

13 Landscape

13.1 Introduction

- 13.1.1 This chapter presents the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 3 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Proposed Scheme for A9 Dualling, Project 9 – Crubenmore to Kincaig. It considers the potential construction and operational impacts on the landscape resource associated with the Proposed Scheme as described in **Chapter 5**.
- 13.1.1 The landscape throughout the Proposed Scheme is highly scenic and sits within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP) and partially within the Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor Special Landscape Area (SLA). The River Spey, and its tributary the River Truim further south, run within close proximity to the A9, allowing open views over extensive floodplains in places. Mountain ranges of the CNP form the backdrop to views in most directions. The towns of Newtonmore and Kingussie, which are situated to the west of the road, are visible from a number of locations.
- 13.1.2 One of the most stunning areas of this project is the River Spey crossing, encompassing many important landscape and conservation designations. The landscape character opens up over the Insh Marshes National Nature Reserve (NNR) and the historic feature of Ruthven Barracks Scheduled Monument rising above the Strath to the east is a prominent element within the floodplain. Such features create an impressive travelling experience throughout this project extent.
- 13.1.3 **Drawing 13.1** in **Volume 3** shows the Proposed Scheme extents on an OS map base. It includes an expansive landscape of a spectacular and dramatic nature, typical of the central Scottish Highlands. The scenic assets of this area are particularly important.
- 13.1.4 This chapter includes:
- Baseline conditions within the study area relating to the landscape character of the existing road
 - Potential effects of the Proposed Scheme with regard to the identified baseline conditions
 - Anticipated mitigation measures, that allow subsequent identification of potential residual effects
 - A summary of assessment identifying the residual effects.
- 13.1.5 This chapter should be read in conjunction with **Chapter 14**. The potential effect on Views from the Road is considered in **Chapter 9**.

13.2 Approach and Methods

- 13.2.1 The landscape assessment approach and methodology has been refined to deliver a bespoke best practice approach that enables a thorough evaluation of the potential landscape effects within the highly scenic landscape surrounding the Proposed Scheme.

Scope and Guidance

- 13.2.2 The EIA has been undertaken with reference to the *Highways Agency et al, Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10* and *DMRB Volume 11, Section 3, Part 5, Landscape Effects, 1993* and *The Scottish Government Planning Advice Note 1/2013 Environmental Impact Assessment*.

- 13.2.3 The landscape assessment has also been undertaken in accordance with other guidance, which included Guidelines for ‘*Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA 3)*’ (*Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013*) and ‘*Fitting Landscapes: Securing more sustainable landscapes*’ (Transport Scotland, 2014).
- 13.2.4 Landscape Architects across the A9 Dualling Programme have worked together through the A9 Dualling Landscape Forum to agree a common approach to assessment, to ensure consistency in methodology and terminology for assessing Landscape and Visual effects.
- 13.2.5 The *A9 Dualling Programme Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report 2013*, includes a series of strategic considerations and key design implications, which have been taken into account within this landscape assessment, the design development for the Proposed Scheme and mitigation.
- 13.2.6 Consultation and engagement with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) has been undertaken during design development as detailed in **Chapter 7** of this Environmental Statement (ES).

Study Area

- 13.2.7 The Proposed Scheme lies within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP) and extends along the existing A9 between Crubenmore and Kincaig. **Drawing 13.2 in Volume 3** of this report identifies an existing theoretical Zone of Visual Influence (tZVI) for the existing A9.
- 13.2.8 **Drawing 13.3 in Volume 3** identifies the proposed tZVI based upon the Proposed Scheme. The tZVI is based upon bare ground topography and does not take into account any screening or filtering of visibility by local landform, vegetation or built form, and is therefore a worst-case indication of theoretical visibility. See **Appendix 13.1 in Volume 2** for a description of the methodology behind the proposed tZVI.
- 13.2.9 Following consideration of the initial tZVI within a distance of 10km from the existing A9, the study area for this landscape assessment was reduced to 5km, with the greatest effects anticipated within 2km, due to the nature of the upland terrain surrounding the Proposed Scheme. The 2km and 5km distance buffers are also presented on **Drawing 13.1 in Volume 3**.
- 13.2.10 As established within the *A9 Dualling Programme SEA Environmental Report Addendum, Appendix F - Strategic Landscape Review Report*, dated March 2014 (within Section 6 – Key issues), the landscape effects associated with the Proposed Scheme are anticipated to be limited to the immediate local level and the potential effects on the wider landscape character is considered to be limited.
- 13.2.11 **Drawing 13.5 in Volume 3** indicates the topography of the area; this has also been taken into consideration when defining the study area, as indicated above.

Baseline Data Sources

- 13.2.12 Two key published studies have established the baseline landscape character assessment for the study area:
- ‘*Cairngorms Landscape Character Assessment*’
Turnbull Jeffery Partnership, published by SNH, 1996
 - ‘*Cairngorms National Park Landscape Character Assessment: Final Report*’
Alison Grant, published by CNPA, 2009

- 13.2.13 Other key documents relating to the landscape character include:
- ‘*The Special Landscape Qualities (SLQs) of the Cairngorms National Park*’ SNH and CNPA, 2010 (SNH Commissioned Report, No. 375)
 - ‘*A9 Dualling Programme Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Strategic Landscape Review*’ (Halcrow/ CH2M HILL for Transport Scotland), 2014
- 13.2.14 Additional baseline information was obtained via site walkovers and desk studies, including reviews of the following information sources:
- 1:5,000, 1:10,000, 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey mapping
 - Google Earth web-based photography
 - A9 Dualling commissioned aerial photography (BLOM, 2014)
 - Geographical Information Systems (GIS) datasets (including those obtained through the CH2M Fairhurst Joint Venture (CFJV) GIS team in liaison with relevant stakeholders)
 - Detailed site assessments made by four CFJV landscape architects over a series of site visits in 2015-2017
 - Three-dimensional (3-D) visualisation model of the existing A9 and of the Proposed Scheme

Evaluation Approach

- 13.2.15 The impact assessment has been undertaken using the approach outlined below, where the level of significance of an effect is assessed based on the *value* of the landscape resource, the *susceptibility* to change of the landscape resource, elements and character, which together provide an indication of the *sensitivity* of the landscape to change.
- 13.2.16 In accordance with GLVIA3, there is less reliance on simplistic matrices and more on professional judgement in assessing the significance of the likely impacts.
- 13.2.17 All effects have been considered but only those that are Moderate and above are considered significant. These are reviewed in detail as they are considered to highlight the key impacts of the Proposed Scheme.

Assigning Sensitivity

- 13.2.18 In accordance with GLVIA3, the assessment of sensitivity combines judgements on the value attributed to a receptor and the susceptibility of that receptor to the specific type of development proposed.

Landscape Value

- 13.2.19 GLVIA3 defines landscape value as ‘*the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society*’. A review of existing designations (e.g. National Scenic Area, Special Landscape Area, etc.) is usually the starting point in understanding value; although it should be noted that value and/ or associated susceptibility may not necessarily be uniform across a designated area.
- 13.2.20 There may also be situations where an undesignated landscape is of value and/ or susceptible in local terms. **Table 13:1** below sets out the relative importance of landscape designations and descriptions as considered within this assessment.

Table 13:1: Criteria for assessing value of landscape designations

Designation	Description
World Heritage Sites	Unique sites, features or areas identified as being of international importance according to UNESCO criteria. Consideration should be given to their settings, especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.
National Parks, National Scenic Areas	Areas of landscape identified as being of national importance for their natural beauty (and in the case of National Parks the opportunities they offer for outdoor recreation).
Historic Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes	Gardens and designed landscapes included on the inventory.
Local Landscape Designations (such as Special or Local Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value and similar) included in local planning documents	Areas of landscape identified as having importance at the local authority level.

13.2.21 For this project, **Table 13:1** is relevant as the entire project is within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP). It should be noted that while the settlements of Newtonmore, Kingussie, Drumguish and Insh, are excluded from the CNP, they are completely surrounded by it. Establishing the value attached to undesignated areas requires examination of individual elements of the landscape. A number of criteria are to be considered, as relevant, to help determine value as detailed in **Table 13:2** below.

13.2.22 Through discussion with the Landscape Forum, it was agreed that, to provide a consistent approach to methodology across the A9 Dualling Programme, **Table 13:2** would be included in all assessment methodologies. **Table 13:2** alongside professional judgement is used to make an overall assessment for each receptor in terms of high, medium and low value. As the Proposed Scheme lies wholly within the CNP, the majority of items within the baseline are likely to be of high value, as a National Park is a nationally important designation. However, other features, depending on e.g. rarity, may be of medium or low value; this is discussed for receptors within the baseline **Section 13.3**.

Table 13:2: Criteria for assessing value of non-designated landscapes

Attribute	Description
Landscape Quality (Condition)	A measure of the physical state of the landscape; its intactness and the condition of individual elements.
Scenic Quality	General appeal of the landscape to the senses.
Rarity	The presence of rare elements, features or landscape types.
Representativeness	Characteristic/ feature/ element considered a particularly important example.
Conservation/ Cultural Interest	The presence of wildlife, earth science or cultural heritage interest which contributes positively to the landscape.
Recreation Value	Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.
Perceptual Aspects	Evidence that a landscape is valued for its wildness/ tranquillity.
Associations	Relevant associations with notable figures, such as writers or artists, or events in history that contribute to landscape value.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 13.2.23 Susceptibility is defined as the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the Proposed Scheme without undue negative consequences. The Proposed Scheme involves dualling of an existing single carriageway road. This has direct relevance to the susceptibility of the landscape receptors, as the road already exists within the baseline; therefore, receptors' susceptibility to change is likely to be lower. Susceptibility of landscape receptors to change is assessed using the criteria detailed in **Table 13:3** and is set out for each receptor within **Section 13.3**.

Table 13:3: *Landscape susceptibility criteria*

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	The landscape is unlikely to be able to accommodate the proposed change without undue consequences.
Medium	The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate the proposed change albeit with some consequences.
Low	The landscape will be able to accommodate the proposed change with little or no consequences.

Evaluation of Landscape Sensitivity

- 13.2.24 **Table 13:4** outlines the criteria used in the evaluation of landscape sensitivity, based on a combination of both susceptibility and value.

Table 13:4: *Landscape sensitivity criteria*

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Landscape elements of particular distinctive character, which are highly valued and considered susceptible to relatively small change. Landscapes which by nature of their character and value would have very limited capacity to accommodate change of the type proposed.
Medium	Landscape of moderately valued characteristics considered reasonably tolerant of change Some ability to accommodate the proposed option without undue detriment. Landscapes which by nature of their character and value would be able to partly accommodate change of the type proposed.
Low	Landscape of generally low valued characteristics considered potentially tolerant of substantial change. Landscapes which by nature of their character and value would be able to accommodate change of the type proposed.

Assigning Magnitude of Impact

- 13.2.25 The magnitude of landscape effects is assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, duration and reversibility.
- 13.2.26 The size and/ or scale of change in the landscape takes into consideration the following factors:
- The extent/ proportion of landscape elements lost or added
 - The contribution of that element to landscape character and the degree to which aesthetic/ perceptual aspects are altered
 - Whether the change is likely to alter the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character
- 13.2.27 The criteria used to assess the size, scale and geographic extents of landscape effects is based upon the amount of change that would occur as a result of the Proposed Scheme, as described in **Table 13-5**.

Table 13:5: Magnitude of landscape effects

Magnitude	Criteria
High	Notable change in landscape characteristics over an extensive area, ranging to very intensive change over a more limited area.
Medium	Ranging from minor changes in landscape characteristics over a wide area, to notable changes in a more limited area.
Low	Minor or virtually imperceptible change in any area or to any components of the landscape.
None	No perceptible change to the landscape resource.

13.2.28 In accordance with GLVIA3, the evaluation of magnitude also considers the duration and reversibility of landscape effects. The duration of effects is judged on the following scale:

- Short-term: under 1 year
- Long-term: up to 15 years

13.2.29 However, in this location it has also been necessary to consider effects over a longer time frame (e.g. up to 25 years) as vegetation establishment in areas with high altitude (and latitude), high rainfall and frequent low temperatures, such as found in the study area, will be slow. This is based on informed professional judgement as discussed through the Landscape Forum.

13.2.30 Temporary construction-phase effects are often short-term and reversible and are therefore likely to have a lower magnitude of effect.

Assigning Significance of Effect

13.2.31 The significance of landscape effects is determined through consideration of both the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the predicted magnitude of effect as a result of the Proposed Scheme. GLVIA3 advocates that Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is an evidence-based process combined with professional judgement and that numerical scoring or weighting criteria should be avoided.

13.2.32 When GLVIA3 was released, the Landscape Institute noted that: *“GLVIA3 places greater emphasis on professional judgement and less emphasis on a formulaic approach”*. Therefore, a matrix for assessment of significance is not utilised and a reasoned justification for the allocated significance of effect upon each receptor is provided.

13.2.33 The criteria used to inform judgements on the significance of the assessed landscape effects are described in **Table 13-6**. It should be noted that the significance categories can be either beneficial or adverse. Whilst the majority of potential effects are anticipated to be negative, in some circumstances the addition of new features may be beneficial.

Table 13:6: Significance of landscape effect

Level of Effect	Criteria
Substantial	The project would be at considerable variance with the character (including quality and value) and/or special qualities of the landscape receptor, degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features or elements or damage a sense of place resulting in an adverse effect. The project would enhance the character (including quality and value) and/or special qualities of the landscape receptor, create an iconic high-quality feature and/or series of elements or enable a sense of place to be created or enhanced resulting in a beneficial effect.
Moderate	The project would conflict with the character (including quality and value) and/or special qualities of the landscape receptor, have an adverse effect on characteristic features or elements or diminish a sense of place resulting in an adverse effect. The project would improve the character (including quality and value) and/or special qualities of the landscape receptor enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements partially lost or diminished by inappropriate management or development or enable some sense of place resulting in a beneficial effect.
Slight	The project would not quite fit the character (including quality and value) and/or special qualities of the landscape receptor, be at variance with characteristic features and elements or detract from a sense of place resulting in an adverse effect. The project would complement the character (including quality and value) and/or special qualities of the landscape, maintain or enhance characteristic features and elements and enable some sense of place to be restored resulting in a beneficial effect.
Negligible/ None	The project would maintain the character and/or special qualities of the landscape receptor, blend in with characteristic features and elements and enable a sense of place to be retained.

13.2.34 It is customary that any effect that is identified as Moderate or Substantial is deemed to be significant and will require detailed investigation of potential mitigation in order to reduce the effect, wherever possible.

13.2.35 In the event of an effect resulting in a Moderate/ slight effect, whereby Moderate is considered significant and Slight is considered not significant, professional judgement is used to consider and explain if that particular effect was considered to be significant or not significant, based upon the context of that individual receptor. This is explained where relevant within the assessment.

Assigning mitigation

13.2.36 Potential mitigation measures required to reduce the identified landscape effects have been considered and are discussed in **Section 13.5**. Embedded mitigation, relevant to this chapter, is detailed in **Section 13.4**.

Limitations to Assessment

13.2.37 Precise details of construction activities in specific locations are limited. An indicative assessment of construction phase effects was made for the landscape resource based on informed assumptions and available information.

13.2.38 Limitations to the short- and long-term assessment include assumed views from the more densely populated locations such as Newtonmore and Kingussie. Access into private properties/ gardens within these locations could not be gained and therefore representative Viewpoints are taken from where best possible within built up areas.

13.2.39 In general, there is also restricted access to any privately accessed land/ properties.

13.3 Baseline Conditions

Introduction

- 13.3.2 With reference to **Drawing 13.2** in **Volume 3**, the Proposed Scheme study area falls within the Cairngorm National Park (CNP) and a small section of the Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor Special Landscape Area (SLA) to its southern extent. It is bordered by extensive stretches of woodland, much of which is classed as ancient woodland, i.e. the locations are included on the SNH Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI). The landscape study area considers a 2km corridor either side of the existing A9.
- 13.3.3 The landscape character of the study area within the CNP is defined by six Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). In addition, the study area also includes two principal settlements, Newtonmore and Kingussie, which lie approximately 1km to the northwest of the A9, with populations of around 1,000 and 1,400 respectively. Other settlements that are encompassed by LCAs include the small village of Insh, 2km south of the A9, and a number of other smaller settlements including, but not limited to, Ralia, Nuide, Ruthven and Lynchat, all of which are within close proximity to the A9.
- 13.3.4 Using a finer grain of assessment, the LCAs have been further refined following close site analysis, resulting in the definition of 10 Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs). The LLCAs include route-specific assessment of landscape characteristics, features and perceptual issues, assisting in determining how the proposed route will impact the character of the study area.
- 13.3.5 The landscape designations, SLA, LCAs and LLCAs are described and discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

Landscape Designations

- 13.3.6 Designated landscape areas are shown on **Drawing 13.2** in **Volume 3**. There are two relevant landscape designations: the CNP and the Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA.
- 13.3.7 The study area is also bordered by two SNH Wild Land Areas (WLAs). Although adopted into the Scottish National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3), these are not statutory designations, and their boundaries are more than 2km distant from the A9; they are therefore not considered further in this assessment (although wildness is assessed as a specific characteristic).

Cairngorms National Park

- 13.3.8 The extent of the Proposed Scheme lies within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP), established in 2003. This is a landscape associated designation that has a high value, and with reference to **Table 13:1**, ranked second to World Heritage Sites and at the same level as National Scenic Areas.
- 13.3.9 The 'Special Landscape Qualities' (SLQs) of the CNP form part of its designation and these are set out in full in '*The special landscape qualities of the Cairngorms National Park*' (SNH Commissioned Report, No. 375. SNH and CNPA (2010)). The SLQs are summarised as follows:

General Qualities

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

Trees, Woods and Forests

- Dark and venerable pine forest
- Light and airy birch woods
- Parkland and policy woodlands
- Long association with forestry

Moorlands

- Extensive moorland, linking the farmland, woodland and the high tops
- A patchwork of muirburn

The Mountains and Plateaux

- The unifying presence of the central mountains
- An imposing massif of strong dramatic character
- The unique plateaux of vast scale, distinctive landforms and exposed, boulder strewn high ground
- The surrounding hills
- The drama of deep corries
- Exceptional glacial landforms
- Snowscapes

Wildlife and Nature

- Dominance of natural landforms
- Extensive tracts of natural vegetation
- Association with iconic animals
- Wild land
- Wildness

Glens and Straths

- Steep glens and high passes
- Broad, farmed straths
- Renowned rivers
- Beautiful lochs

Visual and Sensory Qualities

- Layers of receding ridge lines
- Grand panoramas and framed views
- A landscape of many colours
- Dark skies
- Attractive and contrasting textures
- The dominance of natural sounds

Culture and History

- Distinctive planned towns
- Vernacular stone buildings
- Dramatic, historical routes
- The wistfulness of abandoned settlements
- Focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges
- The Royal connection

Recreation

- A landscape of opportunities
- Spirituality

- 13.3.10 As the Proposed Scheme is restricted to the existing A9 corridor, it will have limited effects on many of these qualities; however, each has been considered to ensure that the landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme are fully understood within the context of the special qualities of the CNP. The CNP SLQs are considered further in **Appendix 13.4**, in **Volume 2**.

Note on Assessment of CNP SLQs

- 13.3.11 Assessment of Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs), with their unique landscape features and key characteristics, has been undertaken and cross referenced within the assessment of CNP SLQs. The key features and characteristics which link SLQs, LCAs and LLCAs were assigned sensitivity ratings and considered to be inter-related across the impact assessment.
- 13.3.12 The landscape objectives for the Proposed Scheme and subsequent Environmental Mitigation Strategy were developed being mindful of the key features and characteristics within the SLQ's, LCA's, and LLCA's. The new landscape framework (features/ elements) was then assessed through to residual impacts to consider any longer-term changes to landscape character; therefore, a further detailed assessment against the SLQs was not undertaken. The CNP SLQ assessment is detailed in **Appendix 13.4, Volume 2**.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review - LCA Guidance

- 13.3.13 As part of the A9 Dualling SEA, a route wide Strategic Landscape Review (SLR) was undertaken to develop strategic landscape guidance and key objectives for the A9 programme. The SLR set out the assessments of the landscape which the A9 passes through and provides an overview of the character context and views from the road, considering the potential issues and effects of the dualling programme.

- 13.3.14 Strategic landscape guidance and objectives were developed for each LCA to inform a landscape design framework respecting the local landscape character.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

- 13.3.15 **Section 13.2** above notes that two published studies present landscape character assessments of the study area around the Proposed Scheme:

- ‘*Cairngorms Landscape Character Assessment*’
Turnbull Jeffery Partnership, published by SNH (1996)
- ‘*Cairngorms National Park Landscape Character Assessment: Final Report*’
Alison Grant, published by CNPA (2009)

- 13.3.16 The A9 Dualling Programme, ‘*SEA, Environmental Report Addendum, Appendix F, Strategic Landscape Review Report*’, (CH2M for Transport Scotland, 2014) reviewed these publications and determined that, whilst the Turnbull Jeffrey study was a respected source the CNPA study should be prioritised as the predominant LCA reference source. This is due to the fact that the CNPA study was more recent and presented LCAs within the Park to a finer grain of detail (i.e. it increased the number of LCAs with more variation identified across the Park).

- 13.3.17 Landscape Character Area (LCA) definitions and descriptions for this chapter have therefore been taken from the ‘*Cairngorms National Park Landscape Character Assessment*’ (CNPA, 2009). The LCAs within the CNP relevant to the Proposed Scheme extent are shown on **Drawing 13.3** in **Volume 3**. They are also listed here and described in detail below:

- Glen Truim LCA
- Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA
- Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA
- Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA
- The Southern Hills: South Western Glens LCA
- The Monadhliath: South Monadhliath LCA
- The Monadhliath: North Monadhliath LCA

LCA Descriptions

Glen Truim LCA Description

- 13.3.18 Glen Truim LCA is located just south of the confluence of the Rivers Spey and Truim. To the west, the LCA comprises a sequence of low, rocky hill summits that contain a narrow glacial valley; to the east, summits within the LCA have been smoothed by glaciers into more rounded forms. The River Truim meanders across the narrow glen floor between gravelly terraces, dropping over a bench of rock relatively resistant to erosion at the Falls of Truim.
- 13.3.19 Planted woodland, including commercial conifer plantations, occasional older belts of trees and recently established native woodland, is supplemented by extensive areas of regenerating broadleaved and coniferous scrub along the steep slopes and the roadsides where grazing is limited. Heather moorland extends over more open slopes.
- 13.3.20 Three clusters of estate buildings – Etteridge, Crubenbeg and Crubenmore – are located on slightly raised, well-drained mounds, surrounded by agriculture, 18th/ 19th century improved fields and the abandoned fields of post-medieval farmsteads.

- 13.3.21 The A9 and the Highland Main Line (HML) railway occupy adjacent elevated positions, following the contours of the eastern edge of the glen floor. Minor roads and access tracks extend access along the glens and there are routes up into the hills.
- 13.3.22 Experienced from the A9, the glen appears to be well wooded, but from more minor roads and footpaths, it has an intimate scaled pattern of woodland and open ground, which reflects the small-scale diversity of the landform and land cover.
- 13.3.23 Travelling through the LCA on the A9 imparts a sense of being within an enclosed linear space, as this narrow glen links fertile, diverse Speyside with the elevated and the more exposed upland character to the south.

Route Specific Character Issues

- 13.3.24 Within the Glen Truim LCA, the A9 is extensively enclosed by pine and birch in this section, although this is punctuated with views of Cruben Beag through gaps in the trees. Glen Truim is a “pinch point” and is the transition between Badenoch Upper Strath and the Upper Spey farmlands.
- 13.3.25 This landscape is diverse, with a range of topographical features complemented by varied woodland and field patterns. There are extensive areas of regenerating woodland, coupled with new planting, which reinforces the sense of an enclosed ‘pass’ when travelling through this glen.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review - LCA Guidance

- 13.3.26 The ‘*Strategic Landscape Review Report*’ set out guidance for the Glen Truim LCA:
- “Reinforce the sense of enclosure next to the road.
Retain an intimate scaled pattern of woodland and open ground.”

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

- 13.3.27 As part of the ‘*Strategic Landscape Review Report*’, key landscape objectives were also set for each LCA. For the Glen Truim LCA these are:
- “Utilise the limited palette of existing trees near the road to reinforce the sense of enclosure
 - Investigate opportunities to improve access to Falls of Truim
 - Retain mixed woodland character
 - Reinforce pinch-point character with planting where possible
 - Views of the hillsides such as Cruben Beag are a key feature of this section and should be retained and enhanced”

Sensitivity

- 13.3.28 As the LCA is entirely within the National Park, the landscape is of **High** value. With regard to susceptibility, the dualling of the A9 will take place within the existing infrastructure corridor which includes the HML railway, the existing A9, and National Cycle Network route 7 (NCN7). The scale of the A9 proposals is relatively small compared to the scale of the landscape, and therefore the LCA can tolerate changes to the road corridor that will result from the Proposed Scheme.
- 13.3.29 This LCA is allocated a **High** value and **Low** susceptibility resulting in a **Medium** sensitivity to the dualling works.



Photograph 13:1: Planting surrounding the River Truim bridge/ road embankment screens the A9

Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA Description

- 13.3.30 This LCA is located within a fertile strath, characterised by glacial terraces and hillocks. To the southeast, the strath is only loosely contained by undulating moor and striking streamlined ridges with crags at their northern ends. To the northwest, the steep, rocky summit and ridgeline of Creag Dubh, rising above escarpments of scree, forms well-defined enclosure to the strath.
- 13.3.31 The River Spey meanders gently across the strath, its line sometimes reinforced by riparian woodland. There are extensive areas of rough grazing punctuated by scattered semi-natural broadleaved woodland. Fenced, improved fields extend northwards onto the hummocky terrain and gentle slopes below Creag Dubh.
- 13.3.32 Extensive native broadleaf woodland clothes the steeper slopes of Creag Dubh, where regenerating scrub and trees have taken hold across less accessible slopes and screes. Planted conifer shelter belts are found along the floor of the strath. There is a sense of transition between Glen Truim and the Laggan area from the south and the more open, less defined strath of the River Spey.

