



A96 Dualling Programme

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Tier 2 Environmental Report

Appendix I - Detailed Assessment Matrices
(Option Segments within SEA Sections)

May 2015



Section 3: Hardmuir Wood to Alves					
SEA Topic		West Option B	Forres Option B North	Forres Option B South	Forres Option N
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI, all of which is semi-natural, and which is moderately extensive across the segment area.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS woodland, SINS and a small peat bog area in the north west corner of the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natura sites may be present/ adjacent but likely to be small or in discrete locations that could be avoided within the option extent <p>A key sensitivity in this segment will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on Ramsar, Natura, SSSI and LNR sites. These sites are generally at the edge of the segment and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Relatively low AWI/ NWSS woodland cover which does not heavily constrain the segment area.</p> <p>Other constraints include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the Coastal Protection Zone at the northern edge of the segment, as well as SINS.</p>	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites Natura sites may be present/ adjacent but likely to be small or in discrete locations that could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key issues will include avoidance of Natura and SSSI sites at the outer edge of the 2km study area which are sensitive features but not extensive area constraints in the segment.</p> <p>Substantial areas of AWI (majority LEPO) and SINS to the south of Forres may prove more difficult to avoid, and therefore represent an important constraint and sensitivity to dualling, particularly in the western part of the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites Natura sites may be present/ adjacent but likely to be small or in discrete locations that could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key issues will include avoidance of Natura and SSSI sites at the outer edge of the 2km study area which are sensitive features but not extensive area constraints in the segment.</p> <p>Substantial areas of AWI (majority LEPO) and SINS cross the breadth of the segment area to the south of Forres, and are therefore unavoidable representing an important constraint and sensitivity to dualling in this segment.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>None of the constraints cross the option breadth in its entirety and there is good avoidance potential for A96 dualling, e.g. from AWI woodland and/ or the SINS site although some risk of affecting ancient woodland remains.</p> <p>Should AWI prove unavoidable, effects likely to be limited to woodland edge or in small parcels in discrete locations and of a small scale.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor/ Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>SINS may be difficult to avoid, however they are not extensive within the segment and dualling impacts likely to be mitigated to small scale given the total extent of their coverage.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for Natura and SSSI sites as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are predicted to be unlikely.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for small patches of AWI given its limited extent in the segment. Should AWI prove unavoidable, effects likely to be limited to woodland edge in small, discrete locations and of a small scale.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Should AWI prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>Should the Findhorn Valley SINS prove unavoidable, dualling impacts likely to be mitigated to small scale given the total extent of its coverage.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for Natura and SSSI sites as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are predicted to be unlikely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Due to its distribution throughout the segment, AWI is unavoidable and dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>The Findhorn Valley SINS is also unavoidable, however, dualling impacts likely to be mitigated to small scale given the total extent of its coverage.</p> <p>Moderate avoidance potential for Natura and SSSI sites as these are located only partly within the segment boundary, although significant effects are possible if a dualling alignment followed the southern part of the segment at its western end.</p>
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p> <p>There are small areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment however the extent and spatial distribution of these do not present an extensive constraint to dualling.</p>	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land. The geological SSSI site is a sensitive location but confined to the extreme northern edge of the segment.</p> <p>There are small areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment however the extent and spatial distribution of these do not present an extensive constraint to dualling.</p>	<p>Constraint Sensitivity Assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National / local designations and features present but not extensive in area / number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>The segment is partly covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. An important constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land however it would be possible to develop a route which avoids most of this constraint.</p> <p>There are small areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment however the extent and spatial distribution of these do not present an extensive constraint to dualling.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils however the extent and distribution of these does not represent a significant constraint to road dualling.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint does not cross the segment breadth in its entirety although it is heavily constrained.</p> <p>Should prime agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for peat and carbon-rich soils as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI site as this is located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for peat and carbon-rich soils as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution (though less than for Forres Option B North). Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for carbon-rich soils as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should prime agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as medium.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for carbon-rich soils as these are located at the edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>

Section 3: Hardmuir Wood to Alves					
SEA Topic		West Option B	Forres Option B North	Forres Option B South	Forres Option N
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The key constraints in this segment will be risk from fluvial flooding to future dualled A96 route, to the number of properties currently in fluvial flood plain as well as risk of potential changes in the extent of flood plains as a result of dualling.</p> <p>Other constraint includes watercourse crossings which may be unavoidable as the Muckle Burn crosses the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation <p>Almost one third of the segment area is within the 1:200yr fluvial flood zone, with a much lower percentage of the area (~2%) in the coastal flood zone.</p> <p>Large number of properties located within the fluvial floodplain, with some in the coastal floodplain or both indicating high level of sensitivity to flooding and to potential changes in the extent of floodplains as a result of dualling.</p> <p>Flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraint to dualling alignment options within the 2km segment area.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The key constraints in this segment will be risk from fluvial flooding to future dualled A96 route, to the significant number of properties currently in fluvial flood plain as well as risk of potential changes in the extent of flood plains as a result of dualling.</p> <p>Other constraint includes watercourse crossings which may be unavoidable due to the number within the segment area.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The key constraints in this segment will be risk from fluvial flooding to future dualled A96 route, to the significant number of properties currently in fluvial flood plain as well as risk of potential changes in the extent of flood plains as a result of dualling.</p> <p>Other constraint includes watercourse crossings which may be unavoidable due to the number within the segment area.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some potential for dualling to exacerbate flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through development of road within areas of the 1:200 flood extent area(s). Likely that significant impacts could be avoided based on small number of properties in fluvial floodplain, relatively limited extent of floodplain and potential to mitigate the road design.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for areas of fluvial flood zone, however this is unavoidable at the watercourse crossing of the Muckle Burn which spans the segment breadth in its entirety. Flooding impacts could be mitigated here through appropriate design of structure.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially <p>Significant avoidance potential for coastal flood zone as this is located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and as this zone also overlaps with the fluvial flood zone, it is likely that dualling would avoid it.</p> <p>Almost one third of the segment area is within the 1:200yr fluvial flood zone, large areas of which span the segment breadth in its entirety, making it unavoidable. There is potential for significant permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling. This would affect large areas of the floodplain since a crossing of the River Findhorn is needed.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some potential for dualling to exacerbate flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through development of road within areas of the 1:200 flood extent area(s). Likely that significant impacts could be avoided based on small number of properties in fluvial floodplain, relatively limited extent of floodplain and potential to mitigate the road design.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for areas of fluvial flood zone, however this is unavoidable at the crossing of the River Findhorn which spans the segment breadth in its entirety. Some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structure.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some potential for dualling to exacerbate flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through development of road within areas of the 1:200 flood extent area(s). Likely that significant impacts could be avoided based on small number of properties in fluvial floodplain, relatively limited extent of floodplain and potential to mitigate the road design.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for areas of fluvial flood zone, however this is unavoidable at the crossing of the River Findhorn and Altire Burn (which then becomes Burn of Mosset) which span the segment breadth in its entirety. Some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p>
Air	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Forres</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Forres</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by busier roads at the edge of Forres</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Forres than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Forres than the existing A96 alignment. Effects would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Forres than the existing A96 alignment. Effects would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and the National Cycle Route. Segment sensitivity reflects the relatively low number of properties and population density.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs. Segment sensitivity reflects proximity of option to large settlement of Forres and the constraints from proximity of national and regional trails.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs. Segment sensitivity reflects proximity of option to large settlement of Forres and the constraints from proximity of national and regional trails.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs. Segment sensitivity reflects proximity of option to large settlement of Forres and the constraints from proximity of national and regional trails.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, such as Blinkbony which currently lies adjacent to the A96, could be avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on other isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for National Cycle Route which runs through only the northern part of the Option. Significant impacts on this route would be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres which lie on the outer edges of the segment or currently lie adjacent to the A96, could be avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on other isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for National Cycle Route with runs primarily through the northern part of the segment, or potential impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p> <p>Crossing the Moray Coast Trail is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres which generally lie on the edges of the segment could be avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on other isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for National Cycle Route with runs through the northern part of the segment, or potential impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p> <p>Crossing the Dava Way is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Crossing the Dava Way is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment but impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>

Section 3: Hardmuir Wood to Alves					
SEA Topic		West Option B	Forres Option B North	Forres Option B South	Forres Option N
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>A key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on two GDLs which could prove difficult to avoid given their distribution and proximity the current A96 and to each other.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument which have good avoidance potential; as well as non-designated Moray archaeological sites.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on high value scheduled monuments, A listed buildings and GDLs.</p> <p>Option also lies close to the historic core and Conservation Area at Forres which introduces a potential constraint.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on a high number of B and C listed buildings and Moray archaeological sites.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on high value scheduled monuments, A listed buildings and GDL.</p> <p>There is a particular pinch point towards the middle of the segment area between Dallas Dhu distillery and the southern part of Forres, where there would be limited opportunities for avoidance without subsequent impacts on private properties.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on a high number of B and C listed buildings and Moray archaeological sites.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on high value scheduled monuments, A listed buildings and GDL.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on a large number of B and C listed buildings and Moray archaeological sites.</p> <p>The distribution of these assets within the segment provides ample opportunities for avoidance, without any of the pinch points identified in the other segments.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>High concentration of designated assets within Forres, which whilst offering avoidance opportunities, could have issues associated with impacts on setting.</p> <p>There is avoidance potential for both Gardens and Designed Landscapes which lie to the north and south extents of the segment however, A96 dualling could present the potential for setting impacts.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks within the segment which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage. Further assessment will be required on the Moray archaeological sites to determine their value, nature and extent.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings, due to their number and dispersal throughout the segment. Similarly, significant avoidance potential for GDLs which lie at the outer edges of the segment.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for conservation area of Forres as this lies to the southern extent of the segment, close to the A96. As such, A96 dualling could present the potential for setting impacts.</p> <p>The majority of B and C listed buildings are concentrated within Forres to the southern extent of the segment, with the remaining assets dispersed throughout the segment, offering good avoidance potential.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks and the WWII Forres airfield within the segment, which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially. <p>Limited avoidance potential for the complex of high value scheduled monument and A listed buildings at Dallas Dhu Distillery which lie to the southern extent of the segment. Similarly, scheduled monument at Greshop Farm lies on the northern edge of the segment.</p> <p>There is, however, good avoidance potential for the GDL which lies at the outer edge of the segment.</p> <p>The dispersed nature of the remaining high value assets throughout the segment offers good avoidance potential, however there could be potential setting impacts which cannot be properly identified at this stage of assessment.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for B and C listed buildings due to their number and dispersal throughout the segment.</p> <p>The potential for impacts on the setting of designated assets will also need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks within the segment, which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment.</p> <p>Given the pinch point around Dallas Dhu, and the potential for impacts on the setting of a large number of designated assets a major risk of effect has been assessed for this segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for the complex of high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings at Dallas Dhu Distillery which lie to the southern extent of the segment.</p> <p>The dispersed nature of the remaining high value assets throughout the segment offers good avoidance potential. Similarly, there is avoidance potential for B and C listed buildings due to their number and dispersal throughout the segment.</p> <p>The potential for impacts on the setting of designated assets will also need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>There is an undesignated designed landscape associated, and contemporary, with Westerton House spanning the segment at its eastern extent. This may be unavoidable and introduce potential constraints associated with impacts on the setting of this asset.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for other Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks and the WWII Forres airfield within the segment, which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment.</p> <p>The distribution of these assets within the segment provides good opportunities for avoidance, without any pinch points. As such, a moderate risk of effect has been assessed for this segment.</p>

