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Environmental Impact Assessment Record of Determination

A96 South of Oyne Fork

Contents

Project Details

Description

The works are required to maintain the safety and integrity of a stretch of the A96 carriageway to the east of Oyne, Aberdeenshire. The carriageway is presenting signs of continual deterioration.

Construction activities will entail the resurfacing of the A96 carriageway east of Oyne with the activities as follows:

- Installation of Traffic Management (TM);
- Milling of carriageway to agreed depths;
- Resurfacing of the carriageway to existing road levels using TS2010 surface source, AC20 binder and AC32 bituminous base;
- Reinstatement of road markings, linings and studs; and
- Removal of TM.

The following (but not limited to) plant/machinery/vehicles may be used throughout the scheme:

- Planer;
- Wagon(s);
- Bitumen tank;
- Extrusion liner;
- Paint tanker;
- Paver; and
- Roller(s).

The proposed work is programmed to be completed within the next financial year (April 2025 to March 2026) for a duration of seven to 10 days with the majority of works being undertaken during night-time hours.

TM for the scheme will compromise of lane and road closures on the A96 carriageway. Where road closures are required, a diversion will be in place, which involves local access only to the area of works and all other traffic diverted via the local minor carriageways.

Location

The scheme is located within a rural section of the A96 carriageway east of Oyne, Aberdeenshire at the approximate National Grid References (NGRs) detailed below. The scheme location is illustrated in Figure 1:

- NJ 71022 25413
- NJ 69394 25657

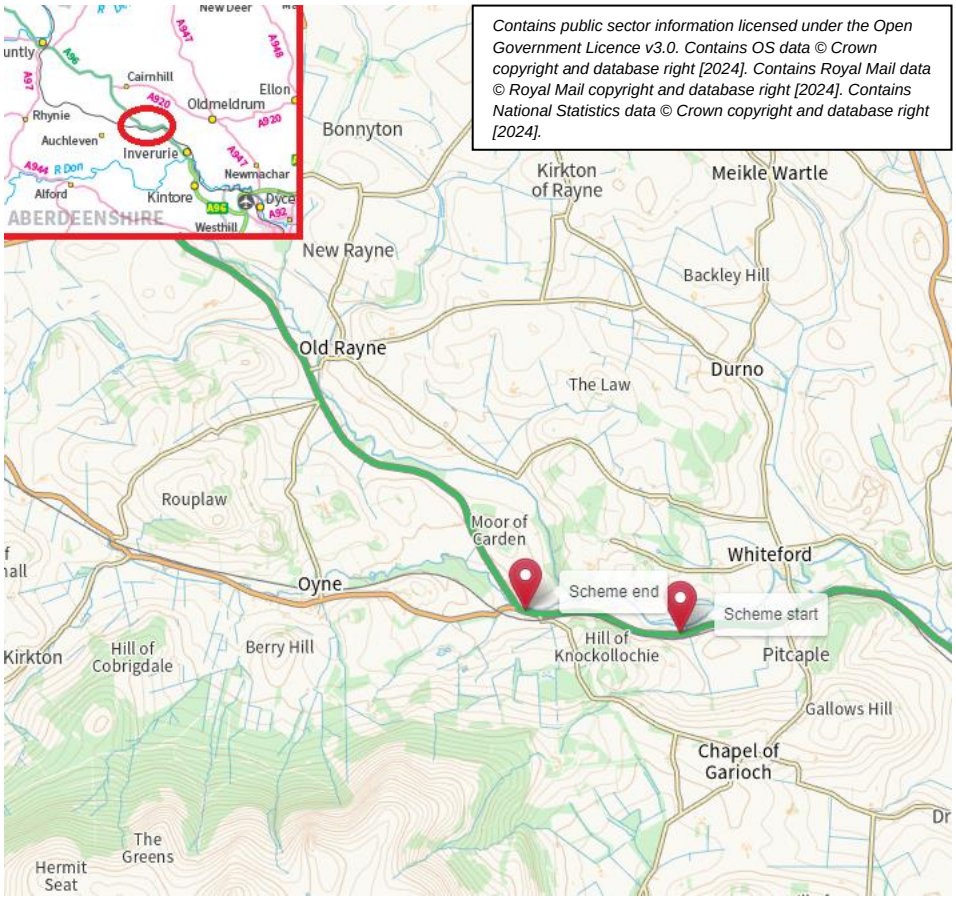

Figure 1: Scheme location.

