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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A9 Pitaldonich expansion joint replacement

Contents

Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to undertake expansion joint replacement works on the A9 Pitaldonich bridge. The scheme covers an approximate area of 0.1ha and is 80m in length. The works will include:

- Removal of the existing uplink and downlink expansion joints.
- Concrete repairs to the bridge deck and curtain wall around the expansion gap (if required).
- Installation of new MATT joints on the uplink and downlink.

The works are scheduled to commence during the current financial year (FY24-25) between September 2024 and March 2025. Currently, the scheme is expected to be carried out in September 2024 for a duration of 7-10 days. Works will take place during daytime hours (07:00 to 19:00). The works are necessary to rectify failure of an uplink expansion joint.

Traffic Management (TM) will include a single lane closure facilitated by temporary traffic lights (TTL). The TM strategy will be in line with recommendations and guidance in The Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 8.

Location

The scheme is located on the A9 trunk road approximately 2.7km northwest of the rural village of Blair Atholl within Perth and Kinross Council (Figure 1). The scheme is located at the following National Grid Reference (NGR): NN 82550 65790

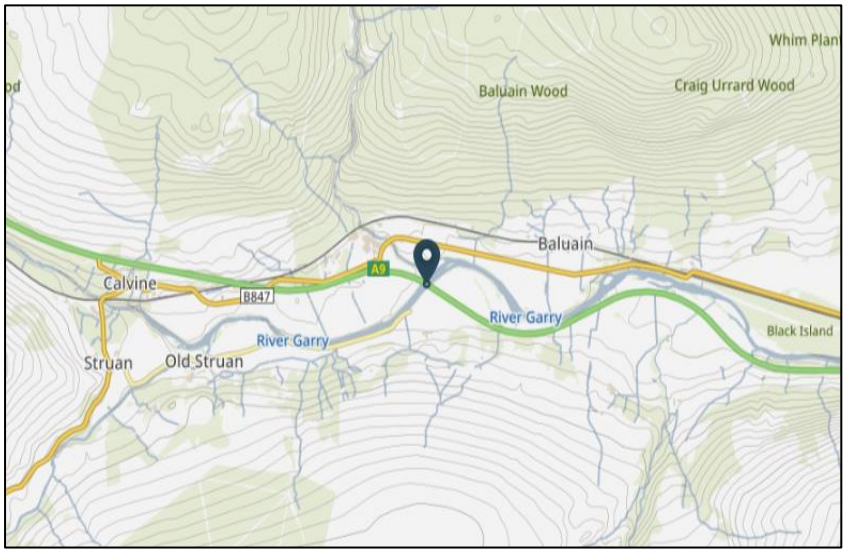

Figure 1 Location of A9 Pitaldonch expansion joint replacement scheme.

Description of local environment

Air quality

No Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) (Air Quality Management Areas) are located within 10km of the scheme.

There are no air quality monitoring stations within 10km of the works (Scottish Air Quality). The closest air monitoring station is located within Perth which is approximately 50km southeast of the scheme.

No sites registered on the Scottish Pollution Release Inventory (SPRI) are located within 10km of the scheme (Scottish Pollution Release Inventory).

The nearest traffic monitoring point on the A9 (site number 806242) is located approximately 11km south from the scheme. For the year of the most recent available data (2019), Annual Average Daily Flow (AADF) monitoring at this located recorded a total of 2,422 motor vehicles, of which 99 (4.1%) were Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) (Road traffic statistics).

Baseline air quality in the study area is mainly influenced by vehicles travelling along the A9 trunk road. Secondary sources are derived from vehicles travelling along the local road network and rural activities associated with land management within the area.

Cultural heritage

According to Pastmap, there is one cultural heritage feature located within the scheme extents.

- Canmore also listed as Historic Environment Record (HER), Pitaldonich Bridge (ref 279031), lies in the immediate vicinity of the scheme.

