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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A7 South of Canobie Junction

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Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out resurfacing works on the A7 carriageway. The works will consist of inlays to mixed depths using the crack and seat method. The works will also involve the reinstatement of road markings and studs for a length of 1.41km (Approx. 1.35ha).

The construction activities for the resurfacing procedure are as follows:

- Set up traffic management (TM) and mark out site.
- Milling of existing bituminous material by road planer.
- Jackhammer and compressor for breaking up surfaces not accessible by planer (e.g. around gullies).
- Crack and seat treatment to be carried out at specified locations within the scheme extents.
- Loader/excavator used to collect and move excess material.
- Sweeper to collect loose material and provide clean laying surface.
- Milled out/excavated materials all taken off site.
- Tack/bond coat laid.
- Base / binder material laid and compressed by paver (where required).
- Material compacted using a heavy roller.
- New bituminous surface course material laid by paver.
- Material compacted using a heavy roller.
- Mechanical sweeper to collect loose material.
- HGV for removal and replacement of material.
- Road markings and studs applied where necessary (in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual, Chapter 5).
- Remove TM and open road.

The works are currently programmed to be completed within 2025/2026 financial year, with works expected to begin on the 1st of September 2025 for a duration of 15 nights, excluding weekends (19:30 – 06:00). TM will involve 15 night-time full road closures of the A7 carriageway with a signed diversion in place. Traffic will be diverted off the A7 at Hawick and follow the A699, A6088, and the B6357 before rejoining the A7 south of Canobie.

Location

The scheme lies on the A7 carriageway south of Canobie (Figure 1), within Dumfries and Galloway Council and is predominantly bordered by agricultural land.

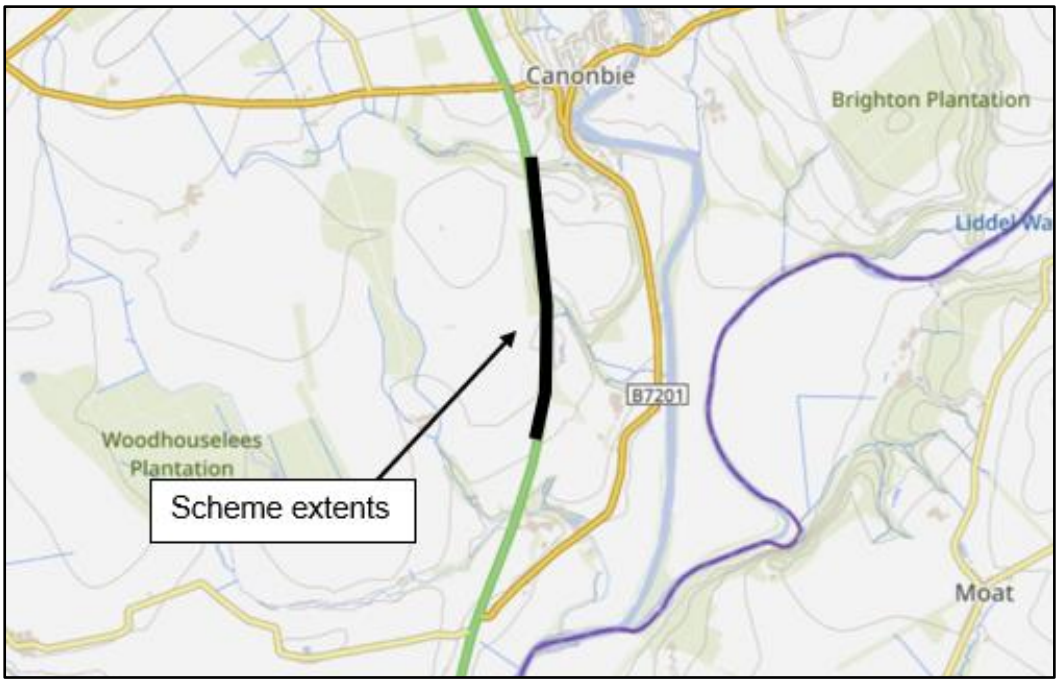

Figure 1: Extents of the works - Source: Asset Management Performance System (AMPS). © Europa Technologies Ltd. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.

Description of local environment

Air quality

Properties within 300m of the scheme – refer to 'Population and Human Health'.

A search of the Air Quality in Scotland online mapping tool records that the air quality zones in the wider area record bandings in the 'green zone' (Low Index 1-3).

The scheme lies within the boundary of Dumfries and Galloway Council, which has no active Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within its administrative boundary. The nearest AQMA, 'High Street, Musselburgh', which is located within the boundary of East Lothian Council, lies approx. 96.5km northeast of the scheme extents (at its nearest point) and has been declared for nitrogen dioxide (NO_2).

There are no sites registered on the Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) for pollutant releases to air within 10km of the scheme extents (in the last 10-years).

