



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

**A96 Williamston Junction to
Old Meldrum Junction
(Resurfacing)**

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Project Details

Description

The works are required due to carriageway deterioration and surface defects including fretting, longitudinal cracking, potholes, patches, rutting and crazing on a stretch of the A96 carriageway between Huntly and Inverurie, Aberdeenshire.

The scheme covers an approximate area of 1 hectare.

Construction activities are as follows:

- Installation of temporary traffic management (TTM) and marking out site;
- Milling carriageway to agreed depths;
- Resurfacing of carriageway to the existing road levels using TS2010 aggregate (Site class 1), AC20 binder and AC32 base.
- Reinstatement of road markings, linings, and studs; and
- Removal of TTM.

The following plant, non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) and vehicles will be required:

- Planer;
- Paver;
- Roller;
- JCBs; and
- Bond coat truck.

The proposed construction is programmed to be completed within this financial year (April 2024 to March 2025) for the duration of approximately 10 overnight shifts (19:30-06:30).

TTM will comprise of lane closures and an overnight convoy for the works duration. Aberdeenshire Council Environmental Health Team have been notified of such arrangements.

Location

The scheme is located along a rural stretch of the A96 between Huntly and Inverurie, south of Colpy at the following National Grid References (NGRs) (Figure 1):

- Scheme start: NJ 64685 30922
- Scheme end: NJ 64258 32103



Figure 1. Scheme Location

Description of local environment

Air quality

Baseline air quality levels are likely to be influenced by vehicles and associated emissions along the A96 carriageway and surrounding agricultural activities within this rural area. The [Average Annual Daily Flow](#) (AADF) was estimated for the nearest traffic count point on the A96 carriageway located approximately 3km north (Site number: 20785), and accounted for 8,938 total vehicles, with 6.1% Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

There are <10 residential receptors within 200m, the closest located 5m east of the carriageway boundary at NJ 64256 31912. No non-residential air quality receptors are located within 200m.

Aberdeenshire Council has not declared any [Air Quality Management Areas](#) (AQMAs).

There are no sites registered on the [Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory](#) (SPRI) for air pollutant releases within 1km of the scheme.

Cultural heritage

A desktop study using the [PastMap](#) resource has identified two statutory, designated cultural heritage assets within 300m of the scheme:

- Williamston House Garden & Designed Landscape (GDL00386) – immediately adjacent to the carriageway boundary to the east.
- Mill House of Williamston Category C Listed Building (LB30) – 28m east.

The following Historic Environment Records (HERs) have been recorded within 200m of the scheme:

- Mains Of Sheelagreen (NJ63SW0027) – within extents.
- Mill House of Williamston (NJ63SW0107) – immediately adjacent to the carriageway boundary to the east.
- Mains Of Williamston (NJ63SE0100) – 115m east.
- Law Hillock (NJ63SW0007) – 200m west.
- Old Inn of Williamston (NJ63SW0201) – immediately adjacent to the carriageway boundary to the west.

- Sheelagreen (NJ63SW0079) – 45m west.
- Sheelagreen Farm (NJ63SW0014) – 45m west.

There are no Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites or Inventory Battlefields identified within 300m of the scheme.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is located within a rural area along a stretch of the A96 carriageway with the surrounding landscape consisting of rectilinear fields and farms, with an area of designed landscape to the east ([HLAMap](#)).

This scheme is not located within a National Park, National Scenic Area, or any other area designated for landscape character or quality ([Sitelink](#)).

Williamston House (NJ63SW0082), Garden & Designed Landscape (GDL) (Ref: NJ63SW0082) is located immediately to the east of the carriageway. Vegetation lines the carriageway between the scheme and the GDL which provides partial screening.

The [Landscape Character Type](#) (LCT) within the scheme extent is Assessment: Farmed Basin – Aberdeenshire ([LCT 23](#)) with the following key characteristics:

- Simple, flat to gently undulating broad valley floor contained by undulating slopes which rise to the high heather-clad and forested Outlying Hills and Ridges.
- Large geometric fields forming a colourful patchwork of arable and pasture land on basin floors, often extending far up containing slopes.
- Wetter rushy pastures and some small areas of remnant moss and birch woodlands present on flatter basin floors.
- Small copses of broadleaf trees and conifer shelterbelts pattern the farmland.
- Policy woodlands a particular feature in parts of the area.
- Distinct ‘Highland fringe’ character in parts.
- Regular scattering of farms, villages and isolated houses.
- Rich mix of archaeological remains.
- Large scale character with powerful landform and simple landscape pattern.