Route specific character issues

- 13.3.33 The A9 and HML railway through the Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA extend along the southern section of the strath. This communication corridor, on slightly elevated ground, is often hidden within hummocky terrain and is enclosed by extensive semi-natural birch dominated woodland.
- 13.3.34 The A9 is relatively enclosed and views out are limited. The linearity of the road contrasts with the undulating landform of the strath.
- 13.3.35 To the north of the LCA, pine tree belts line each side of the A9, framing the mountains on the horizon. The landscape to the east is more open, exposing wild open moorland. A belt of mature birch woodland along the western boundary encloses the A9 within the wider landscape.
- 13.3.36 The character within this section varies, with multiple areas of enclosed woodland, interspersed within open expanses of wild heather moor. Isolated properties associated with Ralia and Newtonmore pepper the landscape.

A9 Dualling Programme - Strategic Landscape Review - LCA Guidance

13.3.37 SLR guidance for the Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA is summarised below:

- “Visually screen the A9 with hummocky terrain and by semi-natural, birch dominated woodland
- Emphasise the sense of arrival associated with leaving Glen Truim/ Laggan area
- Road alignment should respond to the local landform.”

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

13.3.38 For the Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA the key landscape objectives are as follows:

- “Utilise the limited palette of existing trees near the road to reinforce the sense of enclosure
- Investigate opportunities to improve screening by mimicking hummocky terrain
- Retain and enhance semi natural birch dominated woodland character
- Reinforce transition between enclosed character with planting where possible
- Consider opening views of the key landscape features within this section where practicable.”

Sensitivity

13.3.39 This LCA lies within the CNP and therefore the landscape is of **High** value. The location of the dualled section of the existing A9 and HML railway is largely enclosed or buffered from the surrounding landscape by vegetation associated with the Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA.

13.3.40 The River Spey (which confluences with the River Truim at approx. ch. 41,200), a key characteristic of the LCA, is separated from the A9 by broadleaf and coniferous woodland throughout. To the south-east, heather moorland is more dominant, and this will be sensitive to change due to its open character. The existing buffer of vegetation to the west of the A9 limits the potential magnitude of change and overall effect on the LCA.

13.3.41 This LCA is allocated a **High** value and **Low** susceptibility resulting in a **Medium** sensitivity to Proposed Scheme dualling.



Photograph 13:2: Showing the enclosed immediate character of the A9, at Ralia

Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA Description

- 13.3.42 The relatively open floodplain is a key feature of this area: the two settlements of Newtonmore and Kingussie are located outside of the floodplain, although they are linked to two large tributaries of the Spey. Individual houses and farms are mainly situated on elevated terraces within the Strath. The A9 cuts through this area, often hidden by hummocky terrain and terraces.
- 13.3.43 The enclosed vegetated character of the road corridor found within Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA to the south continues within this LCA, although steep sided rocky escarpments create a more dramatic and wilder ambience.
- 13.3.44 To the north of the LCA, the character changes dramatically, opening up into the wider landscape of the River Spey floodplain. The road is elevated, with undulating terrain occupying the land around it, as it falls away into a lower, flatter landscape, frequently used for pastoral agriculture. The A9 is well-connected to the open landscape, and there are panoramic views across the expanse of the surrounding floodplain to the hills of the CNP beyond.
- 13.3.45 This wide strath, where the River Spey flows in a relatively flat floodplain, is enclosed by gently graded slopes leading to low hills that can be identified as individual rocky summits. To the north, the plain is contained by well-drained terraces that form a defined steep edge to the strath floor.
- 13.3.46 To the north of the River Spey, the A86/ B9152 follows the base of the western valley flank, gracefully curving with the topography, its slight elevation offering extensive views. The HML railway embankment separates the old road and A9 from the flood plain and Insh Marshes.
- 13.3.47 The broad scale and expansiveness of this wide stretch of strath is reinforced by the relative openness maintained by the arable land within the floodplain and the low surrounding topography.
- 13.3.48 The complex, intricate terrain of interlocking rolling hills and terraces, enclosing small areas of wetland, lochans and farmed flats along the south-eastern edge of the strath, creates a landscape of intimate scale. This contrasts with the more expansive floor of the main valley.



Photograph 13:3: Undulating terrain providing partial views of the A9

Route Specific Character Issues

- 13.3.49 There is an enclosed, vegetated character along the road corridor in the southern area of the LCA.
- 13.3.50 The LCA changes in character to the north, opening up into a wider landscape of the River Spey floodplain. There are dramatic, steep sided rocky embankments in the central part of the LCA, with a feeling of wildness. The road is elevated, with undulating terrain occupying the land around it, as it falls away into a lower, flatter landscape, frequently used for grazing.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review Guidance

- 13.3.51 SLR guidance for the Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA is summarised below:
- “Reflect adjoining complex, intricate terrain and vegetation patterns.”

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

(Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA)

- 13.3.52 For the Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA the key landscape objectives are as follows:
- “Ensure any new alignment fits with the dramatic local landscape form between road sections in cutting and on embankment
 - Utilise the limited palette of existing trees near the road to reinforce the sense of enclosure looking to create a semi-natural woodland where practicable
 - Investigate opportunities to improve screening by mimicking hummocky terrain
 - Retain and enhance semi natural birch dominated woodland character
 - Consider opening views of the key landscape features within this section where practicable. This location offers significant opportunity to open up views to reflect the current complexity of varying terrain and vegetation patterns within moorland, agricultural grazing and expansive views north towards Cairngorms Mountains.”

Sensitivity

- 13.3.53 This area is of **High** value due to its location within the National Park. The character within this section is varied, although it is dominated by the River Spey floodplain. This section of the road corridor is exposed within the wider landscape and therefore changes to the road corridor could have an increased effect on the landscape character.
- 13.3.54 The area is of **High** value, with **High** susceptibility to the proposals. Overall this results in a **High** sensitivity value.

Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA Description

- 13.3.55 Extensive wetland, marsh and occasional lochans reach across most of the floor of this wide stretch of strath, interrupted by occasional hummocks of gravelly deposits. The floodplain is framed on both sides by wide terraces and elevated, undulating slopes of well-drained glacial-fluvial deposits.
- 13.3.56 Lodges at Balavil and Dunachton, as well as farmsteads occupy the south facing slopes above the A9, where conifer shelterbelts, occasional policies, roundels and specimen trees add to the diversity of the vegetation pattern. The Balavil Estate includes various listed buildings and structures, with the main house forming a prominent feature within a designed landscape setting in close proximity to the A9.

- 13.3.57 Ruthven Barracks is a prominent landmark feature sitting on the remnants of a glacial kame terrace (sand and gravel ridge) at the south-western end of the marshes, while Insh church is a focus on the shores of Loch Insh.
- 13.3.58 Roads are elevated above the flood-prone strath, and are often enclosed by woodland, while the HML railway is located mainly upon an embankment for the length of the floodplain.
- 13.3.59 The dominance of natural forces is further reinforced by character of the river, which introduces an unpredictable and dynamic element due to evidence of frequent flooding. The experience of travelling along the roads, through a sequence of enclosed woodland and open farmland is particularly striking on the east side of the Spey.
- 13.3.60 The River Spey meanders across the Strath here with extensive wetland, marsh and occasional pools, reeds, wetland vegetation and occasional shrub. Expanses of semi-natural woodland surround the edges of the wetland and onto the terraces. Ruthven Barracks is a landmark feature of high value, dominating the southern expanse of the Insh Marshes within the LCA.
- 13.3.61 The north of the LCA forms an expansive landscape with panoramic views to the northwest towards Kingussie. Ruthven Barracks stands out as a dramatic feature against the back drop of the mountains, to the southeast of the road corridor. Vegetation is mainly wet grassland, reed beds and marsh, with woodland at the peripheries of the wetland.
- 13.3.62 North of the A9 bridge over the A86 (at approx. ch. 50,750), the character merges with a more enclosed landscape of mature woodland and trees that line the A9.



Photograph 13:4: The open landscape of Insh Marshes within the River Spey Floodplain

Route Specific Character Issues

- 13.3.63 The A9 passes close to the Insh Marshes within the Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA. However, within the farmland and policy woodlands to the north (such as those associated with Balavil), there is limited inter-visibility. Views, albeit intermittent, across the strath of the marshes and the hills beyond are very attractive; the road hugs the north side of the strath, avoiding the floodplain.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review Guidance

13.3.64 SLR guidance for the Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA is summarised below:

- “Retain a landscape sequence of enclosed woodland and open farmland.
- Explore options to improve visual connectivity between the road and the marshes.
- Retain and enhance the character of policy woodlands and parkland.”

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

13.3.65 Key landscape objectives for the Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA are as follows:

- “Ensure any new alignment fits with the dramatic local landscape form within the context of the River Spey floodplain
- The minimising of infrastructure here should be a key design objective and must form a key aspect of the design approach for all disciplines
- Integrate any new tree planting with existing tree belts, the modification and enhancement of the existing tree belts with broadleaf planting should be considered
- The enjoyment of the spectacular views here should be facilitated
- The design of road and lay-bys should facilitate access to and appreciation of this landscape. This location offers significant opportunity to create an exciting lay-by, but needs sensitive design to enhance visitor experience whilst leaving a minimal impression on the landscape (also needs to be considered in the context of nature conservation designations restrictions).”

Sensitivity

13.3.66 The open nature of the landscape, within which the road corridor sits, would make it susceptible to change. Changes to the road corridor would also affect the character of the Ruthven Barracks, due to its proximity with the A9. Changes to the Spey bridge crossing would also affect the landscape character of the LCA due to the juxtaposition of character types over a wide area.

13.3.67 The LCA has a **High** landscape value due to its location within the CNP and proximity to the Ruthven Barracks and Insh Marshes National Nature Reserve. There is a **High** susceptibility to change and therefore it has a **High** landscape sensitivity.

The Southern Hills: South Western Glens LCA Description

13.3.68 Although the A9 does not traverse this LCA directly, a section of The Southern Hills: South Western Glens LCA falls within the 2km study area boundary of the A9 between Badenoch: Glen Truim LCA and Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA.

13.3.69 This area is characterised by undulating terrain with narrow river channels and a number of lochs and lochans. There is a small pocket of mixed woodland. The area contains several estate tracks as well as the route of General Wade’s Military Road (GWMR).

13.3.70 The character is therefore enclosed and remote due to the undulating terrain and lack of main access routes.

Route Specific Character Issues

13.3.71 As the A9 does not and is not proposed to pass directly through this LCA there are no route character issues outlined.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review Guidance

- 13.3.72 As the A9 does not pass directly through this LCA there is no guidance specified within the Strategic Landscape Review (SLR).

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

- 13.3.73 As the A9 does not and is not proposed to pass directly through this LCA there are no key landscape objectives specified within the SLR.

Sensitivity

- 13.3.74 This LCA has a **High** value due to its location in the National Park. It has a **Low** susceptibility due to the A9 not directly running through the LCA and only a small section of the LCA being in the 2km boundary of the A9. This results in a **Medium** sensitivity.

The Monadhliath: South Monadhliath LCA Description

- 13.3.75 Although the A9 does not pass directly through the LCA, a small area of the northern section falls within the 2km study area boundary. This area is characterised by the slopes of Creag Dhubh and Creag Bheag, with Loch Gynack and stands of woodland in-between. A network of access tracks runs at the base of the Creags and through woodland.

Route Specific Character Issues

- 13.3.76 As the A9 does not and is not proposed to pass directly through this LCA there are no route character issues outlined.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review Guidance

- 13.3.77 As the A9 does not pass directly through this LCA there is no guidance specified within the SLR.

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

- 13.3.78 As the A9 does not and is not proposed to pass directly through this LCA there are no key landscape objectives specified within the SLR.

Sensitivity

- 13.3.79 This LCA has a **High** value due to its location in the National Park. It has a **Low** susceptibility due to the A9 not directly running through the LCA and only a small section of the LCA being in the 2km boundary of the A9. This results in a **Medium** sensitivity.

The Monadhliath: North Monadhliath LCA Description

- 13.3.80 Although the A9 does not pass directly through this LCA, the southern section of it falls within the 2km study area boundary. This area is characterised by undulating terrain with scattered trees and a network of access tracks. South-easterly orientated glens and slopes of rounded hills and long ridges of the Monadhliath form the north-western boundary to the Park; the lower hills and the north/ south elongated ridges form large scale, undulating terrain, limiting the sense of enclosure.

- 13.3.81 The smooth, subdued landform strongly reflects glacial erosion, and underpins the low relief which creates a relatively simple topography. Smooth slopes create a relatively open, expansive landscape on the upper slopes, although forestry can be a contrasting enclosing element. Although this area is secluded, the forest and associated activities limit the sense of remoteness.

Route Specific Character Issues

- 13.3.82 As the A9 does not pass directly through this LCA there are no route specific character issues outlined.

A9 Dualling Programme – Strategic Landscape Review Guidance

- 13.3.83 As the A9 does not pass directly through this LCA there is no guidance specified within the SLR.

Strategic Landscape Review – Key landscape objectives

- 13.3.84 As the A9 does not and is not proposed to pass directly through this LCA there are no key landscape objectives specified within the SLR.

Sensitivity

- 13.3.85 This LCA has a **High** value due to its location in the National Park. It has a **Low** susceptibility due to the A9 not directly running through the LCA and only a small section of the LCA being in the 2km boundary of the A9. This results in a **Medium** sensitivity.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs)

- 13.3.86 To enable assessment of the landscape effects at a local level, a series of Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) were identified, specific to the Proposed Scheme, and which allow a more detailed understanding of the baseline landscape. Ten LLCAs are of relevance and are detailed below. The A9 has a direct effect on eight of the LLCAs, because the route is located within or adjacent to the LLCA, and indirect effects on the remaining two (Upper Strath and Insh Marsh Woodland), as they are separated from the A9 by an intervening LLCA. They are included for consideration because they fall within the 2km study area boundary.
- 13.3.87 Each LLCA has a distinct character which has been determined by desk study and site inspection. In contrast to the LCAs, they are specifically related to the A9 and the experience of travelling along the road corridor to the extent of the study area's 2km boundary.
- 13.3.88 The LLCAs are shown on **Drawing 13.4 in Volume 3**. The methodology for defining the LLCAs and field data sheets produced through site visits are detailed in **Appendix 13.2 in Volume 2**. Key characteristics of each LLCA are described below.

Local Landscape Character Areas (Direct)

Loch Etteridge LLCA Description

- 13.3.89 This LLCA lies within the CNP and contains the Woods of Glentruim and the hamlet of Etteridge. It covers the existing dualled section of the A9 up to the transition to the single carriageway within the Proposed Scheme.
- 13.3.90 The River Truim meanders to the west of the A9 and is surrounded by woodland to the west and areas of grassland or heath to the east. The woodland is composed of mixed, mature, deciduous and coniferous semi-native trees, creating an enclosed character. The Mains of Glentruim is a farmstead, located off the narrow road which runs through the woodland. There is a network of tracks throughout, which are used recreationally as well as by estate workers. Glentruim Castle and Cottages are located within the Woods of Glentruim. These buildings were built in the early 1840's and are used as a holiday resort and for events.
- 13.3.91 The dense woodland and occasional built form creates a sense of remoteness, although holiday accommodation indicates tourists are attracted to the area.

- 13.3.92 To the east of the A9 lies the settlement of Etteridge, consisting of a farm building and Etteridge Lodge. It is adjacent to the Loch Etteridge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is separated from the A9 corridor by landform and dense mixed woodland.
- 13.3.93 This LLCA is of **High** value. It is allocated a **Medium** susceptibility due to the dense tree cover adjacent to the road and wooded character of the area. This results in **High/ medium** sensitivity.
- 13.3.94 **Photograph 13:5** shows a view of Loch Etteridge LLCA looking towards the A9 across Truim Bridge from near Invernahavon Holiday Park entrance. The Category B listed Truim Bridge, built as part of the GWMR, is a notable feature of heritage value. The roadway it supports links to the Invernahavon Holiday Park, a recreational and tourist hub within the area, which is well sign-posted from the A9.



Photograph 13:5: View on approach to Truim Bridge, Loch Etteridge LLCA

Route specific aesthetic/ perceptual aspects

- 13.3.95 Aesthetic and perceptual issues that are specific to the route through this LLCA include:
- Dense mixed woodland (including regenerating birch) to the west and rising topography to the east give a feeling of enclosure
 - Extensive rolling topography with muted colours but a different localised character near Etteridge and the A9 corridor
 - The A9 and River Truim combined with the scenery contribute to an interesting and contrasting landscape
 - Attractive mix of human and natural elements; there are a number of built features that are widely dispersed; some telephone poles are located to the east of the corridor on raised ground
 - Glimpses of the HML railway which runs adjacent to the west side of the A9 are visible, though it is largely covered by vegetation
 - A sense of heritage embodied by the GWMR, bridges and Glentruim Castle

Ralia LLCA Description

- 13.3.96 To the east of the A9, the Rivers Truim and Spey meander beside the A9, flowing in a northerly direction. Within the CNP, this LLCA is dominated by heath and rough grasses with areas of woodland. Grazing land with drystone walls and scattered farmsteads are located in the north of this LLCA. The character is open, though dense stands of coniferous woodland, including some AWI woodland, screen the road corridor creating an enclosed feel while travelling through the A9 corridor. The Ralia Café is the main built landmark of the LLCA. The HML railway and NCN7 cycle route run parallel to the A9 on the west side.
- 13.3.97 This LLCA is of **High** value. It has **Medium** susceptibility due to the relative open character of the LLCA which is balanced by dense stands of coniferous woodland lining the road. The sensitivity is therefore **High/ medium** as there are elements which would have limited tolerance to change.



Photograph 13:6: View of Ralia LLCA facing east from the A86 south of Newtonmore

Route specific aesthetic/ perceptual aspects

- 13.3.98 Issues specific to the A9 within this LLCA include the following aspects:
- Topography slopes to the west towards the River Spey
 - Dense plantations of coniferous woodland screen the road corrido
 - The dramatic, craggy Creag Dhubh forms a backdrop to the west, providing a view beyond the trees lining the corridor
 - Proximity of Newtonmore, visible through birch and conifer mixed woodland from the A9
 - The Ralia Café is a landmark, highlighted by signage on the A9

Newtonmore LLCA Description

- 13.3.99 Newtonmore is a small town consisting of a mix of residential, commercial and farm buildings. The built form vernacular is white washed/ stone buildings with slate roofs, with recreational facilities on the settlement edge, including a golf course and open-air museum. The town is surrounded by pastoral farmland consisting of fields enclosed by drystone walls and fences, with dense coniferous and deciduous woodlands on the perimeter of the LLCA. Newtonmore is one of the main built up areas on this stretch of the A9, linked by both A and B roads, including a network of minor roads,

the NCN7 cycle route and a HML railway station. The centre of Newtonmore is therefore urban in character, with a more open, semi-rural character on the perimeter. The topography slopes towards Newtonmore from the north-west, and is predominantly level to the south-west, where it abuts the River Spey floodplain.

- 13.3.100 This LLCA is of **High** value. Although the landscape is dominated by the open, rural character on the perimeter of Newtonmore, the A9 does not run through this LLCA. Therefore, the susceptibility is **Low** and the sensitivity is **Medium**.



Photograph 13:7: View from the north-west looking towards Newtonmore

Route specific aesthetic/ perceptual aspects

- 13.3.101 The A9 does not run directly through this LLCA; however, it has indirect effects on the LLCA's adjacent to the A9. It is important because of the relatively large number of residences and extent of public open space within the town.

Cairn/ Nuide LLCA Description

- 13.3.102 This LLCA has a relatively open character due to its undulating landform and farmland. Residential and farm buildings are dispersed throughout, with predominantly coniferous shelterbelt trees. Embankments with dry heath and heather are very characteristic and provide seasonal colour. There are several lochs/ lochans surrounded by marshland, with areas of woodland throughout. There is some AWI woodland around Inverton. Along some lengths within the LLCA, the A9 has an enclosed feel due to dense tree cover lining the road and undulating landform along the roadside.
- 13.3.103 This LLCA is of **High** value. It has a **High/ medium** susceptibility due to its largely open character, offset by hummocky terrain and occasional birch woodland which lines the route. The sensitivity is therefore **High/ medium** as there are elements which would have limited tolerance to change.



Photograph 13:8: View to the east from track at approximate ch. 46,200

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

13.3.104 Issues specific to the A9 within this LLCA include the following aspects:

- Relatively open in character with some coniferous trees and undulating topography
- Power lines, telegraph poles and phone masts predominantly visible to the west within the rolling terrain
- Some areas of exposed rock on the west side.

Kingussie LLCA Description

- 13.3.105 Kingussie is the main settlement within the study area. It is a small planned rural town founded in 1799, characterised by a mix of residential, commercial and agricultural buildings. The built form consists predominantly of white washed buildings with slate roofs, although there are a number of larger business premises and modern public buildings. These include Kingussie High School, which has contemporary, multi-coloured facades that stand out from the more traditional structures.
- 13.3.106 The town is surrounded by agricultural land and scattered farms with hedgerow trees, fences and dry-stone walls dividing the land. To the west side of the town there is a substantial area of long-established woodland. It has an extensive road network with links to the NCN7 cycle route and HML railway and is therefore relatively busy in character.
- 13.3.107 Sports pitches are located between the River Spey and HML railway, falling within the LLCA as they form part of the town's developed hinterland. The existing Kingussie Junction lies along the north-eastern edge of the Glebe Ponds area, allocated as Open Space within the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.
- 13.3.108 As an area of residential and recreational use, including some commercial development, this LLCA is of **High** value and **Low** susceptibility to change within the A9 corridor as the road does not pass directly through it. The LLCA therefore has a **Medium** sensitivity.



Photograph 13:9: View west towards Kingussie from existing Lay-by 114

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

- 13.3.109 Although the A9 does not run directly through this LLCA, it runs adjacent to it. The agricultural land between Kingussie and the A9 corridor creates an open character. The LLCA is important because of the relatively large number of residences and extent of public open space and recreational area within the town, characteristics of which may be affected by changes to the A9 corridor.

Insh Marshes LLCA Description

- 13.3.110 This LLCA contains several protected areas, including a National Nature Reserve (NNR), and is characterised by its predominantly flat and open landscape. The Insh Marshes NNR is a large area of wetland covering most of the LLCA, with AWI woodland bordering the wetland to the west. Gently undulating land surrounds the nature reserve. In addition to the NNR, other nature conservation designations include SSSI, Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Wetland of International Importance.
- 13.3.111 Ruthven Barracks sits on the remnants of a kame terrace and is designated as a Category A Listed Building and Scheduled Monument by Historic Environment Scotland (HES). It is surrounded by flat grassland, making it a prominent feature in the landscape and a key characteristic of the area. The Commonwealth War Graves cemetery, located adjacent to the B9152 and parallel to ch. 51,400, is another feature within this LLCA, located to the west of the B9152, approx. 1km to the east of the existing A9 /A86 Kingussie Junction. The existing River Spey crossing bridge is a recognised landscape feature that is set within the open floodplain together with the bridge's approach road (flanked by grassed embankments).
- 13.3.112 This LLCA is of **High** value and **High** susceptibility due to its predominantly flat and open landscape and important features including the Spey bridge. This results in **High** sensitivity because the landscape would have limited capacity to accommodate change.



Photograph 13:10 View over Insh Marshes towards Ruthven Barracks



Photograph 13:11: View towards the Spey bridge and Kingussie from Insh Marshes

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

13.3.113 Issues that are specific to the route through this LLCA include:

- The Spey bridge is a key landmark along the route. Views of the Spey are prominent due to its meandering form, the flat topography and exposed character
- Insh Marshes National Nature Reserve (NNR); one of the most important wetlands in Europe with areas also designated as SSSI, Ramsar, SPA and SAC
- Predominantly flat wetland/ marshland cover most of the area, although scattered broadleaf trees on slightly higher ground and coniferous woodland border the wetland to the east
- Ruthven Barracks Scheduled Monument sits on the remnants of a kame terrace and is surrounded by predominantly flat grassland, making it a prominent feature
- Open and exposed landscape, dominated by Ruthven Barracks and views of Kingussie

Lynchat and Balavil LLCA Description

- 13.3.114 Situated within the CNP, the character of the LLCA consists of a complex mosaic of coniferous and deciduous woodland within an agricultural landscape. Rectilinear fields are set on the rising north-western slopes of the glen. The small village of Lynchat falls within the LLCA, surrounded by relatively flat marshland, pastoral fields and parkland. The village of Lynchat is orderly in appearance, with avenues of mature, deciduous trees lining the approach roads. An area of dense coniferous tree plantation, Balavil Woodland, is located to the west of the LLCA, on land rising to the North Monadhliath.
- 13.3.115 Balavil House is located within the LLCA; an 18th century neo-Classical design by architect Robert Adam, it is a Category B listed property. While the designed landscape that surrounds the house is undesignated, it is integral to its setting. The former main driveway to the house, lined by mature deciduous trees, leads in a graceful extended sweep from the east Lodge (now severed by the A9). Groups of Scots pine trees indicated on the 1870 and 1903 OS maps are still to be seen within the open land east of the main house. There are a number of other listed buildings and artefacts within the grounds that appear to have been located for their visual effect as well as practical benefits. These include the Balavil Cottages Bridge (probably of GWMR origin), McPherson Memorial Obelisk and the burial ground east of the A9 near Lynchat, the East and West Lodges and Gate Piers, Balavil Mains and former Steading. In addition to other ancillary estate buildings, there are a number of derelict structures, including a sizable walled garden (with an accompanying habitable cottage), two former water mills (one of which is labelled 'Saw Mill' on the OS maps), and a chapel. The GWMR traverses the estate, passing the front entrance of Balavil House. Balavil Estate is evaluated in **Chapter 15, Cultural Heritage**.
- 13.3.116 Raitt's Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument is also located within this LLCA; a bronze age stone and earthwork structure located within an open field, it is currently screened from the A9 by landform and woodland. The current open setting of the Scheduled Monument provides an ambience of mystique due to it being (at least) visually separated from nearby buildings and roads.
- 13.3.117 Craighui Wood lies adjacent to Balavil Woodland; however, it is sparser in character. Both are designated as ancient woodland. The topography rises up towards Creag Bheag and Creag Bhalg to the west. A network of tracks run throughout this area and connect to minor roads in Lynchat.
- 13.3.118 This LLCA is of **High** value. It has **Medium** susceptibility and **High/ medium** sensitivity due to its open character, with mature trees lining the route.



