

Balfour Beatty/ Contraflow

**Proposed Traffic Management Phase 1
A9 Tomatin South Diversion
A9 Dualling – Tomatin to Moy
Scottish Highlands**

Stage 3 Road Safety Audit

Report No. A9P12-DBA-TTM-ZZZZZ-RP-XX-00008(3)

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Date: 6th March 2026

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Contents

1 Introduction1

2 Items Raised at Previous Road Safety Audits5

3 Items Raised at this Stage 3 Road Safety Audit13

4 Audit Team Statement.....15

Appendices

- Appendix A – List of drawings/documents provided
- Appendix B – Location plan of problems identified

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report results from a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit carried out on the Tomatin South Temporary Diversion on the A9 between Tomatin and Moy as part of the A9 Dualling project. The project details are in Table 1. The audit was requested by Balfour Beatty on behalf of Contraflow and Transport Scotland as the Overseeing Organisation, although it should be noted that Balfour Beatty will act on behalf of TS Overseeing Organisation for the duration of the RSA process. The first issue of the report (23rd December 2025) assessed the diversion only, as the new Tomatin ghost island junction off the south-west side of the diversion was incomplete at the time. This is the second version of the report that now includes the new Tomatin junction and the closure of the existing Tomatin junction off the A9 mainline to the north.

Table 1 – Project Details

Report Title:	<i>Proposed Traffic Management Phase 1, A9 Tomatin South Diversion - A9 Dualling – Tomatin to Moy, Scottish Highlands Stage 3 Road Safety Audit</i>
Date:	<i>5th March 2026</i>
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Prepared By:	<i>Kevin Nicholson</i>
On Behalf of:	<i>Transport Scotland / Balfour Beatty</i>

- 1.2 A Road Safety Audit Brief was provided by Balfour Beatty. For traffic management schemes, individual briefs will not be approved by Transport Scotland but have been approved internally by the Project Team leads. The Audit Teams have been approved by Transport Scotland for the project. The Audit Teams accepted the Brief.
- 1.3 The December 2025 audit of the diversion route was carried out by the following:

Audit Team Leader

Richard Pearson BSc (Hons) CMILT MCIHT MSoRSA
HE Approved Certificate of Competency
Director, Drummond Black Consulting Ltd.

Audit Team Member

Kevin Nicholson BSc CMaths MCIHT FSoRSA
HE Approved Certificate of Competency
Director, Nicholson Sloan Consultancy Limited

drummondblack.co.uk

- 1.4 The March 2026 audit of the new and closed Tomatin junctions was carried out by the following:

Audit Team Leader

Kevin Nicholson BSc CMaths MCIHT FSoRSA
HE Approved Certificate of Competency
Director, Nicholson Sloan Consultancy Limited

Audit Team Member

Nancy Sloan MCIHT MSoRSA
Director, Nicholson Sloan Consultancy Limited

- 1.5 The audits took place on site during December 2025 and March 2026 with a review of the drawings and documents taking place at the offices of Drummond Black and Nicholson Sloan prior to the site visits. The audits were undertaken in accordance with the Road Safety Audit Brief as described above. The audits comprised an examination of the works on site and the documents provided in the Brief as detailed in **Appendix A**.

- 1.6 The first site visit (for the diversion only) was carried out between 3pm and 5pm on the 17th December 2025 (Including a night site visit). During this site visit the weather was fine and clear and the road surface was dry. At the time of the site visit traffic was busy but free flowing with no pedestrian and cyclist's movement noted. The following were also in attendance at the site visit:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|-----------------|
| • Neil Drummond | - | Police Scotland |
| • David Graham | - | Contraflow |
| • Ewan McDonald | - | Balfour Beatty |
| • Graeme Campbell | - | Atkins Realis |
| • Ross Nairn | - | Atkins Realis |

- 1.7 The second site visit (for the newly-opened Tomatin junction and the closed existing junction) was carried out on 27 February 2026 between 6am and 8am to assess the works during the hours of both darkness and daylight. During this site visit the weather was cool and partially overcast and the road surface was damp following earlier rain. At the time of the site visit traffic was steady and free flowing with no pedestrian and cyclist's movement noted. The following were also in attendance at the site visit:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|------------------|
| • Mark Elliot | - | Balfour Beatty |
| • Graeme Campbell | - | Atkins Realis |
| • Alistair MacLeod | - | Highland Council |

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- 1.8 An investigation of the recent collision history on the route for the 5 years to December 2024 shows no collisions in the vicinity of the works.
- 1.9 The terms of reference of the audit are as described in GG 119 Rev.2.0.1. The team has examined and reported only on the road safety implications for road users of the scheme as presented and has not examined or verified the compliance of the designs to any other criteria. However, to clearly explain a safety problem or the recommendation to resolve a problem, the Audit Team may on occasion have referred to a design standard for information only. Any audit comments should not be construed as implying that a technical audit has been undertaken in any respect. This Road Safety Audit has been undertaken based on the Road Safety Audit Team's previous experience and knowledge in undertaking Collision Investigation, Road Safety Engineering and Road Safety Audits.
- 1.10 The A9 through the scheme is currently a single carriageway two-way road subject to a temporary 40-mph speed limit as part of the temporary traffic management works. The road is unlit with no footway provision directly adjacent to the carriageway. There are a number of at-grade junctions and accesses along this route. Traffic flows provided indicate 12,400 annual average daily flow with 13% HGVs. Pedestrians / Cyclists is averagely between 6-10 per day with 50/50 split.