Description of local environment

Air quality

Baseline air quality levels are likely to be influenced by vehicle traffic from the A96 carriageway and agricultural activities. The Annual Average Daily Flow (AADF) in 2023 for the A96 carriageway within the scheme extents (estimated count point: 80046), accounted for 10,541 vehicles, with 638 of these being Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

Four residential properties have been identified within 200m of the scheme extents with the closest property entitled 'Craigmill' located approx. 7m north of the A96 carriageway. No non-residential air quality sensitive receptors have been identified within 200m of the scheme extents.

Aberdeenshire Council has not declared any Air Quality Management Areas.

The Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory (SPRI) has identified the Carden Livestock Facility (located approximately 200m north) within 1km of the scheme. This facility is listed as being a polluting facility as a result of intensive livestock production.

Cultural heritage

The PastMap resource has been utilised to ascertain the designated and undesignated culturally significant assets within proximity to the scheme extents (see Tables 1 and 2 below). Designated assets within proximity have been determined using a buffer of 300m whilst undesignated assets within proximity have been determined using a buffer of 100m. Where a designation is duplicated, only the highest level of classification will be listed below.

Table 1: Designated cultural heritage assets within 300m.

Name and Designation	Reference Number	Description	Distance from Scheme
Lodge, Logie House	333829	Category C Listed Building	7m north

Table 2: Non-designated cultural heritage assets within 100m.

Name and Designation	Reference Number	Description	Distance from Scheme
Bridge of Carden	184325	Canmore	80m north
Hill of Knockollochie	183192	Canmore	40m south

Landscape and visual effects

Six residential properties have been identified within 300m of the scheme extents. The closest property is located approx. 7m north (at the roadside) entitled 'Craigmill'. Due to the surrounding landscape consisting of low-lying agricultural land (low-sided valleys), multiple properties in the surrounding areas are anticipated to have sight of the A96 carriageway within the scheme extents. No non-residential visual receptors have been identified.

No landscape designations such as Garden Designed Landscapes (GDLs) or National Scenic Areas (NSAs) have been identified within 1km of the scheme extents (PastMap).

Scotland's Landscape Character Type Map lists the landscape character type present within the scheme extents to be 'Wooded Estates - Aberdeenshire'. Scotland's Historic Land-Use Map lists the land surrounding the scheme extents as a mixture of rectilinear farms and fields and rough grazing.

No Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) have been identified adjacent within 300m of the scheme extents.

Biodiversity

The A96 carriageway within the scheme extents contains areas of low-lying vegetation, trees and scrub separating the carriageway from arable and pastoral farmland.

No designated European sites have been identified within 2km of the scheme extents (NatureScot's Sitelink). No indirect linkages to designated European sites (such as hydrological or ecological links) have been identified between the area of works and any sites. No nationally designated sites (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or local/national nature reserves) have been identified within 200m of the scheme extents.

The NBN Atlas resource has identified the presence of INNS including Giant hogweed *(Heracleum mantegazzianum)* and Rhododendron *(Rhododendron*

ponticum) within 500m of the scheme extents. This resource has identified the presence of Transport Scotland Target Species including the following within 500m of the scheme extents:

- Rosebay willowherb *(Chamaenerion angustifolium)*;
- Broad-leaved dock (Rumex obtusifolius);
- Creeping thistle (Cirsium arvense); and,
- Spear thistle (Cirsium vulgare).

The Amey Environment NE NMC INNS Map resource has not recorded the presence of any INNS or Transport Scotland Target Species within 500m of the scheme extents.

The scheme and the surrounding habitat have been reviewed by a senior ecologist utilising desktop resource and in turn, a site visit was scoped out. The transient nature of the works combined with the requirement of the works to be contained within the pavement boundary has allowed for this conclusion.

Geology and soils

The scheme is not located within 200m of any Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRS), or SSSIs designated for their geological significance (NatureScot's Sitelink).

The National Soil Map of Scotland lists the soil present within the scheme extents to be that of mineral gleys. This resource also classifies the land as '3.1' with regard to the Land Classification for Agriculture.

