

Marine License Application

A85 Connel

Section 7 (i)

The works programme involves the carriageway resurfacing of the A85 trunk road. The entirety of the work will be restricted to the A85 carriageway, with a minor section of the works taking place on a bridge spanning marine environment. To prevent materials entering the marine environment during works, standard containment measures will be in place. Good practice measures and relevant General Binding Rules (GBRs) under the Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018 and Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPP) 'Works and maintenance in or near water: GPP 5' will be included within the Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) and adhered to on site.

The A85 scheme lies 1.6km northwest (measured in a direct line) of Loch Etive Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for a range of deciduous woodland habitats and Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*).

A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) was completed to assess potential impacts of the proposed works on the qualifying features of ecologically connected designated site (refer to supporting document 'F565 HRA Proforma – A85 Connel'). The HRA concluded that the proposed resurfacing works will not result in Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on the qualifying features of Loch Etive Woods SAC.

Additionally, the scheme has received an environmental assessment, and an Ecological Constraints Survey (ECS) was undertaken for a separate works package (A85 Cnoc Aruan scheme), located approximately 80m west of the proposed works, by BEAR Scotland on 12th January 2026. The survey identified suitable habitat for European otter along the banks of Loch Etive; however, no couches, holts, or other resting places were recorded within 200 m of the scheme. An ECS, including camera trapping for European otter, was also undertaken by Jenny Wallace Ecology Ltd. for the A828 Connel Bridge scheme, located approximately 130m west of the proposed works, on 30th January 2026. The surveys recorded several otter sprainting locations along the rocky shoreline on both sides of the A828 Connel bridge. However, no otter holts or resting sites were identified within 200m of the A828 Connel bridge including the scheme extents.

A Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) will be produced for the works which will detail good practice and mitigation measures to be implemented during the works.

The proposed works do not meet the thresholds to be considered Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 projects under the Marine Works (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This legislation transposes the European

Union's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by 2014/52/EU) into Scottish law for projects within the Scottish Marine Area and includes the thresholds for Annex I and Annex II projects from the EIA Directive (as determined by the criteria within Annex III of the EIA Directive) within Schedules 1 and 2.

Proposed works will also be assessed under The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, which transposes the EIA Directive into Scottish law for projects related to trunk roads. Under this legislation, the proposed works do not meet the threshold to be considered an Annex II project and therefore require do not require screening to determine whether a full EIA is required.