

Road drainage and the water environment

During resurfacing works, there is potential for temporary adverse impacts on the water environment e.g., Ewes Water, Near Whitshiels Cleuch, and nearby drainage waterbodies. Potential changes in water quality e.g., 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 surrounding waterbodies such as the minor drainage channels found in proximity.

However, considering the relatively minor nature of the resurfacing works, the short duration and with implementation of the mitigation detailed below, the proposed works impacts on the road drainage and water environment are assessed to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the resurfacing works, no residual impacts are anticipated in relation to the road drainage and water environment.

Road drainage and the water environment mitigation measures:

- Site operatives will be informed of the location and proximity of Ewes Water, Near Whitshiels Cleuch, Drain 1, and Drain 2 prior to the commencement of the works.
- If any works are identified that would require entering a waterbody, BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted (before works commence) to allow consideration of potential environmental effects.
- The abstraction or transfers of water from, discharges to, or the washing of tools in surface waterbodies identified will not be permitted.
- Appropriate measures will be implemented during resurfacing operations to limit the potential for wastes (i.e. road planings) and materials (i.e. new asphalt) to enter any gullies present on site. On completion of resurfacing operations, any gullies present on site will be visually checked to ensure they have not become blocked as a result of the scheme.
- All site personnel will be made aware of site spillage response procedures and in the event of a spill, all works associated with the spill will stop, and the incident reported to the Site Supervisor. Small spills that did not leave the site boundary and are cleaned up without material environmental harm or residual environmental impact would most likely not be required to be notified to SEPA or other authorities. However, all such incidents will be recorded and reported

to BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team. In the event of a 'serious incident', SEPA will be notified without delay. Such notification will include: (i) the time and duration of the incident, (ii) a description of the cause of the incident, (iii) any effect on the environment as a result of the incident, and (iv) any measures taken to minimise or mitigate the effect and prevent a recurrence.

- All waste, vehicles, ancillary plant, NRMM and fuels will be stored in the compound(s) or laydown area and will be secured and located, if space is available, at least 10m from drainage entry points, in order to comply with GPP 5 'works and maintenance in or near water'. Refuelling will only be undertaken at designated refuelling areas (e.g., on hardstanding, with spill kits available, and >10m from drainage entry points, where practicable). Spill kits will also be available within all site vehicles and spill kits will be replenished onsite when required. Only designated trained and competent operatives will be authorised to refuel plant. Generators, and other ancillary plant and NRMM, where there is a risk of leakage of oil or fuel, will have internal bunding or will have a secondary containment system placed beneath them that meets 110% capacity requirements. Containment systems will also be emptied regularly. All waste, vehicles, ancillary plant, NRMM and fuels will also be stored in a manner that ensures they are protected from damage by collision or extremes of weather.
- Regular visual pollution inspections of the designated laydown area and work site (particularly near road drainage entry points) will be conducted (e.g., site walkover by engineer or Site Supervisor), especially during periods of heavy rain.
- All vehicles and NRMM onsite will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of oil tanks, coolant systems, gaskets etc. A checklist will be present to make sure that the checks have been carried out.

Climate

BEAR Scotland, working on behalf of Transport Scotland, undertakes carbon monitoring of major projects and operational activities. Emissions from activities are recorded using Transport Scotland's Carbon Management System. BEAR Scotland also undertakes resource efficiency activities to manage and reduce emissions contributing to climate change. The works will also extend the maintenance intervals required for future works. In doing so, the service life of the trunk road is also extended.

During each of the schemes there is potential for impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of equipment, vehicles, and NRMM, material use and production, and transportation of material/waste. However, considering the nature, size and scale of the individual schemes, and the mitigation detailed below, the impacts to climate are considered to be non-significant.

Upon completion of the proposed schemes no residual impacts are anticipated on the climate.

Climate mitigation measures:

- Warm mix asphalt will be used as standard
- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gases emitted as part of the works.
- BEAR Scotland will adhere to its Carbon Management Policy.
- Where possible, waste will be removed to local waste management facilities.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

There will be no change to the likelihood of flooding on the A7 within the scheme extents upon completion of the works.