No [Tree Preservation Orders](#) or areas of [Ancient Woodland](#) immediately surround, or will be impacted by the works.

Views to and from the road will be visually impacted for the duration of the works due to the presence of TM, plant, machinery and NRMM. There are sporadic rural properties lining the scheme length, with little screening between the work area.

Biodiversity

[NatureScot's Sitelink](#) resource has not identified any European designated sites within 2km, or with hydrological connectivity to the scheme.

No other designated sites are within proximity or have direct connectivity to the works area, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), local and national nature reserves ([Sitelink](#)).

The immediate surrounding area of the scheme extents consists of open agricultural land and sporadic shrubs and vegetation lining the roadside verges. The immediate surrounding habitat is not identified as highly favourable and with the contained nature of the works a Preliminary Ecological Walkover (PEW) has been scoped out by a competent ecologist, with a desktop study deemed sufficient.

The following Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) and injurious weed species within 500m ([NBN Atlas](#)):

- Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) INNS;
- Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) INNS;
- Rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*) injurious weed.

Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) has not identified any INNS or injurious weeds within 500m.

No [Tree Preservation Orders](#) or areas of [Ancient Woodland](#) immediately surround, or will be impacted by the works.

Please see *Road Drainage and the Water Environment* section below for a description of local waterbodies surrounding the scheme.

Geology and soils

The scheme does not lie within or have connectivity to any Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRS), geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or Local Geodiversity Sites (LGS) ([Sitelink](#)).

The local soil type of scheme extents is recorded as brown soils ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

Bedrock within scheme extents is comprised of ([British Geological Survey Geology Viewer](#)):

- Igneous bedrock of the Inch Pluton, Upper Zone (Olivine-gabbro (fe-rich)) formed between 485.4 and 443.8 million years ago (Mya) during the Ordovician period.

Superficial deposits comprise of:

- Sedimentary superficial deposits of Till, Devensian (Diamicton) formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.
- Sedimentary deposits of alluvium (clay, silt, sand and gravel) formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

As a result of the works taking place strictly within made ground and surface layer of the A96 carriageway boundary, it has been determined that the proposed project does not carry the potential to cause direct or indirect impact to geology or soils. As such, impact has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Material assets and waste

The proposed works are required to resurface the worn carriageway with notable defects and reinstate road markings and studs. Materials used will consist of:

- Surfacing, binder, and base materials (TS2010 aggregate (Site class 1), AC20 binder and AC32 base); and
- Road marking materials (thermoplastic road marking paint) and studs.

Wastes are anticipated to be planings from the carriageway surface course, with no coal tar recorded from coring logs within scheme extents. The Contractor is responsible for the disposal of road planings, and this will be registered in accordance with a Paragraph 13(a) waste exemption issued by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), as described in Schedule 3 of the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 2011.

Noise and vibration

The scheme is located along a rural stretch of the A96 carriageway between Huntly and Inverurie, Aberdeenshire. There are approximately 20 properties located within 300m, the closest located 5m east of the carriageway boundary at NJ 64256 31912.

No non-residential noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) are present within 300m of the scheme.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA), as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (Road Maps) [Transportation Noise Action Plan](#) (TNAP).

[Scotland's Noise Map](#) has indicated modelled day-evening-night noise levels (Lden) within the carriageway to be 65-70dB, with lower night-time noise levels (Lnight) of 60-65dB. Baseline noise levels are likely to be primarily influenced by vehicle traffic along the A96, with secondary sources from surrounding agricultural activities.

The AADF was estimated for the nearest traffic count point on the A96 carriageway located approximately 3km north (Site number: 20785), and accounted for 8,938 total vehicles, with 6.1% HGVs.

Population and human health

No community facilities (healthcare, educational, religious, or recreational) are located within 300m. However, the carriageway surrounding extents connects areas such as Huntly approximately 13km to the northwest, and Inverurie approximately 13km to the southeast.

There are 20 residential properties located within 300m, the closest located 5m east of the carriageway boundary at NJ 64256 31912. Access/egress to approximately six properties is within extents and includes:

- Mill Croft at NJ 64663 30943;
- Old Mill Cottage at NJ 64622 31029;
- Old Mill House at NJ 64582 31093;
- Old Inn Barn, Old Inn Cottage and Old Inn Steading at NJ 64536 31135.

No Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including [Aberdeenshire Council Core Paths](#) or [National Cycle Network](#) (NCN) routes, or bridleways are within the scheme, and the carriageway is not street-lit within this section.

