

APPENDIX 3.3: PUBLIC ROAD IMPROVEMENT (PRI) APPRAISAL

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1. PRI APPRAISAL

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Public road improvements (PRI) would be required in some areas to facilitate construction traffic. These works do not form part of the planning application for the Proposed Development and are not assessed in detail in this EIA Report and will be subject to a separate planning application submitted by SSEN Transmission. The purpose of this appendix is to provide information on the likely PRI works for the Proposed Development, including a preliminary appraisal of potential environmental constraints. The PRI works and mitigation have been discussed and agreed in principle with Aberdeenshire Council Roads Officers (ACRO) via both consultation meetings and email correspondence (14 May 2024 and 18 June 2024).

1.1.2 The main areas where PRI works are anticipated to be required are:

- A948 between Waulkmill – Mill of Elrick – Auchnagatt;
- B9170 between Gellybrae Farm and the B9170 / C29S junction;
- B9170 to the immediate north of the Meldrum House Hotel Roundabout; and
- C29S between the site access and B9170 / C29S junction.

1.1.3 These locations are shown on **Volume 3, Figure 3.3.1 Public Road Improvements**.

1.2 A948 between Waulkmill – Mill of Elrick – Auchnagatt

1.2.1 The A948 contains two sections of pinch point along the primary route:

- at the Burn of Fortree Bridge Crossing where the carriageway narrows to 5.5 m; and
- at a concealed access into some agricultural buildings within the hamlet of Mill of Elrick where the carriageway is 6 m wide but is on a very tight bend.

1.2.2 These pinch points will have Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions (TSRGD)¹ Chapter 8 temporary non prescribed signage recommended as a solution. The signage will state 'Construction Traffic Carriageway Narrows Ahead' in both directions and 'SLOW' road marking will be provided. This PRI is within the road boundary and involves only road markings and temporary signage, so no environmental impacts are anticipated.

1.3 B9170 between Gellybrae Farm and the B9170 / C29S junction

1.3.1 The B9170 contains three sections of pinch point along the section of road used by all construction traffic routes.

- along the development frontage of Gellybrae Farm where the carriageway narrows to below 5.5 m over a distance of 15 m;
- at the S-Bend near the access junction for Allathan House where a tight horizontal curvature would mean that a heavy goods vehicle (HGV) would straddle over the centre line of the road (at two locations); and
- at Dam Brig Bridge and the tight corner bend for Fairview Allathan Farm Buildings where the carriageway narrows to slightly below 5.5 m over the Dam Brig and then has a tight corner horizontal radius as it passes Fairview Allathan Farm Buildings, meaning that an HGV would straddle over the centre line of the road.

1.3.2 These pinch points will have TSRGD Chapter 8 temporary non prescribed signage. The signage will state 'Construction Traffic Carriageway Narrows Ahead' in both directions and 'SLOW' road marking will be provided. This PRI work is within the road boundary and involves only road markings and temporary signage, so no environmental impacts are anticipated.

¹ UK Government (2016), The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/362/contents/made>

1.4 B9170 to the immediate north of the Meldrum House Hotel Roundabout

1.4.1 The B9170 contains two sections of pinch point along the secondary route:

- at the B9170 entry arm of the A920 / A947 / B9170 Roundabout by the access to the Meldrum House Hotel;
- the carriageway immediately to the north of the A920 / A947 / B9170 Roundabout where the width reduces to 5 m before widening out to 6 m at the bend to the north.

1.4.2 These pinch points will have TSRGD Chapter 8 temporary non prescribed signage, installation of carriageway narrowing signage in both directions, and the installation of Reflective Verge Marker Posts. The signage will state 'Construction Traffic Carriageway Narrows Ahead' in both directions and 'SLOW' road marking will be provided. This PRI work is within the road boundary and involves only road markings and temporary signage, so no environmental impacts are anticipated.

1.5 C29S between the site access and B9170 / C29S junction

1.5.1 To make the C29S conducive to the unconstrained free flow of two-way HGV movements, the road will need to be upgraded to widen the carriageway and verges on either side.

1.5.2 The PRI works are likely to require the widening of the C29S road between the proposed site access point and the C29S / B9170 Road junction, for approximately 1.35 km. The road will be widened from 4.5-5.2 m to an approximately 6.5 m carriageway with 2 m wide verges on either side.

Landscape and Visual Considerations

1.5.3 The C29S is located in a valued landscape within the local context; it lies within the Undulating Agricultural Heartland Landscape Character Type (LCT) 20 which is an extensive area of gently undulating farmland. LCT 20 is known for its open, expansive character with views to landmark hills, which are unlikely to be affected by the PRI works. A grass verge, occasional trees and arable land border both sides of the carriageway.

Human Health and Residential Receptors

1.5.4 There are six residential properties along the C29S which may present constraints. Given the small scale and temporary nature of the PRI works, significant effects are not anticipated, subject to the adoption of standard best practice measures to manage access and disturbance impacts from noise, vibration, dust and air pollution.

Natural Heritage Considerations

1.5.5 The C29S does not pass through any designated sites for natural heritage, and the closest watercourse is Little Water approximately 250 m to east, with a drain of this directly adjacent to the PRI works. Given the likely scale and nature of the PRI works, they are not likely to pose a particular risk of impact on natural heritage, subject to the adoption of best practice construction measures.

1.5.6 It is anticipated that any works would be subject to pre-construction ecological surveys and would be in accordance with standard and best practice construction measures to avoid any potential effects on protected species and the water environment as far as practicable. Trees are present within 2 m of the existing carriageway, so their retention is recommended where possible.