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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A86 East of Strathmashie

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Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out resurfacing works on a stretch of the A86 carriageway, with a total length of 778m and total area of 0.44ha. Carriageway resurfacing will involve the milling out and replacement of up to 300mm of bituminous material. Following the resurfacing works, road markings will be reinstated. Works are required to address surface and structural deterioration of the trunk roads. The works will include:

- Set up traffic management (TM) and mark out site
- Mill out old surface course
- Lay new surface course
- Roll surface and allow it to go off
- Install road markings
- Remove TM and open road

The scheme is currently programmed to be completed within the 2026/27 financial year, with a proposed start date of 02/08/2026. The duration is still to be confirmed (likely one week) but will operate overnight between the hours of 20:00-08:00. Changes in the programme may result in a change to the proposed working hours/commencement dates.

No site compound is required, and site access and plant storage will be located within TM. TM will comprise road closure with amnesties at 9pm, 10pm, 11pm, 12am, 2am and 4am, with control of junctions where required. Local access will be accommodated within the TM as much as is reasonably practicable.

Location

The scheme is located on a rural stretch of the A86 carriageway, just south of the small settlement of Strathmashie, in the Highland Council local authority area (National Grid References NN 58735 91434 to NN 59123 92088) (Figure 1).



Figure 1. A86 East of Strathmashie scheme extent

Description of local environment

Air quality

There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) which have been declared by the Highland Council within 10km of the scheme ([Air Quality Management Areas](#)).

There are no air quality monitoring sites located within 10km of the scheme ([Scottish Air Quality](#)).

There are no air pollutant release sites listed on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) within 10km of the scheme ([Scottish Pollution Release Inventory](#)).

Baseline air quality for the scheme is primarily influenced by traffic along the A86 trunk road. Secondary releases are likely delivered by land management within the wider area.

Cultural heritage

According to [PastMap](#), there are several features of lesser cultural heritage value (those which are listed on the National Records of the Historic Environment (NRHE) and Historic Environment Record (HER) databases) located within the scheme extents and within 300m of the scheme. The closest of which are NRHE/HER 'Strathmashie House' (MHG27142) and 'Kinloch Laggan' (MHG29656), which lie adjacent to the A86 eastbound carriageway within the scheme extents.

There are no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Garden & Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Battlefields or World Heritage Sites within 300m of the scheme ([PastMap](#)).

The works are confined to the trunk road boundary. As such, construction of the A86 trunk road is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present within the area and as such 'cultural heritage' is scoped out and is not discussed further within this Record of Determination (RoD).

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme falls wholly within Cairngorms National Park (NatureScot Site code: [8623](#)) which is designated for the following special general qualities:

- Magnificent mountains towering over moorland, forest and strath.

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

The scheme does not fall within a National Scenic Area (NSA) ([Scotland's Environment](#)).

Landscape Character Type for the scheme is listed as 'Upland Glen – Cairngorms' ([LCT 126](#)) which has the following key characteristics:

- Strong evidence of glacial processes, including steepened sides and level floors, shattered rock faces on higher slopes, hummocks of resistant rock on some glen floors and terraces of glacial deposits at the edges of glen floors.
- Often form arrival points into the Cairngorms National Park.
- Size varies from large e open passes to narrower, more secluded glens.
- Enclosed predominantly by steep slopes.
- Frequently differing land-use on one side of the glen to the other - linked to aspect.
- Improved, grazed fields on glen floors and floodplains.
- Mostly settled, some only sparsely, but often extensive evidence of past settlement, including prehistoric hut circles and associated field systems, pre-improvement townships, and seasonal shielings.
- Some landmark historic buildings.
- Access varies from narrow roads, estate and forestry tracks to main routes, but most have some form of road running through them.
- Varied experience when passing through glens from open and expansive to sheltered and secluded.
- Views to adjacent uplands; from which parts of the glens are visible and provide contrast.

Land use ([HLAMap](#)) within 300m of the scheme extent is classified as:

- Plantation
- Rectilinear fields and farms
- Rough grazing

The land surrounding the trunk road is classified as 4.2 ('Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops, primarily on grassland with short arable breaks of forage

crops') and 5.2 ('Land capable of use as improved grassland. Few problems with pasture establishment but may be difficult to maintain') ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

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

Biodiversity

The scheme lies 120m northeast of River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (NatureScot Site Code [8365](#)).