TTM will comprise of lane closures and an overnight convoy for the duration of the works period.

Road drainage and the water environment

The scheme is located within the Inverurie groundwater body (ID: 150685) which in 2021 had an overall classification of 'good' ([SEPA Water Environment Hub](#)).

The River Urie (ID: 23369) located approximately 120m east of the carriageway at its closest point has 'good ecological potential' under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) ([SEPA Water Environment Hub](#)), and has a high (10%) likelihood of flooding per year.

The scheme is within the Moray, Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan [Nitrate Vulnerable Zone](#) (NVZ).

One unclassified watercourse is located within 500m of extents. Jordan Burn is identified approximately 100m east and flows into the River Urie.

A pond is located 105m east, with a weir flowing to the River Urie.

No areas of the A96 carriageway within scheme extents are identified at risk of surface or river flooding ([SEPA Flood Maps](#)).

Road drainage is provided by top-entry gullies.

Climate

Carbon Goals

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

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

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

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

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

Policies and Plans

This Record of Determination (RoD) has been undertaken in accordance with Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (RSA EIA Regulations) along with Transport Scotland's Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance ([Guidance – Environmental Impact Assessments for road projects \(transport.gov.scot\)](#)). Relevant guidance, policies and plans accompanied with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges ([Design Manual for Roads and Bridges \(DMRB\)](#)) LA 101 and LA 104 were used to form this assessment.

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 surrounding the scheme location. Activities undertaken on site may cause dust and particulate matter to be emitted to the atmosphere and there will be prolonged vehicle, plant and NRMM presence. However, considering 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, and will be for the duration of the works only.

- Best practice and measures as outlined in the '[Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction \(January 2024\)](#)' published by the institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), which includes the following mitigation relevant to this scheme will be followed:
 - Site layout will be planned (including plant and vehicles) so that machinery and dust causing activities are located away from receptors, as far as reasonably practicable;
 - Materials that have a potential to produce dust will be removed from site as soon as possible, unless being re-used on site (cover or fence stockpiles to prevent wind whipping);
 - Drop heights from conveyors and other loading or handling equipment will be minimised;
 - Vehicles entering and leaving the work area will be covered/sheeted to prevent escape of materials during transport;
 - Equipment will be readily available on site to clean any dry spillages, and clean up spillages as soon as reasonably practicable after the event using wet cleaning methods; and
 - When not in use, plant and vehicles will be switched off and there will be no idling vehicles.
- All plant and fuel-requiring equipment utilised during construction will be well maintained to minimise emissions.
- Green driving techniques will be adopted, and effective route preparation and planning undertaken prior to works.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation, there will be no significant impact on air quality. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 105: Air Quality no further assessment is required.

Cultural heritage

Despite records of cultural heritage features within 300m of scheme extents, there is no earthworks or land acquisition associated with the scheme, with original construction of the A96 carriageway likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present. Therefore, the potential for the presence of unknown archaeological remains in the study area has been assessed to be low.

Furthermore, vibration levels will be similar (or lower), and less prolonged than that during construction of the A96 trunk road, and thus no significant impacts are anticipated to the identified listed building located adjacent to scheme extents.

There is one HER located within scheme extents, however, the works involve like-for-like replacements of the existing carriageway boundary and thus will not result in any change to the cultural heritage asset.

The following best practice mitigation measures will be in place:

- Plant and machinery will be stored within the carriageway boundary as far as reasonably practicable, however, strictly not within the cultural heritage features identified. Where areas out with the carriageway are to be accessed, it will be reduced as far as possible, and ideally limited to access on foot.
- If a change to the construction programme onsite is required that involves changes to scheme extents Amey's Environmental Team will be notified.

Given the nature of the works, works area, and distance from identified cultural heritage features, no significant effects are predicted on cultural heritage. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 106: Cultural Heritage, no further assessment is required.

Landscape and visual effects

There will likely be short-term adverse impacts with regard to landscape character and visual amenity due to the presence of plant, machinery, NRMM and TTM.

However, works are temporary, restricted to engineered ground and occurring overnight and thus the visual impacts are somewhat reduced.

No residual impacts are anticipated on completion of the works, and considering the nature and duration of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed below, impacts on landscape are not significant:

- Works and storage of plant, machinery, materials will be contained within the carriageway boundary (as far as reasonably practicable).

- Operatives will be aware of the adjacent GDL and its landscape sensitivity prior to works commencing.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed works will not be significant. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 106: Cultural Heritage, no further assessment is required.