The following cultural heritage features were also highlighted to be within 300m of the scheme:

- One feature listed on the Canmore database. Pitgowan, House of Bruar (ref 346651) lies approximately 270m northwest of the scheme.
- One HER, Dunkeld-Dalnacardoch-Ruthven-Aviemore-Inverness Military Road; Woodend-Bruar-Calvine (ref MPK9299), lies approximately 285m north of the scheme.

There are no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Garden & Designed Landscapes, Conservation Areas, Battlefields or World Heritage Sites found within 300m of the scheme extent.

Construction of the A9 is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present within the area.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is located partially within the Cairngorms National Park (CNP). The general qualities of CNP include the following:

- Magnificent mountains towering over moorland, forest, and strath.
- Vastness of space, scale, and height.
- Strong juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes.
- A landscape of layers, from inhabited strath to remote, uninhabited upland.
- 'The harmony of complicated curves'
- Landscapes both cultural and natural.
- The scheme is not located within a National Scenic Area (NSA) (SiteLink).

The scheme is located within a rural location northwest of the village of Blair Atholl. Pastoral fields and broadleaf tree corridors can be found flanking the A9 carriageway. The River Garry is also a prominent feature within the scheme as it meanders through the landscape. The Highland Main Line railway line runs approximately parallel to the A9 north of the River Garry near the scheme location.

The Landscape Character Type (LCT 129) within the scheme extent is recorded as Broad Glen with Estates, which has the following key characteristics:

- Large glens.
- Contained by high, rounded hills.
- Flat, broad strath floors, sometimes constricted into rocky wooded gorges, housing the upper/mid sections of major rivers flowing down from the Cairngorms.
- The rivers are a feature whether meandering in sinuous loops or faster-flowing along boulder-strewn stretches.
- Number of side glens cut by tributary streams/burns.
- Pastures on valley floors, interspersed with policy tree planting and stretches of riparian woodland.
- Policy woodlands that often include areas of parkland trees.
- Extensive woodlands: steeper slopes have conifer forest with some heather moorland on open hills.
- Settlements at bridging points and crossroads.
- Large estate houses and castles with associated lodges, cottages and steadings.
- Diverse landscape character with much visual interest.

The A9 Trunk Road, within the North West, connects Perth with Thurso. It commences immediately north of Inveralmond Roundabout in Perth leading generally northwards for 357 kilometres to its junction with an unclassified road leading to Holborn Head lighthouse at Scrabster. The A9 is a mixture of single carriageway, '2+1' carriageway and stretches of two-lane dual carriageway.

Biodiversity

The A9 Pitaldonich Bridge spans the River Garry, which forms part of the River Tay Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (8366).

Although no in-water works are required, the scheme is situated directly above the River Tay SAC. A Habitats Regulation Appraisal (HRA) was undertaken to assess potential impacts of the works on the SAC. More details can be found below in the section 'Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation'.

Tulach Hills and Glen Fender Meadows SAC (8401) lies approximately 670m southeast of the scheme. Due to the distance between the SAC and the proposed works on the A9 Pitaldonich bridge, no connectivity between the area of works and the SAC was identified.

Aldclune and Invervack Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (30) is designated for lowland calcareous grassland and lies approximately 230m northeast from the scheme.

No other locally or nationally designated sites (i.e., Local Nature Reserve (LNR), or National Nature Reserve (NNR) are located within 300m of the scheme (SiteLink).

Numerous records of bird species were returned on the NBN Atlas using the same search criteria. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA), all wild birds and their nests are protected.

The NBN Atlas highlighted records of rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), which is an invasive non-native species (INNS) as listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA. No injurious weeds, as listed under the Weeds Act 1959 were returned within 2km of the scheme extents (within the last 10 years), on the NBN Atlas.

A search of Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) highlighted two records of the injurious weed common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*) found within the verges of the A9 carriageway boundary approximately 80m southeast of the scheme extent.

There are no ancient woodlands listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) that lie within 300m of the scheme.

According to Perth and Kinross Council there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) located within 300m of the scheme.