Section 3: Hardmuir Wood to Alves					
SEA Topic		West Option B	Forres Option B North	Forres Option B South	Forres Option N
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: not designated and are likely to contain few, if any, features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character of the area is of open fields with some wooded areas.</p> <p>The settlements of Brodie and Blinkbonny are sensitive receptors.</p> <p>The railway line is a major constraint to the north of the existing road.</p> <p>The existing A96 currently runs through this segment and it is an established part of the local landscape which reduces its sensitivity.</p> <p>The character of the landscape can absorb a dualled route without a significant impact to its quality and character.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change; comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character consists mainly of flat lowland agricultural land. There are a few small patches of woodland throughout the segment and Alves wood is located in the eastern part of the segment.</p> <p>The northern suburbs of Forres, the Village of Broom of Moy, and the southern part of Kinloss, including Kinloss Abbey, are located within the segment and are sensitive receptors.</p> <p>The landscape in this area is quite flat and it would be sensitive to any new elevated structures required to cross the railway and the River Findhorn.</p> <p>The landscape can absorb the inclusion of a dualled route without significant impact to its quality and character.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change; comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character is of open fields with some wooded areas. There are a larger areas of woodland to the south-east of Forres, which could potentially be impacted, however, these wooded areas could also help to conceal a dualled route, thereby potentially reducing the sensitivity of the landscape.</p> <p>The picturesque, historically designated Dallas Dhu Distillery is a key constraint as this is a sensitive feature in the landscape and integral to the character of the area.</p> <p>As the landscape in this area is quite flat is would be sensitive to any new structures required to cross the River Findhorn.</p> <p>Generally the landscape can be maintained, and absorb a dualled route without a significant impact to its quality and character.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change; of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character and sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character is predominately of open fields with pockets of wooded areas. There are large areas of woodland to the south-east of Forres, which could potentially be avoided through route alignment, however further east along the segment the areas of woodland would be more challenging to avoid.</p> <p>The River Findhorn AGLV and the Pluscarden AGLV are located within the segment and are key sensitive constraints.</p> <p>Where the terrain rises, the landscape character would be sensitive to any new infrastructure which would be viewed from the north on the side of the hills.</p> <p>As the landscape in the west of the area is quite flat, it would be sensitive to any new elevated bridge structures required to cross the River Findhorn.</p> <p>To the east of the segment (at Todholes) there is a large area of high wildness value which could be sensitive to a dualled route.</p> <p>Although the landscape character and value can generally be maintained, there would be some moderate impacts on the landscape.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable, but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline resource would be similar under post-development conditions <p>The landscape character of the segment is of open fields with some wooded areas, and the existing A96 runs through the segment and is an established part of the local landscape; a dualled route therefore likely to cause only minor adverse effect on the overall landscape character.</p> <p>There is potential for visual effects on the properties in Brodie and Blinkbonny, however as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, effects are predicted to be minor.</p> <p>There is potential for minor adverse effects on woodland areas to the north along the existing A96. Where appropriate, screening by new planting may be incorporated to mitigate visual effects in the longer term.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>The character is of open fields with some wooded areas, which could generally be maintained, and absorb a dualled route with a potential moderate effect.</p> <p>It is predicted that small population centres could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on properties.</p> <p>Crossing the railway and river is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required and this could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Screening may be appropriate to provide longer term mitigation, however any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>The character is of open fields with some wooded areas, which could generally be maintained, and absorb a dualled route with a moderate effect.</p> <p>It is predicted that small population centres and Dallas Dhu Distillery could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on properties.</p> <p>Crossing the railway and river is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required and this could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Screening may be appropriate to provide longer term mitigation, however any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>The River Findhorn AGLV and the Pluscarden AGLV are located within the segment but can be avoided through route alignment.</p> <p>There are large areas of woodland to the south-east of Forres, which could potentially be avoided through route alignment, however further east along the segment the areas of woodland would be more challenging to avoid and could have a significant effect on the quality and character of this landscape.</p> <p>Existing and proposed woodland could help to conceal a dualled route, potentially reducing its visual effect particularly if new planting was used to reinforce the woodland structure and extent. It is predicted that small population centres could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on the properties.</p> <p>Crossing the River Findhorn is likely to be difficult to avoid and new infrastructure would be required. This could have a permanent visual effect on the landscape. Screening may be appropriate, however any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>Generally the landscape character can be maintained and absorb a dualled route with potential moderate effects on the landscape character.</p>

Section 4: Alves to Lhanbryde

SEA Topic		Elgin Option B North	Elgin Option B South	Elgin Option N
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites Natura sites may be present/ adjacent but likely to be small or in discrete locations that could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key issues include avoidance of Natura and SSSI sites which are sensitive features but not extensive area constraints in the segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI, all of which is plantation, and although not extensive in cover, crosses the breadth of the segment area at the eastern extent.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on SINS which, in one area, covers the breadth of the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura or NNR sites within the segment and although key issues include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the SSSI which is a sensitive feature, it is not an extensive area constraint in the segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland which, although not extensive in cover, cross the breadth of the segment area in several locations.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on SINS to the eastern extent of the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura or NNR sites within the 2km wide boundary in this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS native woodland which, although not extensive in cover, cross the breadth of the segment area.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on SSSIs to the south of the segment, SINS to the east and AWI woodland throughout.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is significant avoidance potential for Loch Spynie Ramsar, SPA and SSSI as their outer edge is situated on the northern edge of the segment and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Similarly, there is good avoidance potential for Loch Oire SSSI at the eastern extent of the segment due to its size and location.</p> <p>There are numerous pockets of AWI woodland which, due to their size and dispersion, are avoidable along most of the segment. However, there is a large area of unavoidable AWI at the eastern extent of the segment. Here, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>Spynie, a Moray SINS, spans the breadth of the middle of the segment and is unavoidable. Here, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is significant avoidance potential for Loch Oire SSSI at the eastern extent of the segment due to its size and location and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>There are numerous pockets of AWI woodland which, due to their size and dispersion, are avoidable along most of the segment. However, there is a large area of unavoidable AWI at the eastern extent of the segment. Here, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>Similarly, the distribution of NWSS sites are avoidable apart from a strip which follows the River Lossie and spans the breadth of the middle of the segment.</p> <p>The Moray SINS of Lhanbryde Lochs covers a large area in the middle of the eastern extent of the segment, and should this prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is significant avoidance potential for Buinach and Glenlatterach and Coleburn Pasture SSSIs at the southern edges of the segment due to their location and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Similarly, there is significant avoidance potential for Brown Muir/ Teindland SINS to the south east of the segment, however Scaat Craig SINS may prove more difficult to avoid due to its location in the centre of the eastern part of the segment.</p> <p>There are numerous areas of AWI woodland which, due to their size and dispersion, have good avoidance potential along the segment.</p> <p>The dispersed distribution of NWSS woodland sites means that most are avoidable within the segment, although there is an unavoidable strip which follows the River Lossie and spans the breadth of the middle of the segment.</p> <p>Should any AWI or NWSS site prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be small scale, permanent and potentially significant at the local level, with potential for secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p>

Section 4: Alves to Lhanbryde

SEA Topic		Elgin Option B North	Elgin Option B South	Elgin Option N
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling</p> <p>There are small areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment however the extent and distribution of these do not present an extensive constraint to dualling.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The segment is partly covered by prime agricultural land and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>There is relatively little constraint from carbon-rich soils and there are no designated geological sites in the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils (class 3 and 4 especially) which are distributed over small areas of the segment but typically concentrated in the southern and more peripheral area.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soils are mainly categorised as class 1 in the segment which does not indicate presence of carbon-rich soils other than a small area of peat soils at the extreme west end of the segment. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint does not cross the segment breadth in its entirety. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as medium.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soil is mainly categorised as class 1 in the segment which does not indicate presence of high carbon-rich soil. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint covers only a small area of the segment. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as medium. Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI site as this is located at the outer edge of the 2km wide Option segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for carbon-rich soils class 1 and 3 as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p> <p>Some avoidance through design potential for class 4 carbon-rich soil as the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety although it is heavily constrained.</p>

Section 4: Alves to Lhanbryde				
SEA Topic		Elgin Option B North	Elgin Option B South	Elgin Option N
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation <p>Flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraint to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>A key constraint will be risk from fluvial flooding both to future dualled A96 route and to properties currently in fluvial flood plain.</p> <p>Other key constraints include crossing the River Lossie, which may unavoidable as it crosses the segment, as well as risks associated with coastal flooding at its northern extent.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation <p>Watercrossings are likely to be the key positional constraint to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>A key constraint will be crossing the River Lossie and a number of its tributaries, which will be unavoidable as they cross the breadth of the segment at numerous locations.</p> <p>The other key constraint will be risk from fluvial flooding both to future dualled A96 route and to properties currently in fluvial flood plain.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near current floodplain could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>A key constraint will be crossing the River Lossie which spans the segment and is unavoidable, and some of its tributaries which cross the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Other constraints will be the risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to properties currently in fluvial flood plain.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near current floodplain could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially <p>Almost a fifth of the segment area is within the 1:200yr fluvial flood zone, large areas of which are associated with crossing the River Lossie, which spans the segment breadth in its entirety, making it unavoidable.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for coastal flood zone as this is located to the north of the segment boundary, although it does span over half of the breadth of the segment at some locations. The coastal flood zone also overlaps with the fluvial flood zone and it is likely that dualling would avoid these areas.</p> <p>There is potential for significant permanent impacts on all flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling. This would affect large areas of the River Lossie floodplain since a new crossing would be needed and development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g through loss of capacity.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially <p>There are multiple tributaries of the River Lossie which cross the breadth of the segment area.</p> <p>To the west of the segment, crossing the River Lossie itself and its larger tributaries, the Black Burn and Monaghty Burn/ Mosstowie Canal, is unavoidable.</p> <p>To the east of the segment, crossing the smaller tributaries of Lhanbryde Burn and the Burn of Linkwood is also unavoidable due to their location and extent.</p> <p>Potential for significant permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling. This would affect the floodplains of the River Lossie and its tributaries since crossings are needed, and development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g through loss of capacity.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing the River Lossie in the centre of the segment is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>There is potential for avoidance of the Black Burn in the north west corner of the segment, a tributary of the River Lossie, however the segment is also crossed by the Glen Burn (just before it becomes the Longmorn Burn) to the east, which is unavoidable.</p> <p>There is potential for permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk (to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling.</p> <p>This would affect the floodplains of the River Lossie and its tributaries, since crossings are needed and development in within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structure.</p>
Air	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Elgin</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Elgin</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using busier roads such as the A941</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Elgin than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Elgin than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.</p>

Section 4: Alves to Lhanbryde				
SEA Topic		Elgin Option B North	Elgin Option B South	Elgin Option N
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs. Segment sensitivity reflects proximity of option to large settlement of Elgin and the constraints from proximity of national and regional trails.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and core paths. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and core paths. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Crossing the National Cycle Route (and some other core paths) is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Crossing a number of core paths is unavoidable as they spans the breadth of the segment to the south of Elgin and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres which generally lie on the edges of the segment could be avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Crossing a core path is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on a large number of B Listed Buildings that are evenly dispersed across the segment area, with few options for avoidance.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on a high number of B and C listed buildings, and direct impacts on Moray archaeological sites. Given their relatively dispersed nature, there are ample opportunities for avoidance. Further assessment will need to concentrate on Moray archaeological sites to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of setting impacts on high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on Moray archaeological sites. Further assessment will need to concentrate on Moray archaeological sites to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>There are no designated assets within the segment area.</p> <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on Moray archaeological sites, which will require further assessment to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings, due to their number and dispersal throughout the segment. Consideration needs to be given to the potential impacts on setting, which cannot be properly determined at this stage of assessment.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings, due to their number and dispersal throughout the segment.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p> <p>Given the avoidance opportunities and a small number of dispersed designated assets, a low risk of effect has been identified for this segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>There are no high value, designated assets within the segment</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks within the segment which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p> <p>As there are no designated assets within the segment, a low risk of effect has been assessed for this segment.</p>