Photograph 13:12: View to the south-west to the B9152 from Lynchat village

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

13.3.119 Issues that are specific to the route through this LLCA include aspects as follows:

- The gradient falling towards the immediate west of the A9 begins to level off; to its east, between the B9152 and the HML railway, the land slopes more gently towards the river, making the character relatively open despite some stands of tree cover
- The west of the A9 is more enclosed due to the rise in topography, but there are glimpses of agricultural land through the birch and coniferous trees along the road corridor
- Balavil Woodland dominates the landscape within the LLCA
- The setting of Raitt’s Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument within the LLCA

Dunachtonmore LLCA Description

13.3.120 Within the CNP, Dunachtonmore contains a mix of commercial and industrial land use including holiday cottages, farmland, the Highland Wildlife Park and the Breedon Meadowside Quarry. The Highland Wildlife Park is a key destination in the area and, along with holiday cottages, gives the area a more commercial and busier feel than other LLCA’s. Blocks of coniferous and deciduous woodland lie within rough grassland. Despite the existing commercial and industrial features, these elements bordering the A9 carriageway have limited tolerance to change.

13.3.121 This LLCA is of **High** value and is allocated a **High/ medium** susceptibility because of the sloping topography and trees lining the existing carriageway. This results in a **High/ medium** sensitivity.



Photograph 13:13: View east to A9 bridge from Highland Wildlife Park access road

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

13.3.122 Issues that are specific to the route through this LLCA include:

- Topography slopes predominantly from west to east, generally forming rolling hilly terrain, with fields and heath/ rough grassland enclosed or interspersed by woodland or parkland. The road is screened seasonally with predominantly birch woodland, limiting views of the Highland Wildlife Park along the route

- There is a small section of cut rock along the road side

Local Landscape Character Areas (Indirect)

Upper Strath LLCA Description

- 13.3.123 Within the CNP, this LLCA consists of very extensive native broadleaved woodland covering the steep slopes of Creag Dubh, regenerating across less accessible slopes and screes.
- 13.3.124 The LLCA has **High** value. The susceptibility is **Low** because the proposed route does not fall within the LLCA. The sensitivity is therefore **Medium**.

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

- 13.3.125 The A9 does not run directly through this LLCA and there is approximately 1km between this LLCA and the A9 corridor.

Insh Marsh Woodland LLCA Description

- 13.3.126 This LLCA falls within the 2km study area but the A9 does not directly traverse it. The area contains gently undulating pastoral land with built elements including a small number of white washed farmhouses and fenced fields. The LLCA forms a backdrop to Ruthven Barracks and is skirted by the B970 to the north-west. The topography rises towards Beinn Bhuidhe, which is covered with dense coniferous woodland interspersed with moorland.
- 13.3.127 The LLCA has **High** value. The susceptibility is **Low** because the proposed route does not fall within the LLCA. The sensitivity is therefore **Medium**.

Route specific aesthetic/perceptual aspects

- 13.3.128 The A9 does not run directly through this LLCA; however, it may have indirect effects given proximity.

Landscape Character Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity Summary

- 13.3.129 A summary of the landscape value, susceptibility to change and overall sensitivity of each LCA and LLCA around the Proposed Scheme extents is provided in **Table 13-7**.

Table 13:7: Summary of LCAs and LLCA Value, Susceptibility and Sensitivity

Area	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Landscape Character Area			
Glen Truim LCA	High	Low	Medium
Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA	High	Low	Medium
Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA	High	High	High
Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA	High	High	High
Local Landscape Character Area's (Direct)			
Loch Etteridge	High	Medium	High/ medium
Ralia	High	Medium	High/ Medium
Newtonmore	High	Low	Medium
Cairn/ Nuide	High	High/ medium	High/ medium
Kingussie	High	Low	Medium
Insh Marsh	High	High	High
Lynchat & Balavil Woodland	High	Medium	High/ medium
Dunachtonmore	High	High/ medium	High/ medium

Local Landscape Character Area's (Indirect)			
Upper Strath	High	Low	Medium
Insh Marsh Woodland	High	Low	Medium

Landscape Features and Perception

General

- 13.3.130 In accordance with the Evaluation Approach (**Section 13.2**), the assessment considers susceptibility to change of elements of the landscape resource. This includes assessment of its individual characteristics, features and elements. The following section provides a high-level, project wide assessment of discrete landscape characteristics that inform the LCA and LLCA evaluations. These are assessed as separate items to evaluate the components that together form the landscape of the study area, and how the Proposed Scheme interacts with them individually. They have provided a basis for assessing the landscape objectives of the Proposed Scheme, and the assessment of sensitivity of each characteristic provides a means of indicating the degree to which those objectives are met by the design.

Landform

- 13.3.131 The River Spey meanders through the extent of the study area, and the majority of the Proposed Scheme adjoins an extensive floodplain. The mountains of the Monadhliath and Cairngorms rise up to east and west of the study area, forming a backdrop on the horizon.
- 13.3.132 Newtonmore and Kingussie are the two main settlements in the study area and are set back from the existing A9 corridor, nestling within foothills of the Monadhliath to the west. The southern part of the A9 corridor is enclosed in character by mixed and coniferous woodland, concealing landform.
- 13.3.133 The character of the landform becomes more open where the A9 crosses over the River Spey, with the Spey bridge itself being a prominent feature. Here, the Ruthven Barracks dominate due to their raised position within predominantly flat wetland and the exposed character of the Insh Marshes.
- 13.3.134 The landscape here is of **High** value due to the unique elements of the landform. There is an overall **Medium** susceptibility to change due to the wooded characteristics of the landscape, resulting in a **High/ medium** sensitivity.

Vegetation

- 13.3.135 Whilst it appears wild in places, the existing vegetation cover within the study area and surrounding landscape has been greatly influenced by human activity through land use and livestock management, together with the natural influences of local geology, landform, microclimate, drainage, and soils.
- 13.3.136 The predominant types of vegetation cover are large clusters of woodland, pasture, heath and rough grassland, together with extensive wet grassland within Insh Marsh. Slopes are generally covered by heather moorland and poorly drained grassland, and to the south east, with extensive areas of regenerating woodland.
- 13.3.137 The vegetation is of **High** value. There are a variety vegetation types with **Medium** susceptibility to change; overall this results in a **Medium** sensitivity because, in many parts of the study area, change to vegetation will not be immediately apparent.

Woodland

- 13.3.138 Birch and mixed conifers are the predominant types of woodland vegetation. There are several areas of AWI woodland within the study area. Long established coniferous plantations are found to the west of Kingussie. The southern end of the study area contains a mixture of coniferous and

broadleaf woodland blocks scattered parallel to the A9 road corridor. The Woods of Glentruim to the east of the A9 corridor is the dominant area of woodland in the south.

- 13.3.139 Dense birch woodland associated with the existing A9 infrastructure is prominent in the landscape surrounding Ralia Café. Dense, coniferous and deciduous plantation extends beyond the River Spey to the west of Ralia Café.
- 13.3.140 Due to the extensive floodplain associated with the River Spey, wooded areas between approx. ch. 48,880 and ch. 52,810 are scattered on the edge of the floodplain resulting in the immediate landscape being more open in nature, with clear views to and from Kingussie west of the A9. Balavil Woodland is an area of dense, coniferous trees. The adjacent woodland (Craigbui Wood) is sparser in character. This is also the largest area of AWI woodland in the study area.
- 13.3.141 The existing woodland is diverse and is a key element in giving the area its character. Therefore, the woodland is of **High** value and **High** susceptibility to change. This gives it a **High** sensitivity.

Wildness

- 13.3.142 The Proposed Scheme does not impact directly on any designated areas of wildness. The Monadhliath Wild Land Area (WLA) is closest, at approximately 4km west of Kingussie. The study area has, however, a wild appearance in places; particularly around the River Spey and Insh Marshes, which have a geomorphically dynamic and natural character.
- 13.3.143 Human activity has heavily influenced the landscape along the rail/ road corridor and around the settlements including Newtonmore and Kingussie. Wildness is therefore considered detached from the existing infrastructure corridor. A lower sensitivity has been allocated to these landscape features within the vicinity of the existing roads.
- 13.3.144 The value of wildness is intrinsically **High**. However, susceptibility is **Low**, because, although some areas have a wild character, all areas are managed, and the rail/ road infrastructure and settlements heavily influence the local landscape. This results in a **Medium** sensitivity.

Water

- 13.3.145 The River Truim flows into the River Spey within the southern part of the Proposed Scheme. Flowing northwards, the River Spey meanders throughout the study area; the wider floodplain influences the character around the south-eastern edges of Newtonmore and Kingussie, and open sections of the A9 where the route abuts the Insh Marshes. Where the A9 crosses the River Spey, southeast of Kingussie, the bridge and embanked approach are prominent within the wider landscape.
- 13.3.146 The Insh Marshes NNR, located within the northern part of the Proposed Scheme, contains a number of lochs and lochans, as well as burns and drainage ditches. It supports a diverse variety of wetland flora and fauna. Parts of the NNR are also designated as SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar.
- 13.3.147 Water has a **High** value and a **High** susceptibility. This results in a **High** sensitivity.

Historic and Cultural Associations

- 13.3.148 The landscape within the study area has a number of historic and cultural associations. While **Chapter 15, Cultural Heritage** provides a comprehensive itinerary of properties, structures and artefacts of note within the study area, those of greatest importance include the following:
- The landscape surrounding the Proposed Scheme extent has been subject to settlement and agriculture from the mid-18th Century onwards (although it is likely that many of the settlements and farmsteads have earlier origins)
 - The 18th Century GWMR is present, crossing the A9 in places
 - A General Wade's bridge is located in Loch Etteridge LLCA

- Newtonmore and Kingussie are the larger settlements within the Proposed Scheme extents. Cultural attractions include the Clan Macpherson Museum and the Highland Folk Museum
- A historic Commonwealth War Graves cemetery is located on the outskirts of Kingussie
- A Scheduled Monument, an iron-age Souterrain (known as Raitt's Cave), is located within the Lynchat and Balavil LLCA 150m to the west of the A9
- Balavil House, an 18th Century Category B listed neo-Classical house designed by Robert Adam, set within a designed landscape in which a number of additional listed buildings and artefacts are located. The house is set 300m to the north west of the A9
- Ruthven Barracks, a Scheduled Monument and Category A listed building is a prominent feature within the landscape and the setting of the A9. The barracks are located 300m to the southeast of the A9, near the B970 (Ruthven Road) underbridge

13.3.149 The historical and cultural assets within the Proposed Scheme, notably those with Listed or Scheduled Monument status, are of **High** value, with **High** susceptibility to change. Therefore, a **High** sensitivity has been allocated to this element.

Landscape Fit

13.3.150 The key factor in considering landscape fit is the relationship between the road vertical and horizontal geometry and the surrounding landform.

13.3.151 The existing A9 generally follows the river valley and the edge of the Insh Marshes and therefore has a good landscape fit throughout the study area. The existing carriageway follows the gentle curves of the surrounding topography and, with the exception of the Spey crossing, avoids intrusion within the Marsh. However, the A9 traverses the eastern extent of the Balavil Estate, severing access between the East and West Lodges and the driveways to the main house, locally resulting in a discordant relationship with the designed landscape. The existing route also passes in close proximity to the hamlet of Lynchat, leaving a narrow strip of woodland that partially screens it from the A9. The route fits with the settlements of Newtonmore and Kingussie, separated from them by distance and topography.

13.3.152 Landscape fit is of **High** value; the A9 largely responds to local topography, despite the issues at Balavil and Lynchat. It has a **Medium** susceptibility because the existing route has already altered the landscape, and therefore further change would be measured against that baseline. This results in a **High/ medium** sensitivity.

Landscape Experience

13.3.153 Landscape experience is subjective and therefore perception of it will vary for different users. People who work on the land will have a different experience to tourists who visit the area for the first time. The view from the road is considered further in **Chapter 9** and **Chapter 14**. Elements of relevance to this assessment are explained below.

13.3.154 The landscape along the A9 corridor is scenic and contains designations of national importance. The southern extent of the study area is well wooded with deciduous and coniferous trees on either side of the A9, extending into the wider landscape.

13.3.155 To the north of the study area, the landscape through which the A9 passes is generally of a more rolling hilly terrain, with fields and heath/ rough grassland enclosed or interspersed by woodland or parkland (including the Highland Wildlife Park (HWP) and the Balavil Estate).

13.3.156 The Insh Marshes NNR forms a dominant part of the landscape experience within the northern part of the study area due to its open and exposed character. The Spey crossing bridge and Ruthven

Barracks are prominent features of the landscape, as is Balavil House. The Cairngorms and Monadhliath mountains rise up to the east and the west respectively, creating a backdrop to these features. At the northern extent of the Proposed Scheme study area, the road again becomes enclosed on both sides by woodland.

- 13.3.157 The landscape experience in the study area is **High** value with a **Medium** susceptibility to change. This results in a **High/ medium** sensitivity.

Landscape Features and Perceptual Sensitivity Summary

- 13.3.158 A summary of the value, susceptibility to change and overall sensitivity of each landscape feature, together with historic and cultural associations, landscape fit and landscape experience within the Proposed Scheme is provided in **Table 13:8**.

Table 13:8: Summary of Landscape Features and Perception Sensitivity

Characteristic	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Landscape Features			
Landform	High	Medium	High/ medium
Vegetation	High	Low	Medium
Woodland	High	High	High
Wildness	High	Low	Medium
Water	High	High	High
Landscape Perception			
Historic and Cultural Associations and Built Environment	High	High	High
Landscape Fit	High	Medium	High/ medium
Landscape Experience	High	Medium	High/ medium

Special Landscape Area (SLA)

Overview: Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA

- 13.3.159 The Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA lies predominantly out with the A9 road corridor. However, the Proposed Scheme traverses a small section of the SLA, as shown on **Drawing 13.2** in **Volume 3**.
- 13.3.160 SLAs were identified by The Highland Council (THC) by virtue either as being large scale areas of regional importance for scenic quality, or as being small scale areas of local scenic and recreational value. THC will consider the potential impacts of development proposals on the integrity of SLAs, including effects on their wider setting.
- 13.3.161 The information relating to Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA is taken from the *Assessment of Highland Special Landscape Areas: The Highland Council in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage* by Horner and MacLennan with Mike Wood, Landscape Architect (March 2010).
- 13.3.162 This SLA, located at the heart of the Central Highlands, combines a series of attractive, predominantly wooded glens interspersed with small-scale farmlands, with rising moorland leading to distinctive craggy summits and mountain plateaux which is of picturesque quality. Traditional estate farmsteads, cottages, castles and gatehouses throughout the glens enrich the sense of history within the area.
- 13.3.163 Within this area are two of Scotland's largest and best-known Munros (Ben Alder and Creag Meagaidh) and the varied constellation of peaks which lie between them. The area includes Loch Laggan, with its unusual sandy beach, extensive areas of forest and fairy-tale castle at Adverikie. It

also includes the more rugged, southern part of Loch Ericht, Loch Pattack, and a number of high corrie lochans.

SLA – Key Landscape and Visual Characteristics

- 13.3.164 This complex and diverse area combines an intimate sequence of wooded glens, estate policies and lochs surrounded by rolling moorlands leading to rugged mountains, craggy ridges and corries and mountain plateaux.
- 13.3.165 There is a strong contrast between the glens and the smooth rising heather moorland which leads to a series of prominent knolls and ridges, rugged corries, striking isolated mountain peaks and mountain plateaux.
- 13.3.166 Variable landform means that coniferous plantations generally merge well with the open hillsides above, and there is an almost seamless transition between woodland, forest, grassland and heath.
- 13.3.167 Throughout this area, an extensive network of hill tracks and paths, primarily for estate management, penetrate through the mountainous heart, linking remote glens over long high mountain passes with a strong sense of remoteness.

SLA Special Qualities – Ever Changing Compositions

- 13.3.168 A contrasting combination of glens and mountains, with small scale rocky landforms in-between, form a fairly chaotic composition with roads and reservoirs forming the main ordering elements.
- 13.3.169 A dynamic sense of place is experienced through ever changing combinations of high mountain, craggy knolls and ridges, smooth moorland, dark coniferous forest and native broadleaf woodland, flat farmed strath and open loch. There are some striking features within or adjacent to the study area. Creag Dhubh, near Newtonmore is one of Scotland’s most impressive roadside crags. There is a picturesque sequence of contrasts between upland mountains and settled straths which are enhanced by castles and lodges.

SLA Special Qualities – Cultural Heritage that contributes to landscape character

- 13.3.170 Settlement is heavily concentrated around the banks of the River Spey and, to a lesser extent, the River Truim. Prehistoric settlement is especially pronounced and present in significant concentrations along the River Spey to the south-west of Newtonmore.

SLA Special Qualities – Sensitivity to change

- 13.3.171 Qualities that would be sensitive to change within this SLA are mainly related to planting. Further woodland planting could screen views to local built heritage features or reduce the variety of views and the quality of the travel experience.

SLA Special Qualities – Potential for landscape enhancement within the Proposed Scheme

- 13.3.172 Promotion of natural regeneration of native broadleaf will be encouraged within the straths, while ensuring that key views to historical buildings and features are retained or enhanced.
- 13.3.173 The section of the SLA within the Proposed Scheme is allocated a **High** value and **Low** susceptibility resulting in a **Medium** sensitivity to the dualling works.

Baseline Summary

- 13.3.174 There are a variety of sensitive landscape features within the study area and the following key elements are assessed:
- Two of the four LCA's (Glen Truim and Badenoch: Upper Strath) have a **Medium** sensitivity to the Proposed Scheme, while the Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie and Badenoch: Insh Marshes have a **High** sensitivity.
 - All LLCA's (with a direct impact) as listed above have a **High** or **High/ medium** sensitivity to the Proposed Scheme
 - A number of SLQs of the CNP are considered to be present within the LCAs, LLCAs and landscape features; these are specifically discussed within **Appendix 13.4** in **Volume 2**
 - Of the eight landscape characteristics listed above in **Table 13:8**, three are **High** sensitivity (Woodland, Water and Historic and Cultural Associations and Built Environment), three are **High/ medium** sensitivity (Landform, Landscape Fit and Landscape Experience) and two are **Medium** sensitivity (Vegetation and Wildness)
 - Landscape experience is of **High/ medium** sensitivity (refer to paragraph **13.3.153**) because of the existing infrastructure of the A9 itself, the Spey crossing and the HML railway

13.4 Potential Impacts

Introduction

- 13.4.1 This section considers the potential temporary (construction phase) and permanent (operational phase) effects of the Proposed Scheme on the landscape character areas and features discussed in **Section 13.3**.
- 13.4.2 All effects set out within this section are considered to be adverse, unless otherwise stated.
- 13.4.3 Through the environmentally led design process, embedded mitigation has been developed and is incorporated within the Proposed Scheme design. Embedded mitigation is further explained below. All effects identified within this section have been assessed with the inclusion of embedded mitigation. Additional mitigation is explained in **Section 13.5**.

Assessment against Key Objectives

- 13.4.4 The Proposed Scheme is assessed against the LCA objectives established via the A9 Dualling Programme Strategic Landscape Review. The full assessment is set out in **Appendix 13.3, Volume 2**.

Embedded (Primary) Mitigation

- 13.4.5 Through the DMRB Stage 3 iterative design process, a number of environmentally led workshops considered each aspect of the developing design and made recommendations for certain features to be included in the design. These aspects have been defined as ‘embedded mitigation’ and, where they are included in the Proposed Scheme design, they are considered within the context of the impact assessment as providing mitigation to avoid or reduce environmental impacts, and in some cases, provide environmental benefits.
- 13.4.6 With respect to GLVIA 3 terminology, ‘primary’ mitigation is what this EIA refers to as ‘embedded’ mitigation. With respect to landscape considerations in this chapter, the relevant aspects of project specific embedded (primary) mitigation measures include:
- preliminary form of cutting and embankment slopes adjoining the A9 mainline (including areas of rock cut) have been designed with the involvement of Landscape Architects to reflect local landform features where possible, within peat, habitat and flood zone constraints. There are a number of landform-sensitive areas also set out within **Chapter 14**, which have been designed to respond to adjacent landform as far as possible
 - retaining wall structures (RWS) designed to minimise overt intrusion into views from the road, or open landscape, at a number of locations
 - preliminary form of sustainable drainage system (SuDS) basins have been designed in conjunction with Landscape Architects to reflect local landscape characteristics and to replicate natural features where possible
 - there are a total of 10 DMRB Type A lay-bys in the Proposed Scheme, five on each of the northbound and southbound carriageways. Three lay-bys include retaining walls, viewing facilities, a widened segregation strip and potential links to NMU routes
 - there is a link to the NMU from the Raitt’s Cave northbound layby at Ch. 52,000;
 - designs to improve aesthetics and local integration of structures, including the low-profile design of the new River Spey bridge crossing
 - design of rock cutting generally; additional ‘finessing’ of rock cut faces, like other landform features referred to above, will be required as an element of ‘additional’ mitigation

- 13.4.7 While the impact assessment is undertaken in cognisance of the embedded (primary) mitigation features noted above, in order to ensure that all project mitigation requirements (including embedded (primary), specific and standard mitigation are captured, they have been included within the summary of mitigation in **Section 13.5** of this chapter, and the Schedule of Environmental Commitments contained in **Chapter 21**. The additional mitigation listed in **Section 13.5** is what GLVIA 3 refers to as ‘secondary’ mitigation. Standard, embedded and project specific mitigation has been identified within **Table 13-17**.
- 13.4.8 The long-term permanent effects after years 15-25 identified in this section have been assessed as including the embedded and additional mitigation. The details of the proposed additional mitigation measures are further explained in **Section 13.5**.

Additional (Secondary) Mitigation

- 13.4.9 Additional landscape mitigation is that which is necessary to reduce or minimise any likely long-term residual effects following the implementation of embedded (primary) landscape mitigation measures. In general, this would comprise the introduction of planting that screens adverse views from sensitive receptors; replaces element of views that have been removed by the Scheme; augments existing features; or enhances views by, for example, creating a context or frame. Proposed additional mitigation measures are what GLVIA3 refers to as ‘secondary’ mitigation and are further explained in **Section 13.5**.
- 13.4.10 Additional mitigation, specific to views from the road, has been developed with input from Landscape Architects to align with the key landscape and visual design objectives for the Proposed Scheme (please refer to **Appendix 13.2, Volume 2**), including:
- design of the roadscape environment including seeding and planted features (as shown on **Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1-6.19** in **Volume 3**)
 - visual/ aesthetic treatment of retaining walls within the Proposed Scheme are to be faced with natural stone treatment and designed carefully to break up their linear appearance, subject to detailed design
 - natural finish to reflect the appearance of the existing stone bridge facades, subject to detailed design
 - new embankments and cuttings are to be further developed at detailed design to feather into tops and toes of adjacent (existing) gradients, at approved profiles, to form slopes of natural appearance, to blend into the topography within the Scheme context.
- 13.4.11 SuDS are to be further developed at detailed design including seeding and planted features (as shown on **Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1-6.19** in **Volume 3**).

Additional Lay-by Proposals

- 13.4.12 The design under assessment includes three no. Type A lay-bys, with a segregation island, as discussed above. These are ‘embedded’ into the design. However, at each of these locations, it is proposed to augment the lay-bys, with areas designed to facilitate users’ enjoyment of the spectacular surrounding landscape scenery. The figures as described below illustrate the conceptual designs for each lay-by:
- **Figure 13-1** to **Figure 13-3** presents indicative illustrations of proposals for the northbound lay-by at approx. ch. 49,000 at Ruthven
 - **Figure 13-4** to **Figure 13-6** illustrates proposals for the southbound lay-by at Ruthven Barracks, ch. 49,400

- **Figure 13-7 to Figure 13-9** illustrates the southbound lay-by proposals at approx. ch. 55,850 at Insh Marshes

- 13.4.13 The landform elements of these proposals, i.e. earthworks required to create terraces and platforms, are included within the 3D earthworks models for the Proposed Scheme. Relevant features, beyond principal earthworks requirements, such as furniture (e.g. benches/ shelters/ picnic tables), fencing or walls, ramps or steps, signage and interpretation information, with ‘Access for All’ compliant footpaths and links to the existing NMU network are ‘additional’ requirements.
- 13.4.14 The indicative lay-by proposals are presented below. The designs will be developed further during detailed design stage.