The baseline air quality within the scheme extents is primarily influenced by motor vehicles travelling along the A7 trunk road. Secondary sources are derived from

vehicles travelling along nearby local network roads and day-to-day agricultural land management activities.

Cultural heritage

According to the PastMap and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) online mapping tool, there is one conservation area (CA) located within 300m of the scheme extents. The 'Canobie' CA lies approx. 20m east of the scheme extents and is comprised of residential areas, the River Esk, and small areas of mature woodland.

There is one listed building located within 300m of the scheme extents. This record pertains to the 'Priorslynn, Cruck-Framed Building', Category A listed building (ID: LB3531), which lies approx. 290m east of the scheme extents.

No other designated cultural heritage assets are located within 300m of the scheme extents.

Of lesser cultural heritage value, approx. nine undesignated cultural heritage assets (UCHAs) lie within 300m of the scheme extents. The nearest record pertains to 'Canobie – Cinerary Urn (Bronze Age)' National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) (ID: 67528), which lies approx. 18m west of the scheme extents.

Construction of the A7 carriageway is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present within the carriageway boundary. The potential for the presence of unknown archaeological remains in the study area has therefore been assessed to be low.

Landscape and visual effects

The scheme is not situated within a National Park (NP) or National Scenic Area (NSA).

The Landscape Character Type (LCT) within the scheme extents is 'Middle Dale – Dumfries & Galloway' (no.163) (Scottish Landscape Character Types). The key characteristics of which are:

- Broad valley with complex undulating topography and locally narrow sections,
- River meanders eroding bluffs in the valley moraines,
- Landcover predominantly improved pastures, lush green, sheep, and cattle grazed,
- Medium scale field enclosures, a mixture of hedgerows and dry-stone dykes,
- Extensive pattern of shelterbelts and farm woodlands with semi-natural woodlands on bluff slopes,
- Dale contained by uplands with forests and rough grazing on horizons,
- Semi-natural hanging woodlands on steep bluff slopes,
- Country houses and designed landscapes,

- Settlements of high townscape quality,
- Communication routes, and
- 'Red earth' qualities relating to underlying red sandstones.

Land use within the study area is comprised of the following:

- Rectilinear farms and fields,
- Urban area,
- Freshwater area,
- Managed woodland, and
- Plantation.

The national scale land capability for agriculture classifies land surrounding the scheme as being:

- 'Class 3.2' – Land capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained. Grass leys are common.

There are six areas of woodland that are registered on the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland database located within 300m of the scheme extents:

- Approx. 1.78ha of wet woodland, located directly alongside the southbound (SB) carriageway boundary at the northern end of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 1.94ha of wet woodland, located directly alongside the northbound (NB) carriageway boundary at the northern end of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 1.34ha of an unidentifiable type of woodland, located directly alongside the NB carriageway boundary,
- Approx. 2.39ha of wet woodland, located approx. 115m southeast from the southern end of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 1.57ha of an unidentifiable type of woodland, located approx. 180m northwest from the northern end of the scheme extents, and
- Approx. 0.65ha of wet woodland, located approx. 235m southwest from the southern end of the scheme extents.

There are three areas of woodland registered on the Ancient Woodland Inventory Scotland database located within 300m of the scheme extents:

- Approx. 3.59ha of ancient (of semi-natural origin) woodland, located directly alongside both the SB and NB carriageway at the northern end of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 8.49ha of ancient (of semi-natural origin) woodland, located approx. 110m east of the scheme extents, and

- Approx. 2.99ha of ancient (of semi-natural origin) woodland, located approx. 145m southeast from the southern end of the scheme extents.

In addition to the above, the following six woodlands are also located within 300m of the scheme extents:

- Approx. 0.54ha of conifer woodland, located directly alongside the SB carriageway boundary towards the southern end of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 10.66ha of young trees, located approx. 25m west of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 12.08ha of young trees, located approx. 40m west of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 0.52ha of conifer woodland, located approx. 145m northeast from the northern end of the scheme extents,
- Approx. 6.49ha of ground prep, located approx. 240m west of the scheme extents, and
- Approx. 0.86ha of young trees, located approx. 245m southeast from the southern end of the scheme extents.

The existing trunk road is a prominent linear landscape feature. The trunk road corridor, for example, has a distinct character shaped by fast-flowing traffic, road markings, safety barriers, signage, landscaping, etc. The scale of the trunk road detracts from the quality and character of the wider landscape.

Biodiversity

The NatureScot Sitelink online mapping tools identifies that the scheme is not situated within 2km of any European Sites designated for biodiversity features e.g. SACs, SPAs, or Ramsar sites.

However, the scheme extents are located within the buffer zones for some of the qualifying features of the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills Special Protection Area (SPA), Solway Firth SPA and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site. The Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA lies approx. 6.1km northeast of the scheme, the Solway Firth SPA lies approx. 10.4km southwest of the scheme, and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site lies approx. 10.4km southwest of the scheme extents.

The Langholm – Newcastleton Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (component of the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA) lies approx. 6.1km northeast of the scheme extents.