Due to the proximity and potential hydrological connectivity of the works to the SAC, a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) has been produced. Refer to the relevant assessment section below for details.

There are no other locally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) or Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) within 300m of the scheme ([SiteLink](#)).

The NBN Atlas and Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) hold no records of invasive and injurious plant species (as listed in the North West Network Management Contract (NMC)) within 300m of the scheme.

Habitat within the scheme extent is comprised of plantation woodland, broadleaved wooded margins, open agricultural land and freshwater is provided by the River Mashie which flows adjacent to the A86 trunk road at a distance of 120m southeast at its closest point.

There are no areas of ancient woodland located within 300m of the scheme extent ([Ancient Woodland Inventory](#)).

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) present within 300m of the scheme extent ([Highland Tree Preservation Orders](#)).

Due to restriction of works to the A86 trunk road boundary, and given the localised nature of the works, the potential for impacts to the surrounding environment and protected/notable species identified within the desktop study are considered to be negligible and a site visit as part of this assessment has been deemed unnecessary.

Geology and soils

Bedrock geology ([BGS Geology Viewer](#)) within the scheme consists of 'Glen Banchor Subgroup - Gneissose psammite and gneissose semipelite'.

Superficial deposits ([BGS Geology Viewer](#)) within the scheme consist of Till, Devensian - Diamicton

Soils within the scheme are recorded as mineral alluvial soils with peaty alluvial soils ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

Soils within the scheme extent are recorded as being of Carbon and Peatland 'Class 0', which is associated with mineral soil where peat is not typically found ([Carbon and Peatland Map](#)).

There are no Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRSs) or SSSIs designated for geological or earth sciences within 300m of the scheme ([SiteLink](#)).

This receptor has no constraints (as identified in the environmental baseline) that are likely to be impacted by the proposed works. As such, 'geology and soils' is scoped out and not discussed further within this RoD.

Material assets and waste

The resurfacing works are required to replace worn surface and undertake general maintenance of the A86 trunk road. Materials used will consist of:

- Asphaltic material (AC32/AC20/TS2010)
- Bituminous emulsion bond coat
- Milled in road studs
- Thermoplastic road marking paint

Wastes are anticipated to be primarily planings from the carriageway surface course. All road planings will be treated in line with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) Low Risk Waste Activity (LRWA) 3 and will be recycled in line with SEPA's Guidance for End-of-Waste for Recycled Aggregates (WAS-G-DEF-05).

Coal tar has not been highlighted as being present within the scheme.

No site compound is required for these works and storage of plant and equipment will be within TM on the A86 carriageway.

As the value of the scheme does not exceed £350,000, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required for these works.

Noise and vibration

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

A search of [Scotland's Noise Map](#) returned modelled noise records for average noise levels in the day-evening-night (LDEN) within the A86 and its verges ranging between 67 and 69dB within the scheme extents.

The scheme does not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP) ([Transportation Noise Action Plan - 2024-2028](#)).

Given the rural nature found within the scheme, it is considered likely that the baseline noise levels will be low, with noise mainly influenced by vehicles travelling along the A86. Secondary sources are likely delivered by land management within the wider area.

Population and human health

The scheme lies just south of the small, rural settlement of Strathmashie within the Highland Council region.

There are two properties within 300m of the scheme, the closest being Strathmashie House which lies adjacent to the northbound A86 carriageway and is screened by an embankment and line of mature trees. The other property is Laggan Wolftrax, a recreational mountain biking area located 290m north of the scheme.

There is one layby within the scheme extent, on the northbound lane of the A86.

There are no footpaths, walking paths listed on [WalkHighlands](#), Core Paths listed on the [Highland Council Open Map Data](#), cycle paths ([OS Maps](#)), bus stops or other non-motorised road user (NMU) facilities located within the scheme extents.

According to Scottish Road Works there are no other works scheduled within 300m of the scheme ([Scottish Road Works Online](#)).

Transport Scotland's manual data counter (site name: ATC 01050) located 3.1km northeast from the scheme, recorded an annual daily total (ADT) flow of 2,003 motor

vehicles in 2025, of which 20.1% were heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) ([Transport Scotland](#)).

TM will consist of road closure with amnesties at 9pm, 10pm, 11pm, 12am, 2am and 4am, with control of junctions where required.

Road drainage and the water environment

‘Strathnairn, Speyside and Cairngorms’ (ID: 150709) is a groundwater body in the Scotland River basin district which underlies the scheme. It was awarded an overall status of ‘good’ in 2024 by Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) ([Water Classification Hub](#)).