Bedrock Geology:

- Insch Pluton, Middle Zone - Norite and gabbronorite. Igneous bedrock formed between 485.4 and 443.8 million years ago during the Ordovician period.

Superficial Deposits:

- Banchory Till Formation - Diamicton. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

As a result of the works taking place strictly within made ground within the A96 carriageway boundary, it has been determined that the project does not carry the potential to cause direct or indirect impact to geology or soils. As such, impact has been assessed as being 'no change' and has been scoped out of requiring further assessment.

Material assets and waste

The works are required to resurface the worn carriageway and reinstate road markings and studs. Materials used will consist of:

- Bituminous surfacing (TS2010, AC20 binder and AC32 base);
- Road marking materials (thermoplastic road marking paint) and studs;
- Vehicle fuel;
- Oil; and
- Lubricant.

Wastes are anticipated to be planings from the carriageway surface course, with no coal tar recorded from coring logs within scheme extents. The Contractor is responsible for the disposal of road planings, and this will be registered in accordance with a Paragraph 13(a) waste exemption issued by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), as described in Schedule 3 of the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 2011.

This scheme value is in excess of £350k and therefore a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) will be produced.

Noise and vibration

Baseline noise levels are likely to be influenced by vehicle traffic from the A96 carriageway and residential/industrial activities. The AADF in 2023 for the A96 carriageway within the scheme extents (estimated count point: 80046), accounted for 10,541 vehicles, with 638 of these being HGVs.

Six residential properties have been identified within 300m of the scheme extents. The closest property is located approx. 7m north (at the roadside) entitled ‘Craigmill’. No non-residential noise sensitive receptors have been identified within 300m of the scheme extents.

Scotland’s Noise Map has indicated modelled day-evening-night noise levels (Lden) within 50m of the carriageway to be between 55 and 75dB, with lower night-time noise levels (Lnight) of between 50 and 65dB within this parameter.

The scheme is not located within a Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA) as defined by the Transportation Noise Action Plan (Road Maps) Transportation Noise Action Plan (TNAP).

Population and human health

The A96 carriageway within the scheme extents is located within rural Aberdeenshire. This carriageway acts as a link between the city of Aberdeen and smaller settlements including Inverurie, Huntly and Kintore. Whilst these towns and villages play host to medical facilities and public amenities, the city of Aberdeen contains a greater complexity of facilities in greater abundance.

Six residential properties have been identified within 300m of the scheme extents. The closest property is located approx. 7m north (at the roadside) entitled 'Craigmill'. Non-residential properties within 300m include agricultural premises/businesses and related holdings.

The A96 carriageway within the scheme extents is not street-lit and contains no pedestrian footways. Multiple private property and field access points are present within the scheme extents, as are roads connecting the A96 carriageway to Chapel of Gairoch, the B9002 carriageway and Whiteford. Laybys are present both eastbound and westbound within the scheme boundary . Access to the westbound layby (at the scheme start point) is slightly outwith the scheme extents whilst the eastbound layby is located entirely within the scheme extents.

No Aberdeenshire Council Core Paths or National Cycle Network (NCN) routes are present within 300m of the scheme extents.

Road drainage and the water environment

SEPA's Water Classification Hub has identified the identified the Gadie Burn (site ID: 23290) flowing approx. 20m north of the A96 carriageway within the scheme extents (at its closest point). This watercourse flows into the River Urie (site ID: 23288) of which is located approx. 80m north of the scheme's end point. These watercourses are classified as being in 'Good' condition under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Various field drains have also been identified flowing adjacent to the scheme extents including an unnamed watercourse flowing beneath the scheme extents and into the Gadie Burn.

SEPA's Water Classification Hub identified the groundwater conditions within the scheme extents (entitled Inverurie, site ID: 150685) as being in 'Good' condition.

SEPA's Flood Map has indicated that the entirety of the verge of the A96 carriageway within the scheme's western extent is at a 'Medium' to 'High' (approx. 0.5% to 10% each year) risk of surface water flooding with small areas of the pavement included within this. The Gadie Burn and its banks (including the scheme's western extent) is at a 'High' (approx. 10% each year) risk of river water flooding.

The A96 carriageway within the scheme's eastern extent is drained via top-entry gullies. No obvious drainage assets are present at the central and western extents.