Section 4: Alves to Lhanbryde

SEA Topic		Elgin Option B North	Elgin Option B South	Elgin Option N
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change; comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment. The character of the segment is of open fields with some woodland areas and this landscape could generally be maintained and absorb a dualled route without a significant effect on its quality and character.</p> <p>The villages of Alves, Newton, Llanbryde, and the edge of Urquhart are located within the segment, as well as some individual properties scattered throughout.</p> <p>The landscape in this area is quite flat it would be sensitive to any new elevated structures required to cross the River Lossie.</p> <p>Loch Oire is located at the eastern extent of the segment and could be a major constraint to dualling.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change; comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character of the area is open fields with some woodland areas, which could generally be maintained. The landscape can absorb the inclusion of a dualled route without having a significant effect on its character and quality.</p> <p>Directly south of Elgin, woodland crosses most of the segment which could be challenging to avoid.</p> <p>Landscape in the segment is generally flat would be sensitive to any new structures required to cross the railway and River Findhorn.</p> <p>The sensitive setting of the distilleries is a key constraint within this segment.</p> <p>Loch Oire and Loch na Bo are identified as constraints within this segment.</p> <p>The railway line at the east and west extents of the segment is a constraint.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change; likely to be designated, but the aspects which underpin such value may also be present outside designated areas, especially at the local scale; areas of special recognised value through use, perception or historic and cultural associations. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment, however Pluscarden AGLV spans the segment to the west and is identified as a key constraint.</p> <p>The character of the area is generally of open fields with some wooded areas, which can absorb the inclusion of a dualled route without a significant effect on its quality and character, however where there is a more undulating landscape, a sensitive design approach will be required.</p> <p>Areas of woodland to the west and within the centre of the segment may be challenging to avoid.</p> <p>Glenlossie distillery and its setting is a key constraint within the segment.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>It is predicted that small population centres could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on the properties.</p> <p>Crossing the River Lossie is unavoidable and a new structure could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new infrastructure would need to be designed sensitively and where necessary, and appropriate, screening can be incorporated, to protect views.</p> <p>Although it is predicted that Loch Oire could be avoided through route alignment, visual effects would have to be minimised through sensitive design.</p> <p>The character of the area is of open fields with some wooded areas, which could generally be maintained, and absorb a dualled route with a potential moderate effect.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>It is predicted that small population centres could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on the properties.</p> <p>Crossing the railway and river is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required and this could have a permanent adverse effect on the landscape. Screening may be appropriate to provide longer term mitigation, however any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>Although it is predicted that Loch Oire and Loch na Bo could be avoided through route alignment, visual effects would have to be minimised through sensitive design.</p> <p>The character of the area is of open fields with some wooded areas, which could generally be maintained, and absorb a dualled route with a potential moderate effect.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>It is predicted that small population centres could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on the properties.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on areas of woodland to the west and within the centre of the segment, and potential for adverse effects on the sensitive setting of the distilleries.</p> <p>While there is some potential for adverse effects on the hilly terrain to the north and south of the segment, the character of the segment is generally of open fields with some wooded areas, which could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with a potential moderate effect.</p>

Section 5: Lhanbryde to west of Keith

SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option N	East Option B
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natura sites present/ adjacent and form an extensive area of sensitivity or constraint to dualling • Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the SACs and SSSIs relating to the River Spey, which cross the breath of the segment and are therefore unavoidable.</p> <p>Other key issues will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the Ramsar and SPA at the edge of the segment area, which are sensitive features but not extensive area constraints.</p> <p>Another key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI woodland, which is also unavoidable as it crosses the breadth of the segment area in several locations.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on SINS, one of which is associated with the River Spey, and crosses the breadth of the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natura sites present/ adjacent and form an extensive area of sensitivity or constraint to dualling • Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the SAC and SSSI relating to the River Spey, which cross the breath of the segment and are therefore unavoidable.</p> <p>Another key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI woodland, which is also unavoidable as it crosses the breadth of the segment area in several locations.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on SINS, one of which is associated with the River Spey, and crosses the breadth of the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within the segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI woodland, which covers over a quarter of the segment and crosses its breadth in several locations.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is significant avoidance potential for Moray and Nairn Coast Ramsar and SPA as the edge of their extents are located just within the northern part of the segment. Similarly, the Lower River Spey SAC and SSSI are avoidable due to their location at the edge of the segment. Although these sites are hydrologically connected to the River Spey SAC, with appropriate mitigation no significant impacts are predicted.</p> <p>The SAC, SSSI and SINS associated with the River Spey are unavoidable however, as they cross the entire breadth of the segment. With mitigation measures applied, potential impacts may be avoided or reduced such that no adverse effects on site integrity would occur.</p> <p>AWI is unavoidable in this segment, especially at the eastern and western extents. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>The SAC, SSSI and SINS associated with the River Spey are unavoidable as they cross the entire breadth of the segment. With mitigation measures applied, potential impacts may be avoided or reduced such that no adverse effects on site integrity would occur.</p> <p>AWI is unavoidable in this segment, especially at the eastern and western extents. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>Should Brown Muir/ Teindland SINS in the western part of the segment prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are likely to be mitigated to small scale given the total extent of SINS coverage.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>AWI is unavoidable in the northern extent of this segment and dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p>

Section 5: Lhanbryde to west of Keith				
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option N	East Option B
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National / local designations and features present but not extensive in area / number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are very limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment includes a very small SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they do not represent a significant constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Other constraint will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are very limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by carbon-rich soils and these represent an important constraint to dualling particularly on the southern side of the existing A96 route.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites as this is located at the outer edge of the 2km wide Option segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as land category 2 and 3.1 do not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>There are no significant areas of carbon-rich soils in the option segment. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites as this is located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as land category 2 and 3.1 do not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>There are no significant areas of carbon-rich soils in the option segment. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>No impacts on prime agricultural land are predicted however the segment area is important for agriculture. Dualling impacts on agricultural soils are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Extensive areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly towards the southern end, would be difficult to fully avoid in routeing of the road and there is some potential for significant effects from loss of peat.</p>
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation <p>The River Spey crossing and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties currently in fluvial flood plain is a key constraint.</p> <p>The other key constraint is the River Spey crossing which will be unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation <p>The River Spey crossing and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties currently in fluvial flood plain is a key constraint.</p> <p>The other key constraint is the River Spey crossing which will be unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The key constraints in this segment will be risk from fluvial flooding to future dualled A96 route, to the property currently in fluvial flood plain as well as risk of potential changes in the extent of flood plains as a result of dualling.</p> <p>Other constraints include watercourse crossings which may be unavoidable due to their number and position within the segment area.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially <p>Crossing the entire breadth of the segment, the River Spey and its floodplain are unavoidable and dualling is likely to affect large fluvial flood risk areas as a major bridge structure will be required.</p> <p>There is potential for significant permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to already existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling.</p> <p>This would affect large areas of the River Spey floodplain since a new crossing would be needed and development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity.</p>	<p>Risk of Effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially <p>Crossing the entire breadth of the segment, the River Spey and its floodplain are unavoidable and dualling is likely to affect large fluvial flood risk areas as a major bridge structure will be required.</p> <p>There is potential for significant permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to already existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling.</p> <p>This would affect large areas of the River Spey floodplain since a new crossing would be needed and development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>There is significant avoidance potential for the water crossings and their associated flood plains within the segment.</p> <p>The Burn of Fochabers to the north of the segment and the Burns of Crooksmill and Forgie to the south, do not cross the breadth of the segment and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>

Section 5: Lhanbryde to west of Keith				
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option N	East Option B
Air	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic on the A96 and busier roads at the edge of Fochabers</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using busier roads at the edge of Fochabers</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Fochabers than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Fochabers than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.</p>
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs in a relatively densely populated area (particularly around Fochabers). Segment sensitivity also reflects the proximity and crossing of the segment from national and regional trails.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs. Segment sensitivity also reflects the proximity and crossing of the segment from national and regional trails.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres although the number of properties is very low in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density and absence of NMU routes.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Crossing the Speyside Way and various core paths is unavoidable as some span the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Core Paths could be avoided through design as they are located at the outer edge of the 2km segment boundary.</p> <p>Crossing the Speyside Way is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>It is predicted that isolated properties or clusters of properties, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p>

Section 5: Lhanbryde to west of Keith

SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option N	East Option B
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites <p>The segment area has a large concentration of A listed buildings which are concentrated around the Gordon Castle GDL and Fochabers Conservation Area. This creates a particular pinch point in the central area of the segment, with associated potential impacts on the structure and setting of these designated areas and assets.</p> <p>Avoidance opportunities in the environs of the GDL, conservation area and listed buildings would appear to be minimal.</p> <p>Other constraints will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on a high number of B and C listed buildings, and direct impacts on Moray archaeological sites. Further assessment will need to concentrate on Moray archaeological sites to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint in the area <p>There is a single C Listed Building within the segment area. There are no other designated assets which makes it an attractive segment from a cultural heritage perspective.</p> <p>There are a number of Moray archaeological sites located across the segment area, however these will require further assessment to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint in the area <p>Despite the presence of a scheduled monument and a number of B and C listed buildings within the segment, there are clear opportunities for avoidance given the wide dispersal of the assets.</p> <p>There are a number of Moray archaeological sites located across the segment area, however these will require further assessment to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially <p>No avoidance potential for Gordon Castle GDL and associated A, B and C Listed Buildings, without impacting on properties in Fochabers (south).</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p> <p>A high concentration of designated assets which form a pinch point around Gordon Castle and Fochabers which could be difficult to avoid.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for the single C Listed Building within the segment.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks and a former WWII airfield within the segment, which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p> <p>A single C Listed Building, and a number of non-designated assets which offer avoidance opportunities means that this segment is considered to have a low risk of effect.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for B and C Listed buildings.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray archaeological sites, due to small number and dispersal, however, analysis of HER has shown that there are a number of areas of cropmarks within the segment, which suggests this is an area of archaeological potential which would require further assessment at a later stage.</p> <p>Dispersed B and C Listed Buildings, and a number of non-designated assets which offer avoidance opportunities means that this segment is considered to have a low risk of effect.</p>

Section 5: Lhanbryde to west of Keith

SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option N	East Option B
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place and locally designated, or their value may be expressed through non-statutory local publications. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.c</p> <p>The long distance path the Speyside Way runs through the centre of the segment.</p> <p>The settlements of Mosstodloch and Fochabers are potential visual receptors and the River Spey crossing is a constraint.</p> <p>A dualled route would need to cross the River Spey which, although is not an AGLV at this point (it becomes an AGLV 300m to the south), provides a prominent and positive contribution to the area and is a local visual amenity.</p> <p>The steep sides of the hills to the east of the segment are a key constraint.</p> <p>The character of the area is predominately open fields with some wooded areas. There are some large areas of woodland to the east of the segment which may be challenging to avoid.</p> <p>Generally though, the landscape character can be maintained, and absorb the inclusion of a dualled route with a moderate impact to the quality of the landscape.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed; Likely to be designated, but the aspects which underpin such value may also be present outside designated areas, especially at the local scale. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment, however the Speyside AGLV and the long distance path the Speyside Way run through the centre of the segment.</p> <p>A dualled route would need to cross the River Spey which, although is not an AGLV at this point (it becomes an AGLV 300m to the south), provides a prominent and positive contribution to the area and is a local visual amenity.</p> <p>Railway line is a key constraint within the segment.</p> <p>There are areas of woodland which may be difficult to avoid and the steepness of the terrain makes the landscape very sensitive.</p> <p>The landscape character of the areas consists of two different types of landscape; to the west and east of the segment the landscape is hilly and covered in woodland; the centre of the segment is more open with a river valley within and gently undulating landscape. Both landscape characters are very sensitive to dualling.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: likely to contain few, if any, features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character of the area to the west of the segment is hilly and covered in woodland, this becomes more open and undulating to the east.</p> <p>There are large areas of woodland to the east of the segment which may be difficult to avoid.</p> <p>Properties within the segment may be sensitive receptors.</p> <p>The steep sides of the hills to the north of the segment are a key constraint, however the open landscape of the southern extent would allow for a dualled route more easily without affecting the terrain. Generally, the landscape can absorb a dualled route without a significant impact to its quality and character.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>Dualling could have an adverse visual effect on the properties within the segment.</p> <p>Crossing the River Spey is unavoidable and new infrastructure may be required to accommodate a dualled route across the river. This could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effect on the terrain through the segment due to the hilly landscape which is a constraint to both the north and south of the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character is predominately open fields with some wooded areas. There are some large areas of woodland to the east of the segment which may be challenging to avoid.</p> <p>Generally though, the landscape character can be maintained, and absorb the inclusion of a dualled route with a moderate adverse effect to the quality of the landscape.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>There is potential for adverse visual effects the on the individual properties scattered throughout the segment.</p> <p>Crossing the River Spey and Railway is unavoidable and new bridge infrastructure would be required. This could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape and any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>The segment is within a relatively remote landscape with little in the way of settlement and other infrastructure, and dualling would have an adverse effect on the sensitive landscape characters within the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable, but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline resource would be similar under post-development conditions <p>There is the potential for visual effects on the scattered properties within the segment, however as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, effects are predicted to be minor.</p> <p>Although there is potential for adverse effects on the hilly terrain to the north of the segment, the overall landscape character of open rolling hills, with a more dense wooded area to the west, can be maintained and absorb a dualled route with a potential minor effect.</p>