Figure 13-1: Illustrative proposals for Ruthven northbound Lay-by at ch. 49,000 – Plan

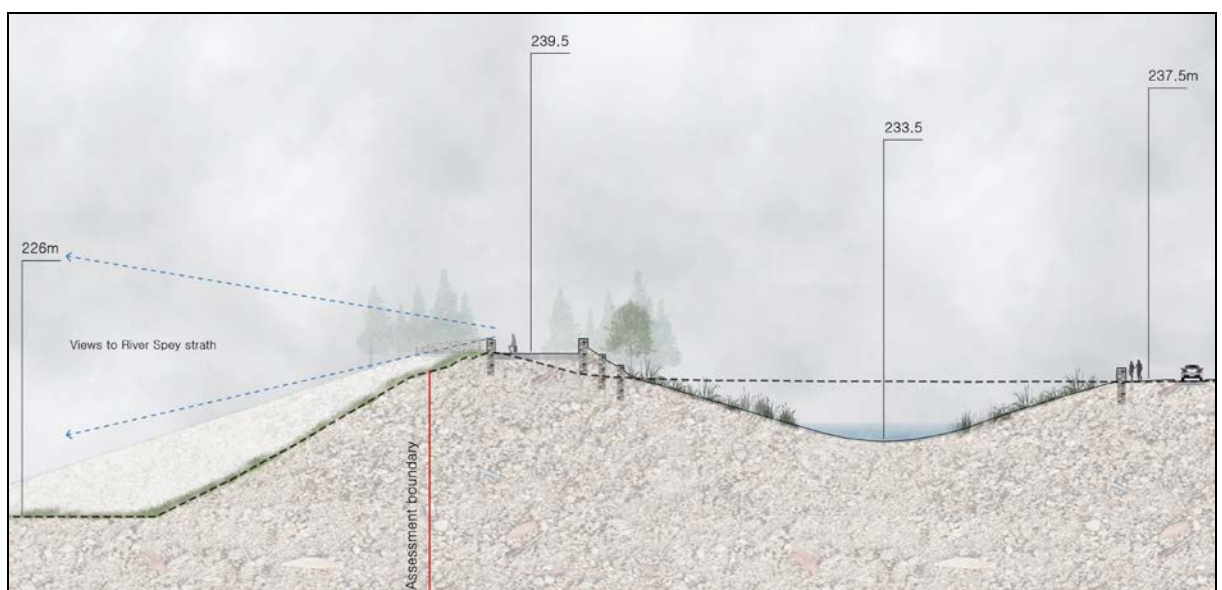


Figure 13-2: Illustrative proposals for Ruthven northbound Lay-by at ch. 49,000 – Section A-A'

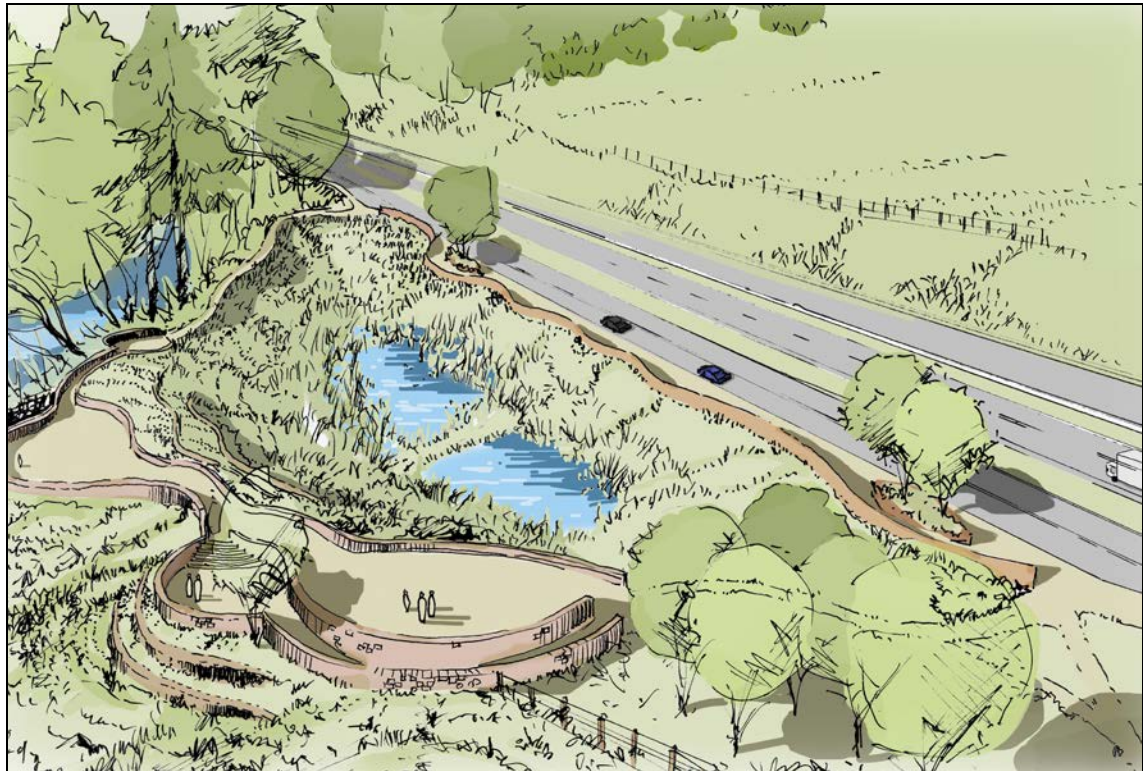


Figure 13-3: Illustrative proposals for Ruthven northbound Lay-by at ch. 49,000 – Sketch View

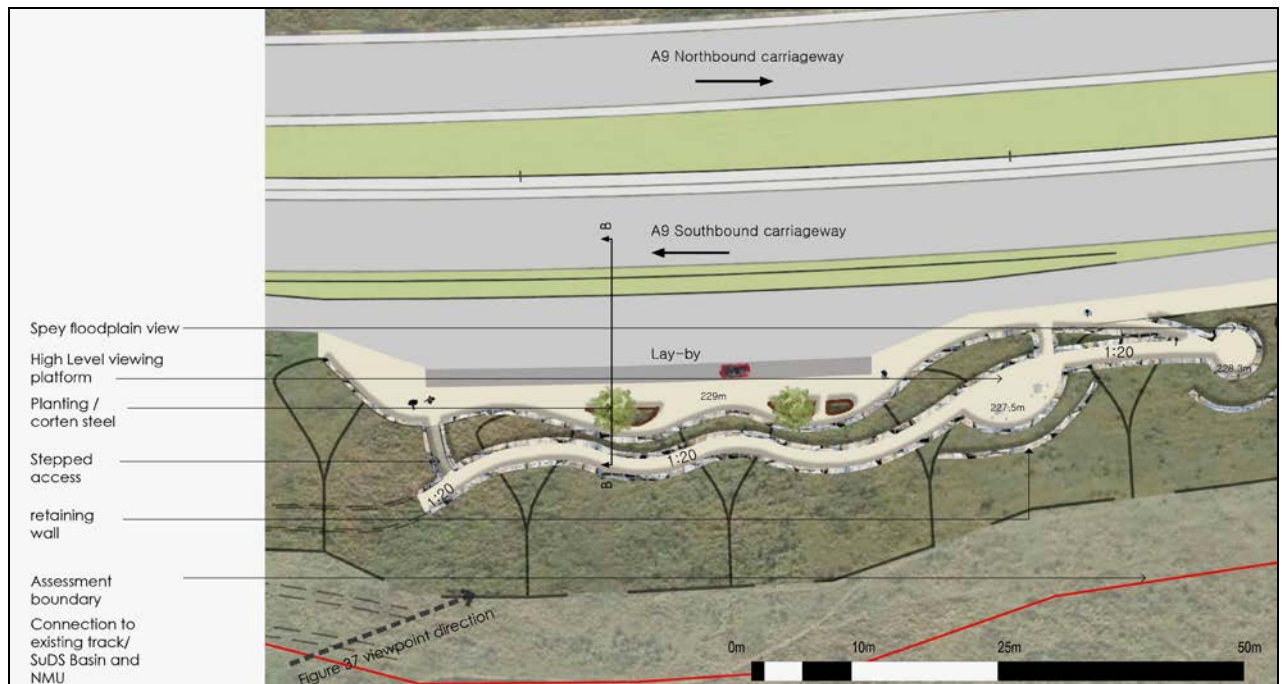


Figure 13-4: Illustrative proposals for Ruthven southbound Lay-by at ch. 49,400 – Plan



Figure 13-5: Illustrative proposals for Ruthven southbound Lay-by at ch. 49,400 – Section B-B'

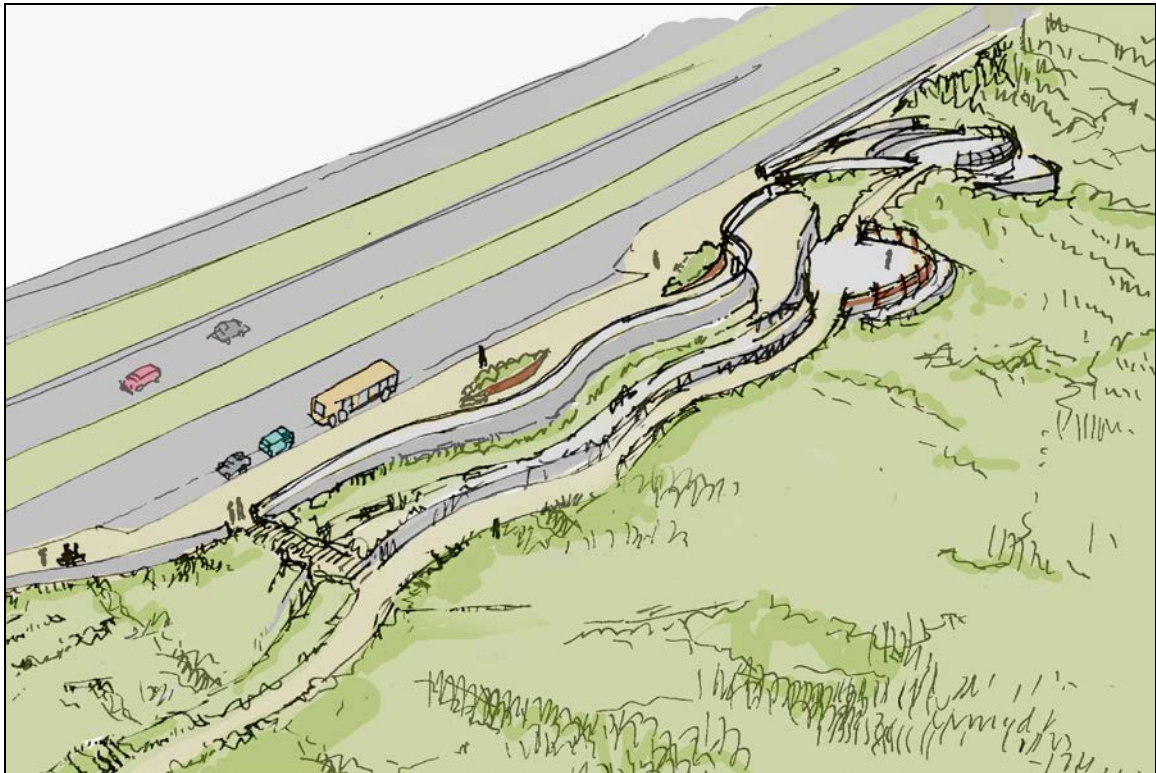


Figure 13-6: Illustrative proposals for Ruthven southbound lay-by at ch. 49,400 – Sketch View

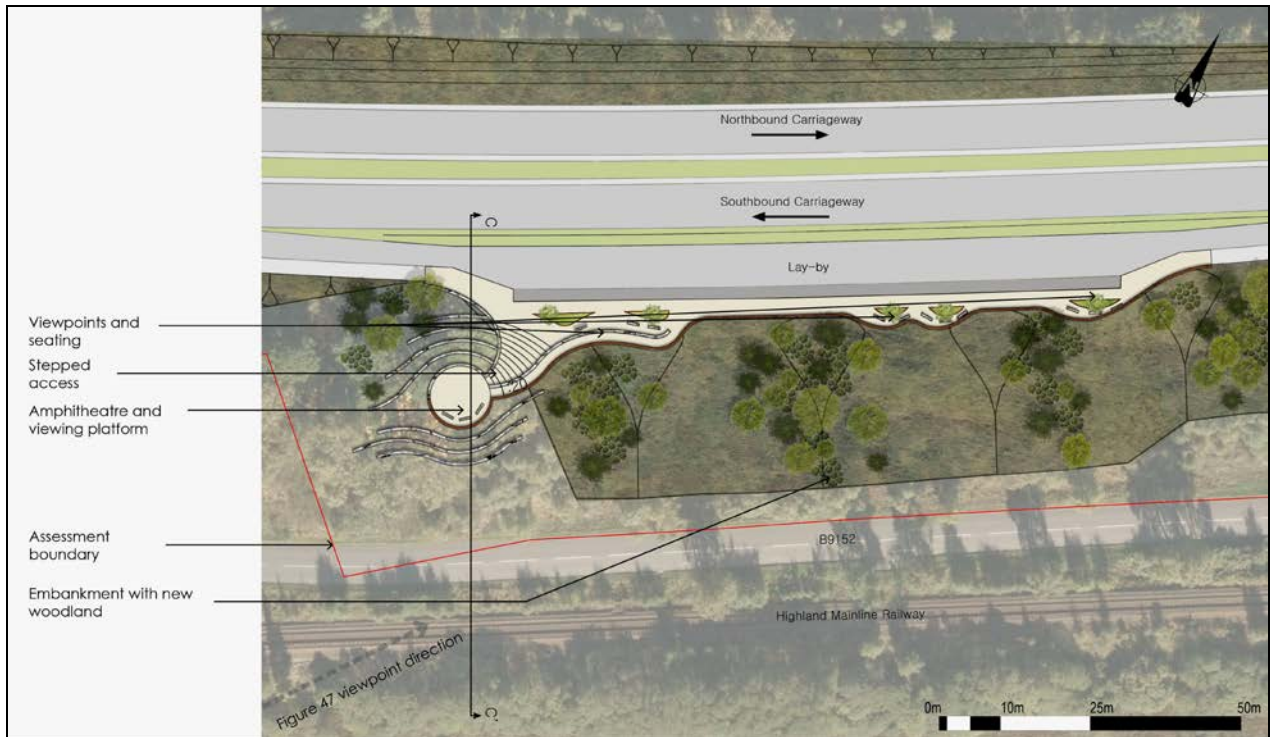


Figure 13-7: Illustrative proposals for Insh Marsh southbound Lay-by at ch. 55,850 – Plan



Figure 13-8: Illustrative proposals for Insh Marsh southbound Lay-by at ch. 55,850 – Section C-C'



Figure 13-9: Illustrative proposals for Insh Marsh southbound Lay-by at ch. 55 850 – Sketch View

Specific Mitigation Proposals for Heritage Features

- 13.4.15 The Proposed Scheme under assessment includes two areas where special consideration has been given to the design and construction of noise attenuation, retaining wall and access features, with relevance to Scheduled Monuments and Listed properties. These are ‘embedded’ into the design. However, at each of these locations, there is potential to augment the design to mitigate effects on existing features of heritage and landscape value and the figures described below illustrate conceptual designs for each area:
- **Figure 13-10 to Figure 13-12** illustrates proposals for northbound treatment of retaining wall and slopes at approx. ch. 51,800 to 52,400 at Raitt’s Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument
 - **Figure 13-13 to Figure 13-15** illustrates proposals for the northbound left-in, left-out access to Balavil Mains and the false cutting to the A9 frontage with Balavil House designed landscape and HES Category B Listed properties, between ch. 53,550 and 54,400.
- 13.4.16 As in the case of the additional lay-by proposals, the landform elements of these proposals, i.e. earthworks required to create terraces and retaining walls, are included within the 3D earthworks models for the Proposed Scheme. In addition, reference should be made to **Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.9** and **Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.18 (Section R-R’)** for Raitt’s Cave. For Balavil House, refer to **Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.10** and **Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.18 (Section S-S’)**.
- 13.4.17 The indicative proposed treatments to these locations are illustrated below. Relevant features, other than principal earthworks requirements, such as gate-piers, metal gates (including fencing) and wall finishes are ‘additional’ requirements.

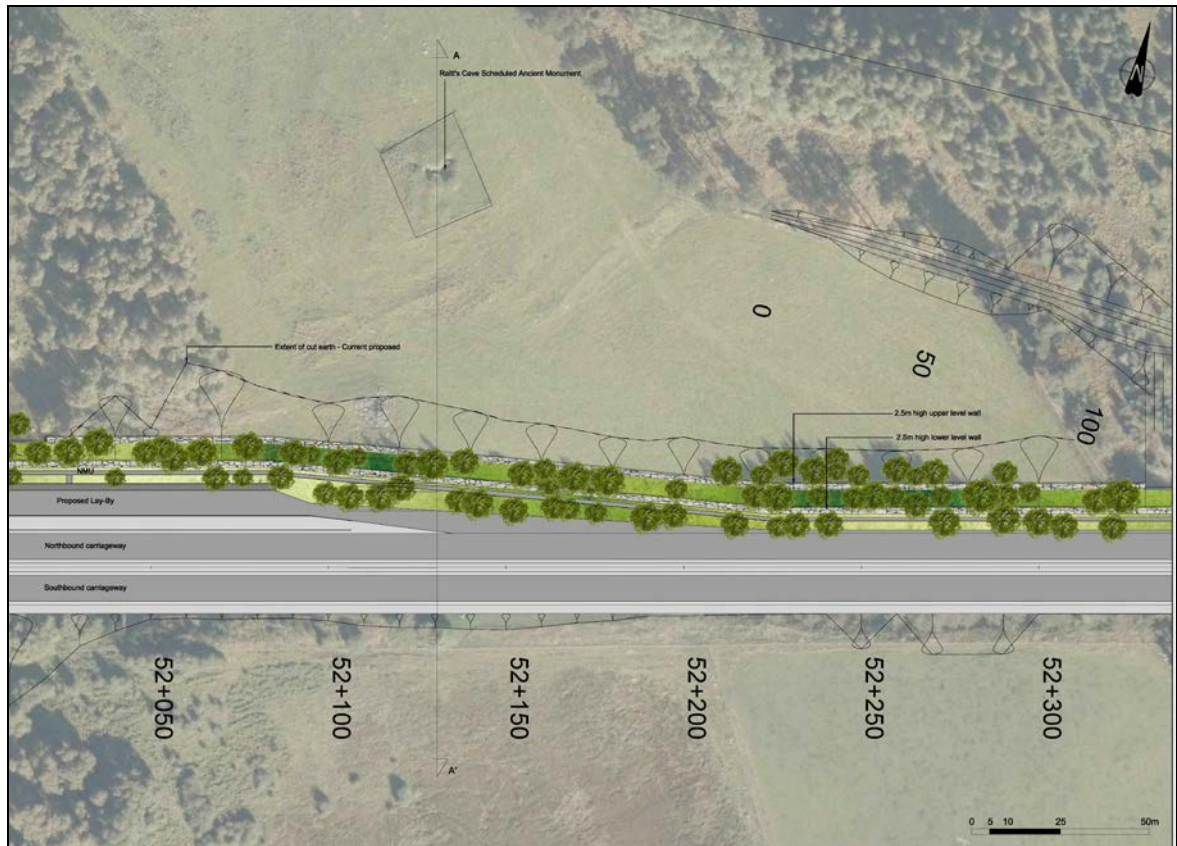


Figure 13-10: Illustrative proposals for Raitt's Cave retaining wall at ch. 51,800 to 52,400 – Plan

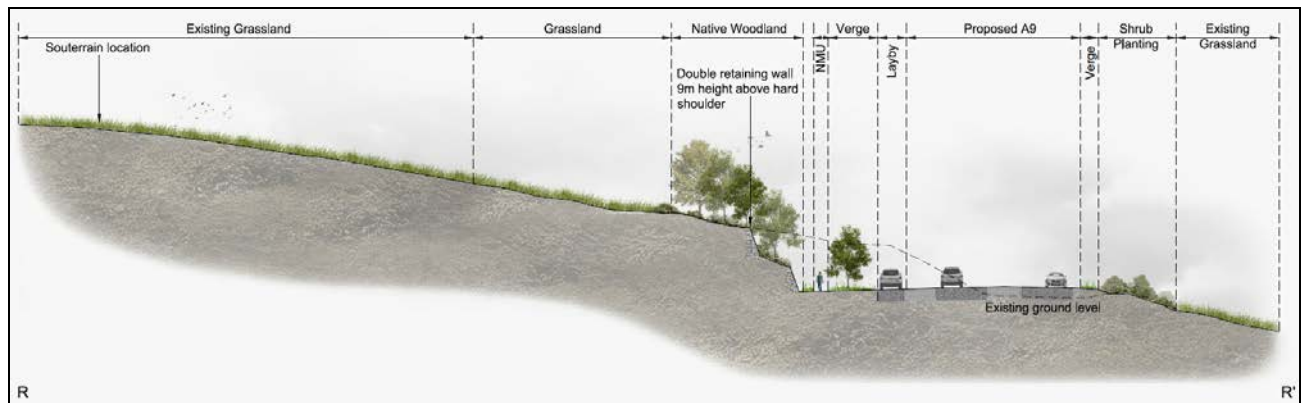


Figure 13-11: Illustrative proposals for Raitt's Cave retaining wall at ch. 51,800 to 52,400 – Section R-R'



Figure 13-12: Illustrative proposals for Raitt's Cave retaining wall at ch. 51,800 to 52,400 – Sketch View



Figure 13-13: Illustrative proposals for Balavil Mains/ House Frontage at ch. 53,550 to 54,400 – Plan

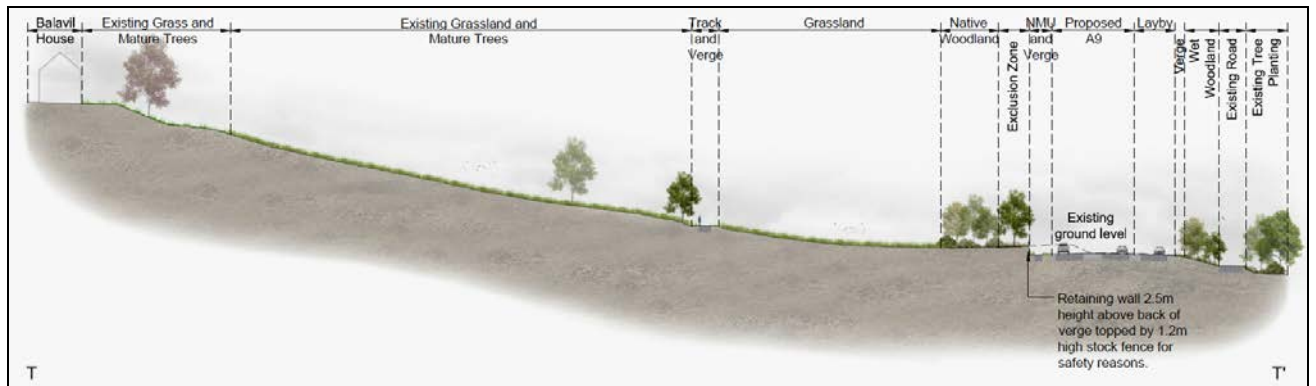


Figure 13-14: Illustrative proposals for Balavil Mains/ House Frontage at ch. 53,550 to 54.400 – Section T-T'



Figure 13-15: Illustrative proposals for Balavil Mains/ House Frontage at ch. 53,550 to 54.400 – Sketch View

Temporary Impact Assessment: Construction Phase

- 13.4.18 Although the effect of construction on landscape character and features will be limited, there are a number of likely construction activities that may affect the study area, including:
- Site clearance and demolition
 - Stock proof fencing
 - Pre-earthworks drainage and temporary SuDS
 - Earthworks general (cut/ fill)
 - Material transfer via haul routes and temporary watercourse crossings
 - Rock cuts and rock breaking
 - Stockpiling and temporary lay-down
 - Watercourse diversions and culverts
 - Drainage networks, including SuDS basin and outfall installation
 - Earthworks rolling and compaction
 - Vehicles moving machinery and materials to and from the site
 - Machinery, potentially including heavy excavators, earth moving plant, concrete batching plant, cranes, etc.
 - Vegetation loss and exposed bare earth over the extent of the proposed works
 - Vegetation protection fencing to protect existing vegetation to be retained
 - Road sub-layer formation
 - Central reserve works
 - Road pavement laying
 - Structures demolition
 - Bridge abutment construction
 - Bridge structure and deck construction
 - Road marking
 - Signage installation
 - Site restoration (ecological and landscape mitigation works)
 - Active traffic management
 - Temporary roads, access tracks, haul routes, etc.
 - Temporary site compound areas including site accommodation and parking
 - Temporary site compound areas, including accommodation and parking
- 13.4.19 Construction activities may result in a high local magnitude of impact, but they will be temporary and of relatively limited duration.
- Construction phase effects*
- 13.4.20 Construction phase effects that will be common for all the landscape features may include presence of machinery and vehicles, vegetation loss, exposed earth, construction of structures and earthworks, access roads, material storage and lighting.
- 13.4.21 Site compound areas, including site accommodation and parking, are not considered within this assessment. These locations and the necessary consents and permissions will be negotiated by the Contractor.
- 13.4.22 Construction phase effects are expected to be in the order of three years from preparatory site clearance works to completion. The overall landscape character is unlikely to be fundamentally changed by such short-term effects; however, they will affect the landscape experience for their duration.

13.4.23 More significant temporary effects will likely arise in areas with extensive earthworks and construction where there are new structures in the Proposed Scheme, such as:

- SuDS basins
- Lay-bys
- Northbound left in/ left out access at ch. 41,600
- Newtonmore Junction at ch. 43,400
- Northbound left in/ left out access at Nuide Farm at ch. 46,450
- Extended B970 underbridge at ch. 48,800
- the River Spey crossing embankment and bridge
- Northbound left in/ left out Kingussie Junction at ch. 50,600
- Southbound left in/ left out Kingussie Junction at ch. 51,000
- New underbridge access to Balavil Estate at ch. 52, 950
- Northbound left in/ left out Balavil Junction at ch. 53,600
- Extended Highland Wildlife Park underbridge at ch. 56,190
- Glentruim Rail Underbridge and Kingussie Rail Underbridge

Permanent Impact Assessment: Operational Phase

13.4.24 Mitigation to reduce impacts has been developed for the Proposed Scheme as part of the design development (embedded mitigation) and EIA process (Standard and Specific mitigation).

13.4.25 The potential impacts of the dualling on the landscape were assessed in relation to the following aspects:

- Landscape designations – CNP SLQs
- LCAs
- LLCAs
- Landscape features
- The landscape experience

13.4.26 The consideration of temporary construction effects and then permanent operational effects are provided for each baseline receptor, assessed below within this section of the chapter.

Designated Landscapes – Cairngorms National Park

13.4.27 All of the study area lies within the CNP. Following discussions with CNPA, through the A9 Dualling Landscape Forum, it was agreed that the review of the SLQs should focus on the LCAs and LLCAs that embody the specific special qualities. An assessment of the CNPA SLQs is presented in **Appendix 13.4 in Volume 2**.

13.4.28 The potential effects of the Proposed Scheme on LLCAs are summarised in **Table 13:14**. The following CNP special qualities, which are seen as relevant to the study area, are highlighted in **bold** below.