‘River Mashie’ (ID: 23149) is a river in the Scotland River basin district and lies approximately 120m southwest of the scheme at its closest extent, and is part of the River Spey SAC. It was awarded an overall status of ‘moderate’ in 2024 by SEPA under the WFD 2000/60/EC ([Water Classification Hub](#)).

Several unclassified surface waterbodies may be located in vicinity to the scheme extent. A small number of field and roadside drains may also be present within the vicinity and culverted beneath the A86.

Small sections of the A86 within the scheme extents have a high likelihood of surface water and small watercourse flooding (each year this area has a 10% chance of flooding) ([SEPA Flood Maps](#)).

Climate

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

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

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

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

Policies and plans

This Record of Determination (RoD) has been undertaken in accordance with all relevant regulations, guidance, policies and plans, notably including the Environment and Sustainability Discipline of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges ([Design Manual for Roads and Bridges \(DMRB\)](#)) and Transport Scotland's Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance ([Guidance - Environmental Impact Assessments for road projects \(transport.gov.scot\)](#)).

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to temporarily cause adverse local air quality impacts. Activities undertaken on site may cause dust and particulate matter to be emitted to the atmosphere. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to air are considered to be low.

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

- Materials will be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.

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

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, works will be restricted to the A86 carriageway boundary and will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the carriageway surface and will be carried out during night-time hours (duration to be confirmed).

No change to land use, or to the designation features of the CNP, will occur as a result of the works, and the works will not result in any obvious residual change to the visual amenity of the local landscape.

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

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

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

Biodiversity

The scheme is located within 2km of the River Spey SAC. Maintenance activities such as resurfacing have been assessed under the existing BEAR Scotland 'Roads and Bridges Maintenance Activities within the Drumochter Hills, River Spey and River Spey-Insh Marshes European Sites, Highland Region Habitats Regulations

Appraisal (June 2023)', which concluded that the works would not result in likely significant effects (LSE) on these sites based on the following factors.

- Works will be restricted to made ground within the trunk road network and will not entail works within the site boundaries. There will be no in-stream works; therefore, no direct impacts to any of the qualifying features of the River Spey SAC are anticipated.
- Qualifying species within the vicinity of the trunk road are likely to be habituated to existing levels of noise and activity due to traffic, and the proposed maintenance activities are unlikely to result in significantly higher levels of noise than baseline levels.
- Standard working practices include robust containment measures to prevent pollution and reduce noise or/and lighting associated with works will be in place.
- Works will not promote the known negative pressures on the various designated features.
- No significant dust, particulate matter, and exhaust emissions sources will be introduced by the works, and standard pollution prevention measures will be in place during works.

Activities undertaken on site could potentially have a temporary adverse impact on biodiversity in the area as a result of an increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats. However, works are restricted to the A86 carriageway and 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 A86 and the scheme will be undertaken on a rolling programme. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore considered to be low.

All works will be restricted to the A86 carriageway surface and will not entail any in-stream works or vegetation clearance. There are no earthworks associated with the scheme, and the scheme does not require permanent or temporary land-take, accommodation works, site clearance or locally gained resources, and there is no requirement to import topsoil. As such, there is limited potential to spread invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants, invasive native perennials, or injurious flowering plant species, should these be present in adjacent verges.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) and adhered to on site. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity is considered to be low:

- Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- All construction operatives will be briefed through toolbox talks prior to works commencing. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species and INNS.
- No tree-felling or in-stream works will be permitted.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of any protected species throughout the works period. Should protected species be noted during construction, works will temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently moved on. Any sightings of protected species will be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. Consultation will be undertaken with NatureScot as required.
- Artificial lighting will be directed away from road verges, woodland, and waterbodies as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
- A 'soft start' will be implemented on site each day. This will involve switching on vehicles and checking under/around vehicles and the immediate work area for mammals prior to works commencing to ensure none are present and that there is a gradual increase in noise.
- Any excavations, exposed pipes/drains, or areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g. storage containers) will be covered over when not in use, at the end of each shift, and following completion of the works to avoid animals falling in and becoming trapped.
- If fencing is utilised at any point during the works, a gap of 200mm from ground level will be provided, allowing free passage for mammals and preventing entrapment.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of INNS in road verges throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in working areas, no works will take place within 7m of these areas until the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team can provide further advice.

