



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A830 Loch Eilt Rock Slope - Rock Fall Mitigation

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Project Details

Description

BEAR Scotland has been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out rock fall mitigation works on a rural section of the A830 trunk road on the northern shore of Loch Eilt. Failed material from the rock slope has landed on the ditch/verge at the base of the slope and there are no current protection measures in place. The failure appears to have occurred at the head of a gully feature where there is rock scarp. The proposed works will involve de-vegetation and scaling to the slope over a length of approximately 250m to facilitate a clearer inspection and to mitigate the immediate risk of rock fall. Following this, test anchors will be installed and the slope will then be netted to prevent loose and potentially unstable rocks from falling onto the trunk road. The netting will cover a length of approximately 10-12m centred on the main failure area. The extent will be reviewed and potentially adjusted based on findings following the initial inspection.

Works are currently programmed to commence in March 2025 for a duration of 20 days and works will be conducted during daytime working hours (08.00-18.00). Changes in the programme may result in a change to the proposed working hours/commencement dates. Traffic management (TM) will involve single lane closures with two-way temporary traffic lights in place.

Location

The scheme is located on a rural stretch of the A830 on the northern shore of Loch Eilt, approximately 22km south-east of Mallaig in the Highland Council Local Authority area (Figure 1). The National Grid Reference (NGR) for the centre rock slope failure is NM 83896 81798.

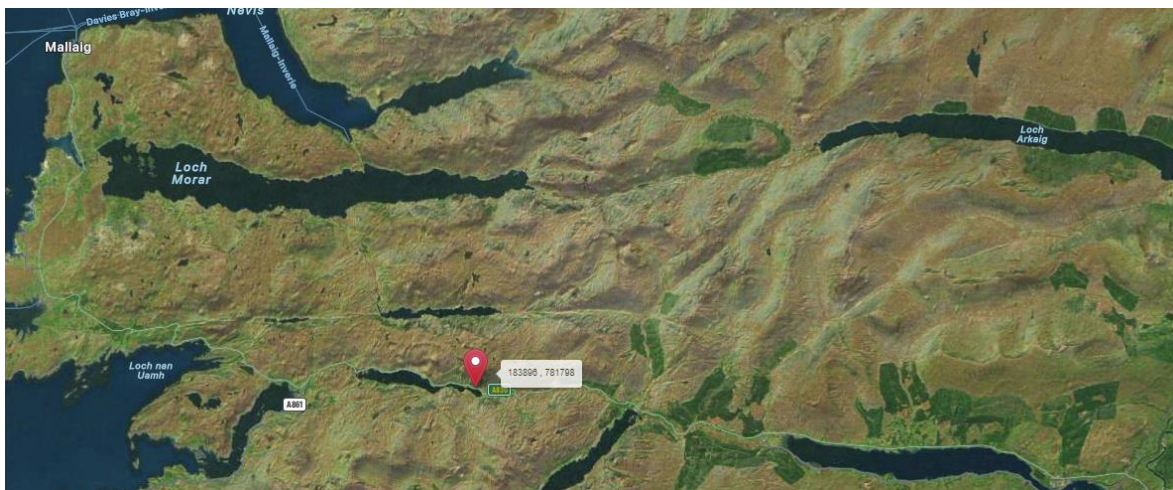


Figure 1: Scheme location

Description of local environment

Air quality

There are no [Air Quality Management Areas](#) (AQMA) in within 10km of the scheme extent.

There is one registered site on the [Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory \(SPRI\)](#) located within 10km of the scheme, which is found approximately 8km west:

- Ardnish MCFF, Loch Ailort - *fish farm*

There are no Air Quality Monitoring Stations ([AQMS](#)) located within 10km of the scheme extent.

Baseline air quality is likely to be primarily influenced by traffic along the A830.