The A96 carriageway within the scheme extents is contained within the Scottish Government's Moray, Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) as defined by the Scottish Government. NVZs are areas designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. Areas such as the Moray, Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan NVZ either result or would likely result in a concentration equal or exceeding 50mg/l of nitrates in either surface or groundwater as a result of agriculture.

Climate

Carbon Goals

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act sets out the target and vision set by the Scottish Government for tackling and responding to climate change. The Act includes a target of reducing CO_2 emissions by 80% before 2050 (from the baseline year 1990).

The Scottish Government has since published its indicative Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to set out how it will instead reach net-zero by 2045, working to reduce emissions of all major greenhouse gases (GHGs) by at least 75% by 2030. By 2040, the Scottish Government is committed to reduce 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, this commitment is being enacted through the Mission Zero for Transport. Transport is the largest contributor to harmful climate emissions in Scotland. In response to the climate emergency, TS are committed to reducing their emissions by 75% by 2030 and to a legally binding target of net-zero by 2045.

Amey's Company Wide Carbon Goal is to achieve Scope 1 and 2 net-zero carbon emissions, with a minimum of 80% absolute reduction on our emissions by 2035. Amey is aiming to be fully net-zero, including Scope 3 emissions, by 2040.

Amey are working towards a contractual commitment to have carbon neutral depots on the NE NMC network by 2028. Amey have set carbon goals for the NE NMC contract as a whole to be net-zero carbon by 2032.

Policies and Plans

This Record of Determination (RoD) has been undertaken in accordance with Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (RSA EIA Regulations) along with Transport Scotland's Environmental Impact Assessment Guidance (Guidance – Environmental Impact Assessments for road projects (transport.gov.scot)). Relevant guidance, policies and plans accompanied with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)) LA 101 and LA 104 were used to form this assessment.

Description of main environmental impacts and proposed mitigation

Air quality

Impacts

- On site construction activities carry a potential to produce airborne particulate matter, dust and generate emissions that may have a temporary impact on local air quality levels and act as a nuisance to nearby residents.
- TM being implemented during the scheme may result in an increase in associated vehicle emissions through idling vehicles and increased congestion, particularly on routes impacted by diversions.

Mitigation

- Best practice and measures as outlined in the 'Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction (January 2024)' published by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM), which includes the following mitigation relevant to this scheme will be followed:
    - The site layout will be planned (including plant, vehicles and Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM)) so that machinery and dust causing activities are located away from receptors, as far as reasonably practicable;
    - Materials that have a potential to produce dust will be removed from site as soon as possible, unless being re-used on site (cover or fence stockpiles will be used to prevent wind whipping);
    - Cutting, grinding or sawing equipment will be fitted or used in conjunction with suitable dust suppression techniques such as water sprays or local extraction, e.g. suitable local exhaust ventilation systems;
    - Drop heights from conveyors and other loading or handling equipment will be minimised;
    - Vehicles carrying wastes and materials entering and leaving the work area will be covered to prevent escape of materials during transport;
    - Equipment will be readily available on site to clean any dry spillages, and clean up spillages as soon as reasonably practicable after the event using wet cleaning methods; and
    - When not in use, plant, vehicles and NRMMs will be switched off and there will be no idling vehicles.
- Plant, vehicles and NRMM will be regularly maintained, paying attention to the integrity of exhaust systems to ensure such fuel operated equipment is not generating excessive fumes.

- Green driving techniques will be adopted, and effective route preparation and planning will be undertaken prior to works.
- Where possible, materials will be sourced locally.
- Surfaces will be swept where loose material remains following planing.

No significant effects are predicted on air quality. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 105: Air Quality no further assessment is required.

Cultural heritage

Impacts

- No potential direct impacts to designated features have been identified as a result of the scheme due to works being contained within the carriageway boundary. Residual impacts from noise and vibration are possible regarding the Listed Building adjacent to the carriageway boundary, although noise and vibration levels during the works is likely to be similar to that during original carriageway construction.
- No potential direct impacts have been assessed to non-designated features identified due to the like-for-like scope of works.
- The potential for the presence of unknown archaeological remains within the scheme extents unlikely as original construction of the A96 carriageway would likely have removed any features of archaeological significance, and works are to be restricted to the existing pavement boundary.