Biodiversity

Construction activities have the potential to have a temporary adverse impact on biodiversity in the area as a result of vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species within close surroundings; and potential to pollute habitats from noise and artificial site lighting.

There are recordings of INNS within 500m of the scheme, however, works will be confined to the trunk road surface, involving like-for-like carriageway resurfacing. Furthermore, there are no earthworks, permanent (or temporary) land-take, accommodation works or site clearance, and there is no requirement to import topsoil. As such, there is limited potential to spread or introduce INNS or injurious flowering plant species.

With the following mitigation measures will be in place:

- As part of the Network Management Contract (NMC) Amey, on behalf of Transport Scotland, keep records of various target species, including Rosebay willowherb. Works will not cause the spread of such species, if works are likely to result in the spread of species through disturbance, Amey's Landscaping Team will be consulted.
- A 'soft start' will be implemented on site each day. This will involve switching on plant/vehicles simultaneously as opposed to instantaneously, to ensure a gradual increase in noise for minimal disturbance.
- Site lighting will be directional and aimed away from sensitive ecological receptors including trees and watercourses.
- Should a protected species be encountered or move on site, works will be temporarily halted until the animal has moved on, or until Amey's Environmental Team can provide advice.
- Amey's Environmental Team will be contacted if:
 - There are any sightings of protected species on, or within close surroundings of the active works area;
 - Unforeseen site clearance, or additional construction activities are required; or
 - INNS are found within the work area.

- Plant, vehicles and materials will be contained within areas of engineered ground, and not parked/stored on grass verges as far as reasonably practicable. Reinstatement of any damaged areas will be undertaken (if required) upon completion of the scheme.
- Please see *Road Drainage and the Water Environment* section below for further mitigation measures in relation to pollution prevention and control.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are predicted for biodiversity. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 108: Biodiversity no further assessment is required.

Material assets and waste

There is potential for impacts as a result of resource depletion through use and transportation of new materials, however, due to the scale and scope of works no significant impacts are anticipated for material assets and waste.

Furthermore, materials will be sourced locally where possible and the design life for the TS2010 surfacing proposed is estimated to be 20 years, thus reducing the requirement for maintenance to this section of road over this period. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- Materials will be derived from recycled, secondary, or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion and associated emissions.
- Good materials management methods (e.g., 'just-in-time' delivery) will be implemented wherever possible, to minimise/prevent the disposal of unused materials.
- Waste will be stored in suitable containers and covered.
- Where possible, different waste streams will be separated at the source.
- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- Following on-site coring investigations and testing, no coal-tar was identified within the surfacing of the carriageway within the scheme extent. As such, road planings generated as a result of the works will be recovered in accordance with the criteria stipulated within SEPA document 'Guidance on the Production of Fully Recoverable Asphalt Road Planings' where possible.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are predicted for Material Assets and Waste.

Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 110: Material Assets and Waste, no further assessment is required.

Noise and vibration

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of machinery and construction vehicles. The works will take place during night-time working hours, and likely increase noise levels from ambient night levels with the potential to disturb NSRs adjacent and surrounding scheme extents.

On completion of the scheme, motorists and nearby local amenity users will benefit from improved road surfacing as a result of the scheme.

The following mitigation measures will be in place:

- On-site construction tasks will be programmed to be as efficient as possible, with a view to limiting noise disruption to local sensitive receptors. The noisiest works will be undertaken before 23:00 where possible.
- Effects from noise will be kept to a minimum through the use of appropriate mufflers and silencers fitted to machinery. All exhaust silencers will be checked at regular intervals to ensure efficiency.
- A 'soft start' to works will be in place, whereby plant/machinery/vehicles are started sequentially as opposed to simultaneously.
- Amey's Noise and Vibration environmental toolbox talk will be delivered to all site operatives before works start.
- A letter drop will be delivered to residents within 300m to notify them of upcoming works, timings and duration.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are predicted for noise and vibration. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 111: Noise and Vibration and no further assessment is required.

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site may have temporary adverse impacts on local residents and vehicle travellers, as a result of construction presence, and associated noise and delays due to TTM. This may include longer journey times for those travelling within the surrounding area. However, works are operating overnight when vehicle traffic is lowest, and thus any delays are not anticipated to be significant.

Access/egress to approximately six properties is within extents, however these access points will be maintained where required throughout the works period.