- 1.11 This scheme will be implemented alongside the lane narrowing scheme with the main purpose to allow the construction of the underbridge PS01 Tomatin and culvert CV01, and the A9 will be temporarily realigned east of the existing road. As part of this, the following measures will be in place for the main lane narrowing scheme:
- Temporary speed reduction down to 40mph;
 - No overtaking;
 - Coned verges defining work areas and creating a lateral safety zone. For this site the zone is a width of 3m minimum. If works need to take place closer than 3m or present a hazard due to drops, machinery or equipment then a VRS will be used;
 - Designated site accesses – Left-In, Left-Out unless the existing A9 carriageway allows for right turning via a centre turning lane;
 - Average Speed Camera set up;
 - Mini Contraflow at each end to allow the tie in to the existing dual carriageway sections;
 - Abnormal Load Passage provision;
 - Initially the contraflow at the south end is extended across Findhorn Viaduct to allow for Bear Scotland Works (circa 12 weeks). After this the South lead taper position will be reset as shown on the drawing.
- 1.12 The scheme subject to this audit is for the new Tomatin South temporary diversion to allow the construction of the underbridge PS01 Tomatin and culvert CV01. The A9 will be temporarily realigned east of the existing road and includes a new junction to Tomatin.
- 1.13 The Audit Team have not been informed of any Departures from Standard for the scheme.
- 1.14 Any recommendations included within this report should not be regarded as being prescriptive design solutions to the problems raised. They are intended only to indicate a proportionate and viable means of eliminating or mitigating the identified problem, in accordance with GG 119, and in no way, imply that a formal design process has been undertaken. There may be alternative methods of addressing a problem which would be equally acceptable in achieving the desired elimination or mitigation and these should be considered when responding to this report.
- 1.15 The location of the site and the locations of any specific problems are referenced on the plan in **Appendix B**.

2 Items Raised at Previous Road Safety Audits

The proposals were subject to a Stage 1&2 Road Safety Audit carried out in July 2025. The following items were raised in the resulting report. The original Problems and Recommendations are shown below, and the Audit Team has provided comments to confirm the current status of each problem (items 2.1 to 2.10 are from the Stage 3 audit carried out in December 2025).

2.1 PROBLEM

Location: North western tie-in (approximately Chainage 1070).

Summary: Barrier positioning prior to use of Phase 4 tie-in could confuse motorists as to the alignment of the carriageway.

While it is noted that for Phases 1 and 2, the carriageway is aligned with cones and chevrons, there are no signage details for Phase 3. It is noted that the temporary barrier aligns with the Phase 4 carriageway. If the coning is not in place for Phase 3, there is a risk that motorists could be confused as to the alignment of the carriageway and could collide with oncoming traffic.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the carriageway edge on Phase 3 is also lined with cones. If feasible, the barrier could be repositioned along the Phase 1-3 alignment.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

As the Tomatin junction was still open during this site visit, this problem is not directly relevant to the situation. A separate problem has been raised on a similar issue. For the purposes of this audit, this problem is closed.

2.2 PROBLEM (read in conjunction with Problem 3.10)

Location: Existing Tomatin junction closure.

Summary: Potential for some drivers to miss the turn for the A9.

There is a risk that some northbound drivers may miss the turn for the A9 and then require to either reverse or turn, risking a variety of collision types. This could be a particular issue with traffic going to and from the distillery (see Problem 3.10).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the cones are set back to allow space for vehicles to turn.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

This junction was still closed off at this stage and not relevant for this audit. This Problem is closed.

2.3 PROBLEM

Location: The length of the widening.

Summary: Differential grip could lead to loss of control collisions.

The scheme involves widening and realignment of the carriageway which will result in lengths of new wearing course abutting the existing surface. The widening will effectively split the lane into two sections longitudinally and, if vehicles have their nearside and offside wheels on surfaces with significantly different wet skid resistance, spin can be imparted and drivers could lose control of their vehicles or overturn.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the wearing course on the widened sections of carriageway have a similar wet skid resistance to the existing surface (assuming that the existing surface is above investigatory levels). Alternatively, a new wearing course could be provided across the full width of the lane.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

No problems were noted with regards to the surfacing. This Problem is closed.

2.4 PROBLEM

Location: The length of the widening.

Summary: The grip and visibility of the longitudinal joint could be compromised.

Overbanding of the longitudinal joint, when wet, can be a skidding risk for motorcyclists should they ride along or across the joint. This risk can be particularly problematic during dusk, darkness, and in low sun conditions, when visibility of the joint can be poor, and can be further exacerbated by excessive overbanding.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the interfaces between the existing and new surfaces are structurally secure, clean and sound, and that the width of any overbanding of the joint is minimised.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

No problems were noted with regards to the surfacing. This Problem is closed.