Mitigation

- Should the nature of the works change, or additional excavation works be required, the Amey ET&S team will be contacted prior to works commencing.
- During construction, plant, vehicles, personnel, materials etc. will be contained to hardstanding areas within the carriageway boundary at all times. All areas of storage will be at a minimum 20m distance from the listed building.
- All site operatives will be made aware of the culturally significant assets identified within proximity to the scheme.
- The Amey ET&S Team have contacted Aberdeenshire Council regarding the category C listed building present within proximity to the scheme extents requesting any potential mitigations/restrictions that they may recommend for the scheme. Aberdeenshire Council confirmed that no additional mitigations/restrictions were required having reviewed Amey's proposed mitigation measures.

With mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are predicted on cultural heritage. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 106: Cultural Heritage, no further assessment is required.

Landscape and visual effects

Impacts

- There will be no operational impacts for visual receptors as works entail the like-for-like resurfacing of the A96 carriageway within the scheme extents.
- Residential properties within proximity to the scheme extents will have sight of the works which will temporarily impact the tranquillity of the area.

Mitigation

- Spill kits will be available on site and all operatives fully trained in spill response.
- Plant and machinery will be regularly maintained in order to reduce the risk of leaks of oil and fuel.
- Works will be contained within the A96 carriageway boundary.
- Asset installation will be of a minimal visual impact and will be in keeping with the current setting of the A96 carriageway within the scheme extents.

The residual effect on landscape and visual effects is deemed to be neutral. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 107: Landscape and Visual Effects no further assessment is required.

Biodiversity

Impacts

- During night-time programming, misdirected site lighting and additional noise could cause temporary disturbance to any surrounding nocturnal species.
- There is potential for protected species to be active within the surrounding area and for the works to result in disturbance to these species.
- Works have the potential to cause the spread of Transport Scotland target species including Rosebay willowherb, Spear thistle, Creeping thistle and Broad-leaved dock.
- There is the potential for INNS including Rhododendron and Giant hogweed to be present within the verge adjacent to the scheme extents.

- Due to the scheme being contained within the pavement boundary, the ancient woodland identified within 500m of the scheme extents will not be impacted by the works.

Mitigation

- As part of NMC, Amey, on behalf of transport Scotland, have been asked to keep a record of various target species, including Rosebay willowherb, Spear thistle, Creeping thistle and Broad-leaved dock. Works will not cause the spread of these species, if works are likely to result in the spread of these species through disturbance, the appropriate Amey landscaping team will be consulted.
- In the event that protected species are sighted, works will temporarily be suspended and sightings will be reported to the Amey ET&S team. who will provide guidance if required, and the control room will be contacted for environmental record.
- All works and storage of plant, machinery, vehicles and equipment will be restricted to the boundaries of the carriageway.
- All site lighting will be directed away from sensitive ecological receptors such as woodland and watercourses.
- Noise mitigation measures as outlined in the Noise and Vibration section and pollution control mitigations as outlined in the Road Drainage and the Water Environment section will be adhered to during the works.
- Amey's environmental briefing on protected species will be delivered to operatives prior to the start of construction.
- Due to the containment of the scheme within the pavement boundary, no impacts are anticipated with regards to Giant hogweed and Rhododendron, however, should works be required within the verge, the Amey ET&S Team will be contacted in the first instance and works within 7m of Giant hogweed and within 1m of any recorded strands of Rhododendron will be avoided through the design process. If this is not possible then works may proceed under a method statement prepared by a suitably competent ecologist.

With mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are predicted on biodiversity. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 108: Biodiversity, no further assessment is required.

Material assets and waste

Impacts

- The design life for the TS2010 surfacing proposed is estimated to be 20 years. This will reduce the requirement for maintenance to this section of road over the period.

- The works will result in contribution to resource depletion through use of virgin materials.
- GHG emissions will be generated by material production and transportation to and from site.
- Transportation and recovery of materials/waste will require energy deriving from fossil fuel, a non-renewable source.

Mitigation

- Materials will be derived from recycled, secondary or re-used origin as far as practicable within the design specifications to reduce natural resource depletion and associated emissions.
- It is Amey policy to reuse or recycle as much waste material as possible. Where reuse is not feasible, waste material will be removed to a licenced waste facility.
- Where possible, different waste streams will be separated at the source.
- Waste will be stored in suitable containers and covered.
- A SWMP will be completed for the scheme.
- Following on-site coring investigations and testing, no coal-tar was identified within the surfacing of the carriageway within the scheme extent. As such, road planings generated as a result of the works will be recovered in accordance with the criteria stipulated within SEPA document 'Guidance on the Production of Fully Recoverable Asphalt Road Planings' .