Habitat within the vicinity of the scheme includes pastoral fields, pockets of woodland, and the riparian habitat along the River Garry and its tributaries.

The BEAR Scotland NW Environment Team carried out a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) and a preliminary roost assessment (PRA) at A9 Pitaldonich bridge in March 2024. It was found that the bridge does not provide suitable summer or winter bat roosting potential and no signs of bat presence (e.g., droppings) were observed. There are no suitable bat structures, buildings or trees within 30m of the scheme.

Geology and soils

The scheme does not lie within a Geological Conservation Review Site (GCRS) or a geologically designated SSSI.

Bedrock within the scheme extent is comprised of: Gaick Psammite Formation – Psammite, which is metamorphic bedrock formed between 1000 and 541 million years ago between the Tonian and Ediacaran periods (BGS Geology Viewer).

Superficial deposits within the scheme extents are listed as: Alluvium – Clay, silt, sand, and gravel, which are sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 11.8 thousand years ago and the present during the Quaternary period (BGS Geology Viewer).

The local soil type is recorded as humus-iron podzols with mineral alluvial soils / peaty alluvial soils (Scotland's Soils).

Soils within the scheme extent are recorded as being ‘Class 0’, as displayed on Scotland's Peat and Carbon map. Class 0 is considered to be mineral soil, and peatland habitats are not typically found on such soils.

This receptor has no constraints (as identified in Environmental Baseline) that are likely to be impacted by the proposed works, which are restricted to the A9 Pitaldonich bridge deck and will not entail excavation or groundworks. As such, ‘geology and soils’ is scoped out and is not discussed further within this RoD.

Material assets and waste

The proposed works are required to replace expansion joints on Pitaldonich bridge. Materials used will consist of:

- New MATT joint material
- Nosing mortar material

The value of the scheme does not exceed £350,000; therefore, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required.

The 80m scheme involves removal of existing Elastomeric in Metal Runners (EIMR) expansion joint material and nosing mortar material which will be removed from site.

No site compound is required for these works. Storage of plant and equipment will be within TM on the A9 carriageway.

Noise and vibration

The scheme extent is located within a rural area. Properties within 300m of the scheme are described below under 'Population and Human Health'.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan-2019-2023 (Road maps).

Scotland's Noise Map (Scotland's Noise Map) records noise levels for day, evening, and night (Lden) within the scheme location between 80dB and 70dB.

Baseline noise levels are likely to be primarily influenced by traffic travelling along the A9 carriageway. Secondary sources are derived from vehicles travelling along the local road network and rural activities associated with land management within the area.

Population and human health

The scheme is located within a rural area west of the village of Blair Atholl. The vast open space and scenery attract regular visitors to the area who wish to take part in recreational activities such as fishing or cycling and walking.

The House of Bruar is a popular shopping destination which dominates the area just north of the A9 near the bridge. It is located approximately 300m west of the scheme.

There is one residential farmstead which is located approximately 290m south of the scheme. Access to this is via the A9 carriageway approximately 560m southeast of the scheme location.

There is one National Cycle Network (NCN) route within the scheme extent. National Cycle Network Route 7 (National Cycle Network) connects Aberfeldy and Pitlochry in Perth and Kinross, and lies approximately 285m north of the scheme location, and travels along the old military road mentioned in 'Cultural Heritage' section.

There is one core path listed within the scheme extents (Old Road from Old Struan East to A9 bridge over River Garry, path code BAST/124) (Core Paths Perth & Kinross Council).

Traffic management will consist of single lane closure with TTL.

Road drainage and the water environment

River Garry (Errochty Water Confluence to L Faskally) is a river (ID 6836) in the River Tay catchment of the Scotland River basin district. The main stem is approximately 15.1 kilometres in length. The water body has been designated as a heavily modified water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on water storage for hydroelectricity generation. River Garry which travels directly below the A9 carriageway at Pitaldonich bridge was awarded an overall classification of 'Good ecological

potential' by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) in 2022 under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) 2000/60/EC (Water Classification Hub).