Cultural heritage

A desktop study of Historic Environment Scotland's data on [SE Map](#) found no features of cultural heritage within 300m of the scheme. The closest feature of cultural heritage is Loch Eilt farmstead (Canmore and Historic Environment Record) which lies approximately 410m south-west of the rock slope failure.

As there are no cultural heritage features within proximity to the works and no excavation is required, there is no potential for adverse impacts of the works on cultural heritage and this receptor is not considered further in this Record of Determination (RoD).

Landscape and visual effects

There are no National Parks, National Scenic Areas or any other sites designated for their landscape character or quality located within 300m of the scheme.

The scheme is located on a rural stretch of the A830 approximately 22km south-east of Mallaig. The surrounding land is a mix of grazing pastures; moorland; montane scrub; mixed woodland, including forestry plantations; and freshwater habitat.

The A830 Trunk Road connects Fort William with Mallaig. It commences at the A828 / A82 junction in Fort William leading generally westwards for a distance of 70

kilometres to (and including) the B8008 Station Road Roundabout in Mallaig. The A830 is a single carriageway along its length.

Biodiversity

The scheme is located wholly within the Moidart and Ardgour Special Protection Area (SPA). A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) has been produced and consultation with NatureScot has been conducted. Refer to the relevant assessment section below for details.

The scheme does not lie in proximity to any Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designated for biodiversity features.

The [National Biodiversity Network \(NBN\) Atlas](#) does not hold any records of bird species within 2km of the scheme. The search criteria included only records during the past ten years, and which have open-use attributions (OGL-CCO-CC-BY); however, this does not preclude their presence in the area. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), all wild birds and their active nests are protected, with certain species receiving additional protections.

Similarly, under the same search criteria, the NBN Atlas holds no records of protected mammals or the invasive non-native species (INNS) or plants or injurious weeds listed on the NMC Contract; however, this does not preclude their presence in the area.

A search using Transport Scotland's Asset Management Performance System (AMPS) returned no records of INNS or injurious weeds listed on the NMC Contract within 300m of the scheme.

Habitat in the surrounding area is dominated by grazing pastures; moorland; montane scrub; mixed woodland, including forestry plantations; and freshwater habitat.

As listed on the [Ancient Woodland Inventory \(AWI\)](#), the scheme lies wholly within the Coille Chreag (Wood ID: 13313) area of ancient (of semi-natural origin) woodland which is approximately 37.49 hectares in area.

There are no trees covered by a [Tree Preservation Order](#) (TPO) by Highland Council within 300m of the scheme extent.

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was conducted by the BEAR Scotland NW Environment Team on the 19/09/2024. The PRA was conducted on trees and structures, including the rock slope, within 30m of the works at each site.

Geology and soils

The scheme lies wholly within the Fassfern to Loch Ailort Road Cuttings Geological Review Site (GCRS) (Site ID: 9581); however, there is no component Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) ([NatureScot](#)). Where a GCRS does not overlap with a corresponding geological SSSI, the GCRS is not statutorily protected.

Component soils around the scheme extent are described as peaty gleyed podzols with peaty gleys with peaty rankers. The parent material is described as drifts derived from schists, gneisses, granulites and quartzites principally from the Moine Series ([Scotland's Soils](#)).

There are no bedrock geology records on for the wider area around the scheme extent available from the British Geological Survey (BGS); however, the scheme lies wholly within the Fassfern to Loch Ailort Road Cuttings GRS which is a 27km section of the Neoproterozoic Moine Supergroup ([British Geological Survey](#)).

Material assets and waste

The rock fall mitigation works are required due to uncertainty surrounding the stability of the rock slope and surrounding terrain and the works are required to avoid potential rock fall/distribution of slope materials onto the A830 trunk road. Materials required will depend on the outcome of the investigation following vegetation clearance, however, it is expected that the following will be required:

- Drapery netting
- Rock dowels
- Grouting plant
- Handheld drill equipment
- Machine mounting drill equipment
- Excavator
- Telescopic handler
- Tipper
- Temporary safety barrier

Waste generated by the works, such as cleared vegetation and rock debris, will be removed from site and disposed of in a licenced waste facility.

A Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) is not required as the scheme value does not exceed £350,000.

Noise and vibration

For residential, community and commercial receptors refer to the 'Population and Human Health' section below.

The works do not fall within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by Transport Scotland's Transportation Noise Action Plan ([TNAP](#)) 2019-2023.

According to [Scotland's Noise Map](#), the average noise level at the scheme extent for day, evening and night (Lden) is between 58-62dB.

Baseline noise levels are likely to be primarily influenced by traffic travelling along the A830.

Population and human health

The scheme lies on a rural stretch of the A830 approximately 22km south-east of Mallaig. There are no residential or commercial properties within 300m of the scheme. The closest property is a residential property approximately 1.8km west of the scheme.

Approximately 300m east of the scheme, adjacent to the east-bound carriageway, lies a land access junction and layby. There are no other junctions, access points, laybys or parking areas within 300m of the scheme.

There are no bus stops, pedestrian footways or National Cycle Routes within 300m of the scheme.

There are no [Core Paths](#) or designated walking routes ([Walk Highlands](#)) within 300m of the scheme extent.

The Oban/Glasgow to Mallaig Rail Line lies approximately 530m south of the scheme.

TM will involve a single lane closure with two-way temporary traffic lights.

Road drainage and the water environment

The scheme extent and surrounding area is underpinned by the Fort William groundwater ([ID: 150696](#)) which is 2,274.7 square kilometres in area. In 2022, this was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) under the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD).

Loch Eilt is a lake ([ID: 100206](#)) in the Ardnamurchan Coastal catchment of the Scotland river basin district. It is 1.8 square kilometres in area and lies approximately 20m south of the scheme. In 2022, it was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD.

The Allt Lon a Mhuide is a river ([ID: 20408](#)) in the Ardnamurchan Coastal catchment of Scotland's river basin district. The main stem is approximately 3.3km in length and it lies approximately 350m south-east of the scheme, with hydrological connectivity via Loch Eilt. In 2022, it was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD.

River Ailort is a river ([ID: 20407](#)) in the Ardnamurchan Coastal catchment of Scotland's river basin district. The main stem is approximately 9.5km in length and it lies approximately 5km west of the scheme, with hydrological connectivity via Loch Eilt. In 2022, it was assigned 'Good Ecological Potential' by SEPA under the WFD.

There are several other unclassified water bodies and drains within 300m of the scheme.

[SEPA Flood Map](#) has highlighted no likelihood of river water flooding at the scheme extent, however, there is a high likelihood within 300m of the scheme (i.e. a 10% chance of flooding each year). Similarly, there is no likelihood of surface water flooding within the scheme extent; however, there is a high likelihood within 300m of the scheme.

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 vegetation clearance, rock removal and breaking out of materials, 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 air are considered to be low.

- 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 drilling/coring equipment 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 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) minimizing cutting and grinding on-site, (b) reducing the 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 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 RoD.

Landscape and visual effects

The works are not located in a National Park, National Scenic Area or any other site designated for landscape character and visual effects features.

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. People, ancillary plant, vehicles and materials will be restricted to areas of made/engineered ground on the A830 and the rock slope; and the works will be of short duration (5 days), and as such any temporary impact will be highly localised.

Permanent change will occur to local landscape due to vegetation clearance and the installation of netting on the rock slope. However, all change is within the A830 trunk road boundary and adjacent rock slope, with netting added to a length of 10-12m along the rock slope only, and is required for risk reduction for the general public. Any change will be localised and of a minor nature, with no significant impacts predicted.