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

Material assets and waste

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

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

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

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- The subcontractor will adhere to waste management legislation and ensure they comply with their Duty of Care.
- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- Planings will be re-used or recycled in line with SEPA's LWRA3 and be recycled in line with SEPA's WAS-G-DEF-05 Guidance for End-of-Waste for Recycled Aggregates.
- All wastes and unused materials will be removed from site in a safe and legal manner by a licensed waste carrier upon completion of the works. The appointed waste carrier will have a valid SEPA waste carrier registration, a copy of which will be provided to and retained by BEAR Scotland as early as possible.
- All appropriate waste documentation will be present on site and will be available for inspection. A copy of the Duty of Care paperwork will be provided and filed appropriately in accordance with the Code of Practice (as made under Section 34 of Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended).
- Re-use and recycling of waste will be encouraged and undertaken where possible, and the subcontractor will be required to fully outline their plans and provide documentary evidence for waste arising from the works (e.g., waste carrier's licence, transfer notes, and waste exemption certificates).
- Staff will be informed that littering will not be tolerated. Staff will be encouraged to collect any litter seen on site.
- Where applicable, all temporary signage will be removed from site on completion of the works.

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

Noise and vibration

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to cause adverse noise and vibration impacts for local receptors through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities. However, the works are not located within a CNMA, and the proximity of existing road space suggests that residents within the local area will have a degree of tolerance to noise and disturbance. The works will employ a night-time working pattern with the noisiest works (e.g. planing) completed by 23:00 where practicable. Due to the localised nature of the works, the proposed scheme is anticipated to result in temporary minor noise impacts during the construction programme.

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

The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- The Best Practicable Means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, will be employed at all times to reduce noise to a minimum.
- Affected local residents and the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) for the Highland Council will be notified of works.
- All site staff will receive the 'Being a Good Neighbour' toolbox talk.
- The noisiest works (e.g. planing) will be programmed to be completed by 23:00 where possible.
- Drop heights from vehicles and NRMM will be kept to a minimum to minimise noise when unloading.
- All plant, machinery and vehicles will be switched off when not in use.
- On-site construction tasks will be programmed to be as efficient as possible, with a view to limiting noise disruption to local sensitive receptors.
- All site personnel will be fully briefed in advance of works regarding the need to minimise noise during works and of the site-specific sensitivities.
- All plant will be operated in such a way that minimises noise emissions and will have been maintained regularly to the appropriate standards.
- Where fitted, and where permitted under Health and Safety requirements, white noise reversing alarms will be utilised during construction.
- Where ancillary plant such as generators are required, they will be positioned so as to cause minimum noise disturbance. Where deemed necessary, acoustic screens will be utilised.

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

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site may have temporary adverse impacts on vehicle travellers, and NMUs as a result of construction presence, and associated delays due to traffic management measures. Road users will be informed of works through a media release, which will provide details of construction dates and times.

No significant congestion issues are noted during the proposed construction hours; however increased journey times may occur, but these are considered insignificant considering the relatively low traffic counts and operation during night-time hours.

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

- Notification will be issued to local residents and local public transport operators prior to commencement of the works, advising of any proposed works and expected restrictions.
- Construction lighting will consider the need to avoid illuminating surrounding environment and properties to avoid a nuisance at night, and non-essential lighting will be switched off at night.
- Local access will be granted as required.
- Any changes of schedule (e.g. change from nighttime works to daytime works) will be communicated to travelling public throughout the programme.
- Appropriate provisions / measures will be implemented within the TM to allow the safe passage of NMUs of all abilities through the site (if required).
- Journey planning information will be available for drivers online at the [trafficscotland.org](https://www.trafficscotland.org) website. Journey planning information will also be available for drivers online through BEAR's social media platforms.

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

Road drainage and the water environment

There is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment due to operation of plant within proximity to watercourses and/or drainage systems, which may lead to potential changes in water quality from pollution events (either by accidental spillage of sediments, particulate matter, chemicals, fuels or by mobilisation of these in surface water caused by rain).

No in-water works will take place and there is no requirement for the abstraction or transfers of water from, or discharges to, a waterbody. As such, the potential for a direct pollution incident within a waterbody is unlikely. Experience gained from BEAR maintenance schemes elsewhere on the network has shown that where standard good working practice is adopted (e.g., adherence to SEPA good practice guidance, utilisation of drain covers or similar, etc.), water quality is protected.