River Bruar is a river (ID 6605) in the River Tay catchment of the Scotland River basin district. The main stem is approximately 17.2 kilometres in length. The water body has been designated as a heavily modified water body on account of physical alterations that cannot be addressed without a significant impact on water storage for hydroelectricity generation. River Bruar lies approximately 115m north of the scheme and was given an overall status of 'bad ecological potential' in 2022 by SEPA under the WFD 2000/60/EC (Water Classification Hub).

There are numerous unclassified surface waterbodies and drainage features which lie within 300m of the scheme.

The scheme falls within the Tummel and Tay Sand and Gravel (ID 150735) groundwater body which has been classified by SEPA in 2022 as having 'Good' overall condition. Groundwater bodies are also designated as Drinking Water Protected Areas (Ground) (DWPA).

The SEPA indicative surface water online flood mapping tool records that the scheme falls within an area that has a high likelihood of river flooding each year (10% chance).

Climate

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 sets out the target and vision set by the Scottish Government for tackling and responding to climate change (The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009). The Act includes a target of reducing CO2 emissions by 80% before 2050 (from the baseline year 1990). The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 amended the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 to bring the target of reaching net-zero emissions in Scotland forward to 2045 (Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019).

The Scottish Government has since published its indicative Nationally Determined Contribution (iNDC) to set out how it will reach net-zero emissions by 2045, working to reduce emissions of all major greenhouse gases by at least 75% by 2030 (Scotland's contribution to the Paris Agreement: indicative Nationally Determined Contribution - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)). By 2040, the Scottish Government is committed to reducing emissions by 90%, with the aim of reaching net-zero by 2045 at the latest.

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

Policies and plans

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

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Construction activities associated with the proposed works have the potential to temporarily cause local air quality impacts. The main sources are likely to be dust generated by excavation, as well as exhaust emissions from ancillary plant and vehicles. As a result, there is potential for dust, particulate matter, and exhaust emissions to be emitted to the atmosphere. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to the air are considered to be low.

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

- Any stockpiled material on site will be monitored daily to ensure no risks of dust emissions exists.
- Materials will be removed from site as soon as is practicable.
- Good housekeeping will be employed throughout the work.

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

Cultural heritage

Expansion joint replacement works are not expected to have an adverse impact on cultural heritage. Construction of the A9 Pitaldonich Bridge and A9 road corridor is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present within the trunk road boundary scheme extents. Although the bridge is noted as a Canmore feature, the works do not include any alterations that would affect the historic and architectural character of this feature. All works are restricted to the A9 Pitaldonich Bridge and the following measures will be implemented to avoid impacts to sensitive cultural features:

- People, plant, and materials will, as much as is reasonably practicable, only be present on areas of made/engineered ground. Where access outwith these areas is required for the safe and effective completion of the scheme, it will be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable and will ideally be limited to access on foot.
- There will be no storage of vehicles, plant, or materials against any buildings, walls, or fences.
- All site personnel will be briefed on the importance of archaeological finds and are instructed, as part of the site induction, to inform the site supervisor where potential finds are made.
- Should any unexpected archaeological evidence be discovered, works will stop temporarily in the vicinity and the BEAR Scotland Environment Team contacted for advice.

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

Landscape and visual effects

Although the works fall within CNP, they will be temporary, short-term, and restricted to the A9 Pitaldonich bridge deck. CNP will be notified of the proposed works and any advice provided will be followed.

There will be a short-term impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the site as a result of the presence of construction plant, vehicles, and TM. However,

people, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A9, and construction works are programmed to be of short duration. As such, the visual impact of the works will be minimal. Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts are anticipated, as the visual appearance of the bridge will remain largely unaffected.