General Qualities

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

Trees, Woods and Forests

- Dark and venerable pine forest
- **Light and airy birch woods**
- **Parkland and policy woodlands**
- Long association with forestry

Moorlands

- **Extensive moorland, linking the farmland, woodland and the high tops**
- **A patchwork of muirburn**

The Mountains and Plateaux

- The unifying presence of the central mountains
- **An imposing massif of strong dramatic character**
- The unique plateaux of vast scale, distinctive landforms and exposed, boulder strewn high ground
- **The surrounding hills**
- The drama of deep corries
- **Exceptional glacial landforms**
- **Snowscapes**

Wildlife and Nature

- **Dominance of natural landforms**
- **Extensive tracts of natural vegetation**
- **Association with iconic animals**
- Wild land
- **Wildness**

Glens and Straths

- **Steep glens and high passes**
- **Broad, farmed straths**
- **Renowned rivers**
- **Beautiful lochs**

Visual and Sensory Qualities

- **Layers of receding ridge lines**
- **Grand panoramas and framed views**
- **A landscape of many colours**
- **Dark skies**
- **Attractive and contrasting textures**
- The dominance of natural sounds

Culture and History

- **Distinctive planned towns**
- **Vernacular stone buildings**
- **Dramatic, historical routes**
- The wistfulness of abandoned settlements
- **Focal cultural landmarks of castles, distilleries and bridges**
- The Royal connection

Recreation

- **A landscape of opportunities**
- **Spirituality**

- 13.4.29 As the Proposed Scheme is restricted to the existing infrastructure corridor, it will have limited effect on many of these qualities; however, each has been considered to ensure that the landscape effects of the proposed dualling are fully understood within the context of the CNP SLQs.
- 13.4.30 SLQs of the CNP have been fully assessed against the Proposed Scheme within **Appendix 13.4** in **Volume 2**, in which reference to relevant LCAs and LLCAs are made.
- 13.4.31 The assessment finds that the Proposed Scheme will not result in any significant adverse effects on the CNP SLQs in the long term, as any anticipated effects are likely to be localised and limited in scale and nature. There is no risk of loss or damage to the SLQs identified. In regard to wildness, there may be limited disruption during construction.

CNPA Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)**Glen Truim LCA**

- 13.4.32 A section of Glen Truim LCA is within the study area from approx. ch. 40,000 to ch. 40,600. This section has dense mixed woodland along the roadside, with rising topography to the east creating an enclosed feel. The proposals will mainly affect the eastern side of the road, where embankments will be created through this stretch. Smaller embankments will be created at two points along the west side of the A9; however, they will not stretch as far as the adjacent existing NCN7 cycleway. There will be earthworks to the NCN7 where it is also utilised for vehicular access. The assessment reviews the potential effect on the key characteristics and how the Proposed Scheme responds to the key objectives established for this area.

Assessment of Key Characteristics

Table 13:9: Potential effects upon Glen Truim LCA key characteristics

Key Characteristics	Potential Effects
Tree cover and planted woodland	Tree cover along both sides of the existing carriageway will be affected.
Sense of enclosure	Will be affected due to wider road and embankments on the west and east side.
Heath and rough grassland	Will be slightly reduced due to construction of embankments.

Magnitude of effect

Construction Stage

- 13.4.33 The construction within this LCA involves parallel widening to the east of the existing A9. Construction will require significant embankments on the east side of the A9 mainline and smaller scale cutting on the west. Some roadside vegetation will need to be removed. The works will span approximately 150m at the widest point. A **Medium** magnitude has been allocated because the earthworks will have a notable impact, however they will only affect a small section of this LCA.

Operational Phase on Completion (Year 1)

- 13.4.34 Upon completion of the construction, embankments will create a more enclosed character. Large areas of bare earth will be visible however some initial seeding will lessen impacts. The existing tree belt will be supplemented with replacement tree planting, but this will not have had time to provide any degree of mitigation. A **Medium** magnitude has been allocated.

Operational Phase – Long Term (Years 15-25)

- 13.4.35 As vegetation becomes established, the embankments will appear more naturalistic and the magnitude of the effect will be reduced. The east side of the A9 mainline will appear more enclosed in character due to the construction of the embankments. The magnitude will be **Medium/ low** because there will locally be a noticeable change in the LCA.

Significance of Effect at Construction and Operation

- 13.4.36 The LCA has been allocated a **Moderate** effect during construction due to the earthworks, particularly on the east side of the A9 mainline. At Operation Year 1, proposed seeding and planting will not have had time to provide a degree of mitigation. However, only a small proportion of the LCA will be affected by the Proposed Scheme, reducing the effect to **Moderate/ slight** following reduction in construction traffic and associated construction disturbance.
- 13.4.37 The long-term effect will reduce to **Slight** because, although the Proposed Scheme does not quite fit the landscape character, the scheme will only affect a small area of the LCA and planting will soften the appearance.

Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA

- 13.4.38 This LCA lies between ch. 40,600 and ch. 45,000. To the south the A9 is surrounded by dense coniferous and birch trees giving a well wooded and enclosed character. The surrounding terrain is rolling with some exposed rock in parts. The proposals affect both sides of the A9 mainline with a new SuDS basin at ch. 41,700 and a left in/ left out junction at ch. 41,600 on the northbound side. The new southbound carriageway will be constructed on the east side of the existing route, and earthworks will take place mainly on that side of the A9 mainline, with associated tree loss.

Assessment of Key Characteristics

Table 13:10: Potential effects upon Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA key characteristics

Key Characteristics	Potential Effects
Sense of enclosure	Will be affected due to wider road, loss of tree cover and new cuttings/ embankments.
Tree cover	Will be affected due to earthworks.
Hummocky moraines	Will be affected due to earthworks.

Magnitude of effect

Construction Stage

- 13.4.39 The Proposed Scheme within this LCA will involve parallel widening to the east of the existing A9 mainline. Construction will involve a large amount of cutting and construction of embankments on both sides of the carriageway with associated tree removal. The construction work will be extensive in this LCA due to the construction of three new SuDS basins and a left-in/ left-out junction. A **High** magnitude has therefore been allocated.

Operational Phase on Completion (Year 1)

- 13.4.40 On completion of the construction phase, there will be large sections of earthworks predominantly to the east of the A9 mainline. Large areas of bare earthworks will be visible but initial seeding and planting will lessen effects. Planting around the SuDS basins and drainage channels will have started to help them blend in to the surrounding grassland.
- 13.4.41 The underbridge junction at ch. 43,400 will require removal of coniferous woodland on the both the east and west sides of the A9 mainline. Green swards of germinating seeded ground cover will begin to mitigate the impacts of the junction earthworks ahead of growth of replacement tree planting; early growth foliage from feathered trees will provide additional greening.
- 13.4.42 The magnitude in this phase will remain **High**.

Operational Phase – Long Term (Years 15-25)

- 13.4.43 When mitigation has matured, the earthworks will blend into the surrounding landscape. Planting and seeding will have established on embankments and cuttings, and natural regeneration of vegetation will have occurred. Magnitude by this time will be **Medium**.

Significance of Effect at Construction and Operation

- 13.4.44 There will be noticeable effects at construction phase due to the construction work involved in the earthworks and SuDS basins. The effect will therefore be **Substantial**. At operation year 1 the proposed seeding and planting will not have established fully but will lessen effects, reducing effects to **Substantial/ moderate**. At 15-25 years, earthworks and planting will blend into the surrounding landscape, reducing the effect to **Moderate/ slight**.

Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA

- 13.4.45 This LCA begins at approximate ch. 45,000 and extends to approximate ch. 50,200. The south of the LCA is enclosed by birch woodland and opens up at approximate ch. 45,600 to a more exposed, rolling terrain. The LCA will be affected by new SuDS basins and a combination of large and small-scale earthworks.

Assessment of Key Characteristics

Table 13:11: Potential effects upon Badenoch: Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA key characteristics

Key Characteristics	Potential Effects
Hummocky terrain with open character	Will be affected due to earthworks and SuDS basins.
Agricultural land	Will be affected by construction of passing places in local access route, potentially resulting in limited loss of predominantly coniferous trees.
Recreational land	Recreational land on the southern perimeter of Kingussie is unlikely to be affected.

Magnitude of effect

Construction Stage

- 13.4.46 The Proposed Scheme is being widened to the east of the existing A9 mainline within this LCA. Construction works will involve extensive earthworks on both sides of the road. Earthworks will also take place on the tracks running along both sides of the A9 mainline between ch. 45,400 and ch. 47,000. In addition, five SuDS basins will be constructed to the west of the A9 mainline, which will be noticeable on the surrounding landscape due to the rolling, open character. A **High** magnitude has been allocated due to the exposed nature of much of this LCA.

Operational Phase on Completion (Year 1)

- 13.4.47 The character of the landscape is generally open so planting of thick tree cover is not appropriate. However, trees planted in clusters and low-level scrub and seed planting will fit in with the existing landscape character and help earthworks and SuDS basins blend into the landscape.
- 13.4.48 Permanent passing places along the track running parallel to the west of the A9 mainline at approximate ch. 43,400 to ch. 45,200 will be completed. The passing places will result in loss of predominantly coniferous woodland but the character will not change greatly due to the remaining surrounding woodland. The phased earthworks and early completion of the seeding and specimen tree planting will begin to mitigate the effects of the junction ahead of the replacement woodland/shrub planting. A **High** magnitude has been allocated for this phase.

Operational Phase – Long Term (Years 15-25)

- 13.4.49 Replacement trees planted in clusters will fit in with the existing landscape character and will not screen views of rolling pastoral land. Embankments and cuttings will have integrated into the surrounding landscape. A **Low** magnitude has been allocated for this phase.

Significance of Effect at Construction and Operation

- 13.4.50 At construction phase, there will be a **Substantial** effect on landscape character as there will be a number of new embankments, cuttings and SuDS basins. At year 1 the implementation of mitigation will reduce effects to **Substantial/ moderate** as seeded earthworks and planting on slopes will have started to establish. In the long term, effects will further reduce to **Moderate/ slight** (not significant) as replacement trees and new planting will have better established.

Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA

- 13.4.51 This LCA begins at approximate ch. 49,200 and extends to the Proposed Scheme's northern boundary on the east side of the A9 mainline. Within this LCA the widening of the road changes from the east to the west side of the existing carriageway. The section around Ruthven Barracks, the Insh Marshes and the Spey bridge is a key point of the proposals, which involves the construction of a SuDS basin and a lay-by that may be apparent from Ruthven Barracks.

Assessment of Key Characteristics

Table 13:12: Potential effects upon Badenoch: Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA key characteristics

Key Characteristics	Potential Effects
Tree belts	Some tree cover will be lost, particularly around the proposed sub-surface SuDS feature (ch. 56,400) and the village of Lynchat.
Insh Marshes	Will be affected by earthworks on the east side of the mainline.
Spey bridge	Will be affected by expansion and associated earthworks, demolition and reinstatement of the site of the old bridge.

Magnitude of effect

Construction Stage

- 13.4.52 The construction phase involves parallel widening to the east of the A9 from approximate ch. 49,200 to ch. 51,400, where the widening changes to be on the west side. It requires cuttings and embankments on either side of the road, SuDS basins and lay-bys. The sub-surface SuDS feature proposed at ch. 56,400 will require significant construction. There will be significant construction around the village of Lynchat due to tree removal and construction of retaining walls and earthworks. A **High** magnitude has been allocated to this LCA as it involves a landscape change around an exposed area, particularly the Spey bridge and Ruthven Barracks.

Operational Phase on Completion (Year 1)

- 13.4.53 South of the Spey bridge, widening is to the east side; whilst north of the Spey bridge and Kingussie Junction, the widening is predominantly to the west within this LLCA. Earthworks around the lay-bys, Spey bridge and SuDS basins will be exposed, although these are relatively small on the east side adjacent to Insh Marsh LCA. After year 1 there will still be bare earth visible; however, the effect of this will be softened once planting has established. The magnitude of effect of the Proposed Scheme on the LCA is **High/ medium**.

Operational Phase – Long Term (Years 15-25)

- 13.4.54 In the long term, the lay-bys will be blended into the landscape by planting and seeding. The landscape fit between the road and marshes will be improved.
- 13.4.55 The proposed Spey bridge will have a noticeable effect on the landscape due to its scale; however, by this phase low level planting will reduce its effect on the landscape.
- 13.4.56 The SuDS basin will have a minimal effect on the landscape character through appropriate mitigation in the long term.
- 13.4.57 Embankments and cuttings will have integrated into the surrounding landscape. Magnitude will be **Medium/ low**.

Significance of Effect at Construction and Operation

- 13.4.58 The Insh Marshes is a landscape which is highly valued and of ecological importance. It has been allocated a **Substantial** effect during construction, which will reduce to **Substantial/ moderate** at year 1 with the reduction of construction traffic and nuisance, and seeded earthworks establishment. An appropriate level of embedded slope design will have been incorporated into the grading of embankments and cuttings, as stated in paragraph **13.4.6**. Additional mitigation will be required, explained in paragraph **13.4.65**. In the long term, the effect will reduce to **Moderate/slight**. **Local Landscape Character Area Effects**

Potential effects on LLCA's at construction

- 13.4.59 Assessment of LLCA sensitivity (summarised in **Table 13:7**) and of landscape features and perception (summarised in **Table 13:8**), are used to identify the effects on each of the LLCAs described in **Section 13.3** at Construction Stage. These are, in turn, set out in **Table 13:13**.
- 13.4.60 During construction, mitigation that is applied within the LLCAs will be limited in terms of reduction of effects, but bearing in mind construction effects are temporary, it is expected that there will be a slight reduction in effects immediately following completion, even if additional mitigation (planting) will not have begun to appreciatively reduce adverse effects.

Table 13:13: Potential effects on LLCAs at construction

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall Effect	Comments on Mitigation
Loch Etteridge	<p>As shown on Drawing 13.4, Local Landscape Character Areas, Volume 3, the proposed dualled road construction and temporary works will connect to the existing dualled section to the south.</p> <p>As the A9 is being widened to the east, there will be more extensive earthworks to the east, with only minor embankments to the west.</p> <p>This will result in loss of roadside vegetation.</p> <p>A temporary access from the NMU route will cut through grass/ heath land resulting in increased traffic in the surrounding area, including at the General Wade’s Bridge to the west.</p>	High/medium	Medium	Moderate	<p>During construction, mitigation will be limited in terms of capacity to reduce effects on the LLCA, however the construction phase is temporary and early phase planting will soften the appearance of the new construction works.</p> <p>Woodland planting, as indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.1, Volume 3, to replace lost trees will be planted and embankments will be seeded as soon as possible.</p>
Ralia	<p>This LLCA will be affected by the widening of the A9 mainline to the east due to temporary earthworks along most of the east side and at intervals to the west.</p> <p>Temporary and permanent construction works to the A9 and associated track on the southern border of HML Railway will affect the LLCA.</p> <p>This includes construction of a left-in left-out access from the A9 mainline at approx. NB ch. 41,600, and an underbridge between ch. 43,200 to 43,400.</p> <p>This will result in loss of birch woodland between the existing A9 mainline and HML railway.</p> <p>The entrance and bunds to the Ralia Café car park will be affected by the works due to the widening of the Ralia access road.</p> <p>The construction of passing places along the NMU route will result in loss of coniferous trees, some of which is AWI woodland.</p> <p>There will be general construction activities around the three SuDS basins no. 417, 427 and 434, (as well as around temporary SuDS) a lay-by at ch. 41,700 (SB) and associated drainage channels in this LLCA.</p> <p>The drainage channel of SuDS basin 417 will extend through grass/ heathland approximately 0.5km west and south.</p>	High/medium	High	Substantial/moderate	<p>During construction, there will be limited opportunity to mitigate effects of the Proposed Scheme on the LLCA.</p> <p>However, the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Native planting, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.4, Volume 3, will be required on the earthworks to tie into the wider landscape features and to replace lost shelterbelt.</p> <p>As soon as earthworks to either side of the road and for SuDS basins have been created, planting will take place in order to help minimise the amount of time bare earth can be seen.</p> <p>Naturalistic design of the drainage channel implemented as part of the initial construction works will help it blend into the landscape.</p>
Newtonmore	<p>As shown on Drawing 13.4, Local Landscape Character Areas in Volume 3, the proposed route does not run through this LLCA and no construction effects are due to take place here.</p> <p>There will be some construction works on the west side of the A9 mainline (adjacent to Newtonmore); however, the dualling will take place to the east of the existing carriageway.</p> <p>There will therefore be an indirect effect on the open landscape character of Newtonmore but this is likely to be limited in scale and nature.</p>	Medium	Low	Moderate/slight (not significant)	<p>The Proposed Scheme will not directly affect Newtonmore LLCA.</p> <p>Indirect effects will be mitigated within adjacent on-line LLCAs by restoration of damaged or removed landscape characteristics, including planting of heath and woodland, as well as design of slopes and earthwork re-profiling.</p>

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall Effect	Comments on Mitigation
Cairn/ Nuide	<p>Construction works will include the carriageway, earth profiling, rock-cutting and retaining walls where the A9 mainline will be widened to the east side.</p> <p>This will result in a change in character to the hummocky pastoral land and heath/grassland, as well as loss of roadside vegetation adjacent to the A9 mainline in the southern part of the LLCA.</p> <p>There will be general construction works around the five SuDS basins No. 458, 461, 474, 487 and 490, and lay-bys at ch. 46,300 (SB), 471000 (NB), and at ch. 49100.</p> <p>There will also be compensatory storage area earthworks from NB ch. 45,800 to 46,100 and SB ch. 46,700 to 47,400.</p> <p>There will be a new northbound left-in, left-out junction at NB ch. 46,400 linking to a maintenance access track serving SuDS basin 474.</p> <p>There will be extensive earthworks between the southbound carriageway and Knappach, including 1:2.5 earthworks slopes which will require soil nailing, and a revised access track to the property between ch. 48,400 and 48,600.</p> <p>These works will result in loss of existing woodland to all sides of the property, altering the enclosed character of the LLCA locally.</p> <p>Passing places along the NMU route will be apparent due to the open character of surrounding pastoral fields.</p>	High/medium	High	Substantial/moderate	<p>During construction, mitigation will be limited in terms of capacity to reduce effects on the LLCA. However, the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Trees which have been lost will be replaced as early as possible, planted in clusters to replicate the existing landscape character.</p> <p>Planting of dry heath, low level shrub and grass as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.7, Volume 3, will also be located to fit with the existing landscape character and to minimise the amount of bare earth around new earthworks, compensatory storage areas and SuDS basins.</p>
Kingussie	<p>Although the dualled route will not run through Kingussie LLCA, some earthworks surrounding the proposed route will take place here.</p> <p>Temporary works will take place between ch. 50,200 and 51,000, and permanent works here include earthworks and a retaining wall.</p> <p>Changes to the A9 Kingussie Junction at ch. 50,300 will involve the loss of some tree cover.</p> <p>The B970 underbridge (approx. ch.49,000) and Kingussie underbridge (ch.50,800) will result in loss of roadside vegetation.</p> <p>There will be some permanent and temporary work affecting the Glebe Ponds area at Kingussie northbound left-in, left-out junction at ch. 50,600, including removal of a number of existing trees and earthworks to accommodate alignment amendments to the existing road.</p>	Medium	Medium	Moderate	<p>During construction, mitigation will be limited in terms of capacity to reduce effects on the LLCA. However, the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Trees to replace those lost to construction, as indicated by Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.7 to 6.8, Volume 3, at the B970 underbridge extension at ch. 49,250 and northbound left-in, left out Kingussie Junction at ch. 50.600 will be planted as soon as possible.</p>

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall Effect	Comments on Mitigation
Insh Marshes	<p>There will be temporary construction and permanent works to the A9 and associated maintenance track around a proposed lay-by near SuDS basin no 493 opposite Ruthven Barracks at ch. 49,400 (SB).</p> <p>There will be general construction works associated with three other SuDS basins (nos. 507, 509, and 513).</p> <p>There will also be compensatory storage area earthworks from SB ch. 50,700 to 50,800 and SB ch. 51,400 to 52,000.</p> <p>Extensive earthworks will take place around the Spey bridge, including the removal of sections of embankment and increasing the length of the bridge crossing the Spey floodplain, replacing the current 138m span with one of circa 290m, and doubling the current width.</p> <p>Earthworks at various points of the A9 mainline will affect the existing character of the Insh Marshes NNR.</p>	High	Medium	Substantial/moderate	<p>During construction, mitigation will be limited in terms of capacity to reduce effects on the LLCA, however the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Trees to replace those lost to construction, where indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.8 to 6.12, Volume 3, will be planted as soon as possible, and planting will also be located to minimise the amount of bare earth around new earthworks, compensatory storage areas and SuDS basins.</p>
Lynchat & Balavil Woodland	<p>The A9 mainline will be widened to the west side of the existing road in this LLCA; however, construction will include earthworks on both the east and west of the carriageway, retaining walls, and three SuDS basins (nos. 530, 534 and 537).</p> <p>There will also be compensatory storage area earthworks from SB ch. 53,000 to 53,150 and NB ch. 53,200 to 53,500.</p> <p>There will be three lay-bys at ch. 52,000 (NB), 54,400 (NB) and 55,850 (SB).</p> <p>A new underbridge access will be constructed at ch. 52,950 and a new left-in, left-out junction will be constructed at ch. 53,600, both providing access to the Balavil estate.</p> <p>These works will result in loss of roadside vegetation (including AWI woodland) lining the A9 mainline and changes to surrounding agricultural land.</p> <p>Raitt's Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument and the undesignated landscape of Balavil House listed property will be subject to substantial adverse landscape effects.</p> <p>Visual and cultural effects are assessed in Chapters 14 and 15 of this Report respectively.</p>	High/medium	High	Substantial/moderate	<p>During construction, mitigation will be limited in terms of being able to reduce effects on the LLCA. However, the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Trees to replace those lost to construction, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.8 to 6.11, Volume 3, will be planted as soon as possible, and planting will also be located to minimise the amount of bare earth around new earthworks, compensatory storage areas and SuDS basins.</p> <p>Tree planting, retaining walls construction and earthwork re-profiling w will mitigate the adverse effects to Raitt's Cave and the Balavil Estate.</p>
Dunachtonmore	<p>The A9 mainline in this LLCA is dualled to the west of the existing road.</p> <p>Construction works here include earthworks, and two new lay-bys at ch. 55,850 (SB) and ch. 56,400 (NB).</p> <p>The construction will result in loss of roadside vegetation including AWI woodland between ch. 56,000 – 56,600.</p> <p>Installation of SuDS attenuation tanks will have locally extensive construction effects.</p>	High/medium	High/medium	Substantial/moderate	<p>During construction, mitigation will be limited in terms of being able to reduce effects on the LLCA. However, the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Trees to replace those lost to construction, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.11 and 6.12, Volume 3, will be planted as soon as possible; planting will be located to minimise the amount of bare earth around new earthworks and SuDS attenuation tanks.</p>

- 13.4.61 **Table 13:14** below identifies the effects on each of the LLCAs described in **Section 13.3**, at operation year 1 and operation years 15-25, taking the assessment of sensitivity from **Table 13:7**: and assessment of landscape features, historic and cultural, landscape fit and landscape experience from **Table 13:8**. Detailed commentary on the likely effect on the CNP SLQs is included in **Appendix 13.4 in Volume 2**.
- 13.4.62 Additional mitigation is identified within this chapter to offset potential adverse effects, residual to the embedded mitigation at Construction, as described within **Table 13:13**. Therefore, the long-term permanent effects, after years 15-25, identified in **Table 13:14**, are assessed to include the embedded and additional (secondary) mitigation. The effect of additional mitigation is further explained in **Section 13.5**.
- 13.4.63 While the impact assessment is undertaken in cognisance of the embedded (primary) mitigation features noted above, in order to ensure that all project mitigation requirements (including embedded/ primary, additional and generic best practice construction mitigation) are captured, they have been included within **Section 13.5**, and the Schedule of Environmental Commitments contained in **Chapter 21**. The additional mitigation listed in **Section 13.5** is what GLVIA 3 refers to as secondary mitigation. Additional mitigation has been included within the assessment of residual effects, presented later in **Table 13:16**.

