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Record of Determination

A835 Braemore Hall to Letters Resurfacing

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Project Details

Description

The proposed works involve carriageway resurfacing and reinstatement of road markings with a 50mm inlay. Drainage grips will be cut once resurfacing works have been completed.

The resurfacing procedure is as follows:

- Set up traffic management (TM) and mark out site
- Mill out 50mm surface course
- Lay 50mm surface course
- Roll surface and allow it to go off
- Mark out lining schedule on site
- Remove TM and open road
- Lining/studding will be carried out at a later date under mobile TM or lane closures

The works are proposed to be carried out in summer 2021 between the hours of 7am and 7pm and will take seven days to complete.

Traffic management for the scheme will involve a 10mph convoy with 2-way traffic lights in place.

Location

The Braemore Hall to Letters scheme lies on the A835 trunk road in the Highland Council region, south of Ullapool. The length of the scheme is 1,812m (approximately 1.16ha).

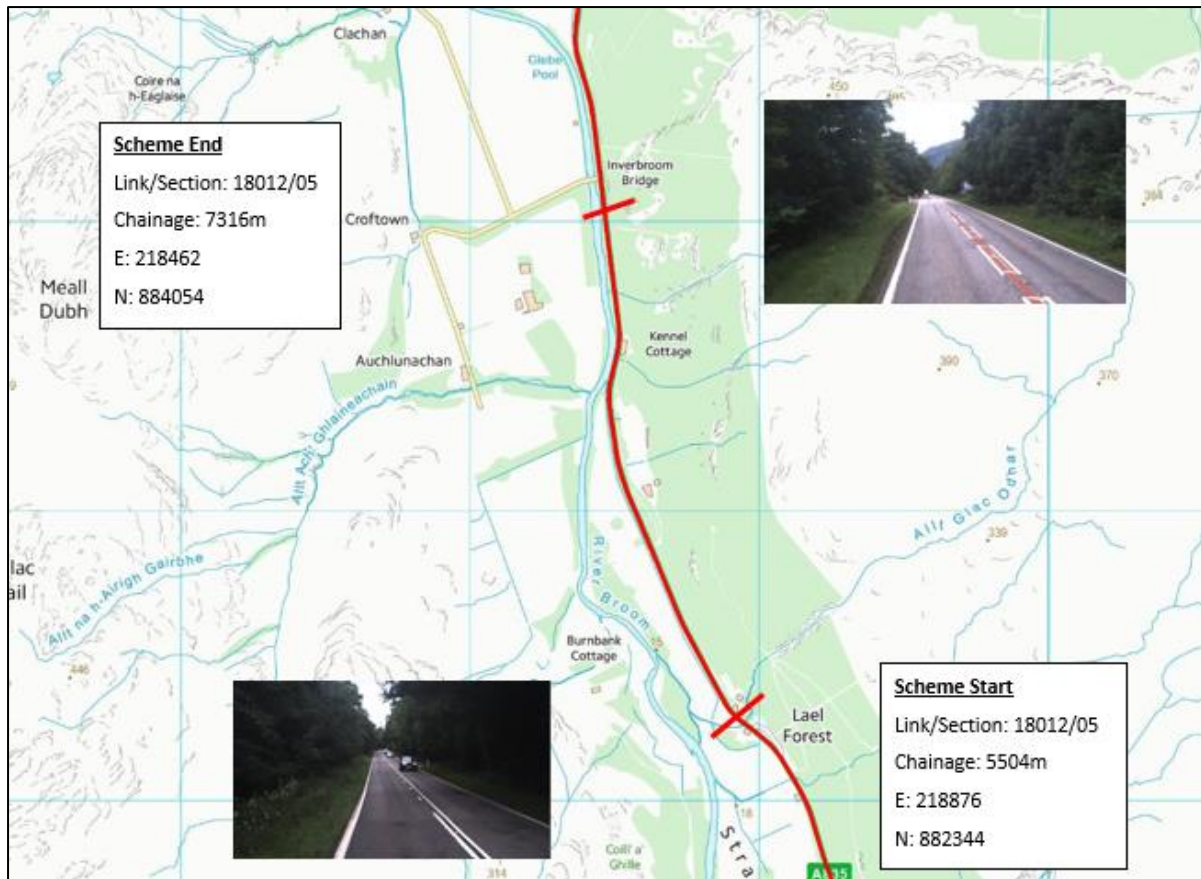


Figure 1 - Location Plan

Description of Local Environment

Population and Human Health

The scheme lies in a rural area on the A835 trunk road south of Ullapool. There are a few scattered residential properties in the surrounding area within 300m of the proposed works. These lie mostly at the southern scheme extent, the closest residential property is set back 20m from the trunk road.

There are no formal [cycleways](#) [core paths](#) or walking paths recorded on [WalkHighlands](#) within the scheme extent. There are no paved footpaths or pedestrian facilities within the scheme extent.

Noise and vibration levels in the surrounding area are likely to be primarily influenced by vehicle travellers on the A835 trunk road. There are no designated Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) or Candidate Quiet Areas (CQAs) within proximity to the works location.

The A835 trunk road runs from Tore, Inverness to Ullapool in the west. It is important for commercial, commuter, tourist and local traffic. The national speed limit applies throughout the scheme.

Biodiversity

Baseline data has been obtained from the [National Biodiversity Network](#) (NBN) Atlas, NatureScot (NS) [Sitelink](#), and [Scotland's Environment web](#) (SE) online mapping tools. A site visit was not undertaken.

The scheme does not lie wholly, partly in or have connectivity to any Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The NBN Atlas holds records of the following invasive non-native species (INNS). There are no records of injurious weeds using the same search criteria.

- Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

The records held on the NBN database for these INNS are all located along the River Broom and none are recorded within the scheme extents.

An area of woodland listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) as Long-established (of plantation origin) lies to the east of the A835 trunk road within the scheme extent.

The area surrounding the scheme is dominated by a variety of different woodland habitats to the east and agriculturally improved grassland to the west.

Based on the desk study the habitats available in the wider area are suitable for protected species as well as nesting birds between March and August.

Land

The works do not lie within any area of land designated as a National Park or National Scenic Area (NSA). Land cover in the scheme is recorded as a mixture of woodland habitats to the east and agriculturally improved grassland to the west.

Soil

The scheme does not lie within a Geological Conservation Review Site (GCRS).

Bedrock within the scheme extent is comprised Glascarnoch Psammite Formation – Psammite, which is a metamorphic bedrock.

Superficial deposits within the scheme is comprised Alluvium - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel, which are sedimentary deposits. Soils within the scheme extent are recorded as a mix of humus-iron podzols, brown earths and mineral alluvial soils.

Water

The River Broom runs parallel to the A835 trunk road within the scheme extent lying between 20m and 200m west of the trunk road. The River Broom was classified by SEPA as having 'Poor ecological potential' in 2018. 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.

The scheme is located within the Strath More Sand and Gravel, and the Wester Ross, Assynt and Kintail groundwater bodies which were both classified by SEPA in 2018 as having good overall condition.

Air

The works are not wholly, or partially, located within an [Air Quality Management Area](#) (AQMA).

No air quality monitoring stations are located within proximity to the scheme. The closest AQS monitoring station to the scheme is located in Strath Vaich. The pollution level on 26/05/2021 was classified as Low (Index 3). It is considered that pollution levels in the general vicinity of the scheme will be low with baseline air quality in the area primarily influenced by traffic along the A835 trunk road.

Climate Change

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 creates mandatory climate change targets to reduce Scotland's GHG emissions. BEAR Scotland have a Carbon Management Policy in place with the core aim of reducing out carbon footprint which we measure and report annually.