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

- Vegetation clearance and netting installation will be limited to only the amount necessary to complete the 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 not permitted. This includes general works, storage of equipment/containers and parking.
- Where applicable, upon completion of the works, any damage to the local landscape will 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 scheme is located wholly within the Moidart and Ardgour SPA. A HRA was conducted and Likely Significant Effects (LSE) of the rock fall mitigation works on the qualifying features of the Moidart and Ardgour SPA could not be ruled out, as the works have the potential to result in indirect effects through risk of habitat loss and disturbance. As such, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) was conducted, which

concluded that the works would not result in Adverse Effects on Site Integrity (AESI) for the qualifying features of the Moidart and Ardgour SPA based on the following factors:

- The rock slope is no more than 10m in height, surrounded by dense broadleaf woodland and scrub and adjacent to the A830 trunk road and is not suitable for breeding, foraging or perching.
- Although Loch Eilt is 15m from the scheme and may provide a suitable foraging ground; there is no suitable nesting habitat around the loch.
- A pre-works survey will be carried out to identify any active nests within disturbance distance of works (750-1000m). If any are found, additional consultation will be carried out with NatureScot to agree suitable mitigation measures.
- The works area is highly localised and represents a very small fraction of the overall breeding and foraging habitat in the SPA.
- The topography and elevation of the surrounding habitat provides visual and acoustic screening between the scheme and the mountainous potential breeding habitat.
- Works are restricted to the A830 trunk road boundary and any birds in the vicinity are likely habituated to the noise and visual disturbance associated with trunk road traffic.
- Works are temporary, of short duration and any noise will be intermittent and localised to the works area; additionally works will be conducted during day light hours.
- There is ample alternative habitat in the remainder of the SPA away from the works available for foraging.
- The following measures would be in place throughout the works, including (but not limited to), the following:
 - A Toolbox Talk for Birds will be included in the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) and provided to all site staff prior to works commencing.
 - Artificial lighting will be used for as short a duration as possible and will be directed on the immediate area of works and away from watercourses and adjacent habitats as far as is safe and reasonably practicable.
 - The best practicable means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites will always be employed to reduce noise produced during works as much as possible.
 - Plant, machinery, and equipment will be fitted with effective silencers where available and will be utilised for the works. Where fitted, and

where permitted under the Health and Safety requirements, white noise reversing alarms shall be utilised during construction.

- Where possible, inherently quiet plan will be selected for construction works. Where appropriate, pumps and generators will be sound-reduced models with fitted, lined and sealed acoustic covers.
- All plant will be operated in such a way that minimises noise emissions and be switched off when not in use.
- Planned working hours will allow for a quiet period during the day when construction stops, which will allow for undisturbed foraging time.

Additionally, no cumulative or in-combination effects of the works on the Moidart and Ardour SPA were identified.

The AA will be submitted to NatureScot for comment and any additional mitigation measures required will be adhered to.

Although no other protected species were identified in proximity to the scheme during the survey, habitat close to the works does provide foraging opportunities for a variety of species. Activities undertaken on site could potentially have temporary adverse impacts on biodiversity in the area as a result of increased vehicle presence and the potential for disturbance to protected species and pollution of habitats. However, works are restricted to the A830 trunk road and rock slope and the number of construction vehicles and construction operatives required on site is low given the scale and scope of the works. In addition, any species in the area are likely to be accustomed to noise and visual disturbance pertaining to vehicle movements on the A830. Furthermore, the scheme is of short duration (20 days) and will be undertaken on a day time working pattern. The potential for significant species disturbance within the area of likely construction disturbance is therefore considered to be low.

The scheme lies wholly within the Coille Chreag (Wood ID: 13313) area of ancient woodland. If tree felling is required outside of the trunk road boundary (i.e., on third-party land not owned by Transport Scotland) and will result in 5m³ or more of timber removed from third-party land, a felling licence will be obtained from Scottish Forestry and compensatory planting will likely be required as a condition of the licence.

If works are conducted within breeding bird season (March to August inclusive), a pre-works nesting bird check will be conducted prior to works commencing. If nesting birds are found during the pre-works check, further consultation and/or licences will be sought and adhered to if required.