The Upper Solway Flats and Marshes SSSI (component of the Solway Firth SPA and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site) lies approx. 10.4km southwest of the scheme extents.

There are no Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), or additional SSSIs designated for biodiversity features within 300m of the scheme extents.

A search of the NBN online mapping tool records no invasive non-native species (INNS), injurious weeds, or invasive native perennials, as listed within the Network Management Contract (NMC), within 2km of the scheme extents (in the last 10-years).

A search of the Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) online mapping tool records the following plant species within the verge of the A7 carriageway boundary within the scheme extents:

One invasive native perennial:

- Rosebay willowherb (Chamaenerion angustifolium).

The habitat immediately bordering the A7 carriageway consists primarily of large areas of agricultural land and managed grassland separated by field boundaries, minor embankments sloping towards the A7 trunk road, mature broadleaved tree shelterbelts, mature hedgerows, and natural roadside vegetation (e.g., immature trees, shrubs etc.) and made verges which undergo cyclic maintenance (e.g., grass-cutting, weed control, etc.). While there is high availability of roadside vegetation, the habitat immediately bordering the trunk road is assessed to be of reduced ecological value, due to the likelihood of trunk road disturbances from high volume, fast-flowing traffic and that the A7 trunk road limits the connectivity and continuity for species between their potential habitats on either side of the road.

Geology and soils

The A7 within the scheme extents is not located within a Geological Conservation Review Site (GCRS) and there are no Local Geodiversity Sites (LGS) located within 300m of the scheme extents.

The National Soil Map of Scotland online mapping tool records one generalised soil type within the scheme extents:

- Mineral gleys.
- Brown Soils.

There is one major soil group recorded within the scheme extents:

- Gleys.
- Brown Soils.

The British Geological Survey online mapping tool records the superficial geology within the scheme extents as:

- Gretna Till Formation – Diamicton.

The bedrock geology within the scheme extents is recorded as:

- Eden Shales Formation – Mudstone, and
- St Bees Sandstone Member – Sandstone.

There is no evidence if historical industrial processes or the storage of hazardous materials that could have given rise to significant land contamination within the scheme extents.

Given that the works will be restricted to the existing carriageway boundary and depth coupled with the absence of any designated site, it is assessed that there is no potential for the scheme to result in impacts to Geology and Soils. As such this topic has been scoped out of further assessment.

Material assets and waste

The proposed works are required to replace the worn carriageway surface and reinstate road markings. Materials used will consist of:

- TS2010 10mm surface course class 1/2/3.
- EME2 AC14 binder.
- Tack/bond coat.
- Paving grade bitumen to seal vertical faces.
- Eurolite thermoplastic road markings.
- Embedded road studs.

As the value of the scheme is greater than £350,000, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is required for these works.

The 1.41km scheme involves removal of the surface course and localised areas of base and binder. In total, approx. 3338 tonnes of bituminous material (European Waste Catalogue Code: 17 03 02) will be removed from site, none of which is classified as hazardous material containing coal tar.

Noise and vibration

Receptors – refer to 'Population and Human Health'.

Works are not located within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) or Candidate Quiet Areas (CQA).

The night-time modelled noise level (LGNT) within the scheme extents ranges between 65 and 70 decibels (dB), with levels dropping to between 40 and 45 dB at the nearest noise sensitive receptor (NSR) (residential property).

Baseline noise and vibration in the study area is mainly influenced by vehicles traveling along the A7 trunk road. Secondary sources are derived from vehicles travelling along nearby local network roads, day-to-day woodland and agricultural land management activities.

Population and human health

Numerous residential properties lie within 300m of the scheme extents. The nearest property lies approx. 155m northeast from the northern end of the scheme extents and has partial screening from the scheme due to fragmented mature-/semi-mature tree shelterbelts and mature hedgerows. The remaining properties have partial to full screening from the scheme extents due to a combination of semi-mature/mature tree shelterbelts, mature hedgerows, mature woodland, minor sloped embankments, intervening topography and/or other properties.

There are no non-motorised (NMU) or community facilities with connectivity to the scheme extents and there is no street lighting present throughout the scheme.

The A7, within the scheme extents, is a single carriageway with a speed limit of 60 mph applying throughout. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flow is low (3,729 motor vehicles (ID: 50718, 2024 data)) (Road Traffic Statistics.

Road drainage and the water environment

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) River Basin Management Plan online mapping tool records one classified surface waterbody within 300m of the scheme extents:

- ‘River Esk’ (Black Esk to National Boundary) (ID: 10758), which lies approx. 265m northeast from the northern end of the scheme extents. It is a river in the River Esk (Solway) catchment of the Solway Tweed river basin district, with the main stem approx. 36.3km in length and has been given an overall classification of good ecological potential.