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

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

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

Biodiversity

The Pitaldonich bridge spans the River Tay SAC. The HRA concluded that, Likely Significant Effects (LSE) could not be ruled out, no Adverse Effects on Site Integrity (AESI) were expected, provided that the following mitigation and good practice measures are followed:

- No works will take place within the boundary of the SAC and no in-water works are required; as such, no direct impacts (e.g., habitat loss) will occur.
- Standard working practices include robust containment measures to prevent pollution events for terrestrial works. With these in place, the risk of indirect effects on the qualifying features of the SAC as a result of pollution is low.
- A pre-construction survey will be carried out.
- If required, consultation with NatureScot will be carried out.
- A ‘soft start’ will be implemented on site each day. This will involve switching on vehicles and checking under/around vehicles and the immediate work area for mammals prior to works commencing to ensure none are present and that there is a gradual increase in noise.
- Relevant toolbox talks for working with protected species will be included in the SEMP.
- Any excavations, exposed pipes/drains, or areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g., storage containers) will be covered over when not in

use, at the end of each shift, and following completion of the works to avoid animals falling in and becoming trapped.

- Any temporary lighting used during periods of low light levels will be directional and will avoid spilling into sensitive areas where possible.
- If fencing is utilised at any point during the works, a gap of 200mm from ground level will be provided, allowing free passage for mammals and preventing entrapment.

Tulach Hills and Glen Fender Meadows SAC is designated for a range of habitats, two invertebrates, and one geological feature and lies approximately 670m southeast from the scheme extent. There is no connectivity between the area of works and the SAC. Therefore, there is no potential for LSE on the qualifying features of the Tulach Hills and Glen Fender Meadows SAC and further assessment is not required.

Activities undertaken on site could potentially have a temporary adverse impact on biodiversity in the area as a result of an increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats. However, works are restricted to the A9 trunk road boundary and the number of construction vehicles and construction operatives required onsite is low. In addition, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle movements on the A9 and the scheme is of short duration. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore considered to be low.

The works will be restricted to the A9 carriageway and the bridge deck of Pitaldonch bridge, no verge works are required. Common ragwort has been recorded near the scheme but is managed under the NW Landscape Management Plan. As such, there is limited potential to spread or introduce INNS, invasive native perennials, or injurious flowering plant species.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the Site Environment Management Plan (SEMP) and adhered to on site. Any protected species in the area are likely to be accustomed to road noise on the A9 and the scheme is of relatively short duration. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity are considered to be low:

- Works will be strictly limited to areas required for access and to carry out the works. Unnecessary encroachment onto terrestrial or aquatic areas will not be tolerated.
- All construction operatives will be briefed through toolbox talks prior to works commencing, which will be included in the SEMP. The toolbox talks will provide information on the legislation, general ecology, and best practice measures for relevant protected species.
- Site personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of any protected species, throughout the works period. Should a protected species be noted during construction, works shall temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently

moved on. Any sightings of protected species shall be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team.

- The mitigation measures and good practices included in the HRA for River Tay SAC (listed above) will be adhered to during construction.

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

Material assets and waste

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

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

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

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- The subcontractor will adhere to waste management legislation and ensure they comply with their Duty of Care.
- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- All wastes and unused materials will be removed from site in a safe and legal manner by a licensed waste carrier upon completion of the works. The appointed waste carrier must have a valid SEPA waste carrier registration, a copy of which will be provided to and retained by BEAR Scotland as early as possible.
- All appropriate waste documentation will be present on site and be available for inspection. A copy of the Duty of Care paperwork shall be produced and filed appropriately in accordance with the Code of Practice (as made under Section 34 of Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended).
- Re-use and recycling of waste will be encouraged, and the subcontractor will be required to fully outline their plans and provide documentary evidence for waste arising from the works (e.g., waste carrier's licence, transfer notes, and waste exemption certificates).

- Staff will be informed that littering will not be tolerated. Staff will be encouraged to collect any litter seen on site.
- Where applicable, all temporary signage will be removed from site on completion of the works.

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

Noise and vibration

Construction activities associated with the proposed scheme have the potential to cause noise and vibration impacts through the use of equipment and construction vehicles for the proposed activities. However, the works are not located within a CNMA or CQA. Works will be completed over 7-10 days and works with the potential to induce worst-case scenario noise and vibration will also be intermittent, temporary, transient and short-lived.