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects are predicted on Material Assets and Waste. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 110: Material Assets and Waste, no further assessment is required.

Noise and vibration

Impacts

- TS2010 road surfacing is shown to have superior durability and noise reducing features compared to standard road surfacing mixes. Vehicle travellers and nearby local amenity users will benefit from improved road surfacing as a result of the scheme.
- Noise heavy works will likely be required during night-time hours, which could cause disturbance for nearby sensitive receptors (such as residential properties within 300m).
- There may be noise disturbance from vehicle traffic along potential night-time diversion routes as a result of the TM being implemented.

Mitigation

- The noisiest works will be completed before 23:00 where feasible.
- Plant/machinery will be fitted with silencers/mufflers.
- No plant, vehicles or machinery will be left idling when not in use.
- There will be a soft start to the works, whereby plant/machinery is turned on sequentially as opposed to simultaneously.
- Amey's environmental briefing on noise and vibration will be delivered to operatives prior to the start of construction.
- Amey's ET&S team has contacted Aberdeenshire Council's Environmental Health Team to notify of the works and to discuss potential diversion routes due to night-time programming.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, and due to the works being of a minor, temporary, transient nature, no significant effects are predicted for noise and vibration. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 111: Noise and Vibration and no further assessment is required.

Population and human health

Impacts

- Construction site lighting during night-time hours could cause disturbance for residential properties in close proximity, and for the nearby amenity users.
- TM for the works will involve road closures and a night-time diversion route:
    - Nearby residents of surrounding settlements may experience travel disruption due to presence of TM, which may lead to increased journey times.
- There will be no impact on land take from private land, community facilities or agricultural land as a result of the scheme as all works will be contained within the carriageway boundary.
- Access roads to properties and fields within or surrounding the scheme extents are likely to be impacted by the scheme.
- The bus stop (and access to it) within the scheme extents has the potential to be impacted by the scheme.
- Layby closures may be required to facilitate the works.

Mitigation

- TM restrictions/arrangements and any expected travel delays will be publicised within the local and wider area, in an effort to minimise disturbance to vehicular travellers.
- When in place, TM will be monitored to ensure it is effectively managing traffic flow.
- Temporary site lighting used throughout the scheme will be directional and pointed only at the area of works.
- Site specific control measures regarding noise and vibration, landscape and visual effects and air quality can be found in the relevant sections (above).
- Due to night-time programming, properties within 300m of the scheme extents will be notified in advance of the works. Pre-notification will include details of proposed timings, duration of the works and alternative access/egress routes for those affected by temporary roadblocks/closures.
- Field and property single access points will be maintained at all times.
- Layby closures will be advertised in advance of the works, and on approach.
- Bus stop closures and required relocations will be discussed with local transport providers and Aberdeenshire Council's Public Transport Department.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, no significant effects on population and human health are predicted. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 112: Population and Human Health, no further assessment is required.

Road drainage and the water environment

Impacts

- If not adequately controlled, debris and runoff from the works could enter surrounding surface water environment. In the event of a flooding incident, this debris may be mobilised and could enter the road drainage system, thus having a detrimental effect on the surrounding local water environment.
- Potential for spills, leaks or seepage of fuels and oils associated with plant to escape and reach drainage systems and watercourses if not controlled, which may negatively affect the surrounding water environment.
- Should flooding occur, this may delay the scheduled works.
- Due to the schemes containment within the carriageway boundary, and given the pollution prevention measures that will be in place, the works will not impact the Moray, Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan NVZ.
- The scheme has the potential to impact the Gadie Burn and River Urie watercourses.