Eight unclassified waterbodies lie within 300m of the scheme extents:

- ‘Birken Sike’, which flows directly beneath the scheme extents and outfalls to the River Esk,
- ‘Closses Burn’, which flows directly beneath the scheme extents at the northern end of the scheme and outfalls to the River Esk,
- ‘Drain one’ which flows beneath the scheme extents and outfalls to Birken Sike,
- ‘Pond one’, located approx. 55m east of the scheme extents,
- ‘Pond two’, located approx. 70m east of the scheme extents,
- ‘Drain two’, located approx. 130m southeast from the southern end of the scheme extents,
- ‘Pond three’, located approx. 260m each of the scheme extents, and
- ‘Boughlin Burn’, located approx. 265m southeast from the southern end of the scheme extents.

These waterbodies are considered to be too small (in terms of catchment area) to be classified as a main stem waterbody by SEPA under the (WFD).

A search of the SEPA's Flood Map online mapping tool records that the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents has a low to medium risk of surface water flooding each year.

A search of the Scotland's Environment (SE) online mapping tool determined that the trunk road, within the scheme extents, lies on the 'Annan' groundwater, which has been classified as 'Good'.

The scheme extents do not lie within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ).

Climate

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 ('The Act'), and its subsequent amendment under the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019, sets the framework for the Scottish Government to address climate change. The Act has an ambitious target to reach Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, with any residual emissions balanced by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This is five years earlier than the rest of the UK due to the greater potential for carbon sequestration in Scotland.

The Act was amended to replace interim targets with carbon budgets. Carbon budgets are legally binding caps on greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland over five-year periods. In line with the Act, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) published advice on the level of Scotland's four carbon budgets, covering the period 2026 to 2045, recommending what the Scottish Government sets its carbon budgets at for annual average levels of emissions. These recommendations are based on an ambitious but credible route to Net Zero for Scotland by 2045.

Emissions reductions from surface transport are the largest contribution to meeting the first two carbon budgets. The pathway for surface transport emission reduction is primarily driven by the uptake of electric vehicles, in addition to measures to enable a shift from car use to public transport and active travel, which all play a role in reducing emissions from fossil fuel cars. Ensuring efficiency of existing transport infrastructure and improving/providing new active travel facilities is therefore important to support these carbon reduction budgets.

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 the above noted legally binding target of net-zero by 2045. 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).

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).

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

During the construction phase, activities undertaken on site could potentially have some minor localised and short-term air quality impacts in proximity to the works. The construction phase will, for example, require a range of ancillary plant, vehicles, and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) which will contribute to local dust and air pollutants. The main sources are likely to be dust generated by cold milling in preparation of carriageway resurfacing, as well as exhaust emissions from ancillary plant and vehicles. As a result, there is potential for impacts to local air quality.

However, considering the nature and duration of the scheme, along with implementation of mitigation detailed below, the proposed works' impacts on local air quality levels during the construction period are assessed to be temporary, negligible adverse in magnitude.

Upon completion of the works, no residual air quality impacts are anticipated.

- 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 cold-milled material from site will have sheeted covers.
- Wherever possible, ancillary plant, vehicles, and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will be shut down.
- All ancillary plant, vehicles and 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., by engineer or Clerk of Works) will take place when activities that have the potential to impact local air quality are occurring. In the unlikely event that unacceptable dust or exhaust emissions 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) minimizing cutting and grinding on-site, (b) reducing the operating hours, (c) changing the method of working, etc.

Cultural Heritage

People, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground within the boundary of the A7 carriageway and no works will be required within the 'Canobie' Conservation Area. Providing mitigation measures detailed below are adhered to there is no potential for impacts to the conservation area.

Construction of the A7 carriageway is likely to have removed any archaeological remains that may have been present within the carriageway boundary. The potential for the presence of unknown archaeological remains in the study area has therefore been assessed to be low. Moreover, the works will be limited to carriageway resurfacing and people, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials are restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A7 carriageway boundary. As such, the risk of disturbing or damaging previously undiscovered or unrecorded items of cultural interest is considered to be extremely low.

Given the nature of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed above, the proposed works impacts on cultural heritage during the construction period are assessed to be negligible in magnitude.

Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts on cultural heritage are anticipated.

- All site personnel will be briefed on the importance and location of the 'Canobie' conservation area.
- If a change to the construction programme on site is required that necessitates vegetation clearance or earthworks, BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted prior to undertaking these activities.
- People, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials will be restricted to areas of made/engineered ground. Where access out with made/engineered ground is required for the safe and effective completion of the scheme, the area will be

reduced as much as is reasonably practicable and ideally will be accessed on foot.

Landscape and visual effects

During construction there will be a short-term impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the local area due to the presence of construction plant, vehicles, and TM. However, all construction is restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A7 carriageway, and works are programmed to be undertaken over 15 nights. As such, the visual impact of the works will be somewhat reduced.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed below, impacts on landscape and visual effects are assessed as temporary, negligible adverse in magnitude.

Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts on landscape and visual effects are anticipated e.g., when complete, the visual appearance will remain largely unaffected, with a renewed road surface on the A7 being the only discernible change.

Landscape and visual effects mitigation measures:

- The site will be monitored regularly for signs of litter and other potential contaminants, and litter will be removed before and after works take place.
- The site will be left clean and tidy following construction.
- Where possible, construction vehicles will not be left in places where soil or vegetation can be damaged. If damage to road verge occurs this will be lightly cultivated or graded (upon completion of the works) to allow natural recolonization by local species and promote integration with existing landscape character.

Biodiversity

While the scheme extents fall within the buffer zones of a small number of the qualifying features of the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA and its component SSSI, the Solway Firth SPA , and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site and its component SSSI, all works will be restricted to the existing A7 carriageway surface and are separated from the SPAs and Ramsar Site by residential areas, grassland, arable land, and woodlands. Furthermore, standard BEAR working practices (e.g., adherence to SEPA Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPP) and The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) Scotland Regs 2011 (CAR)) will be implemented and ensure that there will be no potential pollution impacts to habitat which supports the qualifying features of the SPAs or Ramsar Site. As this working

practice is standard and not considered to be an additional control measure or mitigation, the Habitats Regulations Appraisal has concluded that there will be no likely significant effects on the SPAs or Ramsar Site as a result of the proposed resurfacing works.

A temporary short-term increase in noise levels may cause disturbance to local wildlife if present in the vicinity of the works. The works will, for example, require a range of ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM which will emit noise and create potential disturbance. The works will also require delivery of materials and the presence of personnel to facilitate the improvements to the road surface. However, the number of construction vehicles and construction operatives required onsite is low given the scale and scope of works. In addition, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle movements on the A7. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of construction is therefore somewhat diminished.

Of low concern, rosebay willowherb, an invasive native perennial, has been recorded in the verge within the scheme extents. However, given the minor nature of the works, and the restriction to the existing A7 carriageway boundary, there is no likelihood of impacting this species.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of mitigation detailed above, the proposed works impacts on biodiversity throughout the construction period are therefore assessed to be temporary, minor adverse in magnitude.

Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts are anticipated in relation to biodiversity.

Biodiversity mitigation measures:

- Where possible, artificial lighting used during night works will be sufficiently screened and aligned to ensure that there is no direct illumination of neighbouring habitat (e.g., waterbodies spanned by the works, locations adjacent to tree shelterbelt, grassland, arable land etc.).
- Given the records of protected species within 2km of the scheme extents, Toolbox Talk TTN-139 ‘Protected Species’ will be briefed to all site operatives prior to the commencement of works.
- The works are not permitted to disturb or destroy any active birds nests. If an active birds nest is identified onsite that will be impacted by works, BEAR Scotland’s Environmental Team will be contacted.
- All site workers will have received adequate training relevant to their role prior to working on the site, including specific environmental inductions and ‘toolbox talks’ as required.

- Site personnel will remain vigilant for protected species and will not approach or touch any animals seen on site. Any sightings of protected species will be reported to BEARs Environmental Team. Should a protected species be encountered or move within 50m of the active works (including compounds), works will be temporarily halted until the animal(s) move at least 50m away from the construction site, or until BEAR's Environmental Team can provide advice.
- The Contractor will employ 'soft start' techniques for all noisy activity to avoid sudden and unexpected disturbance during works. Each time the activity is started up after a period of inactivity, the noise levels will be gradually increased over a period of 30 minutes to permit animals (including birds) to move away from the disturbance.
- All equipment stored onsite, if necessary, will be checked at the start of each shift to ensure no animals are present. Any storage containers/plant within the compound will also be secured overnight to prevent exploration by mammal species. Any areas where an animal could become trapped (e.g., storage containers) will also be covered at the end of each working day.
- People, ancillary plant, vehicles, NRMM and materials will be restricted to areas of made/engineered ground (as much as is reasonably practicable). If during works unforeseen access to the surrounding environment is required, works will cease in this area and BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted to allow consideration of potential environmental effects.
- BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted to allow consideration of potential environmental effects if:
    - unforeseen site clearance is required,
    - unplanned works must be undertaken out with the carriageway boundary,
    - there is any deviation from the agreed plan, programme and/or method of working,
    - nesting birds are found onsite.
- BEAR Scotland's Control Room will be contacted if there is a pollution incident.

Material assets and waste

Minimising impacts arising from construction materials are focussed upon making the most efficient use of materials onsite to reduce the need for imported primary materials and minimise the creation and disposal of waste through (i) reduction, (ii) re-use, and (iii) recycling. Potential impacts have been assessed for both the construction and operational phases of this scheme. It is anticipated that most material impacts are likely to arise during construction, though long-term residual impacts could occur post construction during the operational phase e.g., during the disposal of materials arising from routine maintenance operations.