Pollution controls and good practice measures to reduce impacts of works on the local environment will be detailed in the SEMP and adhered to on site. The following mitigation measures, in addition to the ones detailed in the HRA and any further

advised by NatureScot, will be put in place to minimise impacts on biodiversity features in the area:

- 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 will temporarily halt until the species has sufficiently moved on. Any sightings of protected species will be reported to the BEAR Scotland Environmental Team. If required, NatureScot will be contacted for advice.
- Personnel will remain vigilant for the presence of INNS or injurious weeds in road verges throughout the works period. Should any INNS be identified in working areas, works will be restricted to a 7m buffer of any growth where reasonably practicable.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- If works will commence during breeding bird season (March to August inclusive), a nesting bird check will be conducted prior to works commencing and prior to any vegetation clearance.
- If an active bird nest is found in vicinity of the works, all works within 30m of the nest will stop until the BEAR Scotland Environment Team can provide advice.
- If nesting birds are found during the pre-works check or during works, consultation with NatureScot will be carried out and a licence will be sought if advised by NatureScot. If required, all conditions of any licences will be adhered to.

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.

Geology and soils

The works are located wholly within the Fassfern to Loch Ailort Road Cuttings GCRS, however, there is no component SSSI for this site. Where a GCRS does not overlap with a corresponding geological SSSI, the GCRS is not statutorily protected. The works will involve vegetation clearance and removal of unstable rock features. However, due to the current instability of the slope, it is anticipated that the works will not have any additional adverse impacts on the geological integrity of the slope. Therefore, the works are not anticipated to have an adverse impact on geology and soils. However, the following mitigation measures will be adhered to on site:

- Excavated soil, rock and debris will be stored in a designated area on level ground where practicable.
- If the soil is to be re-used on site, then it will be wetted (if necessary) during periods of dry weather to prevent drying out.
- The parking of machinery/vehicles and storage of equipment on road 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) will be reinstated as much as is practicable.
- Mitigation measures to prevent contamination of soils through loss of containment will be strictly adhered to.
- All relevant soil management toolbox talks will be included in the SEMP and sediment control measures will be in place to prevent soil erosion and loss of containment.
- Additional pollution prevention measures as outlined in the 'Road drainage and the water environment' section will be adhered to on site.

With the above mitigation measures in place, it is anticipated that any geology and soil 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 will 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.
- Bulk material will be delivered to site without packaging where possible.
- Supplies will be requested to minimise all packaging where possible.
- Care will be taken to only order the correct quantity of required materials, preventing disposal of unused materials.
- Materials will be reutilised where possible.
- All waste stored on site will be adequately protected against the elements.
- All appropriate waste documentation will be present on site and be available for inspection.
- 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 will 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 provided 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, and there are no residential or commercial properties within proximity to the scheme; with the closest property at a distance of 1.8km. Works will also be conducted utilising a day time working pattern. Noise is not likely to be a defining feature of the works based on the proposed working activities and potential to induce worst-case scenario noise and vibration will also be intermittent, temporary and short-lived.

The following mitigation measures will be put in place:

- The Best Practicable Means, as defined in Section 72 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, 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.
- Where possible, inherently quiet plant will be selected for construction works.
- 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

Construction is not anticipated to have an adverse effect on residents, properties or land use in the area due to the rural location of the scheme. There are no population or human health receptors (e.g. bus stops, laybys, cycle/walking routes) within 300m

of the scheme and therefore there any adverse impacts of the works will be limited to users of the A830 trunk road.

Traffic management will be designed in line with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual and will accommodate non-motorised road users and all construction activities will operate in line with good practice measures for construction as outlined in the SEMP.

It is anticipated that, following works, there will be a slight to moderate beneficial impact on safety for users of the trunk road at this location with infrastructure in place to reduce the risk of impact from rock fall events.

Taking into account the nature and scale of the works and the good site practice measures to be adopted during the works (outlined in the SEMP), it is anticipated that any population and human health effects associated with the works are unlikely to be significant. This receptor is not considered further in this RoD.