Section 6: West of Keith to west of Huntly

SEA Topic		Option B
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>No Natura or NNR sites within the segment and although key issues include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the Den of Pitlurg SSSI, which is a sensitive feature, it is not an extensive area constraint in the segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI woodland which, although not extensive in cover, crosses more than half of the breadth of the segment area in several locations.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on locally designated conservation sites in the southern extent of the segment, and NWSS woodland throughout.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is significant avoidance potential for Den of Pitlurg SSSI, and associated Aberdeenshire LNCS and SESA, to the south of the segment due to its size and location.</p> <p>There is also good avoidance potential for the other Aberdeenshire LNCS and SESA, as well as for NWSS woodland, due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p> <p>There are three distinct areas throughout the segment where plantation AWI forms a constraint to dualling due to size and location of site.</p> <p>There is some potential for avoidance of each site, however avoidance of <i>all</i> sites may prove difficult.</p> <p>Should any AWI sites prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be small scale, permanent and potentially significant at the local level, with potential for secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p>
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>Other constraint will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are relatively limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as land category 2 and 3.1 do not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly towards the southern end, may be difficult to fully avoid in routeing of the road and there is some potential for significant effects from loss of peat.</p>

Section 6: West of Keith to west of Huntly		
SEA Topic		Option B
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be crossing the Loan Burn, River Isla and the Burn of Cairnie which all span the segment and are unavoidable.</p> <p>Other constraints will be risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to properties currently in the fluvial flood plain.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplain could become a constraint if they are at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing the River Isla and its tributaries, the Loan Burn in the north and the Burn of Cairnie in the south, are unavoidable in this segment, as all three span its breadth entirely.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>In addition, development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structure.</p>
Air	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Keith</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Keith than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs. Segment sensitivity also reflects the proximity and crossing of the segment from a local trail.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Crossing the Isla Way is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.</p>

Section 6: West of Keith to west of Huntly		
SEA Topic		Option B
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>Despite the large area covered by the segment there are only a small number of B and C Listed Buildings and some Moray archaeological sites which could be considered to be constraints. The dispersal of these assets across the segment provides excellent opportunities for avoidance.</p> <p>Moray and Aberdeenshire archaeological sites located across the segment area, however these will require further assessment to identify their value, nature and extent.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for B and C Listed buildings.</p> <p>Avoidance potential for Moray and Aberdeenshire archaeological sites, due to the small number of sites and their dispersal/distribution through the segment area.</p> <p>Given that there are ample opportunities to avoid designated and non-designated assets within the segment, it is considered that there would likely be a low risk of effect.</p>
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character is predominately a hilly, open landscape with pockets of woodland and a patchwork of individual dwellings/ farms. The existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, reducing the sensitivity of the landscape.</p> <p>The western edge of Keith and the village of Cairnie are located within the north and south extents of the segment respectively, and a number of individual properties are scattered throughout, all contributing positively to the character of the area.</p> <p>There are areas of woodland to the west of the segment which may be difficult to avoid and to the south end of the segment, the Bin Forest is a sensitive part of the landscape.</p> <p>The railway line crossings the north of the segment, and hilly terrain throughout, are considered key constraint Landscape character can generally be maintained, and absorb the inclusion of a dualled route without significant impact on the quality of the landscape.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>There is potential for adverse effects on the Bin Forest due to the proximity of the forest to the existing A96 and the adjacent hilly terrain.</p> <p>It is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect receptors.</p> <p>Two crossings of a railway line are unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required and this could have a permanent adverse impact on the landscape. Screening may be appropriate to provide longer term mitigation, however any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>Although there is potential for adverse effects on the hilly terrain in the segment, general, the character of the area could be maintained, and absorb a dualled route with a potential moderate effect.</p>

Section 7: West of Huntly to east of Huntly

SEA Topic		Option B	Option C
	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI, the majority of which is plantation, and although not extensive in cover, crosses the breadth of the segment area in the north.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS woodland which is not extensive in cover but is scattered primarily in the north of the segment.</p> <p>The locally designated conservation sites are also a constraint in the north of the segment, the LNCS covering half of the breadth of the segment in that area.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI, the majority of which is plantation, and although not extensive in cover, crosses the breadth of the segment area in the north.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS woodland which is scattered throughout the segment.</p> <p>The locally designated conservation sites are also a constraint in the north of the segment, the LNCS covering half of the breadth of the segment in that area.</p>
Biodiversity	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation sites in the segment; the SESA due to its size and location, and the LNCS as it only extends into the north eastern part of the segment. Should the Bin Hill LNCS prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are likely to be mitigated to small scale given the total extent of its coverage.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p> <p>AWI is unavoidable in the north of segment, where plantation woodland spans its breadth. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>There is avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation sites in the segment; the SESA due to its size and location, and the LNCS as it only extends into the north eastern part of the segment. Should the Bin Hill LNCS prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are likely to be mitigated to small scale given the total extent of its coverage.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p> <p>AWI is unavoidable in the north of segment, where plantation woodland spans its breadth. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p>

Section 7: West of Huntly to east of Huntly

SEA Topic		Option B	Option C
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National / local designations and features present but not extensive in area / number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National / local designations and features present but not extensive in area / number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites due to their small spatial extent within the segment and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint covers only a small area of the segment. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as medium.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly towards the southern end, but the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites due to their small spatial extent within the segment and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint covers only a small area of the segment. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as medium.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly towards the southern end, but the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>

Section 7: West of Huntly to east of Huntly

SEA Topic		Option B	Option C
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The River Deveron and River Bogie crossings and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment. Both are unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties around Huntly which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The River Deveron and River Bogie crossings and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment. Both are unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing the River Deveron and River Bogie are unavoidable in this segment, as they both span its breadth entirely.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Similarly, any development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structure.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing the River Deveron and River Bogie are unavoidable in this segment, as they both span its breadth entirely.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Similarly, any development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structure.</p>

Section 7: West of Huntly to east of Huntly			
SEA Topic		Option B	Option C
Air	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Huntly</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and busier roads at the edge of Huntly</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Huntly than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Huntly than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.</p>
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMU routes in a relatively densely populated area (particularly around Huntly).</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres although the number of properties is very low in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density and relatively limited constraints from NMU routes.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors eg through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Core Paths could be avoided through design as they are concentrated in a fairly discrete area of the segment or would otherwise be accommodated through scheme design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>It is predicted that isolated properties or clusters of properties, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Core Paths could be avoided through design as they are concentrated in a fairly discrete area of the segment or would otherwise be accommodated through scheme design.</p>

Section 7: West of Huntly to east of Huntly			
SEA Topic		Option B	Option C
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on 2 scheduled monuments, 3 A listed buildings, a conservation area and a large number of B and C listed buildings (concentrated within Huntly).</p> <p>The scheduled monument of Dunbennan Old Church is located away from the core of Huntly and could present a constraint, however there are opportunities to avoid this. Potential impacts on its setting will need to be carefully considered however.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 97 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>Listed Buildings are concentrated in the historic core of Huntly, and it is therefore expected that these would not be affected. Dunbennan Old Church scheduled monument, and the B listed buildings Greenhaugh Farmhouse and Cocklarachy Farm lie within the option area but there are good opportunities to avoid these. Potential impacts on their setting will need to be carefully considered however.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 61 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further assessment at later stages.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for high value scheduled monuments, A listed buildings and conservation area, due to their number and dispersal throughout the segment.</p> <p>The majority of A, B and C listed buildings and the conservation area located within Huntly, offering good avoidance potential. The potential for impacts on the setting of designated assets will also need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>There are 97 Aberdeenshire HER sites within the segment that could be affected. These are concentrated in the majority around Huntly and to the north of the segment area and there is good avoidance potential away from these areas. Further assessment will be required to identify the value, nature and extent of these non-designated assets.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>Significant avoidance potential for B and C Listed buildings which are only 4 in number across this segment.</p> <p>There are 61 Aberdeenshire HER sites within the segment that could be affected. These are dispersed evenly around the segment area and there is good avoidance potential. Further assessment will be required to identify the value, nature and extent of these non-designated assets.</p>

Section 7: West of Huntly to east of Huntly

SEA Topic		Option B	Option C
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: likely to contain few, if any, features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The character to the north of the segment is hilly and covered in woodland, which then becomes more open and undulating to the south and east of the segment.</p> <p>There are large areas of woodland to the north of the segment which may be challenging to avoid. The A96 is an established part of the local landscape, and therefore is an existing precedent, which reduces its sensitivity.</p> <p>Part of the town of Huntly is located in the centre of the segment and a number of individual properties scattered throughout.</p> <p>To the north and south of the segment the steep slopes are key constraints to dualling, however the open landscape of the central part would accommodate a dualled route more easily.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character can be maintained, and absorb a dualled route without significant impact on the quality of the landscape.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: likely to contain few, if any, features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character within the segment consists of four character types; hilly with some dense woodland to the north, becoming more open to the south at the river valley, through the hills adjacent to Huntly where the sensitivity of the landscape increases to the open, agricultural areas in the south where a dualled route be highly visible in the landscape.</p> <p>The large areas of woodland to the north of the segment may be difficult to avoid</p> <p>The edge of Huntly is located to the eastern extent of the segment, and there are also individual properties scattered throughout.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character can be maintained, and absorb a dualled route without significant impact on the quality of the landscape.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable, but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline resource would be similar under post-development conditions <p>It is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on receptors.</p> <p>Although there is the potential for adverse effects on the hilly, wooded terrain in the north of the segment, generally the landscape character could be maintained with minor effects</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>It is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on receptors.</p> <p>Although there is the potential for adverse effects on the hilly, wooded terrain in the north of the segment, generally the landscape character could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with moderate effects.</p>

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites around the Hill of Foudland. Both the SESA and LNCS are extensive area constraints which cannot be avoided as they cover the breadth of the segment in some areas.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland. Neither are extensive area constraints however, as AWI woodland is generally at the edges of the segment and NWSS woodland is sparsely dispersed throughout.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>A key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS woodland which includes native and nearly-native cover. Although not extensive in area, it does cross the breadth of the segment area to the south and is therefore unavoidable.</p> <p>The other key constraint in the segment is the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites around the Hill of Foudland. The SESA is an extensive area constraint which cannot be avoided as it crosses the breadth of the segment in the south, and the LNCS covers almost half of the breadth of the segment area.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key constraint in the segment is the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites around the Hill of Foudland. The hill of Foudland SESA is a constraint which cannot be avoided as it crosses the breadth of the segment at its northern end, as does the Foudland LNCS.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland. Although NWSS woodland is scattered throughout the segment and is not an extensive area constraint, AWI woodland spans almost half of the breadth of the segment at its north east extent.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland. Neither are extensive area constraints however and they are dispersed throughout the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key constraint in the segment is the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites around the Hill of Foudland. The hill of Foudland SESA is a constraint which cannot be avoided as it crosses the breadth of the segment at its northern end, as does the Foudland LNCS.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland. Although NWSS woodland is scattered throughout the segment and is not an extensive area constraint, AWI woodland spans half of the breadth of the segment at its north east extent.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>The locally designated conservation sites are unavoidable throughout most of this segment due to their size and location. Both the Hill of Foudland SESA and LNCS span over half of the breadth of the segment for most of its length, and cover the entire breadth of the segment at its eastern extent.</p> <p>Here, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for both AWI and NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>NWSS woodland is unavoidable where it spans the breadth of the segment in the south east. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation sites at the Hill of Foudland LNCS as it only covers part of the north eastern edge of the segment. The SESA however, spans the entire breadth of the segment in the south and is therefore unavoidable; dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>The locally designated conservation sites are unavoidable in the northern extent of segment due to their size and location. Both the Hill of Foudland SESA and LNCS cover the entire breadth of the segment, and dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p> <p>There is some avoidance potential for AWI woodland throughout the segment, although sites could prove more difficult to avoid in the north eastern extent where they span almost half of the segment breadth.</p> <p>Should AWI be unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent or medium term effects on resources/ features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions <p>Significant avoidance potential for both AWI and NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment. Significant effects on these sites are not predicted.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Locally designated conservation sites are unavoidable in the northern extent of the segment due to their size and location. Both the Hill of Foudland SESA and LNCS cover the entire breadth of the segment, and dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential, however, for the locally designated conservation sites associated with Cairnhill as they are located at the north eastern edge of the middle of the segment.</p> <p>There is some avoidance potential for AWI woodland throughout the segment, although sites could prove more difficult to avoid in the north eastern extent where they span almost half of the segment breadth.</p> <p>Should AWI be unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p>