However, the detailed design will reduce the requirements for primary materials e.g., the carriageway surfacing, and subbase will be carefully considered to minimise the

requirements for importing primary material. Materials will also be derived from recycled, secondary, or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion. Specifying TS2010 surface course also allows a wider array of aggregate sources to be considered when compared to typical stone mastic asphalt (SMA). As a result, the use of TS2010 should reduce the usage of imported aggregates and increase the use of a wider range of sustainable aggregate sources. The design life for the TS2010 surfacing is also estimated to be 20 years. The enhanced durability of TS2010 therefore reduces reoccurring routine maintenance and associated levels of traffic disruption to this section of road over the period.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation detailed below, the proposed works impacts on material assets and waste throughout the construction period are therefore assessed to be temporary, negligible adverse in magnitude. Upon completion of the works, no residual impacts are anticipated on materials or waste.

Material assets and waste mitigation measures:

- A SWMP will be completed by the Designer and Contractor as required. The SWMP will provide details of the following:
    - The quantity and type of waste that will be produced.
    - How waste will be minimised, reused, recycled, recovered, or otherwise diverted from landfill.
    - How materials that cannot be reused, recycled, or recovered will be removed from site and consigned, transported and disposed of in full accordance with all relevant legislation.
- Good materials management methods (e.g., ‘just-in-time’ delivery) will be implemented wherever possible.
- The Contractor will comply with all ‘Duty of Care’ requirements, ensuring that any surplus materials or waste are stored, transported, treated, used, and disposed of safely without endangering human health or harming the environment. Waste transfer notes and/or waste exemption certificates will also be completed and retained.
- The Contractor is responsible for the reuse / disposal of non-hazardous road planings, and this has been registered in accordance with a Paragraph 13(a) waste exemption issued by SEPA as described in Schedule 3 of the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 2011 (exemption number: WML/XS/2010714), the rules of which will be complied with.
- Designated areas will be identified within which all materials and personnel, including construction compounds, where necessary, will be contained to limit environmental disturbance during construction works. This will include a designated area (if required) for segregation and reuse of waste materials.

- The selection of areas for materials stockpiling will avoid sensitive locations such as road drainage. Stockpiled materials with leachate potential, for example, will be stored away from road drainage to prevent cross-contamination with other materials, wastes, or groundwater.
- Materials will be stored with the appropriate security to prevent loss, theft, or vandalism.
- All temporary road signs and traffic cones will be removed from site on completion of works.
- Wastewater from welfare facilities (if required) will be subject to effluent treatment followed by tanker removal.
- If hazardous substances are used onsite, each substance will be subject to assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002. Hazardous substances will also be clearly labelled, and disposed of, in line with relevant waste regulations. Special waste will also not be mixed with general waste and/or other recyclables.

Noise and vibration

Activities undertaken on site could potentially have some localised and short-term noise impacts in proximity to the works. The road works will, for example, require a range of ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM for cold milling in preparation for carriageway resurfacing. Noise will also be generated by using breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, use of rollers, etc. Furthermore, the crack and seat method will be used during this scheme which is known to be particularly noisy. As a result, there is potential for noise and vibration effects to residential properties within the local area, the closest of which lies approx. 155m northeast of the A7 carriageway within the scheme extents.

However, the works are not located within a CNMA or CQA, and while they will be completed over 15 nights, the aim will be to complete the noisiest works by 23:00. In addition, the proximity of road space suggests that residents have a degree of tolerance to noise and disturbance.

The road surface is in a poor condition, with a series of defects. Replacing the life-expired surface course with TS2010 road surfacing affords the benefits of a reduction in mid-to-high frequency traffic noise and a reduction in the ground vibrations. As a result, upon completion of the work, noise associated with the movement of vehicles on the A7 trunk road should decrease post construction.

Considering the likely sources of noise and vibration, with the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation detailed below, it is unlikely that noise and vibration associated with the works will lead to significant

impacts, disruption and/or complaints. The proposed scheme is therefore anticipated to result in temporary, minor adverse noise impacts.

- The local authority environmental health department will be notified of nighttime working by BEAR Scotland's design engineer.
- Where possible, the noisiest work operations (e.g., guillotine devices used during the cracking of the pavement, cold milling, using breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, use of rollers, etc.) will be completed before 23:00.
- If unacceptable noise is emanating from the site the operation will, where possible, be modified and re-checked to verify that the corrective action has been effective. Actions to be considered include (a) minimizing cutting and grinding on-site, (b) reducing the operating hours, (c) repositioning equipment, (d) changing the method of working etc. Corrective actions will be actioned through the non-conformance reporting procedure, which ensures a root-cause analysis is carried out on each incident. The non-conformance procedure also ensures that appropriate corrective and preventative action measures are agreed and implemented in a timely fashion with all parties, and are recorded and actioned through to closeout, and fully auditable and traceable.
- Ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM with directional noise characteristics will (where practical) be shut down in intervening periods between site operations.
- The use of paving breakers (jackhammers), chipping hammers, etc. will be avoided (except where there is an overriding justification), and if used will be fitted with mufflers or silencers of the type recommended by the manufacturer.
- Drop heights from vehicles and NRMM will be kept to a minimum to minimise noise when unloading.
- All ancillary plant, vehicles and NRMM used onsite will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of silencers and acoustic enclosures.
- All compressors will be 'sound-reduced' models fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers which will be kept closed when in use.
- HGV, site vehicles and NRMM will be switched to the minimum setting required by HSE and, where possible, will utilise 'broadband non-tonal' or 'directional sound reversing' alarms. Speed limits will also be reduced through the works.

