

A78 Skelmorlie Water Scour Protection Works- Scotland's National Marine Plan

Indicate whether you have considered the project with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan and provide details of considerations made with reference to the policies, including but not limited to General Policies 7 and 13 (GEN 7 and GEN 13), that have been considered.

GEN 7: Landscape/seascape

"Marine Planners and decision makers should ensure that development and use of the marine environment take seascape, landscape and visual impacts into account."

Works will take place on the A78 Skelmorlie Bridge, which channels Skelmorlie Water below the A78 carriageway into the Firth of Clyde located approximately 50m downstream of the bridge. Meigle Burn is present flowing into Skelmorlie Water just upstream of Skelmorlie Bridge. Dense vegetation is present encompassing the banks of both Skelmorlie Water and Meigle Burn.

Within the wider environment large sections of woodland along with farmland and multiple residential properties are present. Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park is located approximately 280m to the east of the scheme.

The effect of the proposed works on the local landscape are considered minimal and will only alter a small section of the river embankment surrounding Skelmorlie Bridge. The works will have a negligible effect on the overall setting and characteristics of the surrounding area.

GEN 9: Natural heritage

"Development and use of the marine environment must: (1) Comply with legal requirements for protected areas and protected species (2) Not result in significant impact on the national status of Priority Marine Features (3) Protect and, where appropriate, enhance the health of the marine area"

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and Skelmorlie Glen SSSI are located at a distance of approximately 280m east and 400m east respectively from Skelmorlie Bridge. No International / European designated sites were identified within proximity to the scheme extents. Given the location of the protected areas from the works no impact is predicted on this designated area.

The site was surveyed for the presence of protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 and Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Field signs for otter were identified, although no holts or resting sites were identified within proximity of the scheme extents. As no holts or resting sites were identified up to 200m each side of the works extents, protected species licencing is not required. With best practice measures on site it has been assessed that the works carry a minimal risk to protected species during construction.

With the installation of a dry mammal ledge, this will have a beneficial impact on otters, improving their access under the structure and reducing the incentive for otters to seek alternative ways of passage such as over the A78 carriageway.

GEN 10: Invasive non-native species

"Opportunities to reduce the introduction of invasive non-native species to a minimum or proactively improve the practice of existing activity should be taken when decisions are being made."

The invasive non-native species Japanese knotweed is present on the embankments of both Skelmorlie Water and Meigle Burn and will be disturbed upstream of the bridge structure during the minor realignment of Skelmorlie Water. There is also potential for Japanese knotweed to be impacted downstream of the works through access requirements. A Japanese knotweed Management Plan complying with current best practice will be developed prior to works. Measures will reduce the risk of spreading Japanese knotweed to both the watercourse and adjacent land.

GEN 12: Water quality and resource

"Developments and activities should not result in a deterioration of the quality of waters to which the Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive or other related Directives apply."

SEPA's Water Classification Hub has classified the Firth of Clyde as having an overall status of good, an ecological status of good and a chemical status of pass (ID: 200028). Both Skelmorlie Water and Meigle Burn are currently unclassified by SEPA. Works will be undertaken in line with SEPA's Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs) and SEPA's General Binding Rules. Additionally best practice measures will be put in place to reduce the risk of pollution during the works. With mitigation measures adhered to the works will have no impact on the deterioration of the quality of waters to which the Water Framework Directive applies.

GEN 13: Noise

"Development and use in the marine environment should avoid significant adverse effects of man-made noise and vibration, especially on species sensitive to such effects".

The surrounding environment is of a rural nature, with farmland, woodland and coastal features present within the immediate vicinity of the carriageway. Several residential properties are present within the wider environment, the closest of which is distanced at approximately 125m from the works. Ambient noise levels within the area are primarily influenced by vehicle traffic from the A78 carriageway. The protected species otter is known to be active within area, other wildlife will also be present throughout the area.

The timings of works will be during day time working hours for the duration of 2 weeks with no night works required. There is not predicted to be any noise heavy works associated with the construction activities, with noise from the works expected to be limited to construction vehicles, placement of rip rap and digging for realignment.

Given the nature and timings of the works the risk of construction activities causing disturbance to protected species within the area is considered to be minimal. Given the

minor nature and timings of the works along with the distance to the nearest residential property, no impact is predicted to residential properties within proximity.