

## **App 5.2 Method Statement for Road Upgrading**

The following methodology refers to the locations listed in the above table.

High pruning will remove branches on trees which would otherwise obstruct the passage of tall vehicles. This will keep the need for tree felling to a minimum. Some felling is inevitable, however, and those trees which lie directly alongside and in the path of sections to be widened will be removed. This includes trees where damage to roots resulting from excavations could render them unsafe. The small numbers of trees to be felled for road improvements dictate that motor-manual (chainsaw) felling is employed. Where stump removal of the felled trees is required, it will be undertaken mechanically.

The road widening works will entail grading sections of the existing verge using a tracked excavator and/or bulldozer with a front-mounted blade. The formation will be graded out to a width of approximately 4m on straights and wider on the tighter bends. These works seek to retain as much of the current meandering character as possible; they do not attempt to straighten the existing roads.

These roads are predominately located on freely draining sites and the proposed works are not intended to alter the drainage properties significantly. That said, the installation of roadside drains may be necessary at specific locations to prevent weaknesses through water-logging. Stone and piped culverts will be checked and upgraded/re-seated if necessary, to facilitate the passage of water through the road. Some reinforcement of these will be undertaken by laying additional fill material above the pipes. Any new culverts will be made of black twin-walled alkathene pipe.

Suitable stone fill material will be sourced locally (from existing borrow pits within designated sites) and transported onsite using tipping lorries/wheeled dumpers. A tracked excavator or bulldozer will spread and grade the surface to a finished width averaging 3m. The surface will be graded to form a camber (crown camber or cross-fall as appropriate) and rolled to compaction.

All controls and procedures as detailed in Section 11, Operational Planning, will apply to these works. It should be noted that the rates at which these sites re-vegetate will vary, and some years may elapse before this process may be considered effectively complete.

Detailed site survey has identified the following specifics in relation to road improvements. The methodology will be as above, except where stated.

### **Moormore Spur (504)**

This route currently exists as a cut formation and requires shaping and top-dressing to make the road serviceable for HGVs.

### **Milton/Croft Field (1712)**

There is currently no proposal to upgrade the track from Lower Milton to Inverdrue, as this is a highly valued public access track and core path (GR5) and up-grading to facilitate HGV may not be appropriate. It is proposed that timber harvesting from the lower Milton area should extract to a loading bay and turning circle in the Croft field, with construction of an appropriate bell mouth and installation of a double field gate. The bell mouth would serve as an upgraded padding bay for traffic on the public road.

### **Inshriach (Cmpt 1502c) to Loch Gamhna spur (1507)**

This is more aspirational to future forest management options, both for Rothiemurchus and Forest Enterprise. An up-grade as per the section from Forest Cottage to Inshriach would be appropriate to facilitate the high levels of multi-activity recreation currently using this route. It will involve some minor tree felling of roadside trees, stump removal, track widening, new and replacement culverts, minimal road-side drains.

### **Loch an Eilein Cottage (1611.1)**

The road from the Loch an Eilein carpark entrance to the lime kiln cottage is adequate for hgv's. However, beyond that the track will need widening, grading and resurfacing, although, due to the levels of public access, minimal surface vegetation will need to be removed. Two options of route are available. The track nearest Lochan Eilein is not useable for hgv's at present due to over-hanging pine trees. The more westerly route passes under a power-line and could only be made useable by some trimming back of juniper bushes. A turning point will be created on the top-side of the road in Cmpt 1604. No more than 6 trees will need to be felled for this turning point. There are currently no plans to upgrade the track beyond this point to Cmpt 1601d. The required road width, with road-side drains would have high impact on amenity values slope stability.

### **Kennapole Deer Farm to Loch an Eilein (1601)**

This is a longer term option to help meet forest management objectives for compartments 1601 and 1602 and without having to bridge or ford the burn draining Loch Gamhna. The current 4x4 track would be scraped and widened without impact to the retaining dyke. A turning point would be made where the track meets the loch Gamhna path. Few mature trees would need to be felled for this upgrade.