Table 13:14: Potential Effects on LLCAs at Operation Year 1 and Years 15-25

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 1		Comments on Mitigation	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 25	
			Magnitude	Overall Effect		Magnitude	Significance
Loch Etteridge	<p>The proposed dualled road will connect to the existing dualled section to the south; there will be more extensive earthworks to the east; this will result in loss of roadside vegetation.</p> <p>There are only minor embankments to the west.</p> <p>There will be a noticeable change in character due to loss of existing vegetation on both sides of the road and the construction of embankments with material cut from other areas, from SB ch. 40,000 to 41,200,.</p>	High/medium	Medium	Moderate	<p>Planting lost from the adjacent areas due to the Proposed Scheme will be replanted within a mosaic of dry heath and/ or native woodland in appropriate locations, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.1 in Volume 3, to blend the proposed embankments into the surrounding area and maintain the enclosed character.</p> <p>Earthwork re-profiling and slope design will reflect existing form and gradients, blending into the existing topography and landform, reducing effects.</p>	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Ralia	<p>Earthworks will take place on both sides of the A9 mainline. However, the new carriageway will be constructed to the east and therefore the majority of earthwork will be from SB ch. 41,200 to ch. 45,000.</p> <p>There will be potential rock cutting between SB ch. 43,700 to ch. 43,900 and also between SB ch. 44,600 to ch. 45,200.</p> <p>To the north of the LLCA, there will be substantial effects on existing woodland and landform mainly to the east of the carriageway.</p> <p>The left-in left-out junction at approx. NB ch. 41,600, and the underbridge between ch. 43,200 and 43,400 will affect the surrounding mixed woodland and landform.</p> <p>SuDS basin 417 is located at NB ch. 41,700 and will have two drainage channels which extend into the LLCA, affecting the surrounding heath/ grassland.</p> <p>SuDS basins 427 will impact on character due to open nature of adjacent landform.</p> <p>The underpass at ch. 43,300 and the nearby SuDS basin no 434 will impact the surrounding birch woodland.</p> <p>The widening of the Ralia access road will result in earthwork cutting and reduction of the existing earth bund to the west of the Ralia Café car park.</p>	High/medium	High/medium	Substantial/moderate	<p>Substantial mitigation of earthworks will be required between SB 41,200 and 45,000.</p> <p>Earthwork re-profiling and slope design will reflect existing form and gradients, blending into the existing topography and landform, reducing their effects.</p> <p>Planting lost from the adjacent areas due to the Proposed Scheme will be replanted within a mosaic of dry heath and native woodland in appropriate locations, particularly on the SB slopes from ch. 41,200 to 41,400; ch. 41,700 to 42,450; and ch. 42,600 to 43,700.</p> <p>On the northbound side, woodland will be re-planted around the left-in/ left-out junction at NB ch. 41,700 and Newtonmore underbridge from NB 43,200 and 43,600.</p> <p>Wet woodland/ woodland edge/ wet grassland, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.4, Volume 3, will blend the SuDS basins, compensatory storage areas and drainage channels in to the landscape.</p> <p>Rock cutting will reduce the effect on existing landform and vegetation.</p> <p>To SuDS basins, planting of grass seeding, scrub and scattered trees will help blend earthworks into the adjacent landscape.</p> <p>The Ralia Café car park access and existing bund will be partially remodelled and re-aligned; birch and conifer trees will be retained where possible or replanted to blend with the existing design.</p>	Medium	Moderate

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 1		Comments on Mitigation	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 25	
			Magnitude	Overall Effect		Magnitude	Significance
Newtonmore	Newtonmore LLCA will not be affected directly by the Proposed Scheme, but extensive earthworks for road embankments, SuDS basins and compensatory storage for drainage within LLCA Ralia (above) adjacent will remove woodland and result in a change in woodland character.	Medium	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	There will be no direct mitigation in this LLCA. Mitigation to the adjacent LLCA will include replanting of woodland, buffering the character of Newtonmore from changes in the adjacent LLCAs, and slope design to embankments will merge them with adjacent topography and landform, reducing their effects.	Low	Slight
Cairn/ Nuide	<p>The new carriageway will cut through and alter adjacent areas of hummocky pastoral land and heath/ grassland. A proposed access track to Nuide Farm accessed via an underbridge at ch. 46,050 will partially follow the existing GWMR route and an existing un-metalled farm track.</p> <p>The new northbound left-in/ left-out junction at NB ch. 46,400 linking to a maintenance access track serving SuDS basin 474.</p> <p>The extensive earthworks at Knappach between SB ch. 48,100 to ch. 48,600, include slopes of 1:2.5 gradient which will require soil nailing, and a revised access track to the property between ch. 48,400 and ch. 48,600.</p> <p>A 3.5m high acoustic attenuation barrier will be constructed at the top of the embankment to screen Knappach Cottage from disturbance from the A9.</p> <p>The access track to Knappach Cottage will be located to the rear of the property,</p> <p>The landscape character is relatively open therefore the proposed earthworks will be exposed and prominent in the landscape and these features will be visible at Year 1 of operation, altering the enclosed character of the LLCA locally.</p> <p>SuDS basins 458, 461, 474, 487 and 490 will result in some loss of trees, and lay-bys at ch. 46,300 (SB), 471000 (NB), and ch. 49100.</p> <p>There will also be compensatory storage area earthworks from NB ch. 45,800 to ch. 46,100 and SB ch. 46,700 to ch. 47,400.</p>	High/ medium	Medium	Moderate	<p>Planting lost from the adjacent areas will be replanted within a mosaic of dry heath and native woodland in appropriate locations, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.3 – 6.5 in Volume 3.</p> <p>The trees and heath will mimic or enhance the existing landscape character by reinforcing its natural appearance and maintain the existing, mainly open, character of the LLCA.</p> <p>Earthwork re-profiling will reflect existing form and gradients of the slopes, blending into the existing topography.</p> <p>Scrub/ shrubs will be planted in pockets within the stabilised soil-nailed slopes at Knappach.</p> <p>Mixed native woodland will be planted to mitigate tree loss due to the construction of the Knappach Cottage access track; as the planting and seeding develops will become more bedded-in and less apparent, fitting into the wider landscape by years 15-25.</p> <p>The design of viewing facilities at northbound Ruthven Lay-by at ch. 49,100 will enhance the landscape experience and opportunities to access to the NMU and wider countryside.</p> <p>Grass seeding and appropriate shrub/ heath planting will soften the appearance of the proposed SuDS basins.</p> <p>Tree planting will help screen the noise barrier.</p>	Medium	Moderate/ slight (not significant)

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 1		Comments on Mitigation	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 25	
			Magnitude	Overall Effect		Magnitude	Significance
Kingussie	<p>Temporary works will have been completed.</p> <p>The remaining earthworks will result in loss of some trees on the perimeter of Kingussie at Glebe Ponds; however, there will also be tree, shrub and low-level heath and grassland planting that will screen part of the engineered junction, replacing planting lost to the Glebe Pond area.</p>	Medium	Medium/low	Moderate/slight	<p>Trees lost within the woodland on the Spey crossing approach road embankments within the adjacent LLCA (Insh Marshes) will not be replanted due to requirements of the National Nature Reserve, while the embankment will be seeded with grass, as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.7 to 6.8, Volume 3.</p> <p>The Proposed Scheme will cause indirect adverse effects to the relationship between Kingussie LLCA and Insh Marsh LLCA due to the permanent loss of trees/scrub.</p> <p>There will be loss of woodland around NB ch. 50,600 due to the requirement of sight-lines at the new left-in/left out Kingussie Junction and access track.</p> <p>This will be replaced with additional planting to the northern side of the access road and re-planting within the Glebe Ponds land area.</p>	Low	Slight
Lynchat & Balavil Woodland	<p>The landscape surrounding the road is relatively exposed and therefore earthworks will be more prominent.</p> <p>There will be some loss to existing vegetation to either side of the road.</p> <p>SuDS basin 530 will be prominent due to the surrounding flat pastoral land. SuDS 534 and 537 will result in loss of trees lining the road.</p> <p>The new underbridge at Lynchat (ch. 52,950) will not significantly affect the character of the area, as the access road will follow existing field boundaries and the new structure will replace the existing underbridge.</p> <p>The new left-in/ left-out access serving Balavil Mains and House at ch. 53,600 will replace the current access at that location, and will be accompanied by acoustic attenuation walling designed to complement the culturally sensitive listed properties and designed landscape, together with re-profiled earthworks and retaining walls designed provide appropriate mitigation to the effects of the new A9 and NMU route along the Balavil House frontage.</p> <p>Some trees will be lost due to the proposed lay-by and the route from the GWMR to the A9.</p>	High/medium	Medium	Moderate	<p>Vegetation lost during construction will be replaced, as indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.8 to 6.12, Volume 3.</p> <p>Planting, predominantly grass seeding, to the SuDS basins, and trees around the GWMR route will help blend the new features into the landscape.</p> <p>New junction, underbridge, acoustic attenuation measures and earthworks will blend with the existing designed landscape, with trees, shrub planting and grass replacing that lost to the Proposed Scheme as it matures.</p> <p>Natural stone treatment to retaining and freestanding walls will fit with the design and appearance of existing heritage structures using stone of similar appearance, providing adequate acoustic re-profiled earthworks and retaining walls will help reduce the Proposed Scheme's effect along the Balavil House grounds frontage, while allowing existing historic Scots pine roundels to be retained.</p>	Low	Slight

Assessed LLCA	Potential Effects Commentary	Sensitivity	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 1		Comments on Mitigation	Operational Impacts Potential effects - Operation Year 25	
			Magnitude	Overall Effect		Magnitude	Significance
Insh Marshes	<p>The extensive earthworks around the Spey bridge, including embankments along the east of the A9 mainline, although similar in function, appearance and form to the existing, will alter the existing landscape character because the embankment occupies twice the area of the current one.</p> <p>The current 138m bridge span will be replaced with one of circa 290m, which is also twice the width of the existing.</p> <p>The embankments will have a largely geometric form and uniform gradient in order to minimise the footprint of the Proposed Scheme within the NNR.</p> <p>Most existing trees to both the north and south approaches to the bridge will be removed and not replanted due to the requirements of the NNR.</p> <p>SuDS basin 507 and 509 will result in loss of existing trees. SuDS basin 513 will be prominent on the landscape due to the surrounding open pastoral land.</p> <p>There will be 3.5m high acoustic barriers to screen properties on the southbound carriageway at Laggan (ch. 51,100 to 51,450); these will be at odds with the open character of the area, a location where there is sparse planting.</p> <p>Earthwork re-profiling and bunds will also be undertaken to provide screening without the extensive use of tree planting for mitigation.</p> <p>The compensatory storage area from SB ch. 50,700 to ch. 50,800 and SB ch. 51,400 to ch. 52,000 will not be conspicuous once grass has become re-established, as it occupies a low-lying area with few existing trees.</p>	High	High/medium	Substantial / moderate	<p>Planting lost from the adjacent areas will be replanted within a mosaic of dry heath, acid grassland and wet grassland as appropriate, enhancing the existing marshland landscape characteristics by reinforcing its natural appearance and maintain the existing, mainly open, character of the LLCA, as indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.8 to 6.12, Volume 3.</p> <p>However, earthwork re-profiling to the A9 Spey crossing approach road embankments will be similar to the existing form and gradient of slopes, and therefore will not introduce new landform characteristics.</p> <p>The River Spey bridge will result in a significant effect that will still be apparent after 25 years, although it will have become an accepted constructed feature within the LLCA.</p> <p>Appropriate heath, acid grass and wet grass mixes seeded on the new embankments, and where appropriate, replacement trees, will have become established helping to blend the embankments into the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>SuDS basins and compensatory storage areas north of the Spey crossing will also merge into the surrounding landscape once they are revegetated, resembling the natural floodplain.</p> <p>The acoustic barriers will remain incongruous features within this open landscape area.</p>	Medium	Moderate
Dunachton-more	<p>The A9 mainline in this LLCA is dualled to the west of the existing road.</p> <p>Construction works here include earthworks and two new lay-bys at ch. 55,850 (SB) and ch. 56,400 (NB).</p> <p>The construction will result in loss of roadside vegetation trees adjacent to the roadside, and loss of woodland including AWI woodland between ch. 56,000 and ch. 56,600.</p> <p>Embankments to the east of the A9 mainline, and cutting to the west, will result in loss of deciduous woodland.</p> <p>Substantial cutting will take place around ch. 56,400 to the west of the A9 mainline, with smaller scale embankments to the east, around SuDS attenuation tanks.</p>	High/medium	Medium/low	Moderate	<p>Grass seeding, shrub and mixed native tree planting, as indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.8 to 6.12, Volume 3, will have become established, blending the embankments and cuttings into the surrounding area on both sides of the road.</p> <p>Replacement woodland will help restore the wooded character.</p> <p>Existing newly planted woodland to the north west of the A9 near Meadowside Quarry replacing woodland lost due to construction of the earthworks associated with an adjacent scheme, to the north (Project 10, Kincaig to Dalraddy) will have matured, integrating the Proposed Scheme into the LLCA.</p>	Low	Slight

Landscape Features - Effects

Landform

- 13.4.64 Landform has been assigned a **High** sensitivity.
- 13.4.65 The landform is the key component of the scenery. The earthworks associated with the dualling are small in comparison with the surrounding landscape. The proposed slope gradients have been developed with the input of Landscape Architects to ensure, where possible, slopes blend well with the adjoining topography.
- 13.4.66 Through the design process, three levels of landform sensitivity have been identified. These are:
- Level 1: Slopes where it is appropriate to plant trees to blend these into the landscape, and therefore the gradient of the slope can be steeper, and areas of rock cut
 - Level 2: Open landscapes that have relatively minor topographic variation that only require specification to ensure that the earthworks are softened and reflect the surrounding landform to some extent.
 - Level 3: There are some specific locations that are within open landscape and therefore landform sensitive areas that will require a detailed specification of slope. Most of these are specific locations within the Level 2 overall area but there are also some isolated locations. All SuDS and Compensatory Storage Areas (CSAs) are considered to require Level 3 slope design.
- 13.4.67 The chainage (ch.) locations for each type are shown in **Table 13:18**.
- 13.4.68 Level 3 Priority Areas are detailed on the **Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12 in Volume 3** and are labelled as 'landform sensitive earthworks'. For Level 3 Priority Areas, drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced as part of the contract documents, subject to detailed design. This is detailed in **Table 13:18**.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.69 During construction phase there will be an extensive requirement for earth stripping, transporting and storing, leaving substantial areas of bare earth. Upon completion of the construction, the finished earthworks and the relationship of the road within the wider landscape will be clearly evident.
- 13.4.70 Large areas of bare earth will be visible, particularly where extensive slope embankment or cutting gradients have been incorporated between SB ch. 40,000 and SB ch. 42,100, SB ch. 42,500 and SB ch. 42,300, SB ch. 43,400 and SB ch. 47,850, and at Knappach (SB ch. 48,900 and SB ch. 48,800), both NB and SB between ch. 51,400 and ch. 52,300 and NB between ch. 54,400 and ch. 55,400.
- 13.4.71 Soil nailing will be required at Knappach, where an access track will be benched into the slope between the dwelling and A9 at this location (west of the cottage).
- 13.4.72 Bare earth will be visible where slopes have been designed to avoid and limit encroachment into the adjacent land or flood plain as at the Spey crossing approach road embankment and abutment between ch. 49,100 and ch. 50,500.
- 13.4.73 There will also be exposed earthworks where proposed junctions are cut into the existing ground or embankments are used, at locations including:
- Newtonmore Junction (underbridge) at ch. 43,400;
 - underbridge extensions at Ruthven (ch. 48,400), the B970 (ch. 49,250), Lynchat (ch. 52,800), and HWP entrance (ch. 56,190);

- left-in, left out accesses at Ralia (NB ch. 41,650), Kingussie (NB ch. 50,600 and SB ch. 51,000 and NB ch. 52,950) and Balavil estate (NB ch. 53,600);
 - the HML railway underbridge at ch. 50,800;
 - the new underbridge Balavil estate access at ch. 52,950.
- 13.4.74 There are a number of areas where site-won cut material will be re-profiled to feather-in the Proposed Scheme to adjacent topography and landform naturalistically. Locations where this is proposed are between SB ch. 48,590 and SB ch. 48,800; SB ch. 48,850 and SB ch. 49,250; SB ch. 51,090 and SB ch. 51,210; SB ch. 51,250 and SB ch. 51,410; and NB ch. 53,600 and NB ch. 54,000.
- 13.4.75 Designed treatment of cut/ fill, slope and landform, removal and replacement of existing trees/ vegetation and naturalisation of water course banks and cascade rockwork will be apparent within the vicinity of the, NMU and associated tracks.
- 13.4.76 Naturalistic earthwork gradients and aesthetic design/ specification of landform will provide mitigation at year 1. Planting of new and replacement native mixed woodland trees and scrub will help integrate the Lynchat underbridge at ch. 52,950 and SuDS basin 530 earthworks into the landscape context and will reduce effects below that of an unmitigated scheme. Advance planting could help reduce effects at year 1.
- 13.4.77 Construction stage SuDS structures, other construction works areas, and re-profiling of land to form Compensatory Storage Areas (CSAs), will result in exposure of bare earth at several locations. These areas will typically be restored to their current land cover.
- 13.4.78 Permanent SuDS basin structures will be designed to merge with adjacent topography and landform naturalistically, although bare earth will be exposed during construction; seeding will take place as early as possible to stabilise slopes.
- 13.4.79 Based on available GI information at the time of writing a number of rock cuttings are anticipated. Combined with landscape and visual considerations, geotechnical advice should be followed with regards the design of these cuttings in relation to stability, the need for artificial support, and slope angles, and they should aim to achieve the best possible exposures.
- 13.4.80 There are a number of retaining walls required within the Proposed Scheme, which will have a range of treatments applied to mitigate their effects as appropriate. Natural stone treatment will be used on retaining walls and on the elevation/ façade of the new underbridge superstructure at Newtonmore, Kingussie and the HWP entrance (subject to detailed design).
- 13.4.81 Additionally, there will be earthworks and retaining walls designed to mitigate the effects of the A9 on the existing landscape setting of cultural heritage assets, which will be visible at Raitt’s Cave Souterrain between NB ch. 52,000 and NB ch. 52,300 and at the Balavil Estate between NB ch. 53,600 and NB ch. 54,400. Likewise, natural stone treatment will be used on retaining walls and on the elevation/ façade of the new underbridge superstructure at ch. 52,950 (subject to detailed design). Delineation of root protection/exclusion zones and other measures to avoid damage to existing mature trees that are to be retained in the Proposed Scheme shall be essential to mitigating the effects on the existing landscape character in these locations.
- 13.4.82 Replanting of conifer woodland removed by construction will also help reduce effects. Landscape mitigation at year 1 shall include mixed native woodland planting; however, the majority of earthworks will be bare or seeded to achieve a green sward, reducing the immediate effect.
- 13.4.83 The magnitude at this phase will be **High** and the overall effect **Substantial**.

- 13.4.84 If the mitigation according to the levels identified above and as detailed in **Table 13:18**, is not applied in the areas identified, then there are likely to be long term significant effects on landform and therefore detrimental effects on LLCAs are likely.

Operation Phase

- 13.4.85 At operation year 1, the early seeding and an initial flush of green on cuttings and embankments will have started to establish which will reduce the impacts throughout the Proposed Scheme. However, earthworks will still be highly evident from the A9, nearby roads, the NMU and HML, as well as from adjacent publicly accessible areas such as Ruthven Barracks and Raitt's Cave Souterrain, the visitors centre at Insh Marshes NNR and from residential areas along the route that have been identified as sensitive receptors, such as the Balavil Estate, Lynchat, Kingussie and Newtonmore.
- 13.4.86 Direct adverse effects on character will be evident within all LCAs and LLCAs within which the Proposed Scheme is located, and thus will have relatively high magnitude of effect. Notable changes in landform include the proposed SuDS basins and alterations to the Spey crossing earthworks. The magnitude will reduce to **Medium** and the overall effect **Substantial/ moderate**.
- 13.4.87 At year 15-25 mitigation will help to reduce the effects of the scheme. Magnitude will reduce to **Low** and overall effect to **Moderate/slight (not significant)**.

Vegetation

- 13.4.88 Vegetation has been assigned a **Medium** sensitivity.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.89 During construction, vegetation within the land made available boundary will be removed and soils will be stripped. It is assumed that this will occur wherever construction works will take place.
- 13.4.90 To avoid unnecessary handling and decomposition of excavated peat structure removed from the works, where possible, peat will be transported to allocated re-use locations within the LMA and planted where necessary with appropriate seeding or translocated heath vegetation, ideally in a single operation.
- 13.4.91 Any peat management works will be visible, appearing similar to the main earthworks. Likewise, restoration of dry heath, grassland and/ or dry heath scrub/ woodland mosaic areas will be visible and initially similar to the main construction works. Please see **Chapter 10** and **Appendix 10.6 (Outline Peat Management Plan)** for further information on the handling of peat anticipated to be excavated and its potential re-use.
- 13.4.92 Existing woodland that falls within the LMA boundary but is to be protected from the works will be safeguarded by exclusion zones as specified on **Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12**.
- 13.4.93 Vegetation will be removed and soils will be stripped where construction works will take place. The magnitude of effect will be **High/ medium** during construction phase because there will be a noticeable amount of bare earth. The overall effect will be **Substantial/ moderate**.

Operation Phase

- 13.4.94 After 1 year, some regrowth will have started to establish, lessening the effects. Most of the affected vegetation will be close to the road therefore the amount of vegetation affected within the study will be relatively small. There will be a **Medium** magnitude with **Moderate** overall effect.

- 13.4.95 In order to mitigate effects of stripping during earthwork re-profiling or storage, all earthworks shall be planted to match adjoining habitats such as grassland and dry heath scrub/ woodland mosaic areas such that, in the long-term, there will be very limited effect on vegetation, other than the permanent effect to the area lost to tarmac. This will be minimal in the overall landscape context, even at a local level. At 15-25 years, replacement vegetation will have established, and the magnitude will be **Low** and the overall effect will be **Slight**.

Woodland

- 13.4.96 Woodland has been assigned a **High** sensitivity.
- 13.4.97 Woodland is a major characteristic of the Proposed Scheme. Roadside woodland and shelterbelts at various locations throughout the Proposed Scheme will be affected at a few areas due to works primarily relating to re-profiling of adjacent embankments and cuttings, and to some extent, drainage and compensatory flood storage.
- 13.4.98 The alignment of the main carriageway to both sides of the carriageway may impact existing broadleaf, coniferous and mixed woodland. Where felling of the edge of an area of woodland adjacent to the proposed carriageway takes place, the lower branchless tree trunks of the inner canopy will be exposed to view. Variation in slope gradients will reduce the effect on landscape; however, some tree loss will occur.
- 13.4.99 With reference to **Chapter 12**, the total existing woodland or new /replacement woodland (of various types differentiated within the ecological assessment) that will be lost due to the Proposed Scheme is approximately 74.62 ha during construction overall, inclusive of AWI woodland. The total area of AWI woodland lost to the Proposed Scheme during construction is 10.78 ha.
- 13.4.100 Appropriate scattered tree/ shrub planting on the sides of the corridor is required to mitigate for loss of mature broadleaf, coniferous and mixed woodland and plantation as well as dry heath scrub woodland mosaic habitat currently present, and to align with CNPA advice on the reinstatement of this habitat type. Where possible, this would be planted in advance and therefore be partially established on completion.
- 13.4.101 Mitigation using native shrubs and trees should aim to seamlessly harmonise with ecological planting, in order to integrate the embankments and new road into adjacent highly sensitive landscape. Planting and seeding on new slopes will be restricted to appropriate native mixed shrub and tree planting of local provenance. Where some of the existing tree belt will be intact but where trees have been removed, native mixed species, trees and shrubs will be planted to reduce the impact of exposed woodland edge.
- 13.4.102 Existing woodland areas that fall within the LMA boundary but are not required for the works will be safeguarded by exclusion zones. Any trees removed shall be replaced with a native woodland mix to allow diversification of species, allow for greater longevity of this feature and to provide a more appropriate woodland type for this landscape, as detailed in **Table 13:18**.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.103 The magnitude during the construction phase will be **High** due to the removal of trees at several locations throughout the Proposed Scheme, which will make the road corridor more exposed in places. The overall effect will be **Substantial**.

Operation Phase

- 13.4.104 The total area of lost woodland is approx. 74.62 ha (including AWI woodland) and shrub/ scrub. A significant element of the proposed native woodland and shrub/ scrub is like-for-like replacement.

The proposed landscape strategy will deliver the woodland/ scrub habitats as part of the overall Environmental Mitigation design as explained in **Appendix 6.1 Note on Mitigation Planting Mix** and illustrated in **Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12** and **Indicative Mitigation Cross Sections Drawings 6.13 to 6.19** in **Volume 3**, as set out below:

- Native Woodland = 69.66 ha
- Native Wet Woodland = 8.72 ha
- Shrub = 10.69 ha
- Woodland (within exclusion zones) = 0.8 ha

- 13.4.105 At operation year 1 the magnitude will remain **High** due to replacement planting not having fully established and therefore there will be a noticeable difference from the mature/ semi-mature trees which were there previously; there still being potentially bare areas. The magnitude will therefore be **Medium**, and the overall effect will be **Substantial/ moderate**.
- 13.4.106 At years 15-25, replacement trees will be more mature. Where trees are not being replaced, other planting will reduce areas of bare earth. The magnitude will be **Medium/ low**, and the overall effect will be **Moderate**.

Wildness

- 13.4.107 Wildness has been assigned a **Medium** sensitivity.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.108 At the construction phase, the sense of wildness will be affected to a limited extent because the areas affected do not have a wild character. However, the construction works may indirectly impact the wildness of surrounding areas, albeit for a temporary period. The magnitude will therefore be **Low** and the overall effect will be **Moderate/ slight**.

Operation Phase

- 13.4.109 At year 1, replacement planting will not have matured which could affect the wildness in some areas. The magnitude will remain **Low** and the overall effect, **Moderate/ slight**.
- 13.4.110 At years 15-25, replacement planting will be more mature which will contribute to a sense of wildness. The magnitude will be **Low/ none** and the effect, **Slight/ negligible**.

Water

- 13.4.111 Water has been assigned a **High** sensitivity.
- 13.4.112 The A9 crosses the River Spey at ch. 50,200. This is a major feature, which will require deconstruction of the existing bridge and approach road embankments. The appearance of the River Spey crossing bridge is of a low profile, similar to that of the existing, albeit with a longer overall length due the need to avoid Natura 2000 areas including the SAC, SPA and Ramsar designated sites. The result will be to minimise the change to the characteristics of the River Spey in this area.
- 13.4.113 There are a number of other watercourses crossing under the road, and there will be new structures and culverts constructed to accommodate these (together with some cascades to resolve level changes).

- 13.4.114 Some of the SuDS basins will contain permanently wet pools, potentially creating landscape features with wildlife benefits.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.115 There will be significant construction around the Spey bridge.

- 13.4.116 There will be some effects on the Insh Marshes during the construction phase. However, as the widening of the A9 mainline changes from the east side to be on the west at approx. ch. 51,600, the impacts on Insh Marshes will be less severe because the associated effects are located away from the wetland. Some earthworks on the east side of the A9 mainline (resulting mainly from vertical re-alignment), adjacent to Insh Marshes, may have an effect. There will be a **High** magnitude and **Substantial** overall effect.

Operation Phase

- 13.4.117 At year 1, vegetation will have started to blend the earthworks into the landscape. This will result in a **Medium** magnitude and **Moderate** overall effect.

- 13.4.118 At years 15-25, vegetation will be more mature creating a naturalistic appearance. The magnitude will be **Low**, and the overall effect will be **Moderate/ slight (not significant)**.