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>There is relatively little constraint from high carbon soils and there are no designated geological sites in the segment.</p> <p>Constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils however the extent and distribution of these does not represent a significant constraint to road dualling.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>There is relatively little constraint from high carbon soils and there are no designated geological sites in the segment.</p> <p>Constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils however the extent and distribution of these does not represent a significant constraint to road dualling.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p> <p>There is a small area of carbon-rich soil in the segment however the extent and spatial distribution of these do not present an extensive constraint to dualling.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly along the existing A96, may be difficult to fully avoid in routeing of the road and there is some potential for significant effects from loss of peat.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly toward Gartly Moor, may be difficult to fully avoid in routeing of the road and there is some potential for significant effects from loss of peat.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soils are mainly categorised as class 1 and 3 in the segment which does not indicate presence of high carbon-rich soils. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soils are mainly categorised as class 1 and 3 in the segment which does not indicate presence of high carbon rich-soils. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Some avoidance through design potential for class 2 and 3 carbon-rich soils although together they form a constraint which crosses the option breadth in its entirety.</p>

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the Glen Water, a tributary of the River Urie, and the River Urie itself are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment. The Glen Water is unavoidable as it spans almost the breadth of the segment before joining the River Urie at the eastern extent of the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline environment not generally subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraint will be risk from fluvial flooding both to future dualled A96 route, to properties currently in fluvial flood plain and from sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near current floodplain which could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents.</p> <p>Water crossings and areas of fluvial flood risk are associated with the Burn of Largie and Glen Water, both of which are located at the outer edges of the segment and as such, could be avoided.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The River Urie and its tributaries', The Shevock and The Kellock, crossings and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment. Both tributaries cross more than half of the breadth of the segment, while the River Urie runs through it entire length.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The Shevock and The Kellock crossings and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment. The Shevock is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment, while The Kellock crosses over half of the breadth of the segment in the north east.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties around Insch which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The River Urie and Bonnyton Burn crossings and flood risk zones are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment. Bonnyton Burn is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment, while the River Urie crosses over half of the breadth of the segment in the north west.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>There is some avoidance potential for crossing the Glen Water and the River Urie, although this may prove difficult at the eastern extent of the segment.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors. It is likely however, that significant impacts could be avoided based on small number of properties in fluvial floodplain, relatively limited extent of floodplain and potential to mitigate the road design.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>There is significant avoidance potential for the water crossings and their associated flood plains within the segment.</p> <p>The Burn of Largie to the north east of the segment and the Glen Water to the south, do not cross the breadth of the segment and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>There is some avoidance potential for crossing The Shevock and The Kellock and their floodplains, although they would be unavoidable along the western side of the segment.</p> <p>There is also avoidance potential for the River Urie crossing and flood risk areas within the segment.</p> <p>Should the fluvial floodplains of these watercourses be affected by dualling, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Development within flood risk areas also has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity, although there is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing The Shevock is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment, while The Kellock crosses over half of the breadth of the segment in the north east.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Similarly, any development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing Bonnyton Burn is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment, while the River Urie crosses over half of the breadth of the segment in the north west.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Similarly, any development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p>

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
Air	Level of Constraint	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using local minor roads.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing B992 and busier roads at the edge of Insch.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally good and typical of rural areas and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and A920.
	Risk of Effect	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres although the number of properties is very low in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density and absence of NMU routes.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on NMU routes. Segment sensitivity also reflects the proximity and crossing of the segment from local trails and cycle routes.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres, core paths and local cycle route. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMUs (local trails and cycle routes) in a relatively densely populated area (particularly around Insch).	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres although the number of properties is very low in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density and absence of NMU routes.
	Risk of Effect	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions It is predicted that isolated properties or clusters of properties, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.	Risk of effect assessment - Moderate • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of local cycle paths is unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment near Insch and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. The short Core Path could be avoided through design as it is located at the outer edge of the 2km segment boundary. The Cycle Route could be avoided through design as it is located at the outer edge of the 2km segment boundary.	Risk of effect assessment - Moderate • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some properties (particularly given extent of development at Insch) depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of local cycle paths is unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment around Insch and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions It is predicted that isolated properties or clusters of properties, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 22 recorded sites within the segment. These will require further assessment at later stages.</p> <p>There are no other designated sites within the segment hence it is relatively unconstrained in terms of the historic environment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 61 recorded sites within the segment. These will require further assessment at later stages.</p> <p>There are no other designated sites within the segment hence it is relatively unconstrained in terms of the historic environment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>There is a particular pinch point within the segment area, where the Williamstone House and Newton House GDLs (with associated listed buildings) and five scheduled monuments could be directly and indirectly impacted on.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 81 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on 4 scheduled monuments and a small number of B and C listed buildings. Avoidance could be challenging given the dispersal of these monuments may cause pinch points within the segment area.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 52 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on 2 scheduled monuments, and A listed building, a GDL and a small number of B and C listed buildings. Given the dispersal pattern of these assets there are opportunities for avoidance, however potential impacts on these will also need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 74 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>
Historic Environment	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 22 recorded sites within the segment that could be affected. Further assessment will be required to identify the value, nature and extent of these non-designated assets.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to result in temporary (short term) but small in scale and/ or reversible changes which are either likely to be avoidable or can be substantially mitigated <p>There are no designated assets within this segment.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 61 recorded sites within the segment that could be affected. Further assessment will be required to identify the value, nature and extent of these non-designated assets.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially. <p>Within this segment there is a particular pinch point relating to the Williamston House and Newton House GDLs, which run alongside the existing A96 and would therefore be at risk from negative effects caused by road dualling.</p> <p>In addition, 2 of the 5 scheduled monuments located within the segment lie within 150m of the existing A96 Newton House inscribed stone, and Colpy Cottage palisaded enclosure. There could therefore be potential impacts on the setting and/ or structure of these assets caused by road dualling.</p> <p>There are 81 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently not known. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this could present further constraints to development.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Designated assets within the segment are well-dispersed and present ample opportunities for avoidance.</p> <p>There could be potential constraints associated with the Picardy Stone scheduled monument and Historic Scotland Property in Care, which along with the Inschfield stone circle and Mill of Boddam ring ditch and souterrain scheduled monuments, form a slight pinch point, particularly for potential setting impacts, at the northern part of the segment.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 52 recorded sites within the segment, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently not known. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this could present further constraints to development.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>There are relatively few designated assets within this segment, and therefore there are ample opportunities for avoidance.</p> <p>A pinch point is evident towards the north of the segment, where there could be potential challenges for avoidance associated with Williamston House GDL, the Mummer's Reive cairn scheduled monument, and the A Listed Culsalmond Old Parish Church. Potential impacts here would most likely be relating to the setting of these assets rather than their physical structure.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 74 recorded sites within the segment, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently not known. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this could present further constraints to development.</p>

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character is of steep hills where the slopes are mostly swathes of farmland, and there are a few small forested areas to the west and one to the east.</p> <p>Dummuies windfarm is located at the western extent of the segment and is prominent in the landscape, thereby reducing the sensitivity in this part of the segment. Similarly, the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, which further reduces its sensitivity and the enhanced layby on the dual carriageway is a positive feature which highlights the impressive views to the north.</p> <p>Individual properties, scattered through the segment and the hilly landscape throughout are constraints to dualling.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character can be maintained, and absorb a dualled route without a significant impact on the quality of the landscape.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed; of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character and sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character of the area is predominately steep hills, with a large block of woodland in the centre and swathes of farmland on the slopes.</p> <p>Although Dummuies windfarm, located at the northern edge of the segment, is prominent in the landscape and partially reduces its sensitivity, the rest of the segment landscape is relatively remote with little in the way of settlement or other infrastructure.</p> <p>A dualled route would therefore substantially change the character of this area as the landscape is very sensitive to change.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low/Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: Locally designated, or their value may be expressed through non-statutory local publications. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character of the area comprises steep hills to the north of the segment, with some woodland shelterbelts breaking up the open swathes of farmland to the south. The existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, which reduces its sensitivity and the enhanced layby on the dual carriageway is a positive feature which highlights the impressive views to the south.</p> <p>Williamston House and Newtown House Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs) are key constraints as the span half of the segment breadth to the north of the existing A96.</p> <p>There are individual properties scattered throughout the segment and some small villages to the south.</p> <p>The hilly terrain to the north of the segment may be a constraint to dualling and although the open landscape to the south is less constrained, it is still sensitive to change.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character can be maintained, and absorb a dualled route without significant impact on the quality of the landscape.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character, and sense of place and areas of special recognised value through use, perception or historic and cultural associations. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character of the area comprises rolling agricultural landscape which is relatively remote and has little in the way of infrastructure.</p> <p>The village of Insch is located at the southern extent of the segment and there are a number of individual properties located throughout.</p> <p>Scheduled Monuments, the Picardy Stone Symbol Stone and the Inschfield Stone Circle stand in fields to the northern extent of the segment.</p> <p>A dualled route would substantially change the character of this area as the landscape is very sensitive to change.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character, and sense of place and areas of special recognised value through use, perception or historic and cultural associations. <p>The landscape character comprises steep hills in the north which flow into gently rolling swathes of farmland, to the south of the segment. In the northern extent of the segment, the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, which reduces its sensitivity and the enhanced layby on the dual carriageway is a positive feature which captures the impressive views to the south.</p> <p>Williamston House Gardens and Designed Landscapes are located at the north western edge of the segment, increasing the local sensitivity of the landscape. Additionally, the 1km tree lined drive of Freefield House spans more than half of the breadth of the segment and is an historic and sensitive feature in the landscape.</p> <p>There are individual and groups of properties scattered through the segment and the village of Kirkton of Rayne to the south.</p> <p>The hilly terrain to the north of the segment may be a constraint to dualling and although the open landscape to the south is less constrained, it is still sensitive to change.</p> <p>It is considered that a dualled route would have a significant impact on the landscape character within this segment.</p>

Section 8: East of Huntly to Old Rayne						
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	East Option B	East Option C	East Option D
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable, but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline resource would be similar under post-development conditions <p>It is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have an adverse visual effect on receptors.</p> <p>The enhanced layby is a positive feature along existing A96, which highlights the impressive views north and dualling has an opportunity to maintain and/or enhance this type of feature.</p> <p>The landscape character could be maintained with minor effects as the precedent of a road running through the landscape is already in place.</p> <p>Although there is the potential for adverse effects on the hilly terrain of the segment, as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape its character can generally be maintained with minor effects.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>There is potential for adverse visual effects on individual properties scattered throughout the segment.</p> <p>The steep, hilly landscape and complex landforms throughout the segment mean that there is potential for major significant adverse effects on landscape character through dualling.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>There is the potential for visual effects on the properties and villages within the segment, however as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape, effects are predicted to be minor.</p> <p>The enhanced layby is a positive feature along existing A96, which highlights the impressive views south and dualling has an opportunity to maintain and/or enhance this type of feature.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse visual and setting effects on Williamston House and Newtown House Gardens and Designed Landscapes due to their size and location within the segment.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on landscape in both the hilly terrain to the north of the segment, and the more open landscape to the south.</p> <p>However, the landscape character of the area could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with potential moderate effects as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>There is potential for adverse visual effects the on the properties within Insch and those scattered throughout the segment.</p> <p>Although it may be possible to avoid the Scheduled Monuments to the north of the segment through route alignment, there remains the potential for adverse effects on their landscape setting.</p> <p>The relatively remote, rolling agricultural landscape of the segment means that there is potential for major significant adverse effects on landscape character through dualling.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>Although it may be possible to avoid the Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Williamston House through route alignment, there remains the potential for adverse effects on their landscape setting.</p> <p>The tree-lined drive of Freefield House may prove difficult to avoid due to its size and location and there is the potential for adverse visual and setting effects on this feature.</p> <p>The enhanced layby is a positive feature along existing A96, which highlights the impressive views south and dualling has an opportunity to maintain and/or enhance this type of feature.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on landscape in both the hilly terrain to the north of the segment, and the more open landscape to the south and t there is potential for major significant adverse effects on landscape character through dualling.</p>