Material Assets

The following materials will be used during the works:

- Asphaltic material
- Bituminous emulsion bond coat
- Milled in road studs
- Thermoplastic road marking paint

The following plant will be used during the works:

- Paver
- Planer
- 3CX JCB
- 2x Roller
- Bowser
- Road sweeper
- Emulsion sprayer
- Welfare unit with generator
- Welfare van
- Pickup
- Small van
- Lorries

Waste

Approximately 1,319 tonnes of asphalt planings will be produced as a result of these works which will be fully recovered for re-use under a SEPA paragraph 13 waste exemption. Construction records from IRIS indicate that this section of the A835 was resurfaced in 1988, with a surface dressing subsequently being undertaken in 1997. As this is after the period when coal tar ceased to be widely used in road construction and taking into consideration the shallow depth of the proposed treatment, coal tar would not be expected to be present within the milled off planings.

Cultural Heritage

According to [Pastmap](#), there are a few features of local cultural heritage listed on Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Canmore database located within 300m of the scheme. The closest of these include Foich Lodge, Prisoner of War Camp and Cemetery which lies approximately 30m east of the trunk road; and Inverbroom Bridge which is on a minor road that crosses the River Broom approximately 50m north of the scheme extent.

There are no Listed Buildings, Inventory Battlefields, Garden & Designed Landscapes or Scheduled Monuments within 300m of the scheme.

Vulnerability of the Project to Risks

The following environmental factors were identified as potential risks to the project:

- Unidentified ecological constraints
- Disturbance of protected species
- Complaints from local residents

Description of Main Environmental Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Population and Human Health

During road resurfacing, activities undertaken on site may have temporary adverse impacts on local residents and road users as a result of vehicle noise and delays due to traffic management measures. However, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on population and human health is considered to be low.

- Traffic management will consist of a single lane closure with a 10mph convoy and two-way traffic lights in place and will take account of the needs of motorised and non-motorised road users.
- Works will be carried out during day-time hours over a period of seven days and will move progressively along the full scheme extent.
- Measures to reduce impacts of works will be detailed in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) and adhered to on site.

Biodiversity

During road resurfacing, 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. The works lie alongside woodland recorded on the AWI; however, the works will be restricted to the A835 carriageway boundary and will not entail any tree-felling. Therefore, no impacts to the AWI woodland are expected. Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site. Any protected species in the area are likely to be accustomed to road noise on the A835 and the scheme is of short duration. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts on biodiversity are considered to be low.

- Toolbox talks for relevant protected species will be delivered to site staff and included in the SEMP.
- Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site.

Land

During road resurfacing, activities undertaken on site are not expected to have an adverse impact on land as the works involve like-for-like replacement of the road surfacing material. There is some potential for minor impacts as a result of damage to roadside verges or littering. Land use will not change as a result of the works and no land take is required. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts to land are considered to be low.

- Throughout all stages of the works, the site must be kept clean and tidy, with materials, equipment, plant and wastes appropriately stored, reducing the landscape and visual effects as much as possible.
- Where applicable, upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape (i.e. damage to grass verges or hardstanding of the A835) should be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Works are to 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.

Soil

During road resurfacing, activities undertaken on site are not expected to have an adverse impact on soils as the works will involve minor excavation to reinstate roadside drainage by re-cutting road grips in roadside verges to a depth of 300mm. There is some potential for minor impacts as a result of damage to roadside verges or littering; however, with the following mitigation measures in place, the risk of significant impacts to soils are considered to be low.

- The parking of machinery/personnel and storage of equipment on verges will be minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape (i.e. damage to grass verges) should be reinstated as much as is practicable.

Water

During works, there is the potential for temporary impacts on water quality. Any construction work has an inherent risk to surface waters and groundwater as a result of pollution. Potential contaminants include fuel and oils from mechanical plant and dirty water run-off from the construction site. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to water are considered to be low.