Works are restricted to areas of made ground on the A7 carriageway surface, with access to the scheme gained via the A7 mainline. TM will employ a full road closure with signed diversion via the A6088, B6357, and B7201.

A Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) will be produced by BEAR Scotland which sets out a framework to reduce the risk of adverse impacts from construction activities on sensitive environmental receptors. The Contractor will comply with all conditions of the SEMP during works and may be subject to audit throughout the contract.

Considering the above, the vulnerability of the project to of major accidents and disasters is considered to be low.

Assessment of 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 [Dumfries and Galloway planning portal](#) has identified one planning application within 300m in the last two years:

- Application “24/2232/CAR” is an “application to operate a certificated site for temporary holiday site (maximum number of units per night 30 including all tents - 11/07/25 - 27/07/25)” to which no objections were raised. It is located

approximately 170m west of the scheme extents, but likely includes the holiday park located approximately 65m west of the scheme extents at its closest point.

While it is not possible to determine the timings of the works detailed in the planning application, it relates to a minor change of use application. As such, the potential for cumulative impacts with the resurfacing works is considered to be limited. This is due to the works being undertaken on a rolling schedule, limiting disturbance in any one place, the relatively small-scale nature of the resurfacing works and the planning application, and the restriction of the resurfacing to the A7 carriageway. Therefore, no in-combination effects are expected with relation to any of the above planning applications.

Additionally, a search of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner's website ([map search](#)) has identified no other roadworks within 300m of the scheme extents at the same time as the resurfacing works. However, while not within 300m, BEAR Scotland are undertaking additional resurfacing works on the A7 to the north of the scheme which will utilise the same road closure, minimising the potential for impacts to road users.

Assessments of the environmental effects

The A7 North of Langholm scheme lies within 2km of the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA, and has hydrological connectivity with the Solway Firth SPA and SAC, and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site. A HRA has concluded that the works will not result in LSE on any of the qualifying species of the designated sites, and as such AA is not required.

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

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

This is a relevant project in terms of section 55A(16) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 as it is a project for the improvement of a road and the completed works (together with any area occupied by apparatus, equipment, machinery, materials, plant, spoil heaps, or other such facilities or stores required during the period of construction) exceed 1 hectare in area.

The project has been subject to screening using the Annex III criteria to determine whether a formal Environmental Impact Assessment is required under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (as amended by The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017). Screening using Annex III criteria, reference to consultations undertaken and review of available information has not identified the need for a statutory EIA.

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

Characteristics of the scheme:

- The works are restricted to like-for-like replacement of the carriageway surface on the A7 carriageway. These are relatively minor works which are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A7 trunk road boundary.

- The works will be undertaken on a rolling schedule, minimising the impact to any one area, and any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, not significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low and by removing the carriageway defects, this will provide this section of the A7 carriageway with another life cycle, and significantly improve the ride quality, which will result in safer conditions for road users.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme is located on the A7 carriageway, north of the village of Langholm.
- The scheme is located within 2km of the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA and has hydrological connectivity with the Solway Firth SAC and SPA, and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site. However, a HRA has been undertaken, which confirmed the works will not result in LSE on any of the qualifying features.
- While the Highmill Bridge is a Category B Listed Building, the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the existing carriageway surface and will not have the potential to impact upon the character of the bridge.
- The scheme is not located within any areas designated for landscape, geological or soil interests.
- The scheme will not require any private land acquisition, and land use will not change as a result of the works.
- The scheme is not located within a densely populated area.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- The waste hierarchy will be followed to reduce waste to landfill.
- The works are programmed to take five nights to complete on a rolling programme, with the aim being to complete the noisiest works by 23:00.
- With good practice pollution prevention measures implemented onsite, there is a negligible risk of a pollution event e.g., compliance with the SEMP.

References of supporting documentation

F565 HRA – A7 North of Langholm

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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