Historic and Cultural Associations and Built Environment

- 13.4.119 Historic and Cultural Associations and Built Environment have been assigned a **High** sensitivity. **Chapter 15, Cultural Heritage** assesses the effects of the scheme on these aspects in detail, as noted in paragraph **13.3.148**. The setting of historic/ cultural settlements and artefacts is assessed in that chapter. Features and properties of historic and cultural significance within the study area that might be affected by the Proposed Scheme include the Ruthven Barracks Scheduled Monument, Raitt's Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument, the listed properties at the Mains of Balavil, Balavil House and gate houses, the McPherson Memorial obelisk and burial ground, and the GWMR.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.120 The setting of the historic and cultural features of Ruthven Barracks, Mains of Balavil, Balavil House and the associated surrounding undesignated designed landscape, the McPherson Memorial obelisk and burial ground and Raitt's Cave will be affected, albeit temporarily, by the Proposed Scheme due to earthwork re-grading, and the presence and movement of construction traffic and machinery.

- 13.4.121 There will be effects on some General Wade's Military Road features during the construction phase. In the Loch Etteridge LLCA, a temporary access route from the NMU may have traffic implications on the General Wade's Bridge along the NMU. Similarly, there will be construction impacts along the proposed route at approximate ch. 55,200 which connects to the GWMR, with associated traffic implications. The new approach road to the proposed River Spey crossing and SuDS basin will result in moderate adverse effects to the setting of Ruthven Barracks. The new carriageway earthworks will potentially result in changes to the views and experience of the landform east of Raitt's Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument, adversely affecting its setting. The proposed A9 earthworks will also result in loss of trees and re-profiling of earthworks to the eastern boundary of Mains of Balavil undesignated designed landscape. The magnitude will therefore be **Medium** and the overall effect **Substantial/ moderate**.

Operation Phase

- 13.4.122 At year 1, the magnitude will be **High/ medium** and the overall effect will be **Substantial/ Moderate**. The construction works will be complete, and a green sward will have become established on the profiled landform between the A9 and Balavil House, reverting in appearance to similar to the existing when viewed from the House. The retaining walls facing the road will be clearly apparent, but the natural stone treatment will create an appropriate appearance that will fit within the historic setting. At years 15-25, vegetation will have become established, bedding the features into the landscape; the magnitude will be **Low** and the overall effect will be **Moderate/ slight**.

Landscape Fit

- 13.4.123 The Proposed Scheme alignment largely follows the existing road, which as determined in the baseline assessment in paragraphs **13.3.150** to **13.3.152** has a good landscape fit. The Proposed Scheme is predominately online widening of the existing A9, which follows the curves found within the landscape. Although there are sections of the route where re-profiling of the existing embankments and cuttings will be required, some of them extensive, once the landform, vegetation and woodland mitigation design has been implemented and matured, the route will return to a similar appearance to that of the existing. Therefore, the Proposed Scheme has a good landscape fit.
- 13.4.124 As the dualling will take place adjacent to the existing A9 mainline, the Landscape Fit should blend in with the existing fit over time. With the exception of the Spey crossing, it will continue to follow the river valley and the edge of the Insh Marshes and the curves will remain appropriate to the surrounding topography.

Landscape Experience from within the Study Area

- 13.4.125 Landscape Experience has been assigned a **High** sensitivity. The landscape experience is subjective and will differ between users; therefore, the Proposed Scheme could be beneficial or detrimental for different people. However, undoubtedly travellers will be provided with an improved landscape experience via the dualled A9 and connections to new DMRB Type A lay-bys with viewing facilities and links to the NMU in place at Ruthven northbound (ch. 49,000) and southbound (ch. 49,450), replacing existing lay-bys, and southbound at Insh Marshes (ch. 55,900). These features will have extensive retaining walls, earthworks, steps, paths, and they include potential for viewing platforms with appropriate fencing, as well as new mixed groundcover, shrub and tree planting.
- 13.4.126 There will also be DMRB Type A lay-bys at SB ch. 41,700; SB ch. 46,300; SB ch. 53,900; NB ch. 47,100; NB ch. 52,000; NB ch. 54,400 and NB ch. 56,400. Earthworks and structures associated with these features will be conspicuous during construction, but not more so than those of the adjacent A9 mainline; the earthworks will have been seeded and greened-up by end of construction. As the lay-bys are located adjacent to the existing or proposed carriageway, they are located in an area of **High** sensitivity.

Construction Phase

- 13.4.127 Infrastructure associated with construction, such as signs, barriers and vehicles, will be present along the route and therefore will have a notable effect on the landscape experience. Most of the Type A lay-bys will replace existing lay-bys or will be seen as a part of the new carriageway, and will have a **Low** magnitude of effect. There will also be a loss of trees lining the route at various points which will change the landscape experience from enclosed to more exposed. Bearing in mind these measures, with a **High** sensitivity, Landscape Experience at construction phase has been allocated a

Medium magnitude of change, with an overall **Substantial/ moderate** significance because of the presence of construction traffic, plant, and temporary works, albeit in a limited area.

Operation Phase

13.4.128 On completion at year 1, the construction works will have ended and the landscape experience will be more settled. The landscape experience will remain notably different due to changes in vegetation and surrounding embankments/ cuttings. The magnitude will be **Medium/ low** and the overall effect will be **Moderate**.

13.4.129 At years 15-25, the landscape experience will remain different; however, earthworks will have blended into the surrounding landscape. The magnitude will be **Low** and the overall effect **Moderate/ slight (not significant)**.

Special Landscape Area (SLA)

13.4.130 The Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA covers the southern section of the Proposed Scheme from ch. 40,000 (the start of the Proposed Scheme) to approximate ch. 43,400. The Proposed Scheme is at the extreme north-eastern edge of this designated area, as shown on **Drawing 13.2** within **Volume 3**.

13.4.131 The SLA designation indicates that the landscape here is highly valued; the existing A9 traverses the north-eastern periphery of the designated area, and its landscape character will not be susceptible to dualling of the existing road. The section of the SLA within the Proposed Scheme has therefore been allocated a **Medium** sensitivity.

13.4.132 The magnitude of effect will be **Medium** because the Proposed Scheme will affect a relatively restricted section of the SLA. The overall significance of effect will be **Moderate**.

Table 13:15: *Effects on SLA special qualities*

Special Qualities	Potential Effect
A contrasting combination of glens, mountains with small scale rocky landforms in between, form a fairly chaotic composition with roads and reservoirs forming the main ordering elements	The Proposed Scheme will retain its function as an ordering element within the landscape.
A dynamic sense of place is experienced through ever changing combinations of high mountain, craggy knolls and ridges, smooth moorland, dark coniferous forest and native broadleaf woodland, flat farmed strath and open loch	The Proposed Scheme will have no effect on this quality.
Creag Dhubh, near Newtonmore is one of Scotland's most impressive roadside crags.	Though visible from the road the landscape setting and physical features of Creag Dhubh, will be unaffected by the Proposed Scheme.
Sensitivity to change	Potential effect
Additional tracks or widened tracks in upland areas which would require significant cut and fill resulting in visible scarring of the hill sides	The Proposed Scheme and associated access tracks will result in hillside scarring, particularly to the southern section; however, it is proposed that mitigation to minimise this will be implemented.
Further buildings or structures or other proposals within the straths which would result in the removal of deciduous tree cover could upset the existing balance of openness and enclosure	The Proposed Scheme construction will result in loss of deciduous trees in this section. A plan of woodland management and replacement to mitigate this loss will be implemented through Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.1 in Volume 3 .
Further woodland planting could screen views to local built heritage features or reduce the variety of views and the quality of the travel experience	To reinforce the existing landscape pattern and to maintain key views from the road and the quality of the travel experience.

Potential for landscape enhancement	Potential applicability
More restocking with native broadleaf woodland/ scrub and using current best forest design practice could improve the relationship of the woodland/ scrub to the underlying landscape characteristics	The mitigation planting will be designed to fit within the Loch Etteridge and Cairn/ Nuide LLCAs, mirroring the existing planting patterns and mosaic of dry heath and regenerating scrub and shrub woodland.
Restore or replicate areas of natural regeneration of native broadleaf and wet woodland and/or scrub affected during construction where appropriate within the straths, enhancing species biodiversity, while ensuring that key views to historical buildings and features are retained or enhanced.	The mitigation planting strategy will be carefully designed to maximise the use of appropriate broadleaf woodland/ scrub species, responding to that within the existing LLCA, and future management will look to promote this approach to revegetation where appropriate. This approach may not involve planting, but would include management to ensure favourable conditions for regeneration to take place using, for example, rabbit, stock and/ or deer fencing. With reference to Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1-6.3 , for example, existing Native Woodland at NB ch. 40,000 – 43,400 will be restored to pre-construction habitat type.

Summary of Effects on Landscape Receptors

- 13.4.133 At construction phase, there will be a **Substantial** effect on three of the four LCAs (Glen Truim LCA being **Moderate**). There will be **Substantial, Substantial/ moderate** or **Moderate** overall effect on the LLCAs. There will also be a **Substantial, Substantial/ moderate** or **Moderate** overall effect on landscape features: landform, vegetation, woodland, water, historic and cultural associations and built environment, and landscape experience. There will be a **Moderate/ slight** effect on wildness.
- 13.4.134 **Table 13:16** summarises the assessment on landscape features and perception at construction, and below further summarises these at operational year 1 and years 15-25.
- 13.4.135 At operational phase year 1, the effects on both LCAs, LLCAs including landscape features and perception will have diminished, but a number will remain significant. This is primarily because mitigation, primarily in the form of planting, having not had time to establish.
- 13.4.136 At operational years 15 – 25, there are significant (**Moderate**) residual effects still apparent within Ralia and Insh Marsh LLCAs. The remaining LCAs and LLCAs will not experience significant effects once mitigation is in place and planting has established.
- 13.4.137 Regarding landscape features, there will be no significant effects present by operational years 15-25 apart from woodland. The residual effect on woodland is likely to be present after year 25 because of the likely extent of removal of mature trees from some areas of the Proposed Scheme.
- 13.4.138 A total of 74.62 ha of lowland mixed deciduous, upland birchwoods and wet woodland will be removed. To mitigate these losses, 79.29 ha of new/ replacement woodland will be planted within the scheme's LMA boundary.
- 13.4.139 Some of the removed trees are located within AWI woodland; approximately 10.78 ha of Category 1a and 2a AWI woodland will be removed as a result of construction work. AWI woodland mitigation areas accumulate to 11.66 ha. Due to extensive replanting and new planting of trees, both on- and off-line, the effect on woodland will decrease to **Moderate/ slight** by Operation Years 15-25, and will continue to decrease thereafter, as there will be a net increase of approximately 4.7ha of woodland/ scrub areas.

Table 13:16: Potential Effects on Landscape Features and Perception at Construction

Assessed item	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Overall Effect
Landscape Features			
Landform	High/ medium	High	Substantial
Vegetation	Medium	High/medium	Substantial/ moderate
Woodland	High	High	Substantial
Wildness	Medium	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Water	High	High	Substantial
Landscape Perception			
Historic and Cultural Associations and Built Environment	High	High/medium	Substantial/ moderate
Landscape Experience from the A9	High /medium	Medium	Substantial/ moderate

Table 13:17: Potential Effects on Landscape Features & Perception, Operation Year 1 and Years 15-25

Assessed item	Sensitivity	Operational Year 1		Operational Year 15-25	
		Magnitude	Overall Effect	Magnitude	Overall Effect
Landscape Features					
Landform	High/ medium	Medium	Moderate	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Vegetation	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Low	Moderate/ slight
Woodland	High	Medium	Substantial/ moderate	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Wildness	Medium	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	Low/ None	Slight/ negligible
Water	High	Medium	Substantial/ moderate	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Landscape Perception					
Historic and Cultural Associations	High	Medium	Substantial/ moderate	Low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Landscape Experience from the A9	High/ medium	Medium/ low	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	Low	Slight

13.5 Mitigation

13.5.1 This section discusses mitigation in relation to the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Scheme.

Standard, Embedded and Specific Additional Mitigation

13.5.2 There are standard mitigation measures that are common to the A9 Dualling Programme. Several of the measures have been identified as being relevant to reduce the overall effects of the Proposed Scheme as listed in items **SMC-LV1** to **SMC-LV7**. Standard mitigation applies to both the Landscape and Visual elements affected by the Proposed Scheme.

13.5.3 Embedded Mitigation measures are project specific and are included in the design of the Proposed Scheme. For clarity, these are also included in **Table 13:18**, items **P09-LV1** to **P09-LV5**, where relevant to this chapter. Note that the impact assessment has included consideration of these measures.

13.5.4 There is also Project Specific Mitigation that includes additional mitigation measures that have been identified as part of this EIA process and which apply specifically to the Landscape resource affected by the Proposed Scheme. These are also listed in **Table 13:18**.

13.5.5 The key principles for earthwork/ landform design as additional mitigation shall achieve integration with the surrounding local landscape to reduce adverse landscape and visual effects through the following aspects:

- The creation of smooth flowing slope profiles which reflect and are in character with the naturally occurring adjoining topography in terms of gradients, scale and form.
- Ensuring varying slope profiles in both cross and longitudinal section
- Forming naturalistic transitions in gradient including rounding the tops and bottoms and grading-out of side slopes to provide a smooth transition into the adjoining landforms and more closely resemble the surrounding landscape character
- Integrating earthworks with Structures, planting and existing ground levels

13.5.6 **Figure 13-16** illustrates a typical approach to be taken in the Proposed Scheme; embankments are to be modified to integrate with existing natural topography, reflecting the adjacent landform.

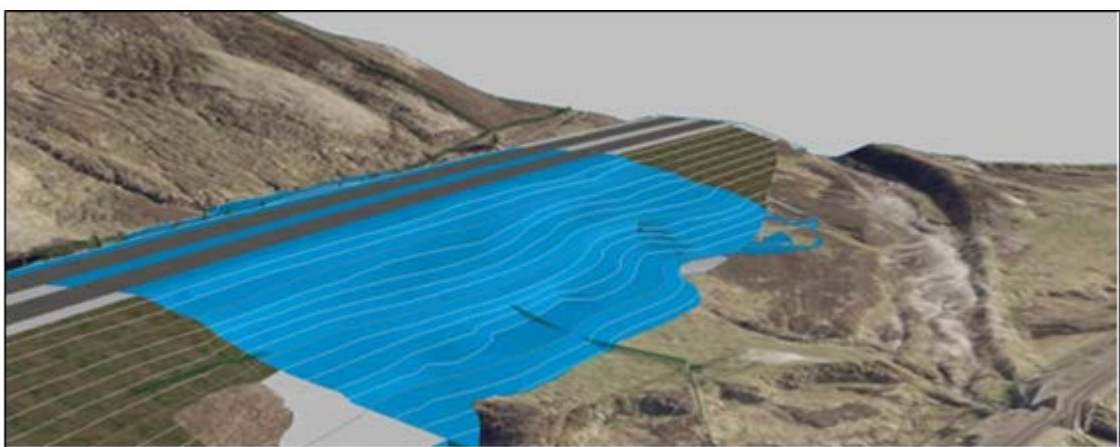


Figure 13-16: Rendered 3D model to convey the landform specification

- 13.5.7 As noted previously three levels of specification of landform will be considered:
- Level 1 - no specific requirements over and above the general requirements; it is appropriate to plant trees/ shrubs/ scrub on these slopes
 - Level 2 - a blanket requirement applicable to open landscape of relatively minor topographical variation, that is achievable in all locations at minimal additional cost, utilising few detailed design metrics, particularly top and toe rounding and long section variability to ensure that the earthworks are softened and reflect the surrounding landform to some extent; the extent of variation need not be large
 - Level 3 - specific locations within landform sensitive areas that will require a detailed specification of significant variation for particularly sensitive, highly visible slopes

Seeding and Planted Features

- 13.5.8 The embedded and additional mitigation design has been developed mindful of the sensitivity of the local landscape character, visual amenity, ecological designations (SSSI/ NNR/ SPA/ SAC) and the CNP SLQ's. The current A9 corridor and associated roadside woodland/ plantation vegetation provides relevant context to the existing functional shelterbelts, which offer a degree of route resilience during winter months and are prominent landscape features.
- 13.5.9 The Proposed Scheme involves the removal of certain sections of this woodland due to the widening of the route and introduction of new junctions. Earthworks and construction will affect existing woodland and trees at the following principle locations:
- Ralia and Glentruim (left in, left out at NB ch. 41,600)
 - Newtonmore Junction (including Underbridge at ch. 43,400)
 - Nuide Farm (left-in, left-out at ch. 46, 150)
 - B970 underbridge extension at ch. 49,250
 - Spey crossing construction and route re-alignment (ch. 49,300 – 50,500)
 - Kingussie (left in, left out at NB ch. 50,600 and SB ch. 51,000)
 - Balavil (left in, left out at NB ch. 52,900)
 - Underbridge extension to access the HWP from the B9152 at ch. 56,100
- 13.5.10 In line with current policy and the requirement to deliver adequate mitigation to offset any associated significant effects, both in relation to landscape and visual effects, **Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12** and **Indicative Mitigation Cross Sections Drawings 6.13 to 6. 19 in Volume 3** and **Appendix 6.1** have been developed following detailed discussions with CNPA and SNH.
- 13.5.11 Proposed woodland/ scrub planting within the NNR has been reviewed and reduced, where possible, to provide a balance between ecological and landscape/ visual recommendations.

Monitoring Requirements

- 13.5.12 Embedded and additional elements implemented as part of the mitigation works shall be monitored during the contract to ensure they are well maintained and that planting becomes established, effectively mitigating visual as well as landscape effects. Monitoring will inform promotion of best practice to all landscape works, particularly to prevent damage to planting during the establishment period and will ensure corrective action is taken where necessary.

- 13.5.13 Monitoring shall be carried out during the agreed contract maintenance period, in tandem with normal maintenance supervision, with specific regard to:
- earthwork, rock cutting, and retaining wall mitigation measures
 - planting/ seeding of acid and wet grassland, dry and wet heath
 - scrub/ shrub, woodland edge and woodland
- 13.5.14 Monitoring includes assessment of planting environments; species selection; the use of planting techniques to ensure effective establishment; the effectiveness of fencing and vegetation protection against sheep, wild fauna, pest infestation, and of the effectiveness of horticultural practice during the agreed landscape maintenance period and landscape planting management.
- 13.5.15 This also includes monitoring of existing woodland health and stability, assessment of the effect of removal of woodland edge on conifer shelterbelts, new understorey planting of trees and shrubs to the woodland edge to ameliorate the effect of wind exposure (in respect to wind throw).
- 13.5.16 This is explained further within **Appendix 6.1** and **Appendix 13.3** in **Volume 2**, in relation to the proposals illustrated on **Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12** and **Indicative Mitigation Cross Sections Drawings 6.13 to 6.19** in **Volume 3** of this report. Monitoring as stated within **Chapter 12** should also be taken into consideration. The effectiveness of such treatment will assist in determining long-term maintenance and planting strategies.

Table 13:18: Standard Mitigation Commitments for landscape and visual effects and specific mitigation commitments for landscape effects

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
Standard A9 Mitigation					
SMC - LV1	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Construction	The construction programme will be kept to the minimum practicable time to reduce the duration of any landscape and visual impacts and areas will be cleared for construction as close as possible to works commencing and topsoiling, reseeded and planting shall be undertaken as soon as practicable after sections of work are complete.	To reduce the duration of any landscape and visual impacts	None required
SMC - LV2	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Pre-Construction and Construction	As far as practicable, construction plant and materials storage areas will be appropriately sited to minimise their landscape and visual impact.	To reduce landscape and visual impact of plant and material storage areas.	None required
SMC - LV3	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Construction	Construction sites will be kept tidy (e.g. free of litter and debris).	To reduce visual impact of construction sites	None required
SMC - LV4	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Construction	Work during hours of darkness will be avoided as far as practicable, and where necessary, directed lighting will be used to minimise light pollution/glare. Lighting levels will be kept to the minimum necessary for security and safety.	To reduce light pollution/glare during night-time working.	None required
SMC - LV5	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Construction	To protect soil quality for the purposes of landscape planting, the following measures will be implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontaminated topsoil for re-use shall be stored in un-compacted mounds no more than 2m in height, and stored separately from subsoil material. Topsoil stripped from areas designated as Ancient Woodland shall be stored separately to all other topsoil and sub-soil material, in un-compacted mounds no more than 2m in height. • Stripped topsoil shall be used in areas of the same proposed vegetation type to utilise the existing natural seed bank. • Subsoil in planting areas shall be replaced after construction and ripped to a minimum of 450 mm prior to topsoiling and planting. Proposed planting areas in existing arable and pasture land, not subject to construction activity, will be ripped to 600 mm to alleviate compaction.	To protect soil quality for the purposes of landscape planting.	None required
SMC - LV6	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Construction	The construction will be managed such that the loss of any existing woodland, scrub, heath, mire, grassland vegetation, marshland, swamps and isolated trees and shrubs not affected by the permanent works is minimised.	To limit vegetation loss as far as practicable.	None required
SMC - LV7	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Pre-Construction	All existing trees and shrubs not affected by the construction of the permanent works shall be fenced off with a suitable type of temporary fencing in accordance with BS5837. Fencing shall extend to the drip line of the tree canopies (unless otherwise agreed by an arboricultural advisor), and shall be erected prior to any construction activities in that area and shall remain for the entire period of construction in that area.	To protect existing trees and shrubs unaffected by the Proposed Scheme.	None required
n/a (note)	n/a	n/a	Further to the above, mitigation items SMC-E7 and SMC-E8 (as detailed in Chapter 12 in Table 12.30: Ecology and Nature Conservation) will be implemented to protect vegetation which is identified to be retained.	To protect vegetation which is identified to be retained	n/a

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
Embedded Mitigation					
P09-LV1	<p>Level 3 chainages: Southbound: ch. 40,050 to ch. 41,150 ch. 46,800 to ch. 47,350 ch. 47,400 to ch. 48,050 ch. 49,400 to ch. 49,950 ch. 50,200 to ch. 50,500</p> <p>Level 3 chainages: Northbound: ch. 46,300 to ch. 47,050 ch. 49,300 to ch. 49,950 ch. 50,200 to ch. 50,500 ch. 53,600 to ch. 54,300</p>	Design and Construction	<p>Slope treatment Landscape Architects have assisted in setting the slope gradients from the A9 verge to the surrounding land. The assessment within Chapter 13 and initial design work has identified three levels of landform sensitivity as follows: Level 1: Slopes where it is appropriate to plant trees, and sections of rock cut Level 2: Open landscapes that have relatively minor topographic variation that only require specification to ensure that the earthworks are softened and reflect the surrounding landform to some extent Level 3 Priority Areas: There are some specific locations that are within open landscape and therefore landform sensitive areas that will require a detailed specification of slope. Most of these are specific locations within the Level 2 overall area but there are also some isolated locations. Level 1 areas are generally of limited size and length and will be identified at detailed design. Level 2 areas are likewise limited in extent and will be identified at detailed design stage Level 3 Priority areas have been identified between the chainages indicated in the column to the left. See Mitigation Item P09-LV6 for further information.</p>	To mitigate adverse effects of the Proposed Scheme from sensitive receptors/ users slopes to have a natural appearance so that they blend into the very open surrounding landscape and contain appropriate planting as shown on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 .	Not Applicable
P09-LV2	<p>Approx. ch. 40,640 to ch. 40,710 (C1137 retention) – 7.5m high and 70m long Approx. ch. 535 to ch. 605 (Ralia Café) – 1.95m high, 70m long Approx. ch. 625 to ch. 665 (Ralia Café) – 1.35m high, 40m long Approx. ch. 685 to ch. 775 (Ralia Café) – 1.7m high, 90m long Approx. ch. 42,750 to ch. 42,850 (NB) (A9 at Raliabeag) – 1m high, 100m long Approx. ch. 44,360 to ch. 44,480 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – 1m high, 120m long</p>	Design and Construction	<p>Retaining Walls These have been considered in regard the surrounding topography, to reduce the footprint of the scheme within the landscape. Detailed design drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced as part of the contract documents, and as indicated on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 subject to detailed design.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Lynchat and Balavil LLCA, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape.	Transport Scotland

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV2 (continued)	<p>Approx. ch. 44,700 to ch. 44,730 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – Variable height (max 900mm, min 300mm), 30m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 44,810 to ch. 44,855 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – 2.1m high, 45m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 45,055 to ch. 45,130 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – Variable height (max 3m, min 2m), 75m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 52,020 to ch. 52,380 (NB) (Raitt’s Cave Lay-by) – Variable height (max 4.5m, min 3m), 360m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 52,430 to ch. 52,500 (SB) (Lynchat retention between A9 and track) – 1.2m high, 70m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 53,475 to ch. 53,590 (NB) (Balavil Entrance Wall) – 2.5m high, 122m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 53,610 to ch. 53,685 (NB) (Balavil Entrance Wall) – 2.5m high, 80m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 52,430 to ch. 52,500 (NB) (Balavil Ha-Ha) – 3.5m high, 115m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 53,810 to ch. 53,850 (Balavil Ha-Ha) – 3.5m high, 40m long</p>	Design and Construction	<p>Retaining Walls</p> <p>These have been considered in regard the surrounding topography, to reduce the footprint of the scheme within the landscape.</p> <p>Detailed design drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced as part of the contract documents, and as indicated on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 subject to detailed design.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Lynchat and Balavil LLCA, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape.	Transport Scotland