Upon completion of the work, noise associated with the movement of vehicles on the trunk road should decrease post construction.

The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- Local residents will be notified in advance of the works, likely by a letter drop, which will contain details of the proposed timings and duration of the works, in addition to contact details for the Site Supervisor.
- The Best Practicable Means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1874, will be employed at all times to reduce noise to a minimum. On-site construction tasks will be programmed to be as efficient as possible, with a view to limiting noise disruption to local sensitive receptors.
- All site personnel will be fully briefed in advance of works regarding the need to minimise noise during works and of the site-specific sensitivities.
- Drop heights from vehicles and NRMM will be kept to a minimum to minimise noise when unloading.
- All plant, machinery and vehicles will be switched off when not in use.
- All plant will be operated in such a way that minimises noise emissions and will have been maintained regularly to the appropriate standards.
- Where fitted, and where permitted under Health and Safety requirements, white noise reversing alarms will be utilised during construction.
- Where ancillary plant such as generators are required, they will be positioned so as to cause minimum noise disturbance. Where deemed necessary, acoustic screens will be utilised.

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

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site have the potential to have temporary adverse impacts on local residents, vehicle travellers, and non-motorised road users (NMUs). Increased journey times may occur due to works; however, no significant congestion issues are noted during the proposed construction hours and a full road closure is not required. In the event of local access restrictions to residential properties, access will be granted as requested.

There are residential properties within 300m of the scheme, the closest of which is 290m south of the works. There is limited roadside screening provided to this property; however, works are very localised, minor in nature, programmed for daytime hours, and of short duration.

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

- The works schedule and any changes to this will be communicated to local residents prior to and throughout the programme.
- If required, construction lighting will consider the need to avoid illuminating surrounding environment to avoid a nuisance and non-essential lighting will be switched off.
- Appropriate provisions / measures shall be implemented within the traffic management to allow the safe passage of NMUs of all abilities through the site.
- Journey planning information will be available for drivers online at the trafficscotland.org website. Journey planning information will also be available for drivers online through BEAR Scotland's social media platforms.

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

Road drainage and the water environment

The works will be undertaken on the bridge deck above the River Garry. Therefore, there is potential for temporary impacts on the water environment due to operation of plant within and within proximity to watercourses and/or drainage systems, which may lead to potential changes in water quality from pollution events (either by accidental spillage of sediments, particulate matter, chemicals, fuels or by mobilisation of these in surface water caused by rain). No in-water works will take place and there is no requirement for the abstraction or transfers of water from, or discharges to, a waterbody. As such, the potential for a direct pollution incident

within a waterbody is unlikely. Experience gained from BEAR Scotland maintenance schemes elsewhere on the network has shown that where standard good working practice is adopted (e.g., adherence to SEPA good practice guidance, utilisation of drain covers or similar, etc.), water quality is protected.

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

- No work has been identified that would require entering any surface waterbodies. If such a need were identified onsite, BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted (before the works commence) to allow consideration of potential environmental effects.
- Standard working practices to comply with The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) for works in or near water will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site.
- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems are permitted. Appropriate containment measures must be in place to prevent any loss of construction materials into the water environment.
- An incident response (contingency) plan will be put in place to reduce the risk from pollution incidents or accidental spillages. All necessary containment equipment, including suitable spill kits (for oil and chemicals) will be available on site, quickly accessible if needed, and staff trained in their use.
- All spills will be logged and reported. In the event of any spills into the water environment, all works will stop, and the incident will be reported to the project manager and the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. SEPA will be informed of any such incident as soon as possible using the SEPA Pollution Hotline.
- All plant and equipment will be regularly inspected for any signs of damage and leaks. A checklist will be present to make sure that the checks have been carried out.
- Storage of hazardous material, oil and fuel containers will be distanced more than 10m away from any watercourses.
- If required, a designated refuelling area will be identified. Fuel bowsers will be stored on an impermeable area and be fully bunded. This will be distanced more than 10m from any watercourses.
- During refuelling of smaller mobile plant, a funnel will be used, and drip trays will be in place. Care will be taken to reduce the chance of spillages. Spill kits will be quickly accessible to capture any spills should they occur. The ground/stone around the site of a spill shall be removed, double bagged and taken off site as special contaminated waste.
- Generators and static plant may have the potential to leak fuel and/or other hydrocarbons and will have bunding with a capacity of 110%. If these are not