Section 9: Old Rayne to Kintore								
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	West Option D	Inverurie Option B North	Inverurie Option B South	Inverurie Option B Inner	Inverurie Option C
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland which, although not extensive in total area cover, together cross almost the whole breadth of the segment area in a diagonal, through its centre.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on Benachie LNCS which is located at the outer edge of the 2km study area and as such, is not an extensive area constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites around Benachie. The LNCS is an extensive area constraint which cannot be avoided as it crosses the breadth of the segment, and the SESA covers almost half of the breadth of the segment area in the south.</p> <p>Another key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland. Although not extensive in total area cover, these woodlands collectively cross the breadth of the segment in several locations.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI, all of which is plantation, and although not extensive in cover, crosses over half of the breadth of the segment area in one location.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS woodland which, due to its extent and spatial distribution, does not present an extensive constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Similarly, the locally designated conservation sites are located in the south eastern corner of the segment and are not considered extensive area constraints.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland which are distributed throughout the segment and are not extensive area constraints.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites which, due to their distribution within the segment, are not extensive area constraints.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland which are distributed throughout the segment and are not extensive area constraints.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites, two of which are situated at the outer edges of the segment. Cairnhall SESA is located in the centre of the southern part of the segment, however it is not an extensive area constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland which are distributed throughout the segment and are not extensive area constraints.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the locally designated conservation sites which, due to their distribution within the segment, are not extensive area constraints.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites</p> <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI and NWSS woodland. Although not extensive in total area cover, these woodlands collectively cross the breadth of the segment in several locations.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on locally designated conservation sites which are area constraints in the centre of the segment due to their spatial distribution.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>Although there is some avoidance potential for both AWI and NWSS woodland, together they form a strip of woodland which spans the breadth of the centre of the segment, and will prove difficult to avoid.</p> <p>Should either AWI or NWSS woodland prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for Benachie LNCS as it is located at the outer edge of the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - High</p> <p>• Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>Although there is some avoidance potential for both AWI and NWSS woodland, together they form several strips of woodland which span the breadth of the segment, proving difficult to avoid.</p> <p>Should either AWI or NWSS woodland be unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>The locally designated conservation sites around Benachie are unavoidable throughout most of segment due to their size and location. The SESAs cover over half of the breadth of the segment, while the LNCS covers the entire breadth of the segment. Here, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>There is some avoidance potential for AWI woodland, although as it does span over half of the breadth of the segment in some locations, it may prove difficult to avoid.</p> <p>Should this be the case, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for NWSS woodland due to size and dispersal of sites throughout the segment.</p> <p>Similarly, there is good avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation sites in the segment as they are limited to the south eastern corner of the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>There is some avoidance potential for AWI and NWSS woodland throughout the segment, although sites could prove more difficult to avoid in the central area, where together they form strips which span over half of the segment breadth.</p> <p>Should either AWI or NWSS woodland prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation due to their size and dispersal throughout the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>Although there is some avoidance potential for both AWI and NWSS woodland, together they form several areas of woodland which span almost the breadth of the segment, proving difficult to avoid.</p> <p>Should either AWI or NWSS woodland be unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation due to their size and dispersal throughout the southern part of the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>There is some avoidance potential for AWI and NWSS woodland throughout the segment, although sites could prove more difficult to avoid along the western side of the segment, where together they form areas which span almost half of the segment breadth.</p> <p>Should either AWI or NWSS woodland prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is good avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation due to their size and dispersal throughout the segment.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - High</p> <p>• Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions</p> <p>Both AWI and NWSS woodland sites are dispersed throughout the whole of the segment, making them difficult to avoid. In several areas these woodlands collectively span the breadth of the segment making them unavoidable.</p> <p>Where either AWI or NWSS woodland is unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>Similarly, the size and location of the locally designated conservation sites mean that it would be difficult to avoid them all. Should any sites prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p>

Section 9: Old Rayne to Kintore								
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	West Option D	Inverurie Option B North	Inverurie Option B South	Inverurie Option B Inner	Inverurie Option C
	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by a very small area of SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National / local designations and features present but not extensive in area / number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by a very small area of SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by a very small area of SSSI and GCR and whilst these are important designations they are not extensive and do not represent a significant constraint to dualling</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through the area covered and/ or the number and distribution of sites <p>The segment is extensively covered by prime agricultural land with associated importance for agriculture. A key constraint will therefore be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on prime agricultural land.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by carbon-rich soils and these represent an important constraint to dualling particularly on the southern side of the existing A96 route.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>The segment is partly covered by carbon-rich soils and these represent an important constraint to dualling particularly on the southern side of the existing A96 route.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally/ locally designated sites may be present but do not form an extensive constraint, and could be avoided within the option area <p>The segment does not include any prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land. There are no designated geological sites in the segment.</p> <p>Constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils however the extent and distribution of these does not represent a significant constraint to road dualling.</p>
Soils & Geodiversity	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soils are mainly categorised as class 1 in the segment which does not indicate presence of high carbon-rich soils. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites due to their small spatial extent within the segment and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint covers only a small area of the segment. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as moderate.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly towards the south eastern end and Benachie, but the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for SSSI and GCR sites as these are located at the outer edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soils are mainly categorised as class 1 in the segment which does not indicate presence of high carbon-rich soils. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to directly affect an environmental designation, resource/ feature or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or a direct effect on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Prime agricultural land is unavoidable due to its extent and distribution. Dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level. Potential for secondary effects on local land use e.g. due to farm unit severance or fragmentation.</p> <p>Carbon-rich soils are mainly categorised as class 1 in the segment which does not indicate presence of high carbon-rich soils other than a small area of peat soils at the extreme west end of the segment. Significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should prime agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as moderate.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for carbon-rich soil as this is located at the edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as the constraint does not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should prime agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level. Despite limited extent of prime land the segment area is important for agriculture and the risk of effect has therefore been assessed as moderate.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for carbon-rich soil as this is located at the edge of the 2km wide segment boundary and significant impacts are not predicted to be likely.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly toward the area of the existing A96 may be difficult to fully avoid in dualling of the road and there is some potential for significant effects from loss of peat.</p>

Section 9: Old Rayne to Kintore								
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	West Option D	Inverurie Option B North	Inverurie Option B South	Inverurie Option B Inner	Inverurie Option C
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the River Urie and one of its tributaries, Gadie Burn, are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>Gadie Burn is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment before joining the River Urie at the eastern side of the segment boundary.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with tributaries of the River Urie and River Don are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>Gadie Burn, a tributary of the River Urie, is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment in the north, while Linn Burn, a tributary of the River Don is located in the south eastern corner of the segment, and could potentially be avoided.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the River Urie and one of its tributaries, Burn of Durno, are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>The River Urie is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment in the south, however the Burn of Durno is located in the east of the segment and could potentially be avoided.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the Rivers Don and Urie and their tributaries are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>The River Urie spans the segment breadth and is unavoidable in north of the segment, and after the confluence with the River Don in the middle of the segment, the River Don is also unavoidable in the south.</p> <p>River Urie tributaries, the Strathnaterick and Lochter Burns in the north, and River Don tributaries the Bridgealehouse and Tuach Burns in the south, are also unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the high number of properties around Inverurie and Kintore which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the River Don and its tributaries are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>The River Don is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment in the north and, after the confluence with the River Urie, it skirts the south eastern edge of the segment.</p> <p>The River Urie tributary the Strathnaterick Burn in the north, and River Don tributaries the Bridgealehouse and Tuach Burns in the south, are also unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties around Inverurie and Kintore which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Features with limited capacity to accommodate change or which are already subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the Rivers Don and Urie and their tributaries are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>The River Don is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment in the north of the segment and, after the confluence with the River Urie at the eastern edge of the segment, it skirts this eastern edge, south.</p> <p>The River Urie tributary the Strathnaterick Burn in the north, and River Don tributaries the Bridgealehouse and Tuach Burns in the south, are also unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the high number of properties around Inverurie and Kintore which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation</p> <p>Crossings and flood risk zones associated with the River Don and its tributaries are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment.</p> <p>The River Don is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment in the north. Similarly, one of its tributaries, Tuach Burn, crosses the breadth of the segment in the south, making it unavoidable.</p> <p>Burn Hervie, joins the River Don in the north of the segment, however, as it is located to the west of the segment, it could potentially be avoided.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated</p> <p>Crossing the River Urie and/ or Gadie Burn is unavoidable as the latter spans the breadth of the segment before joining the River Urie at the eastern side of the segment boundary.</p> <p>Development within the flood risk areas of these watercourses has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity, however there is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p> <p>Should fluvial floodplains of these watercourses be affected by dualling, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated</p> <p>There is potential for avoidance of Linn Burn in the south eastern corner of the segment, however crossing Gadie Burn and its floodplain is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment to the north.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of these watercourses could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Similarly, any development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated</p> <p>There is potential for avoidance of Burn of Durno to the east of the segment, however crossing the River Urie and its floodplain is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment to the south.</p> <p>Development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity, however there is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p> <p>Should fluvial floodplains of these watercourses be affected by dualling, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>In this segment, the Rivers Urie and Don, their associated tributaries and floodplains are unavoidable and dualling is likely to affect large fluvial flood risk areas.</p> <p>There is potential for significant permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to already existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling. This would affect large areas of floodplain and development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated</p> <p>Although crossing the River Don in the north of the segment is unavoidable, there is potential to avoid its floodplain after its confluence with the River Urie, to the eastern edge of the segment. Tributaries of the Rivers Urie and Don are unavoidable in both the northern and southern extents of the segment.</p> <p>Development within the flood risk areas associated with these crossings, has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity, however there is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of structures.</p> <p>Should fluvial floodplains of these watercourses be affected by dualling, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>In this segment, the Rivers Urie and/ or Don, their associated tributaries and floodplains are unavoidable and dualling is likely to affect large fluvial flood risk areas.</p> <p>There is potential for significant permanent impacts on flooding through exacerbation of flood risk (to already existing and potentially new sensitive receptors) through dualling. This would affect large areas of floodplain and development within flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated</p> <p>There is potential for avoidance of Burn Hervie in the north of the segment, however crossing the River Don to the north and Tuach Burn to the south, as well as their associated floodplains, is unavoidable since they both span the breadth of the segment.</p> <p>Development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity, however there is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of bridge structures.</p> <p>Should fluvial floodplains of these watercourses be affected by dualling, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p>

Section 9: Old Rayne to Kintore								
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	West Option D	Inverurie Option B North	Inverurie Option B South	Inverurie Option B Inner	Inverurie Option C
Air	Level of Constraint	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area such as the B9902.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area around Inverurie and Kintore.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area around Inverurie and Kintore.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area around Inverurie and Kintore.
	Risk of Effect	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population near the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Inverurie and Kintore than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centre in Inverurie and Kintore than the existing A96 alignment. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route but also present opportunity to move traffic further from current population centres in Inverurie and Kintore than the existing A96 alignment (should off line dualling be taken forward). Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property.
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres although the number of properties is very low in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density and relatively limited constraints from NMU routes.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on NMU routes. Segment sensitivity also reflects the proximity and crossing of the segment from local trails. Segment sensitivity also reflects the low number of properties and low population density.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Low • Land uses and general character of the area are of limited sensitivity, or high tolerance to change Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres although the number of properties is very low in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the low number of properties and population density and relatively limited constraints from NMU routes.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - High • Extensive areas of settlement extending across option area Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres as the number of properties is high in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the high number of properties and population density which acts to constrain the corridor available for dualling, as well as constraints from a large number and density of NMU routes within Inverurie and across the segment area north of the town.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres as the number of properties is relatively high in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the number of properties and population density which acts to constrain the corridor to some degree, as well as constraints from a large number of NMU routes.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - High • Extensive areas of settlement extending across option area Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres as the number of properties is high in this segment. Segment sensitivity reflects the high number of properties and population density which acts to constrain the corridor, as well as constraints from a large number of NMU routes.	Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on NMU routes. Segment sensitivity also reflects the proximity and crossing of the segment from local trails. Segment sensitivity also reflects the relatively low number of properties and population density.
	Risk of Effect	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions It is predicted that isolated properties or clusters of properties, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Core Paths could be avoided through design as they are concentrated in a fairly discrete area of the segment or would otherwise be accommodated through scheme design.	Risk of effect assessment - Moderate • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of local cycle paths is unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment near Insch and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.	Risk of effect assessment - Minor • Permanent or medium term effects on resources/features or other receptors which will be small in scale and not likely to result in a material loss of the resource or critical aspects of its functions It is predicted that isolated properties or clusters of properties, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Core Paths could be avoided through design as they are concentrated in a fairly discrete area of the segment or would otherwise be accommodated through scheme design.	Risk of effect assessment - Major • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially It is predicted that high population centres, will be difficult to avoid completely through route alignment due to the presence of the built up area of Inverurie, particularly in the central part of the segment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on properties, which are predicted to result in significant effects on population, depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of core paths is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.	Risk of effect assessment - Moderate • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment (although there is more constraint in the southern end of the segment near Kintore). Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of core paths is unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment near Insch and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.	Risk of effect assessment - Major • Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially It is predicted that high population centres, will be difficult to avoid completely through route alignment due to the presence of the built up area of Inverurie, particularly in the central part of the segment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on properties, which are predicted to result in significant effects on population, depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of core paths is unavoidable as it spans the breadth of the segment and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.	Risk of effect assessment - Moderate • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment. Potential remains for demolition or land take impacts on some isolated properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints. Crossing a number of local cycle paths is unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment near Insch and impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design.