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

- Local residents and/or businesses will be informed of the proposed working schedule, particularly the times and durations the works. This will include:
 - Notification via a letter drop will be issued to local residents prior to commencement of the works, in particular due to night-time programming and road restrictions;
 - Pre-construction notice of the works and journey planning via social media and on approach to scheme extents.
- Construction lighting will consider the need to avoid illuminating surrounding properties to avoid a nuisance at night, and non-essential lighting will be switched off at night.
- Aberdeenshire Council's Environmental Health Team have been contacted to notify of night-time programming.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects on population and human health are predicted.

Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 112: Population and Human Health, no further assessment is required.

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 fuels or waste material or by mobilisation of these in surface water) during works could have a direct or indirect effect on the surrounding water environment.

The following mitigation measures will be in place to reduce the risk of pollution incidents as a result of works:

- All operatives will be aware of [SEPA's Guidance for Pollution Prevention](#) (GPP) documents.
- The Contractor will implement measures to minimise the risk of debris, dust, sediment, accidental spillages entering the road drainage system. This can be via the use of drain covers or similar to ensure full segregation of the works from the road drainage system.
- All debris which has the potential to be suspended in surface water and wash into the local water environment will be cleaned from the site both during and following the works.
- All site operatives 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. Spill kits will also be available within all site vehicles and spill kits will be replenished onsite when required.

- The Amey control room will be contacted if any pollution incidences occur (24 hours, 7 days a week), on 0800 083 0084.
- In the event of a 'serious incident' SEPA will be notified without delay.
- Weather reports will be monitored prior to and during the works with all construction activities temporarily halting in the event of adverse weather/flooding event.
 - The works will only continue when it is deemed safe to do so and run-off/drainage can be adequately controlled to prevent pollution.
- All storage areas (fuels, machinery, plant, materials) where required should be located/stored:
 - Away (>10m) from watercourses and surface water drainage systems; and
 - Away from areas that see high vehicular movement (as far as reasonably practicable) to prevent damage by collision or extremes of weather.
 - Fuels stored within a drip tray, bund or other form of secondary containment.
- Amey's Water Pollution Prevention environmental toolbox talk will be delivered to site operatives prior to works commencing.

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. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 113: Road drainage and the water environment no further assessment is required.

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 (GHGs) 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 in place:

- Where possible, materials and suppliers will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with travel distance, materials movement, and waste will be disposed at a local waste facility.
- Further actions and considerations for this scheme are detailed in the above Material Assets and Waste section.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, the residual significance of effect on climate is considered to be neutral.

Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 114: Climate, no further assessment is required.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

Works are contained within the carriageway boundary and thus there will be no change in vulnerability of the road to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. Improvement of the road surface will enhance skid resistance, and thus overall road safety on completion of the scheme.

TTM will comprise of lane closures and an overnight convoy, with the overall vulnerability of the project to risks of major accidents and disasters considered to be low.

Assessment cumulative effects

During construction, activities associated with the works may have minor temporary disturbances such as changes to noise and vibration and air quality. However, these impacts will be temporary in nature and are not anticipated to result in a significant cumulative effect.

[Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Portal](#) and the [Scottish Road Works Commissioner's Interactive Map](#) has not highlighted any works or relevant proposed developments or planning applications during the proposed timescale at the location of the works.

At present, Amey's [programme of works](#) has not highlighted any other works on the A96 that will be undertaken in conjunction with the scheme. Any future schemes will be programmed to consider already programmed works, and as such any effect (such as from TTM arrangements and potential construction noise) will be limited.

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 scheme.

The following environmental surveys/reviews have been undertaken:

- An Environmental Scoping Assessment of the scheme, undertaken by the Amey Environment and Sustainability Team in June 2024.

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

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

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

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

Characteristics of the scheme:

- Construction activities are restricted to the existing carriageway boundary within made ground and as such there will be no residual change to the local landscape as a result of the works.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- As the works will be limited to improving the road surface, there is no adverse change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works.
- By improving the road surface this will provide this part of the A96 carriageway an extended life cycle, and improve road safety, thus having positive operational impacts for road users.

Location of the scheme:

- The works are not located within an area designated for its specific landscape character or quality.

- The scheme is not situated in whole or in part in a sensitive area.
- The scheme is not located within 2km or share any connectivity to a sensitive area.
- The scheme will be confined within the existing carriageway boundary and as a result will not require any land take or alter any local land uses or habitats.
- Any impacts to the local landscape during the construction phase will be minor, temporary and not considered significant. In addition, no operational adverse impacts are anticipated.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.

References of supporting documentation

- An Environmental Scoping Assessment of the scheme, undertaken by the Amey Environment and Sustainability Team in June 2024.

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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Published by Transport Scotland, August 2024

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