The works may result in potential direct or indirect effects on surrounding waterbodies. The following mitigation measures will be put in place to reduce the risk of pollution incidents as a result of works:

- The scheme will not entail any in-stream works.
- Standard working practices to comply with The Water Activities Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations (EASR) 2018 for works near water are detailed in the SEMP and will be adhered to on site.
- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems will be permitted. Appropriate containment measures will be in place to prevent any loss of construction materials into the water environment.
- 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.
- An incident response (contingency) plan will be put in place to reduce the risk from pollution incidents or accidental spillages. All necessary containment equipment, including suitable spill kits (for oil and chemicals) will be available on site, quickly accessible if needed, and staff trained in their use.
- All spills will be logged and reported. In the event of any spills into the water environment, all works will stop, and the incident will be reported to the project manager and the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. SEPA will be informed of any such incident as soon as possible using the SEPA Pollution Hotline.

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

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

Climate

During the works there is potential for impacts such as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of equipment, vehicles, material use, and production and transportation of materials and wastes. However, considering the nature, short-term duration, size and scale of the scheme, and the mitigation detailed below, the risk of significant impacts to climate are considered to be low.

Proposed climate mitigation measures:

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

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

Vulnerability of the project to risks

Small areas of the A86 carriageway within scheme extents are recorded as having high risk (10% chance each year) of surface water and small watercourse flooding. Works will be programmed to avoid periods of adverse weather or heavy rainfall as far as is reasonably practicable.

Works are restricted to the made ground of the A86 trunk road boundary and TM will be designed in line with existing guidance. TM will consist of nighttime (20:00-08:00) full road closure with regular amnesties and control of junctions where required. Where required, alternative NMU provisions/routes will be included in the traffic management setup, to minimise impact of the works on NMUs.

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.

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

Assessment 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 [Highland Council Planning Portal](#) identified one planning application within 300m of the scheme in the last six months: an environmental impact assessment screening opinion request for a proposed substation, located 260m south of the scheme. However, this is still awaiting a decision and construction (if required) is not likely to overlap in timing with this scheme.

A search of the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner website ([Map Search](#)) has identified that no other roadworks are noted as being planned on this area of the A86 trunk road at the same time as this scheme. Due to the timing and nature of the

proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity.

BEAR Scotland programme all of their proposed works in line with appropriate guidance and contractual requirements. All schemes are programmed to take into account existing and future planned works, with a view of limiting any cumulative effects relating to TM. This approach allows BEAR Scotland to effectively manage the potential cumulative effects as a result of TM, resulting in minimal disruption to users of the Scottish trunk road network.

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

Assessments of the environmental effects

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

Resurfacing works are covered under the existing 'Roads and Bridges Maintenance Activities within the Drumochter Hills, River Spey and River Spey-Insh Marshes European Sites, Highland Region Habitats Regulations Appraisal Proforma, June 2023' and no further assessment is required.

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), do not exceed 1 hectare in area, however the works are situated in whole or in part in the Cairngorms National Park which is a sensitive area within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

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

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

Characteristics of the scheme:

- Works are restricted to the like-for-like replacement of worn road surface, with all works restricted to made ground on the A86 trunk road boundary.
- Construction activities are restricted to an area of 0.44ha along a 778m stretch of the A86.
- The works will be temporary, transient, localised, and completed during night-time hours on a rolling programme, with the aim being to complete the noisiest works by 23:00.
- 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.
- By removing the carriageway defects this will provide this part of the A86 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 within the existing A86 trunk road boundary and as such, no land take will be required.
- The scheme is located within the Cairngorms National Park. Works entail like-for-like resurfacing of the A86 carriageway and no change to the visual landscape is expected.
- The scheme is located within 2km of the River Spey SAC. The existing HRA concluded no LSE would occur on these features as a result of proposed works and no further assessment or consultation with NatureScot was required.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.

- No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works. The works are expected to result in positive impacts on road users, ecological and human receptors during the operational phase.
- As the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the trunk road surface; there is no change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.
- Mitigation measures detailed above (and in the SEMP) will be put in place with the objective to prevent and, if required, subsequently control any potential impacts on sensitive receptors.
- In the event that INNS are found on site, measures to prevent potential INNS spread will be implemented.

References of supporting documentation

Roads and Bridges Maintenance Activities within the Drumochter Hills, River Spey and River Spey-Insh Marshes European Sites, Highland Region Habitats Regulations Appraisal, June 2023 (BEAR Scotland).

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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