Section 9: Old Rayne to Kintore								
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	West Option D	Inverurie Option B North	Inverurie Option B South	Inverurie Option B Inner	Inverurie Option C
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites</p> <p>The presence of a relatively large number of scheduled monuments and 4 A listed buildings is a particular constraint given the high value of these assets, the potential for direct and indirect impacts on them, and the lack of opportunities for avoidance.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 129 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites</p> <p>The presence of a high density of scheduled monuments, and an A listed building, is a particular constraint given the high value of these assets, the potential for direct and indirect impacts on them, and the lack of opportunities for avoidance.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 79 recorded sites within the segment. These are spread out throughout the segment area and will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites</p> <p>Within the segment area there are a large number of designated assets, comprising 4 scheduled monuments, 2 A listed buildings, part of Harlaw Inventory Battlefield and B and C Listed Buildings. There is the potential, therefore, for direct and/ or indirect impacts on all or some of these assets, and avoidance might not be possible for all of them.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 121 recorded sites within the segment. These will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites</p> <p>The main constraint within the segment is the large number of scheduled monuments (16) as well as Harlaw Battlefield, Keith Hall GDL, 2 A listed buildings and a large number of B and C listed buildings. Avoidance is likely to be very challenging and there is a high potential for impacts on the setting and structure of these assets.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 340 recorded sites within the segment. These will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites</p> <p>There are a large number of scheduled monuments within the segment area (15) as well as an A listed building and a number of B and C listed buildings. Avoidance may be challenging, and it may not be possible to reduce potential impacts on all designated assets.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 232 recorded sites within the segment. These will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - High</p> <p>• Nationally/ local important designations and features forming extensive constraints either through area covered and/ or number and distribution of sites</p> <p>There are a large number of scheduled monuments within the segment area (20) as well as part of Harlaw Battlefield, Keith Hall GDL, and A, B and C listed buildings. Avoidance may be challenging, and it may not be possible to reduce potential impacts on all designated assets.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 306 recorded sites within the segment which will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>• National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent</p> <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on 5 scheduled monuments, 1 A listed buildings and 6 B listed buildings. Despite the presence of these assets, their dispersal across the segment area, and the fact that there are no Battlefields or GDLs within the segment area, means that there is a greater opportunity for avoidance.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 143 recorded sites within the segment which will require further detailed assessment at later stages.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>There are 10 high value assets within the segment, comprising 6 scheduled monuments and 4 A listed buildings. The dispersal of these across the segment means that while there could be good opportunities for the avoidance of some assets, this could be at the detriment of others.</p> <p>A pinch point has been identified between the Maiden Stone scheduled monument and Property in Care, and Maiden Castle scheduled monument.</p> <p>There are 129 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently not known. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this could present further constraints to development.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>Despite the fact that there are fewer high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings within this segment, constraints caused by the topography mean that road alignment options would be restricted to areas where the majority of these assets are located.</p> <p>A potential pinch point has been identified along the northern half of the segment where road alignment options could be constrained by the scheduled monuments of Gowk Stane, Berry Hill, Maiden Castle and Hatton of Ardoyne stone circle, and the A listed buildings Westhall House and Harthill Castle.</p> <p>There are 79 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently not known. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this could present further constraints to development.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>Despite the fact that there are fewer high value scheduled monuments and A listed buildings within this segment, constraints caused by the topography mean that road alignment options would be restricted to areas where the majority of these assets are located.</p> <p>Two pinch points have been identified within the segment.</p> <p>The first pinch point relates to the area around Pitcaple Castle tower, a high value A listed building and the C listed Bridge of Pitcaple.</p> <p>The second pinch point relates to a cluster of scheduled monuments towards the north of the segment at East Law, comprising Durno Roman camp, The Law cairn and newton of Lewesk enclosure. Particular consideration should be given to the potential for buried archaeological remains associated with the Roman camp.</p> <p>There are 121 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently not known. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this could present further constraints to development.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>This option is heavily constrained, with a large number of high value assets comprising 16 scheduled monuments, a GDL and Inventory Battlefield and 58 A, B and C listed buildings.</p> <p>While there may be some opportunities for avoidance of some assets, this could be at the detriment of others.</p> <p>Harlaw Battlefield and Keith Hall GDL would be impossible to avoid, and therefore represent major constraints to the development of options within this section.</p> <p>There are also 340 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently unknown. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this would likely present further constraint to route alignment options.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>There are a large number of high value scheduled monuments (16) within the segment, as well as 16 A, B and C listed buildings. While there may be some opportunities for avoidance of some of these, this could be at the detriment of others.</p> <p>Particular pinch points have been identified at four locations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Castle of Hallforest and Deer's Den roundhouses - scheduled monuments. Deer's Den is directly adjacent to the A96 and would present constraints to the development of route options. 2. Fullerton ring ditches and cairn scheduled monument. This is directly adjacent to the A96 and would present constraints to the development of route options. 3. Broomend henge, standing stones and symbol stone. This is directly adjacent to the A96 and would present constraints to the development of route options. 4. Complex of scheduled monuments at the northern end of the section comprising Dillyhill enclosure, East Blairbowie standing stone, Balquhain Castle, Mains of Balquhain stone circle and Drimmies symbol stone. These could present constraints to the development of route options, particularly relating to potential impacts on their setting. <p>There are also 231 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently unknown. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this would likely present further constraint to route alignment options.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <p>• Typically long term, permanent effects which are unlikely to be avoidable and may be difficult to mitigate, even partially</p> <p>There are 20 scheduled monuments, Harlaw Inventory Battlefield, Keith Hall GDL and 40 A, B and C listed buildings within the segment. While there may be some opportunities for avoidance of some of these, this could be at the detriment of others.</p> <p>Particular pinch points have been identified at four locations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Castle of Hallforest and Deer's Den roundhouses - scheduled monuments. Deer's Den is directly adjacent to the A96 and would present constraints to the development of route options. 2. Fullerton ring ditches and cairn scheduled monument. This is directly adjacent to the A96 and would present constraints to the development of route options. 3. Broomend henge, standing stones and symbol stone. This is directly adjacent to the A96 and would present constraints to the development of route options. 4. Complex of scheduled monuments at the northern end of the section comprising Dillyhill enclosure, East Blairbowie standing stone, Balquhain Castle, Mains of Balquhain stone circle and Drimmies symbol stone and Harlaw battlefield. These could present constraints to the development of route options, particularly relating to potential impacts on their setting. <p>There are also 306 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently unknown. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this would likely present further constraint to route alignment options.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <p>• Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated</p> <p>There are relatively few high value designated assets within the segment, and those that are present offer ample opportunities for avoidance while not having a major detriment on other designated assets.</p> <p>There is a potential pinch point at Oyne, relating to the Gawk Stane and Berry Hill scheduled monuments, however with appropriate design it is not thought that would be a major constraint to the development of route options.</p> <p>There are also 142 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently unknown. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this would likely present further constraint to route alignment options.</p>