- Pollution control measures will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site to prevent sediment or other materials entering the water environment (e.g. roadside drainage).

Air

During works, there is the potential for temporary impacts on air quality. Activities undertaken on site may cause dust and particulate matter to be emitted to the atmosphere. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to air are considered to be low.

- All plant, machinery and vehicles associated with the scheme must be maintained to the appropriate standards and must switch their engines off when not in use.
- All delivery vehicles carrying material with dust potential will be covered when travelling to or leaving site, preventing the spread of dust beyond the work area.
- All construction activities will operate in line with good practice measures for construction as outlined in the SEMP.

Climate Change

During works there is potential for impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gasses through the use of vehicles and machinery, material use and production, and transportation of materials to and from site. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the risk of significant impacts to climate are considered to be low.

- BEAR Scotland will adhere to their Carbon Management Policy.
- BEAR Scotland undergo annual CEEQUAL Assessment.

Material Assets

The works comprise like-for-like replacement of the existing road surfacing material and will not involve construction of or alteration to any roadside infrastructure. Therefore, material assets are not considered further.

Waste

During works, there is potential for impacts as a result of improper storage or disposal of waste. However, taking into account the following mitigation measures, it is unlikely that the works will have a significant impact as a result of waste.

- The waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Dispose) will be employed throughout the construction works.
- Road planings will be re-used or recycled under a SEPA Paragraph 13(a) waste exemption and in line with BEAR Scotland's Procedure 126: The Production of Fully Recovered Asphalt Road Planings.

Cultural Heritage

During road resurfacing, activities undertaken on site are not expected to have an adverse impact on any features of cultural heritage as the works involve like-for-like replacement of the road surfacing material. All recorded sites of cultural heritage lie outside of the work footprint; therefore, with the following mitigation measures in place, it is unlikely that the works will have a significant impact on cultural heritage.

- There should be no storage of vehicles, plant, or materials against any buildings, walls or fences.
- People, plant, and materials should, as much as is reasonably practicable, only be present on areas of made / engineered ground (i.e. A835 carriageway). Where access out with these areas is required for the safe and effective completion of the scheme, it should be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable and ideally be limited to access on foot.

Vulnerability of the Project to Risks

There is potential for minor impacts on the project as a result of environmental risks such as discovery of a protected species on site or complaints as a result of noise disturbance to residential properties. However, taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the following mitigation measures, the vulnerability of the project to risk is considered to be low.

- A Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) has been produced by BEAR Scotland which sets out a framework to reduce the risk of adverse impacts from construction activities on sensitive environmental receptors. The subcontractor will comply with all conditions of the SEMP during works and may be subject to audit throughout the contract.

Cumulative Effects

The works are required to maintain the safety of the A835 trunk road for use by vehicle travellers. No significant impacts on environmental receptors as a result of the proposed works have been identified.

The proposed works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the road surfacing material and potential impacts are short term and localised to within the scheme extent. There is potential for short term impacts on vehicle travellers as a result of delays due to traffic management for multiple or consecutive schemes. However, due to the localised nature of the potential impacts and the short duration of any proposed works with the following mitigation measures in place, it is unlikely that the works will have a significant cumulative impact.

- Network restrictions as set out in Appendix 1/17 Restrictions – North West Unit of the 4G North West Term Contract will be adhered to.

Assessments of the Environmental Effects

This assessment has not identified any significant effects on any environmental receptors as a result of the proposed works. No further assessment of environmental effects or consultation with statutory bodies is required.

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

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

exceed 1 hectare in area,

are not situated in whole or in part in a sensitive area within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

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

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

Characteristics of the scheme:

- The works comprise like-for-like replacement of the road surfacing material.
- The works are temporary and short-term and will be completed over seven days during day-time hours.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme is not situated in whole or in part in a 'sensitive area'.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- The potential for impacts as a result of the scheme are minor, temporary and not significant.

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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