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Record of Determination

A887 Ceannacroc

Contents

Project Details

Description

The proposed works involve 426m routine carriageway resurfacing and reinstatement of road markings, covering an area of 0.26 Ha.

The works are proposed to commence on the 23rd of August 2021 between the hours of 7am and 7pm and will take five days to complete.

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

Location

The Ceannacroc scheme lies on a section of the A887 Trunk Road Network within The Highland Council Area. Figure 1 details the location of the proposed works.

Figure 1: Scheme location

Description of Local Environment

Population and Human Health

The scheme lies in a rural area on the A887 Trunk Road Network. Within a 300m corridor along the proposed works no residential or commercial properties are located.

The works relate to the A887 Trunk Road which itself is considered a human receptor as it is used by motorised and non-motorised users.

No section of the National Cycle Network runs along the A887 section on which works are proposed (sustrans, 2021).

Noise and vibration levels in the surrounding area are likely to be primarily influenced by vehicle travellers on the A887 Trunk Road.

Biodiversity

A small stretch of the proposed work in the eastern extent crosses the Ceannacroc Bridge which carries the A887 over River Moriston. River Moriston is designated as Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (NatureScot, 2021).

The proposed works have no ecological connectivity with any other ecologically designated site.

Records on the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) (NBN, 2021) over a 10-year period within 2 km of the proposed works were reviewed to identify records of protected species.

NBN holds records of 51 bird species within 2 km over a 10-year period. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 all wild birds and their active nests are protected.

The proposed works cross River Moriston (NH 22618 10530). River Moriston is known to support habitat, migration routes and populations of diadromous species (NatureScot, 2021).

Land

The works do not lie within any area of land designated as a National Park or National Scenic Area (NSA) (NatureScot, 2021).

Land use in the area is dominated by agriculture and localised commercial woodland plantations.

Soil

The proposed work are limited to the existing A887 Trunk Road Network and involve no land take or alteration.

Water

A small stretch of the proposed work in the eastern extent crosses the Ceannacroc Bridge which carries the A887 over River Moriston (NH 22618 10530). The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) categorised River Moriston (ID: 23382) as having an overall good status in 2018 (SEPA, 2021).

The proposed works are situated within the Northern Highland groundwater body (ID: 150701) which SEPA classified as having an overall good status and chemical pass in 2018 (SEPA, 2021).

Air

The works are not wholly, or partially, located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) (Department for Food & Rural Affairs, 2020).

No air quality monitoring stations are located within vicinity of the scheme or within a geographic distance which could provide accurate data (Ricardo Energy & Environment, 2021). 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 A887 Trunk Road.

Climate Change

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 creates mandatory climate change targets to reduce Scotland's greenhouse gas 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
- Lorries

Waste

The proposed routine maintenance activities will result in several tonnes of stripped asphalt planings which do not contain coal tar. Exact tonnage at this stage are not known. Stripped asphalt planings will be fully recovered for re-used under a SEPA Paragraph 13 Waste exemption under The Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 2011.

Cultural Heritage

Within a 300m corridor along the proposed works on the A887 several cultural heritage features are located. These include a Listed Building, Historic Environment Records and features on the Canmore database. However, none of the features have connectivity or are situated within the scheme footprint. No Scheduled Monuments, Battlefield or World Heritage Sites were identified within 300m of the works (PastMap, 2021).

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; and
- Complaints from local residents.

Description of Main Environmental Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Population and Human Health

The proposed works will utilise a range of plant, machinery and equipment, including percussive tools causing noise. Elevated noise over prolonged periods can cause annoyance and in extreme circumstances pose a risk to human health. However, the small-scale of the works will only require limited number of machinery and equipment, likely resulting in very limited noise emissions over a short period (5 days) within the hours of 0700 and 1900. Furthermore, all works will be undertaken in line with industry best practice and BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control and Construction and Open Sites to reduce the generation of construction noise. Impacts on residential/commercial properties will also not occur as none are located within 300m of the works. Therefore, it is assessed that noise impacts on human receptors are short-term, localised and negligible, constituting to a negligible non-significant effect.

Significant impacts on road users through the works are also not anticipated as no road closure is required with traffic flow allowed to continue via a convoy system.

Biodiversity

The nature of the works does not involve any physical altering or removal of habitat, limiting ecological impacts to loss of containment of harmful substance and disturbance of species through noise and human presence.

Loss of containment, such as fuels and oils can have significant environmental impacts where it enters the environment, water environments are particularly susceptible to pollution incidents, although the severity is depended on substance and quantities lost. However, all hazardous material will be stored and handled in line with standard industry practice and pollution prevention guidance's as detailed in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP), reducing the likelihood of a loss of containment occurring. In addition, appropriate spill kits will be available on site with all staff appropriately trained in their use. Therefore, a loss of containment with significant environmental effects is considered very unlikely.

As the A887 is an active road which experiences moderate volumes of traffic, the presence of construction operatives will not significantly deviate from the current baseline, meaning additional human presence is unlikely to cause disturbance to any protected species present in the vicinity of the works. The number of construction operatives will also be limited given the small nature of the works. As discussed above, significant levels of construction noise which may impact upon fauna are also not anticipated. Therefore, it is assessed that human presence and noise impacts on ecological receptors are short-term, localised and negligible, constituting to a negligible non-significant effect.

As works are limited to the A887 Trunk Road and involve no land take or alteration, no species-specific mitigation measures are required. Nonetheless, measures to protect wildlife from injury or entrapment will be implemented.

Negative impacts on ecologically designated sites are not anticipated as works are limited to the A887 Trunk Road and result in no habitat loss or habitat modification. As detailed above, materials with pollution potential will be handled in line with standard industry practice and pollution prevention guidance's, making it very unlikely for a significant effect on the River Moriston SAC and its qualifying features to occur.

Likely significant effects on the River Moriston SAC European Site are not expected as works are limited to the A887 Trunk Road, are of minor nature and use limited material with pollution potential. Consultation with NatureScot in June 2021 confirmed that the works are unlikely to result in likely significant effects on the SAC.

Land

The nature of the works will not affect the integrity of the current or future land use within the local area.

Visual effects relating to the maintenance works will be short-term (5 days) and very localised. Visual effects post scheme completion will not occur as the works are routine like-for-like resurfacing works.

Soil

The risk of ground contamination through a loss of containment is also very unlikely provided all hazardous material will be stored and handled in line with industry best practice and pollution prevention measures.

The nature of the works are limited to the existing A887 Trunk Road and require no earth works.

Water

Loss of containment, such as fuels and oils can have significant environmental impacts where it enters the environment, particularly the water environment, although the severity is dependent on substance and quantities lost. To minimise the risk to the water environment all hazardous material will be stored in line with industry best practice, the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations. Therefore, the likelihood of loss of containment to occur is assessed as very unlikely.

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 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 must 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 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, no significant cumulative impacts are anticipated: .

- 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 which is 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:

- While parts of the proposed works cross River Moriston SAC, works are limited to the A887 Trunk Road and will not result in any land take, habitat alteration or encroachment of the designated site.

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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