Road drainage and the water environment

No in-water works are required and no discharges into any watercourses will be permitted. There is potential for indirect impacts on the water environment due potential spillage of fuels, oils and mobilisation of silt. Standard procedures and conditions are in place to mitigate impacts on the water environment as listed below. Provided these mitigation measures are adhered to throughout the works, impacts are not predicted to be significant:

- No discharges into any watercourses or drainage systems will be permitted. Appropriate containment measures will be in place to prevent any loss of construction materials into the water environment.
- A toolbox talk on silt and sediment containment will be delivered to all site staff as part of the site induction.
- 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 will be removed, double bagged and taken off site as special 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 will 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.
- 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, materials will be sourced locally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials movement, and waste will be removed to local waste management facilities.

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

There is no current likelihood of flooding at the scheme extent and the works are not expected to affect this.

Works will be programmed as far as is reasonably practicable to avoid periods of adverse weather or heavy rainfall.

Works are restricted to areas of made ground of the A830 trunk road boundary and rock slope, with access to the scheme gained via the A830. TM will involve single lane closures with two-way temporary traffic lights and non-motorised road users will be accommodated within the TM setup if required.

The works will not result in any change in vulnerability of the A830 carriageway or active travel route to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. The works will improve the safety of road users by mitigating the risk of rock fall onto the trunk road.

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

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 [Highland Council Planning Portal](#) identified no approved planning applications within 300m of the scheme within the last six months.

A search of the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner website ([Map Search](#)) has identified that there are no roadworks planned for the same period as the proposed works and 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 relating to traffic management. As a result of this exercise, where a potential for cumulative impacts is identified, BEAR will reprogramme schemes to avoid / limit any cumulative effects or will utilise existing traffic management to complete multiple schemes at once. This approach allows BEAR Scotland to effectively manage the potential cumulative effects as a result of traffic management, resulting in minimal disruption to users of the Scottish trunk road network.

Overall, it is unlikely that the proposed works will have significant cumulative effects 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.

A HRA Proforma was conducted due to the works location within the Moidart and Ardgour SPA. The assessment concluded LSE of the works could not be ruled out for the qualifying features of the SPA; however, with appropriate measures in place, the proposed works will not result in AESI.

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) are situated in whole within the Moidart and Ardgour SPA, which is 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:

- Works are localised to the trunk road and adjacent rock slope.
- Construction activities are restricted to an area of 250m in total (including traffic management).
- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to nearby receptors or protected species that may be present in the wider area, out with those detailed in the HRA Proforma.

- A pre-works survey will be carried out to identify any active nests within disturbance distance of works (750-1000m). If any are found, additional consultation will be carried out with NatureScot to agree suitable mitigation measures.
- No INNS were recorded during the ecological surveys.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, short-term, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Residual impacts are considered to be beneficial for the travelling public which may use this stretch of carriageway. In addition, rock fall mitigation will improve road safety following the works.

Location of the scheme:

- The scheme fully lies within the existing A830 trunk road boundary and lies fully within the Moidart and Ardgour SPA. Due to the localised, minor nature of the works and mitigation measures, no AESI are predicted on the qualifying features of the SPA, as concluded in the HRA.
- The scheme is located wholly within the Fassfern to Loch Ailort Road Cuttings GCRS, however, there is no geological component SSSI for this site.
- The scheme is located wholly within the Coille Chreag area of ancient woodland. If any tree felling out with the trunk road boundary is required, additional consents may be required.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Containment measures will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- Residual visual impacts will be localised to the existing A830 and 12m of rock slope and are not considered to be significant.
- Works are programmed to be of short duration and undertaken during day-time hours.
- The SEMP will include plans to address environmental incidents.
- Mitigation measures detailed above and in the SEMP will be put in place with the objective to prevent and, if required, subsequently control any potential impacts on sensitive receptors.
- 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.

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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