Mitigation

- All debris which has the potential to be suspended in surface water and wash into the local water environment will be cleaned from the site both during and following the works.
- Debris and dust generated as a result of the works will be prevented from entering the drainage system. This will be via the use of drain covers or similar.
- Appropriate measures will be implemented onsite to prevent any potential pollution to the natural water environment (e.g., debris, dust, and hazardous substances). This will include spill kits being present onsite at all times, and the use of funnels and drip trays when transferring fuel etc.
    - The Amey control room will be contacted if any pollution incidences occur (24 hours, 7 days a week).
- Visual pollution inspections of the working area will be conducted frequently, especially during heavy rainfall and wind.
- Weather reports will be monitored prior to and during all construction activities. In the event of adverse weather/flooding events, all activities will temporarily stop, and only reconvene when deemed safe to do so.
- All storage of materials/fuel and any refuelling activities will be more than 10m away from any drainage inlet at all times and placed on a hardstanding surface.
- Storage areas will be located away from areas that see high vehicular movement to prevent accidental damage.
- All oils and fuels will be returned to storage area after use.
- Amey's environmental briefing on water pollution prevention will be delivered to operatives prior to the start of construction.
- All site operatives will be made aware of the location of the Gadie Burn, River Urie and adjacent drainage assets prior to works commencing.

Providing all works operate in accordance with current best practice, as demonstrated by SEPA's Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs), no significant effects are predicted on the water environment. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 113: Road drainage and the water environment no further assessment is required.

Climate

Impacts

GHG emissions will be emitted through the use of machinery, vehicles and materials used (containing recycled and virgin materials) and transporting to and from site.

Mitigation

- Local suppliers will be used as far as reasonably practicable to reduce travel distance and GHG emitted as part of the works.
- Vehicles/plant will not be left on when not in use to minimise and prevent unnecessary emissions.
- Further mitigation for this scheme are detailed in the above Material assets and waste section.

With best practice mitigation measures in place, the residual significance of effect on climate is considered to be neutral. Therefore, in accordance with DMRB Guidance document LA 114: Climate, no further assessment is required.

Vulnerability of the project to risks

As the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the carriageway structure, there will be no change in vulnerability of the road to risk, or in severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment.

Assessment cumulative effects

The Scottish Road Works Commissioner's Interactive Map has not highlighted any works during the proposed timescale and at the location of the works.

Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Portal has not highlighted any planning applications within the scheme extents at the time of the works in question.

Amey's current programme of works has not highlighted any other works on the A96 carriageway that will be undertaken in conjunction with the scheme.

No other nearby schemes which may result in a combined effect on nearby receptors have been identified.

Any future schemes will be programmed to take into account already programmed works, and as such any effect (such as from TM arrangements and potential construction noise) will be limited.

Assessments of the environmental effects

Following assessment as detailed within this Record of Determination, and provided that mitigation measures are in place and best practice is followed, the residual impact is deemed neutral and there will be no significant effects on the environment.

The following environmental surveys/reviews/consultations have been undertaken:

- An Environmental Scoping Assessment for the scheme, undertaken by the Amey ET&S Team in December 2024.
- Consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Planning and Heritage Team, undertaken by the Amey ET&S Team in December 2024.
- Consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Environmental Health team, undertaken by the Amey ET&S Team in December 2024.

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:

<u>Characteristics of the scheme:</u>

- Construction activities are restricted to the existing carriageway boundary within made ground and as such there will be no residual change to the local landscape as a result of the works.
- No in-combination effects have been identified.

- Works are not expected to result in significant disturbance to protected species that may be present in the wider area.
- The risk of major accidents or disasters is considered to be low.
- As the works will be limited to the like-for-like replacement of the structural components, there is no change to the vulnerability of the road to the risk or severity of major accidents/disasters that would impact on the environment. No impacts on the environment are expected during the operational phase as a result of works.
- By removing the carriageway defects this will provide this part of the A96 carriageway with another life cycle, and significantly improve the ride quality, which will result in safer conditions, and positive operational impacts for road users.

Location of the scheme:

- Works are not located within an area designated for its specific landscape character or quality.
- The schemes are not situated in whole or in part in a sensitive area.
- The schemes will be confined within the existing carriageway boundary and as a result will not require any land take or alter any local land uses or habitats.
- Any impacts to the local landscape during the construction phase will be minor, temporary and not considered significant. In addition, no operational adverse impacts are anticipated.

Characteristics of potential impacts of the scheme:

- Containment measures of the working area will be in place to prevent debris or pollutants from entering the surrounding environment.
- Any potential impacts of the works are expected to be temporary, non-significant, and limited to the construction phase.
- Measures will be in place to ensure appropriate removal and disposal of waste.
- 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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