Population and human health

During construction, activities undertaken on site have the potential to have temporary adverse impacts on local residents and road users. While TM will be in place for 15 nights, it will be restricted to night-time hours when traffic flows will be at

a minimum, as such no congestion issues are expected during the proposed construction hours. Numerous residential properties lie within 300m of the scheme extents with the nearest situated approx. 155m northeast from the A7 carriageway boundary. As such, there is potential for impacts in the form of noise, vibration and visual disturbance from site lighting.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation described above, impacts on population and human health are assessed as temporary, minor adverse in magnitude.

Upon completion of the works, there will be a positive impact in relation to population and human health due to the improvement of usability and safety provided by the new carriageway surface.

Population and human health mitigation measures:

- Where appropriate, a communication strategy (e.g., social media, consultation with local authority and other stakeholders, letter drop (for night-time works), etc.) will be initiated to keep local residents and/or businesses informed of the proposed working schedule, particularly the times and durations of noisy construction activities. The communication strategy will also provide a 24-hour contact number for the BEAR Scotland Control Room.
- Advanced signage will be strategically placed on the trunk road to notify stakeholders of the road closure and diversion at least seven days in advance.
- 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.

Road drainage and the water environment

During resurfacing works, there is potential for temporary adverse impacts on the water environment. Potential changes in water quality e.g., from pollution events (either by accidental spillage of sediments, particulate matter, chemicals, fuels or by mobilisation of these in surface water caused by rain) during works have the potential to have a direct or indirect effect on surrounding waterbodies, such as ‘Birken Sike’, ‘Closses Burn’, and ‘Drain one’ which are all culverted beneath the scheme extents.

However, given the restriction of the works to the existing A7 carriageway boundary, there is limited potential for direct impacts to nearby waterbodies (Birken Sike, Closses Burn, and Drain one). Furthermore, the potential for a direct pollution incident within a waterbody is also unlikely e.g., experience gained from BEAR

maintenance schemes elsewhere on the network has shown that where standard best working practice is adopted (e.g., adherence to SEPA GPPs or PPGs, utilisation of drain covers or similar, etc.), water quality is protected.

Considering the nature, duration, size, and scale of the scheme, and with implementation of the mitigation detailed below, the proposed works impacts on the road drainage and water environment are assessed as temporary, negligible adverse in magnitude.

Upon completion of the resurfacing works, no residual impacts are anticipated in relation to the road drainage and water environment.

Road drainage and the water environment mitigation measures:

- Site operatives will be made aware of the proximity and sensitivity of 'Birken Sike', 'Closses Burn' and 'Drain one'.
- No work has been identified that would require entering a waterbody. If such a need were identified onsite, BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team will be contacted (before works commence) to allow consideration of potential environmental effects.
- The abstraction or transfers of water from, discharges to, or the washing of tools in surface waterbodies identified is not permitted.
- The Contractor will implement measures to minimise the risk of sediment, materials, waste or accidental spillages entering the road drainage system e.g., prior to works commencing any roadside gullies within 10m of work activities will be bunded (e.g., utilisation of drain covers or similar) to ensure full segregation of the works from the road drainage system. The Contractor will inspect bunds periodically to ensure that they have not been removed, damaged, or interfered with and they will be cleaned of silt and debris as necessary. If it is identified that bunds are not up to standard, the works will not commence until they have been reinstated to the condition, they were originally in.
- On completion of resurfacing operations, any gullies present on site will be visually checked to ensure they have not become blocked as a result of the scheme.
- All site personnel will be made aware of site spillage response procedures and in the event of a spill, all works associated with the spill will stop, and the incident reported to the Site Supervisor. Small spills that did not leave the site boundary and are cleaned up without material environmental harm or residual environmental impact would most likely not be required to be notified to SEPA or other authorities. However, all such incidents will be recorded and reported to BEAR Scotland's Environmental Team. In the event of a 'serious incident', SEPA will be notified without delay. Such notification will include: (i) the time and duration of the incident, (ii) a description of the cause of the incident, (iii) any effect on the environment as a result of the incident, and (iv) any measures taken to minimise or mitigate the effect and prevent a recurrence.