Section 9: Old Rayne to Kintore								
SEA Topic		West Option B	West Option C	West Option D	Inverurie Option B North	Inverurie Option B South	Inverurie Option B Inner	Inverurie Option C
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place; Locally designated, or their value may be expressed through non-statutory local publications; likely to contain some features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character comprises two character types; gently rolling open farmland with some small hills to the northern and southern extents of the segment, and the hills of Bennachie at the western edge.</p> <p>The existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the north which reduces its sensitivity, and the enhanced laybys on the dual carriageway are a positive feature which capture the views to the south. There are also pockets of woodland in the middle of the segment, the railway line crossing the centre of the segment and two, highly visible overhead power lines which run across its south-east corner, further reducing the local landscape sensitivity.</p> <p>There are a number of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings throughout the segment which increase its landscape sensitivity, and there are a number of individual properties and small villages scattered through the segment.</p> <p>The hilly terrain to the south and west of the segment is a constraint to dualling and although the open landscape of the river valley in the centre is less of a constraint, it is still sensitive to change.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character within the north can be maintained, and absorb a dualled route without a significant impact on the quality of the landscape, however a route to the south of the segment would be very sensitive along the hillside.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character and sense of place. <p>The landscape character of the area consists of two character types. The landscape character has a gently rolling terrain as the route flows south. The steep slopes of the Bennachie hills, specifically Craigshannoch cuts into the centre of the segment. There is some woodland around the base of Craigshannoch Hill, but the rest of the landscape consists mainly of open farmland with a small amount of plantation woodland and some archaeological features. It is likely that the landscape character would be very sensitive to change by the introduction of a new route through the landscape.</p> <p>The presence of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings in the segment adds to the overall landscape sensitivity and level of constraint due to the difficulty of avoiding indirect effects on their setting.</p> <p>There are many individual properties, scattered through the zone and a small village within the segment. It is likely that many of these properties would be sensitive to a new road running through this segment. The individual properties and village that currently do not have a view or only partially view of the existing A96 would be visual receptors to the new dualled road, and highly sensitive to any new features within this landscape.</p> <p>Pittodrie Estate coniferous woodlands are around the base of Craigshannoch Hill. This wooded area traverses across the whole of the segment, so would be sensitive to change.</p> <p>The terrain is more constrained to the centre of the segment, with the steep slopes of Craigshannoch Hill. The open landscape to the rest of the zone has less constraints, but is still sensitive to change, due to its openness.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium/ High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character and sense of place and areas of special recognised value through use, perception or historic and cultural associations. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character comprises gently rolling open farmland with Gallows Hill to the south. The hills of Bennachie are still visible to the west and there are some woodland areas scattered through the segment.</p> <p>The existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the south which reduces its sensitivity. The railway line also crosses the south of the segment and two, highly visible overhead power lines run through it, further reducing the local landscape sensitivity. However, the landscape would be sensitive to any new elevated structures required to cross the River Urie and the railway in the south. There are a number of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings throughout the segment which increase its landscape sensitivity, and there are a number of individual properties and small villages scattered through the segment.</p> <p>The hilly terrain of Gallows Hill to the south of the segment is a constraint to dualling and although the open landscape throughout the rest of the segment is less of a constraint, it is still sensitive to change.</p> <p>It is considered that a dualled route could have a significant impact on the landscape character within this segment.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; Areas of special recognised value through use, perception or historic and cultural associations. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character comprises gently rolling open farmland following the river valley from north to south. There are some small hills and an area of woodland which span over half of the breadth of the segment at its eastern extent.</p> <p>The existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the northern and southern extents, which reduces its sensitivity, as do the overhead power lines at either extent. The railway line also runs through the segment further reducing the local landscape sensitivity.</p> <p>However, the landscape would be sensitive to any new elevated structures required to cross the railway or the Rivers Urie and Don.</p> <p>The significant number of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings throughout the segment, and Keith Hall Gardens and Designed Landscapes which span more than half its breadth, are highly sensitive historic assets which contribute to the landscape character.</p> <p>There are many individual properties scattered through the segment and it skirts the highly populated area of Inverurie to the north-east, with the town of Kintore located in the centre of its southern extent.</p> <p>It is considered that a dualled route could have a significant impact on the landscape character within this segment.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; comprised of commonplace elements and features creating generally unremarkable character but with some sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character comprises rolling, agricultural land with small hills and woodland areas through the segment. The existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the southern extent which reduces its sensitivity, as do the highly visible overhead power lines which cross the segment's northern and southern extents.</p> <p>The River Don spans the segment breadth, as does a strip of woodland to the west of Port Elphinstone, and both may be difficult to avoid. The landscape would be sensitive to any new elevated structure required to cross the Rivers Don.</p> <p>There are many individual properties scattered through the segment and it skirts the highly populated area of Inverurie to the west, with the town of Kintore located in the centre of its southern extent. In addition, there are large number of historic environment assets which, due to their dispersal, may be difficult to avoid.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character could accommodate a dualled route without significant impact to its quality.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; not designated and likely to contain few, if any, features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character comprises rolling terrain with small hills to the west of the segment, settlements and a golf course to the east and woodland scattered throughout. The existing A96 runs through the centre of the segment and is an established part of the local landscape which reduces its sensitivity, as do the highly visible overhead power lines which cross the segment's northern and southern extents.</p> <p>The River Don spans the segment breadth and the landscape would be sensitive to any new elevated structure required to cross it.</p> <p>There are many individual properties scattered through the segment and it includes half the town of Inverurie to the east, the village of Port Elphinstone further south, and the town of Kintore at its southern extent. In addition, there are large number of historic environment assets which, due to their dispersal, may be difficult to avoid.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character could accommodate a dualled route without significant impact to its quality.</p>	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscapes which by nature of their character would be unable to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be; of high quality with distinctive elements and features making a positive contribution to character and sense of place. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character comprises gently undulating terrain with a hillier landscape located in the north of the segment. There are large areas of woodland throughout the segment, some which span the breadth of the segment and may be difficult to avoid. The existing A96 runs through the southern extent of the segment and is an established part of the local landscape which reduces its sensitivity, as do the highly visible overhead power lines in the south.</p> <p>The town of Kintore is located to the south of the segment and there are some individual properties scattered throughout. In addition there are a number of historic environment assets located within the segment which are highly sensitive features.</p> <p>The River Don spans the segment breadth and the landscape would be sensitive to any new elevated structure required to cross it.</p> <p>The rolling hills and relatively remote landscape mean that the segment landscape character would be highly sensitive to dualling.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>There is the potential for visual effects on the properties and villages within the segment, however as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the north, risk of effects here are predicted to be less.</p> <p>The enhanced layby is a positive feature along existing A96, which highlights the impressive views south and dualling has an opportunity to maintain and/ or enhance this type of feature.</p> <p>It is predicted that historic environment assets could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have adverse visual and setting effects.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on landscape in both the hilly terrain to the south and west of the segment, and the more open landscape in its centre.</p> <p>However, the landscape character of the area could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with potential moderate effects as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>It is predicted that historic environment assets could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have adverse visual and setting effects.</p> <p>Although it is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, there is the potential for visual effects on the properties and villages within the segment.</p> <p>Crossing the railway is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required which could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on landscape due to the steep sides of Craigshannoch Hill which dominate in the centre of the segment.</p> <p>Dualling in this relatively remote landscape could have a major adverse effect on the character of the landscape.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>There is the potential for visual effects on the properties and villages within the segment, however as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the south, risk of effects here are predicted to be less.</p> <p>It is predicted that historic environment assets could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have adverse visual and setting effects.</p> <p>Crossing the railway and the River Urie is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required which could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on landscape in both the hilly terrain of Gallows Hill to the south and the more open landscape elsewhere in the segment.</p> <p>However, the landscape character of the area could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with potential moderate effects as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the south.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>The large number of historic assets and their location within or close to highly populated areas, means that a dualled route could have adverse visual and setting effects on all sensitive receptors.</p> <p>River and railway crossings are unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required which could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>The slopes of the river valleys and hills could be a constraint to dualling and although the open farmland is less of a constraint, adverse effects on the landscape of both are predicted.</p> <p>Dualling in this segment has the potential to have a major adverse effect on the character of the landscape.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of, or alteration to key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics or quality would be partially changed <p>It is predicted that properties and historic environment assets could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have adverse visual and setting effects on receptors; however as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the south, risk of effects here are predicted to be less.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on the woodland scattered throughout the segment as it may not be possible to avoid all areas.</p> <p>Crossing the river Don is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required which could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on landscape in both the hilly terrain and the more open landscape in the segment.</p> <p>However, the landscape character of the area could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with potential moderate effects as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in the south</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable, but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline resource would be similar under post-development conditions <p>It is predicted that properties and historic environment assets could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have adverse visual and setting effects on receptors; as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape throughout the segment, risk of effects are predicted to be less.</p> <p>There is potential for adverse effects on the woodland scattered throughout the segment as it may not be possible to avoid all areas.</p> <p>Crossing the River Don is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required which could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>The landscape character could be maintained and absorb a dualled route with potential minor effects as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape in throughout.</p>	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Major</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total loss of, or alteration to, key features of the baseline resource such that post development characteristics, or quality, would be fundamentally affected <p>Although it is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, there is the potential for visual effects on the properties and the town of Kintore within the segment.</p> <p>Crossing the River Don is unavoidable and new infrastructure would be required which could have a permanent adverse visual effect on the landscape. Any new structures would need to be carefully designed to be in-keeping with the local landscape character.</p> <p>The undulating terrain in the north of the segment may be a constraint to dualling and although the open terrain to the south is less of a constraint, adverse effects on the landscape of both are predicted.</p> <p>Dualling in this relatively remote landscape could have a major adverse effect on its character.</p>

Section 10: Kintore to proposed junction with the AWPR

SEA Topic		Option B
Biodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>No Natura, SSSI or NNR sites within this segment.</p> <p>The key sensitivity in this segment is associated with avoidance and minimisation of impacts on AWI, the majority of which is plantation, and although not extensive in cover, crosses over half of the breadth of the segment area to the east.</p> <p>Other constraints include the avoidance and minimisation of impacts on NWSS woodland which is scattered throughout the segment and the LNCS which, in the south east, covers half of the breadth of the segment.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Although there is avoidance potential for both AWI and NWSS woodland, together they form a band of woodland which spans the breadth of the segment in the east.</p> <p>Should either AWI or NWSS woodland prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant, with possible secondary effects on woodland (including protected) species.</p> <p>There is some avoidance potential for the locally designated conservation sites. Three Hills LNCS covers half of the breadth of the segment, and should this prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and potentially significant at the local level.</p>
Soils & Geodiversity	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National / local designations and features present but not extensive in area / number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>The segment is not extensively covered by prime agricultural land although agriculture remains important and a constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on the better quality land.</p> <p>Other constraints will include avoidance and minimisation of impacts on carbon-rich soils although these are limited in their area and spatial distribution across the segment.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors, e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>Some avoidance potential for prime agricultural land as land category 3.1 does not cross the option breadth in its entirety.</p> <p>Should agricultural land prove unavoidable, dualling impacts are predicted to be permanent and with potential to be significant at the local level.</p> <p>Some areas of carbon-rich soils in the segment, particularly towards Blackburn may be difficult to fully avoid in any upgrading or realigning of the road and there is some potential for significant effects from loss of peat.</p>

Section 10: Kintore to proposed junction with the AWPR

SEA Topic		Option B
Water & Flooding	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>The Black Burn crossing and flood risk zone are likely to be the key positional constraints to dualling alignment options within the segment; both are unavoidable as they span the breadth of the segment. There is also a large area of fluvial floodplain in the south of the segment where several field drains run into the Black Burn.</p> <p>Risk from fluvial flooding both to the future dualled A96 route and to the properties around Blackburn, which are currently in fluvial flood plain, are a key constraint.</p> <p>Similarly, sensitive properties and other receptors in areas near the current floodplains could be at risk from changes to floodplain extents as a result of dualling and become a constraint.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>Crossing the Black Burn and its floodplain are unavoidable in this segment, as they span its breadth entirely.</p> <p>The fluvial floodplains of this watercourse could be affected by dualling and as such, there is potential for permanent impacts through exacerbation of fluvial flood risk to existing and potentially new sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Similarly, any development within these flood risk areas has the potential to result in significant impacts, for e.g. through loss of capacity. There is some scope for mitigation at watercourse crossings through appropriate design of required bridge structures.</p>
Air	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <p>Air quality in the segment area is generally fair although predicted levels of PM10 are closer to objective limit levels and will be locally influenced by traffic using the existing A96 and other busy roads in the area.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline situation would be similar to pre-development conditions <p>Forecast future year (2032) traffic flows potentially increase risk of air quality effects for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the dualled route. Effects (beneficial and adverse) would be dependent on detailed alignment and proximity to property but at this level are not predicted to result in significantly different air quality effects from those currently experienced</p>

Section 10: Kintore to proposed junction with the AWPR

SEA Topic	Option B	
Population & Human Health	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features with some capacity to accommodate change and which may already be subject to pressures and degradation <p>Key constraints will be avoidance of impacts on population centres and NMU routes in a relatively densely populated area. The existing A96 is dualled through this section and has an influence on population through provision of accessibility and from amenity related effects from traffic to properties and settlements near to the road.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer term permanent effects on non-designated resources/ features or other receptors e.g. through spatial loss or indirect effects on critical aspects of the resource's functions <p>It is predicted that small population centres, which are dispersed throughout the segment, could be generally avoided through route alignment (particularly if current dualling alignment is unchanged). Potential remains for possible demolition or land take impacts on some properties depending on final route alignment which will take account of other constraints.</p> <p>Significant avoidance potential for Core Paths which runs primarily through the northern part of the Option, or potential impacts could be avoided through accommodation works in the road design as they are concentrated in a fairly discrete area of the segment or would otherwise be accommodated through scheme design.</p>
Historic Environment	Level of Constraint	<p>Constraint sensitivity assessment - Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National/ local designations and features present but not extensive in area/ number and could be avoided within the option extent <p>Key constraint will be avoidance and minimisation of impacts on 3 scheduled monuments, 7 B listed and 3 C listed buildings. These assets are evenly dispersed throughout the segment area and there would appear to be ample opportunities for avoidance. However careful consideration will need to be given to potential impacts on the setting of these assets.</p> <p>The Aberdeenshire Historic Environment Record shows 31 recorded sites within the segment.</p> <p>There is currently no validated data relating to archaeological sites within Aberdeen City. Further detailed assessment will need to be undertaken at later stages.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Moderate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically medium to long term effects which are unlikely to be avoidable, but will generally reduce over time and/ or can be substantially mitigated <p>There are relatively few high value designated assets within the segment, and there would appear to be ample avoidance opportunities.</p> <p>Pinch points have been identified associated with the St Mary's Church and churchyard scheduled monument and the Little Clinnerty standing stones scheduled monument, that both lie close to the line of the existing A96.</p> <p>There are also 31 recorded assets on the Aberdeenshire HER, the nature, extent and significance of which are currently unknown. Further assessment will be required, and the results of this would likely present further constraint to route alignment options. There is no verified HER data for Aberdeen City available, so there could be further constraints associated with this information when received.</p>

Section 10: Kintore to proposed junction with the AWPR

SEA Topic	Option B	
Landscape	Level of Constraint	<p>Indicative Landscape sensitivity assessment - Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscapes which by nature of their character would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed. Typically these would be: not designated and likely to contain few, if any, features and elements that could not be replaced. <p>There are no national landscape designations within the segment.</p> <p>The landscape character of the area comprises undulating terrain which is predominately farmland, although there are large woodlands of Kirkhill Forest, Clinterty Woods and Elrick Hill Country Park to the east of the segment. The A96 is an established part of the local landscape, and therefore is an existing precedent, which reduces its sensitivity.</p> <p>There are a three Scheduled Monuments which are widely dispersed throughout the segment and add to the landscape character.</p> <p>Blackburn is situated in the northern part of the segment and spans half its breadth; there are also individual properties scattered throughout the segment. An existing dualled section of the A96 runs along the southern edge of Blackburn, and is an established part of the landscape.</p> <p>It is considered that the landscape character can absorb a dualled route without a significant impact to its quality.</p>
	Risk of Effect	<p>Risk of effect assessment - Minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small changes to the baseline resource which are detectable, but the underlying characteristics or quality of the baseline resource would be similar under post-development conditions <p>It is predicted that properties could be avoided through route alignment, however a dualled route could have visual effect on receptors</p> <p>There is potential for landscape effects on the woodlands in the segment, and although the Scheduled Monuments and Country Park could be avoided through route alignment, there remains some potential for effects on their setting.</p> <p>The character of the area could be maintained as the existing A96 is an established part of the local landscape and effects are predicted to be minor.</p>



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