bunded then drip trays shall also be supplied beneath the equipment with a capacity of 110%.

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

Climate

Construction activities associated with the proposed scheme works have the potential to cause local air quality impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of vehicles and machinery, material use and production, and transportation of materials to and from site. The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- BEAR Scotland will adhere to their Carbon Management Policy.
- Where possible, the works will be undertaken utilising a daytime work pattern to reduce the requirement for additional lighting.
- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gas emitted as part of the works.
- Where possible, material will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be disposed at local landfill.

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

Vulnerability of the project to risks

The scheme falls within an area that has a high likelihood of river water flooding each year (10% chance). However, the bridge is set relatively high above the river and works are of short duration and will be carried out during a period of suitable weather. There will be no change to the likelihood of flooding on the A9 within the scheme extents upon completion of the works.

Works are restricted to areas of made ground on the A9 with access to the scheme gained via the A9. TM will involve single lane closure facilitated by temporary traffic lights. Local residents will be notified of working hours and provided with appropriate contact information. Pedestrians or other NMUs will be accommodated within the traffic management setup.

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

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

Assessment cumulative effects

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

A search of the Perth and Kinross Council Planning Portal (Perth and Kinross Council Planning Portal) identified no approved planning application within 300m of the scheme.

A search of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner website (Scottish Road Works Online) has identified that no other roadworks are currently ongoing, or noted as being planned, on the trunk road at the same time as this scheme. Due to the nature of the proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity.

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

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

Assessments of the environmental effects

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

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

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

construction) which spans the River Tay SAC and is situated within CNP which are 'sensitive areas' within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

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

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

Characteristics of the scheme:

- The total working area is restricted to the existing carriageway boundary and is less than 1ha in area.
- Works are restricted to replacement of expansion joints, with all works restricted to made-ground on the A9 carriageway boundary.
- The works will be temporary, transient, localised, and completed during daytime hours.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- By removing the expansion joint defects this will provide this part of the A9 carriageway with another life cycle, and significantly improve the ride quality, which will result in safer conditions for road users.
- No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works. The works are expected to result in positive impacts on road users during the operational phase.
- As the works will be limited to the replacement of the structural components, there is no change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.

Location of the scheme:

- The works will not result in any change to the landscape character of CNP in which the scheme is situated.
- The scheme will be confined within the existing carriageway boundary and as a result will not require any land take or alter any local land uses or habitats.
- Any impacts to the local landscape during the construction phase will be minor, temporary and not considered significant. In addition, no operational impacts are anticipated.

- Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken within the HRA and has concluded that the works will not result in AESI on River Tay SAC.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as result of the works. The works are expected to result in positive impacts on road users during the operational phase.
- In the event that INNS are found on site, measures to prevent potential INNS spread will be implemented.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.

References of supporting documentation

Habitats Regulations Appraisal, July 2024.

Annex A

"Sensitive area" means any of the following:

- land notified under sections 3(1) or 5(1) (sites of special scientific interest) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- land in respect of which an order has been made under section 23 (nature conservation orders) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- a European site within the meaning of regulation 10 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994
- a property appearing in the World Heritage List kept under article 11(2) of the 1972 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
- a scheduled monument within the meaning of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- a National Scenic Area as designated by a direction made by the Scottish Ministers under section 263A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- an area designated as a National Park by a designation order made by the Scottish Ministers under section 6(1) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

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