- All waste, vehicles, ancillary plant, NRMM and fuels will be stored in the compound (s) or laydown area and will be secured and located, if space is available, at least 10m from drainage entry points and waterbodies, in order to comply with GPP 5 'works and maintenance in or near water'. Refuelling will only be undertaken at designated refuelling areas (e.g., on hardstanding, with spill kits available, and >10m from drainage entry points and waterbodies, where practicable). Spill kits will also be available within all site vehicles and spill kits will be replenished onsite when required. Only designated trained and competent operatives will be authorised to refuel plant. Generators, and other ancillary plant and NRMM, where there is a risk of leakage of oil or fuel, will have internal bunding or must have a secondary containment system placed beneath them that meets 110% capacity requirements. Containment systems will also be emptied regularly. All waste, vehicles, ancillary plant, NRMM and fuels will also be stored in a manner that ensures they are protected from damage by collision or extremes of weather.
- Regular visual pollution inspections of the designated laydown area and work site (particularly near road drainage entry points) will be conducted (e.g., site walkover by engineer or Site Supervisor), especially during periods of heavy rain.
- All vehicles and NRMM onsite will have been regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of oil tanks, coolant systems, gaskets etc. A checklist will be present to make sure that the checks have been carried out.

Climate

BEAR Scotland, working on behalf of Transport Scotland, undertake carbon monitoring of major projects and operational activities. Emissions from activities are recorded using Transport Scotland's Carbon Management System. BEAR Scotland also undertakes resource efficiency activities to manage and reduce emissions contributing to climate change. The works will also extend the maintenance intervals required for future works. In doing so, the service life of the trunk road is also extended.

During works there is potential for impacts as a result of the emission of greenhouse gases through the use of equipment, vehicles, and NRMM, material use and production, and transportation of material/waste. However, considering the nature, duration, size and scale of the scheme, and the mitigation detailed below, the risk of significant impacts to climate are considered to be negligible and adverse in magnitude.

Upon completion of the proposed scheme no residual impacts are anticipated on the climate.

Climate mitigation measures:

- Local contractors and suppliers will be used as far as practicable to reduce fuel use and greenhouse gases emitted as part of the works.
- BEAR Scotland will adhere to its Carbon Management Policy.
- Where possible, waste will be removed to local waste management facilities.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

There will be no change to the likelihood of flooding on the A7 within the scheme extents upon completion of the works.

Works are restricted to areas of made ground on the A7 carriageway surface, with access to the scheme gained via the A7 mainline. TM will employ 15 nighttime full road closures between Hawick and Canobie with a signed diversion in place. As such, the proposed works' impacts on road traffic accidents are assessed to be of negligible magnitude.

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

Considering the above, the vulnerability of the project to of major accidents and disasters is considered to be low.

Assessment cumulative effects

The proposed works are not anticipated to result in significant environmental effects. Due to the nature of the proposed works, no cumulative effects are anticipated with any other developments in the vicinity.

A search of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner's website (map search) has identified that no other road works are currently ongoing, or noted as being planned, on the A7 trunk road or surrounding roads in proximity to the scheme which will be undertaken at the same time.

In addition, a search using the Dumfries and Galloway Council 'Simple Search' identified one planning application within 300m of the scheme extents in the last two years (Table 1).

Table 1. Planning applications within two years.

Reference	Description of works	Status	Distance from works
24/0471/FUL	Erection of dwellinghouse incorporating existing agricultural building, installation	Decided – grant conditionally	Approx. 250m east

Reference	Description of works	Status	Distance from works
	of roof mounted solar panels and private sewage treatment plant		

While it is not possible to gain an understanding on the timing or duration of the above planning application, it is considered that even in the event that the above planning application was being progressed at the same time as the BEAR Scotland resurfacing scheme, given the distance separating the works from the planning application, no in-combination effects are anticipated.

Assessments of the environmental effects

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

Given the distance separating the resurfacing works from the Langholm – Newcastleton Hills SPA, Solway Firth SPA, and Upper Solway Flats and Marshes Ramsar Site, a HRA proforma was undertaken to assess for any potential effects that the works may have on the SPAs or Ramsar Site. The HRA concluded that the proposed resurfacing works will not result in any likely significant effects on any of the qualifying features of the SPAs or Ramsar Site.

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.

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:

- Works are restricted to like-for-like replacement of worn/damaged road surface, with all works restricted to made ground on the A7 carriageway surface.
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area surrounding the scheme extents.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.

- By removing the carriageway defects, this will provide this section of the A7 carriageway with another life cycle, and significantly improve the ride quality, which will result in safer conditions for road users.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme does not lie within any sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance.
- The scheme lies approx. 20m west of the 'Canobie' conservation area.
- The scheme is not located within any designated landscape areas.
- Land use will not change as a result of the works.
- The works do not require any private land acquisition.
- The scheme is not located within a densely populated area.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- The waste hierarchy will be followed to reduce waste to landfill.
- Works are programmed to take 15 nights to complete, with the aim being to complete the noisiest works by 23:00.
- With good practice pollution prevention measures implemented onsite, there is a negligible risk of a pollution event e.g., compliance with the SEMP.

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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