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV2 (continued)	Approx. ch. 55,500 to ch. 55,640 (Highland Wildlife Park Service Road) – 10.6m high, 140m long Approx. ch. 55,710 to ch. 55,950 (Highland Wildlife Park Service Road) – 7m high, 240m long	Design and Construction	Retaining Walls These have been considered in regard the surrounding topography, to reduce the footprint of the scheme within the landscape. Detailed design drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced as part of the contract documents, and as indicated on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 subject to detailed design.	To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Lynchat and Balavil LLCA, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape.	Transport Scotland
P09-LV3	Approx. ch. 43,670 to ch. 43,900 (SB) – Variable height (max 10m, min 1.65m), 230m long Approx. ch. 44,650 to ch. 45,050 (SB) – Variable height (max 14m, min 3.7m), 400m long	Design and Construction	Rock Cutting Geotechnical advice should be followed together with that of landscape architects, with regards the design of these cuttings in relation to stability, the need for artificial support, and slope angles, and they should aim to achieve a natural feature to reflect the existing local landscape character as specified in the contract documents, and as indicated on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 of this report, subject to detailed design.	To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Ralia and Cairn/Nuide LLCAs, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape.	Transport Scotland
P09-LV4	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Design and Construction	SuDS basins Landscape Architects have influenced the design of the SuDS that form part of the Proposed Scheme and will continue to work alongside engineers within the detailed design to finalise the SuDS basins. These have been shaped as best possible to blend into surrounding topography and to look like natural features within this open landscape. See Mitigation Item P09-LV9 and Indicative SuDS Drawings 6.20 – 6.23 within Volume 3 for further information.	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the SuDS basins from sensitive receptors	Not Applicable
P09-LV5	ch. 49,900 to ch. 50,250	Design, Construction and Operation	Bridge over the River Spey The Bridge over the River Spey has been developed to be a low-profile option, so that it sits low on the horizon line (similar to the existing). See mitigation items P09-LV18 and P09-LV19 and Drawings 14.74 – 14.76 in Volume 3 for indicative photomontages.	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Spey bridge from sensitive receptors.	Not Applicable

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
Project Specific Mitigation					
P09-LV6	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Design and Construction	<p>Slope treatment</p> <p>New embankments and cuttings for all level 1, 2 and 3 slopes shall be feathered into the toe/ top of existing gradients at varying profiles to form slopes of natural appearance that integrate into the sensitive landscape context.</p> <p>For Level 3 Priority Areas, drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced as part of the contract documents, subject to detail design and TS approval.</p> <p>This will detail the desired contours, with cross sections to indicate how these slopes should be finished.</p> <p>Types of planting will be location specific and in line with the developed Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19, contained within Volume 3 of this report.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme from sensitive receptors; slopes shall have a natural appearance so that they blend into the very open surrounding landscape and contain appropriate planting as shown on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 .	Transport Scotland
P09-LV7	<p>Approx. ch. 40,640 to ch. 40,710 (C1137 retention) – 7.5m high and 70m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 535 to ch. 605 (Ralia Café) – 1.95m high, 70m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 625 to ch. 665 (Ralia Café) – 1.35m high, 40m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 685 to ch. 775 (Ralia Café) – 1.7m high, 90m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 42,750 to ch. 42,850 (NB) (A9 at Raliabeag) – 1m high, 100m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 44,360 to ch. 44,480 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – 1m high, 120m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 44,700 to ch. 44,730 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – Variable height (max 900mm, min 300mm), 30m long</p> <p>Approx. ch. 44,810 to ch. 44,855 (NB) (U3063</p>	Design and Construction	<p>Retaining Walls</p> <p>Landscape Architects will be involved in the detail design of the natural stone treatment to the retaining walls that form part of the Proposed Scheme at detail design.</p> <p>Retaining wall facades shall be faced with a natural stone treatment.</p> <p>Detailed design drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced in accordance with the contract documents, and as indicated on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 of this report, subject to detailed design as additional mitigation.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Lynchat and Balavil LLCA, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape. <p>The combined use of materials/ treatment of the extensive retaining walls would diffuse the incongruous appearance of the homogenous concrete retaining walls therefore reducing their effect, and improving their fit within the wider landscape.</p>	Transport Scotland

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
	retention between A9 and side road) – 2.1m high, 45m long Approx. ch. 45,055 to ch. 45,130 (NB) (U3063 retention between A9 and side road) – Variable height (max 3m, min 2m), 75m long Approx. ch. 52,020 to ch. 52,380 (NB) (Raitt’s Cave Lay-by) – Variable height (max 4.5m, min 3m), 360m long				
P09-LV7 (continued)	Approx. ch. 52,430 to ch. 52,500 (SB) (Lynchat retention between A9 and track) – 1.2m high, 70m long Approx. ch. 53,475 to ch. 53,590 (NB) (Balavil Entrance Wall) – 2.5m high, 122m long Approx. ch. 53,610 to ch. 53,685 (NB) (Balavil Entrance Wall) – 2.5m high, 80m long Approx. ch. 52,430 to ch. 52,500 (NB) (Balavil Ha-Ha) – 3.5m high, 115m long Approx. ch. 53,810 to ch. 53,850 (NB) (Balavil Ha-Ha) – 3.5m high, 40m long Approx. ch. 55,500 to ch. 55,640 (Highland Wildlife Park Service Road) – 10.6m high, 140m long Approx. ch. 55,710 to ch. 55,950 (Highland Wildlife Park Service Road) – 7m high, 240m long	Design and Construction	<p>Retaining Walls</p> <p>Landscape Architects will be involved in the detail design of the natural stone treatment to the retaining walls that form part of the Proposed Scheme at detail design.</p> <p>Retaining wall facades shall be faced with a natural stone treatment.</p> <p>Detailed design drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced in accordance with the contract documents, and as indicated on the Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in in Volume 3 of this report, subject to detailed design as additional mitigation.</p>	<p>To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Lynchat and Balavil LLCA, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape.</p> <p>The combined use of materials/treatment of the extensive retaining walls would diffuse the incongruous appearance of the homogenous concrete retaining walls therefore reducing their effect, and improving their fit within the wider landscape.</p>	Transport Scotland

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV8	Approx. ch. 43,670 to ch. 43,900 (SB) – Variable height (max 10m, min 1.65m), 230m long Approx. ch. 44,650 to ch. 45,050 (SB) – Variable height (max 14m, min 3.7m), 400m long	Design and Construction	Rock Cutting: Planting Landscape architects shall advise regarding the planting in pockets within rock cut areas, in conjunction with geotechnical engineer's advice, as part of the contract documents, and as indicated on the indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3 of this report, subject to detailed design as additional mitigation.	To mitigate adverse landscape effects on the landscape characteristics of the LCA, LLCAs, landscape features and landscape perceptions, particularly Ralia and Cairn/Nuide LLCAs, to optimise traveller experience while fitting into the open surrounding landscape.	Transport Scotland
P09-LV9	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Design and Construction	SuDS basins design refinement Further design shall integrate SuDS basins with roadside slopes (including slopes to access tracks) at all SuDS basins. SuDS basins are landform sensitive and shall look as natural as possible to blend into the surrounding open landscape. Appropriate seeding and planting is required as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 contained within Volume 3 of this report. Please also refer to Indicative SuDS Mitigation Drawings 6.20 – 6.23 within Volume 3 .	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the SuDS basins from sensitive receptors within the LLCA and LCA.	Transport Scotland
P09-LV10	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Design, Construction and Operation	Planting (including seeding) to either side of the road Planting should be as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 , contained within Volume 3 of this report. All planting has been designed to be appropriate to the setting of the scheme and to reduce adverse visual effects from sensitive receptors. Specific elements of this are detailed below.	To ensure the enjoyment of the highly scenic landscape is possible and reduce adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme.	Not Applicable
P09-LV11	Throughout Proposed Scheme	Design, Construction and Operation	Road signage/ furniture Minimisation of roadscape features such as signs and barriers at more open areas. These items are expected along a road scheme of this nature, however minimising them to the necessary requirements will help with the enjoyment of the high-quality landscape surrounding.	To ensure the enjoyment of the highly scenic landscape is possible and reduce adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme, primarily to the character of the LLCA, NCN7 and HML railway.	Not Applicable
P09-LV12	ch. 42,800, ch. 43,100 to 43,200 and ch. 48,600 to ch. 48,800	Design, Construction and Operation	Landform Areas Parcels of land at the aforementioned chainages have been identified that require land re-profiling. Material will be placed in these areas and sculpted based on designs from Landscape Architects to tie into existing landform and topography.	To ensure landform in adjacent areas to the A9 ties into the existing topography, re-profiling areas with a natural gradient and thereby minimising adverse landscape effects to the LLCA and LCA.	None required

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV13	ch. 41,500 to ch. 42,000 (NB)	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Ralia left in left out and SuDS basin 417</p> <p>Planting to the Ralia left-in left-out is to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12, contained within Volume 3, and with reference to Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.13 (Section A-A'), contained within Volume 3.</p> <p>Planting structure around the junction will comprise trees, shrubs and low-level heath and grassland to suit landscape. This will mitigate the loss of tree planting at this location. Appropriate planting to SuDS basin 417 as this will likely be visible from this junction.</p>	To reduce adverse landscape effects from sensitive landscape receptors; to reinstate any vegetation removal and to aid some masking of the Proposed Scheme.	None required Not Applicable
P09-LV14	ch. 43,000 to ch. 43,600	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Newtonmore Junction</p> <p>Slopes to the Newtonmore Junction require further detailed design mitigation as a landform sensitive area as noted in Mitigation Item P09-LV1.</p> <p>Planting to the Newtonmore Junction is to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12, contained within Volume 3, and as referred to in Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.14 (Section D-D'), contained within Volume 3.</p> <p>Planting structure around the junction will comprise trees, shrubs and low-level heath and grassland to suit landscape, to allow certain aspects of the engineered junction to be screened.</p> <p>Planting structure around the junction will comprise trees, shrubs and low-level heath and grassland to suit landscape. This will mitigate the loss of tree planting at this location.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the new junction infrastructure and on the LLCA and LCA.	None required Not Applicable
P09-LV15	ch. 44,800 to ch. 45,100	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Soil nailing</p> <p>Pockets should be installed within the area of soil nailing to allow larger planting to take place, such as shrub and tree planting to soften the appearance of the soil nailing.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the soil nailing and on the LLCA and LCA.	Transport Scotland
P09-LV16	ch. 48,800 to ch. 49,300	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Profiling of landform along mainline at Ruthven Properties</p> <p>Along the southbound carriageway, the earthworks along the mainline will be mounded and then blended into the adjacent field to create a feature that protects landscape character and visual amenity.</p> <p>This is as indicated on Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.7 and Indicative Mitigation Cross Section drawing 6.15 (Section J-J'), in Volume 3 subject to detailed design.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme on the landscape character of the land adjacent to Ruthven Cottage, Ruthven Park, Ruthven House and Ruthven Steadings and on the LLCA and LCA.	None required
P09-LV17	NB ch. 48,800 to ch. 49,150 SB ch. 49,300 to ch. 49,550 SB ch. 55,750 to ch. 56,000	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>DMRB Type A Lay-bys with Viewing Facilities at Ruthven and Insh Marsh</p> <p>3 no. Type A Lay-bys within the Proposed Scheme with viewing facilities for visitors as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.7 and 6.11, subject to detailed design.</p>	To provide a rest and stopping area to optimise traveller experience, while complementing the view of the landscape including features such as Ruthven Barracks, hill ranges beyond Kingussie and Insh Marshes.	Transport Scotland in consultation with HES, CNPA and The Highland Council

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV18	ch. 43,400 at Newtonmore Junction ch. 48,800 GWMR at Knappach ch. 49,275 B970 at Ruthven ch. 49,950 southern Spey bridge abutment ch. 50,210 northern Spey bridge abutment ch. 50,700 B9152 at Kingussie ch. 52,920 at Lynchat ch. 56,100 to ch. 56,200 at the HWP	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Treatment of the A9 underbridges at B9150, GWMR/NMU at Knappach, B970, the Spey bridge, B9152 at Kingussie, the Balavil underbridge at Lynchat and the road to the Highland Wildlife Park from the B9152</p> <p>Aesthetic consideration will be focussed on slope design on the approach road embankments and the design and material selection of the bridge finish, including natural stone treatment to the sub-structure.</p> <p>Planting to the embankments will be in keeping with existing planting and mixed native trees.</p> <p>Planting to the Spey Crossing is to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.7 to 6.8, contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the new bridge structures on the LLCA and LCA.	None required
P09-LV19	ch. 49,300 to ch. 50,500	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Approach to and Bridge over the River Spey</p> <p>Aesthetic considerations will be focussed on slope design on the approach road embankments and the design and material selection of the bridge finish, including natural stone treatment to the bridge abutment sub-structure.</p> <p>Native and wet woodland tree species will be planted on the northbound side of the embankment between ch. 49,300 and ch. 49,430, and to the southbound side of the embankment from ch. 49,300 to ch. 49,400, to replace trees lost to construction.</p> <p>Planting to the remaining areas of the new approach embankment and reinstatement of locally disturbed ground will be limited to native grassland species in order to avoid introduction of habitats that are not compatible with conservation objectives for breeding waders within the Insh Marshes NNR.</p> <p>Planting in the vicinity of the Spey crossing is to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.7 to 6.8, contained within Volume 3, and with reference to Indicative Photomontage Drawings 14.74-14.76, within Volume 3</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the new bridge structure, upon the setting of a number of sensitive receptors and on the LLCA and LCA.	Transport Scotland in consultation with HES, CNPA and The Highland Council
P09-LV20	ch. 50,200 to ch. 51,600	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Kingussie Junctions (northbound and southbound)</p> <p>Planting structure around the junction will comprise trees, shrubs and low-level heath and grassland to suit landscape, to allow certain aspects of the engineered junction to be screened and to replace planting lost to the Glebe Pond area.</p> <p>Planting to the Kingussie Junctions is to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.8 and Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.16 (Section M-M'), contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the new junction infrastructure and on the LLCA and LCA.	None required

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV21	ch. 51,100 to ch. 51,400	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Landform at Laggan Properties (northbound and southbound)</p> <p>Bunds will be provided near to the mainline and SuDS basin 513, that replicate existing local landform to mitigate noise as detailed within Chapter 17 mitigation item P09-NV2 and mitigation item P09-NV5.</p> <p>Planting at Laggan is to be delivered as specified on the Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.8, contained within Volume 3, and with reference to Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.17 (Sections P-P' and Q-Q'), contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme and the LLCA and LCA.	None required
P09-LV22	NB ch. 52,000 to ch. 52,250	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Raitt's Cave Souterrain landform and planting</p> <p>Landform will be re-profiled and tree planting as shown on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.9 will be planted along the mainline, and with reference to Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.18 (Section R-R'), contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme on the setting of Raitt's Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument, and the LLCA and LCA.	Heritage Environment Scotland
P09-LV23	ch. 52,200 to ch. 53,100	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Underbridge and access tracks and earthworks to the north of the mainline and SuDS basin 530 at Lynchat</p> <p>Refinement of slopes to the access track, planting to drainage features and refinement and planting of SuDS basin 530.</p> <p>Planting to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12, contained within Volume 3, and with reference to Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.18 (Section S-S'), contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme on the LLCA and LCA.	None required
P09-LV24	ch. 53,600 to ch. 54,400	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Balavil access, landform and planting</p> <p>Within the garden between the mainline and the proposed access track for Balavil Estate use, additional mitigation has been designed to create a terraced false cutting between the A9 and Balavil House and garden.</p> <p>There will be tree planting to both the northbound and southbound carriageway and Kingussie to Kincaig NMU link, combined with a natural stone treatment to the noise attenuation barrier.</p> <p>Planting to be delivered as specified on Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.10, contained within Volume 3 and with reference to Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.18 (Section 'T-T'), contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme on the setting of Balavil Estate and the LLCA and LCA.	Heritage Environment Scotland
P09-LV25	ch. 54,400 to ch. 55,200	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Croftcarnoch planting and access track</p> <p>The mainline and Kingussie to Kincaig NMU link is in cutting and will not be visible from this property.</p> <p>There will be tree planting to both the northbound and southbound carriageways.</p> <p>Along the new access track for this property, existing trees will be retained where possible and tree planting will also take place along the track.</p> <p>Refer also to Environmental Mitigation Drawing 6.10 and Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawing 6.19 (Section 'U-U'), contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme and the LLCA and LCA.	None required

Item Ref.	Approximate Chainage/ Location	Timing of Measure	Description	Mitigation Purpose/ Objective	Specific Consultation or Approval Required
P09-LV26	ch. 48,389 to ch. 48,610 (SB) – 4m high ch. 51,100 to ch. 51,350 (SB) – 3m high ch. 52,460 to ch. 52,635 (NB) – 3m high ch. 52,635 to ch. 52,700 (SB) – 3m high ch. 52,495 to ch. 52,650 (SB) – 2.5m high ch. 53,490 to ch. 53,590 (NB) – 2.5m high	Design, Construction and Operation	<p>Noise Barriers</p> <p>Treatment to noise barriers to be as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ch. 48,389 to 48,610 – 4m high green screen with surrounding vegetation • ch. 51,100 to 51,350 – 3m high earthwork bund • ch. 52,460 to 52,635 – 3m high green screen with surrounding vegetation • ch. 52,635 to 52,700 – 3m high green screen with surrounding vegetation • ch. 52,495 to 52,650 – 2.5m high earthwork bund • ch. 53,490 to 53,590 – 2.5m high stone wall <p>These items relate to the mitigation as detailed within Chapter 17, Mitigation Items P09-NV1 to P09-NV6.</p> <p>Detailed design drawings and specifications for each location shall be produced, in line with the Environmental Mitigation Drawings 6.1 to 6.12 in Volume 3 of this report, subject to detailed design as additional mitigation.</p> <p>Refer also to Indicative Mitigation Cross Section Drawings 6.13 to 6.19, contained within Volume 3.</p>	To mitigate adverse landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme and the LLCA and LCA.	Transport Scotland in consultation with HES, CNPA and The Highland Council

13.6 Residual Effects

Introduction

- 13.6.1 This section considers the temporary (construction) and permanent (operational) potential residual landscape effects of the Proposed Scheme on the LCAs and LLCAs and Landscape features assessed, refer to **Table 13:7** and **Section 13.5**. It sets out the residual effects, accounting for effects at operation phase years 15-25 after opening. Effects are adverse unless otherwise stated.

Temporary - Construction Phase

- 13.6.2 As detailed in **Section 13.4** and **Table 13:13**, the construction of the Proposed Scheme will result in unavoidable temporary **Substantial** or **Moderate** significant adverse effects on the four LCAs through which the A9 passes directly. It will also have **Substantial, Substantial/ moderate** or **Moderate** significant adverse effects on all eight of the LLCAs adjacent to the A9, and directly affected by it. Landscape features of landform, vegetation, woodland and water and landscape perceptual feature of landscape experience will also experience **Substantial, Substantial/ moderate** or **Moderate** significant adverse effects. Wildness will be subject to **Moderate/ slight (not significant)** effects however, as this characteristic is less susceptible within the Proposed Scheme study area, as explained in paragraphs **13.3.142** to **13.3.144**. While such effects may be significant during the construction phase, they are also temporary and consequently are not considered residually significant.

Permanent

- 13.6.3 **Table 13:14** identifies potential effects on the Ben Alder Laggan and Glen Banchor SLA at commencement of operations and at years 15-25 after opening. Through mitigation detailed in **Table 13:14**, given the establishment of vegetation by years 15-25, it is anticipated there will be no significant residual effects when mitigation is in place and planting has established.
- 13.6.4 The greatest effects in the long term are **Moderate** effects upon Ralia LLCA due to the notable changes to earthworks, SuDS basins and underbridge crossings associated with the new junction, and **Moderate** effects upon Insh Marshes LLCA due to the effect of the new Spey crossing and associated earthworks at localised locations. Over time, the embankments, underbridge earthworks and planting design will integrate with the surrounding landscape within Ralia LLCA and the new Spey crossing will become a feature that, although more extensive than the existing, will be accepted as an element within the wider landscape in the same way as the existing bridge.
- 13.6.5 **Table 13-19** sets out the summary of residual effects.

Table 13:19: Summary of residual effects

Receptor	Sensitivity	Significance of Impact – Construction Phase	Significance of Impact – Operation Year 1	Mitigation Ref.	Residual Significance of Impact – Operation Years 15-25
Landscape Character Areas					
Glen Truim LCA	Medium	Moderate	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV6, P09-LV10, P09-LV11	Slight
Badenoch: Upper Strath LCA	Medium	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV12, P09-LV13, P09-LV14, P09-LV15	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Badenoch: Newtonmore to Kingussie LCA	High	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV12, P09-LV15, P09-LV16	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Badenoch: Insh Marshes LCA	High	Moderate	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV5, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV16, P09-LV17, P09-LV18, P09-LV20, P09-LV21, P09-LV22, P09-LV23, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Local Landscape Character Areas					
Loch Etteridge	High/ medium	Moderate	Moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV6, P09-LV10, P09-LV11	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Ralia	High/ medium	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV12, P09-LV13, P09-LV14, P09-LV15	Moderate
Newtonmore	Medium	N/A	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV10, P09-LV12	Slight
Cairn/ Nuide	High/ medium	Substantial/ moderate	Moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV12, P09-LV15, P09-LV16	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Kingussie	Medium	Moderate	Moderate/ slight	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV16, P09-LV19, P09-LV20	Slight
Insh Marshes	High	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV5, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV17, P09-LV18, P09-LV19	Moderate
Lynchat & Balavil Woodland	High/ medium	Substantial/ moderate	Moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV17, P09-LV18, P09-LV22, P09-LV23, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Slight
Dunachtonmore	High/ medium	Substantial/ moderate	Moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV17, P09-LV18	Slight

Receptor	Sensitivity	Significance of Impact – Construction Phase	Significance of Impact – Operation Year 1	Mitigation Ref.	Residual Significance of Impact – Operation Years 15-25
Landscape Feature					
Landform	High/ medium	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV9, P09-LV12, P09-LV13, P09-LV14, P09-LV15, P09-LV16, P09-LV17, P09-LV18, P09-LV19, P09-LV20, P09-LV21, P09-LV22, P09-LV23	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Vegetation	Medium	Substantial/ moderate	Moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV19, P09-LV20, P09-LV22, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Slight
Woodland	High	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV19, P09-LV20, P09-LV22, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Wildness	Medium	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV19, P09-LV20, P09-LV22, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Slight/ negligible
Water	High	Substantial	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV5, P09-LV9, P09-LV17, P09-LV19, P09-LV22, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Landscape Perception					
Historic and Cultural Associations	High	Substantial/ moderate	Substantial/ moderate	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV4, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV12, P09-LV17, P09-LV19, P09-LV22, P09-LV24, P09-LV25	Moderate/ slight (not significant)
Landscape Experience from the A9	High/ medium	Substantial/ moderate	Moderate/ slight (not significant)	SMC-LV1, SMC-LV2, SMC-LV3, SMC-LV4, SMC-LV5, SMC-LV6, SMC-LV7, P09-LV1, P09-LV2, P09-LV3, P09-LV4, P09-LV5, P09-LV6, P09-LV7, P09-LV8, P09-LV9, P09-LV10, P09-LV11, P09-LV12, P09-LV13, P09-LV14, P09-LV15, P09-LV16, P09-LV17, P09-LV18, P09-LV19, P09-LV21, P09-LV22, P09-LV23, P09-LV24	Slight

Summary

- 13.6.6 Significant adverse effects on the LCAs, LLCAs are anticipated at construction stage and after Operation Year 1 (post-opening) before most embedded and additional mitigation will be fully established. As previously noted, with embedded (primary) and additional (secondary) mitigation in place, there will be **Moderate** residual significant effects on the Ralia and Insh Marshes LLCAs. There will be no significant effects on other LCAs, LLCAs, landscape features, CNPA SLQs, or the SLA.
- 13.6.7 The greatest effects in the long term are **Moderate** effects upon Ralia due to the notable changes to the southbound (east) embankments and the new Newtonmore Junction that will alter the characteristics of the LCA and LLCAs in this localised location. Effects upon Insh Marshes LLCA will also be **Moderate**, primarily due to the construction of the wider road pavement, and increased length of the new Spey bridge and approach road embankments, which alter this area locally within the open floodplain of the Spey. The loss of road-side trees and scrub, particularly north of Kingussie (to both sides of the carriageway) will also be notable.
- 13.6.8 Effects upon the landscape setting of the culturally important Ruthven Barracks Scheduled Monument will remain significant, partly as a result of the need to avoid tree planting within or adjacent to the NNR at the Spey crossing, which precludes screening of the new A9 embankment and bridge. However, these effects are off-set in part because the Proposed Scheme replaces the existing bridge and embankment with a new structure of much the same low-profile appearance. The removal of the existing embankment will also result in beneficial restoration of an area of marshland.
- 13.6.9 By reducing the extent of earthworks required, the extensive retaining walls and re-profiling of the embankment to the A9 frontage along Raitt’s Cave Souterrain Scheduled Monument mitigates landscape effects within the landscape setting in this location. They also create aesthetically beneficial effects when viewed from the road, as illustrated by **Figure 13-10**, **Figure 13-11** and **Figure 13-12**.
- 13.6.10 The effects of the Proposed Scheme on Balavil Mains and Balavil House will be similarly mitigated by combined retaining walls, earthworks and planting, preserving historically important trees. As well as enhancing views from Balavil House, this mitigation will reduce the effects of both the Proposed Scheme and the existing A9 on the character of the designed landscape setting, as illustrated by **Figure 13-13**, **Figure 13-14** and **Figure 13-15**.
- 13.6.11 Lay-bys with viewing facilities at Ruthven (northbound and southbound) and Insh Marshes (southbound) also provide a beneficial effect, particularly regarding the landscape experience from the A9, helping to off-set adverse effects by introducing aesthetically beneficial resting and viewing points, illustrated by **Figure 13-9**.
- 13.6.12 The replacement strategy for loss of woodland will deliver an overall increase in woodland/ scrub cover (of native species) within the Proposed Scheme compared to the existing situation. However, until the planting becomes mature in the longer term, tree loss will be significant. The replacement strategy will have the objective of reinforcing LLCA features and AWI woodland lost by historic land management/ development within the A9 corridor (refer to **Drawings 14.74 to 14.76 Indicative Photomontage 1, 2 and 3 in Volume 3**).
- 13.6.13 Over time the earthworks, bridges, retaining walls, lay-bys with viewing facilities, heritage mitigation and planting design will integrate with the surrounding local landscape. Proposed landscape planting, as detailed on the **Environmental Mitigation Drawings and Indicative Cross Sections 6.1 to 6.19 in Volume 3**, will provide a number of other benefits, including screening and improving views, biodiversity, reinforcing the LLCAs and benefiting the CNPA SLQs and setting of heritage assets.

13.7 References

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