2.5 PROBLEM

Location: All proposed junctions within the scheme.

Summary: Junction visibility not shown on junction design drawings.

Junction visibility splays are not indicated on the design drawings. If these are not shown, there is a risk that the areas within the visibility splays may not be sufficiently clear and that visibility could be restricted by either street furniture, equipment or temporary signage. If visibility is restricted, this could increase the risk of side swipe type collisions at the access junction.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that full visibility splays are included as part of the designs.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

No problems were noted with regards to visibility at this stage, however this will be further checked on opening of the new junction. This Problem is closed.

2.6 PROBLEM

Location: Existing Tomatin junction (Phases 1, 2 & 3*). (* Drawing not provided for Phase 3)

Summary: Removal of redundant lane markings.

With the re-alignment of lanes and markings, particularly at the northern tie-in at the old Tomatin junction, old markings will either need to be removed or temporarily covered for the duration of the scheme. From previous experience, the Audit Team are aware of a number of problems that can occur related to this. Burning off lining can lead to surface defects that can increase the risk of loss of control collisions, particularly for riders of two wheeled vehicles. In addition to this, providing some temporary masking of lining can still result in them being visible either in low sun or under illumination of headlights at night.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that all lining is either removed or covered to ensure the surface is not affected and that there is no visibility of old line markings for approaching motorists.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

No problems were observed at this stage with regards to this, however this will be reviewed on opening of the new junction. For the purposes of this audit, this Problem is closed.

2.7 PROBLEM

Location: Access onto Tomatin minor road.

Summary: Full details of this are not shown on the designs.

Limited details have been included in the designs at the new junction from the link onto the road to Tomatin. There are a number of collision risks that are likely to increase if the junction is not adequately designed to deal with its increased use and changes in movements.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the junction is fully designed and includes signing and road markings for priority, as well as indicating appropriate visibility splays for the speed and class of the road.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The junctions have not yet switched over. This will be checked at a later date and for the purposes of this audit, this Problem is closed.

2.8 PROBLEM

Location: Phase 2 Tomatin Junction.

Summary: Potential confusion for drivers with the extended length of the right turn lane.

With the right turn lane being constructed to accommodate the two phases, there will be a period where there is a section of unused lane. The use of the lane may be unclear to motorists and this could result in it being used by motorists, with the attendant risk of side swipe collisions as they attempt to move back over to the main running lane.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that in the period where the lane is not used, it be coned off.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The junctions have not yet switched over. This will be checked at a later date and for the purposes of this audit, this Problem is closed.

2.9 PROBLEM

Location: Whole scheme.

Summary: Potential for cyclists to travel on unsafe sections of road.

With the numerous changes to the road layout and routes through the phased works, there is a risk that some cyclists could be confused as to the route for the national cycle network. This could result in cyclists attempting to join the main line A9 and risk being struck by vehicles.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that additional signage is provided to confirm the routing for the national cycle network route.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The junctions have not yet switched over. This will be checked at a later date and for the purposes of this audit, this Problem is closed.

2.10 PROBLEM (read in conjunction with Problem 2.2)

Location: Distillery access junction.

Summary: Potentially insufficient signage on new route and closures.

Limited signing is proposed at the access to the distillery. This site access junction is likely to have motorists using the junction who are unfamiliar with the area and the routes. As a result, motorists may turn north towards the old junction and be required to turn or reverse, risking a variety of collision types.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that additional signing is provided at the distillery junction to remind users of the correct direction to turn to access the A9. It is also recommended that Satnav mapping companies are made aware of the changes to routing.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The junctions have not yet switched over. This will be checked at a later date and for the purposes of this audit, this Problem is closed.

The proposals for the diversion route (excluding the new Tomatin Junction) were subject to a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit carried out in December 2025. The following items were raised in the resulting report. The original Problems and Recommendations are shown below, and the Audit Team has provided comments to confirm the current status of each problem.

2.11 PROBLEM

Location: Works Access/ Exits.

Summary: Insufficient signing and unsafe use of works access/ exit.

During the site visit a number of HGVs were observed entering the works area from the north and turning right across the southbound traffic in a potentially unsafe manoeuvre. In addition to this, there are further risks with this arrangement and with the Tomatin Junction still being open as works vehicles exiting are at risk of colliding with traffic turning left at the Tomatin junction. There is a further risk if an entering vehicle meets an existing vehicle.



Figure 1: Works Access Exit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that that access is taken from the minor road only and the works accesses directly onto the A9 are closed off at this location. In closing off the exit to the north, it is recommended that the keep left arrow is moved further over to the north and west.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The Tomatin junction has been closed and the works access removed. This Problem is closed.

2.12 PROBLEM

Location: Works Access/ Works Exit and restricted turns.

Summary: Unclear and insufficient signing.

Notwithstanding the recommendation of closure in Problem 3.1, the proposed signing at the works accesses on the design drawings has additional signage that has not been provided, including “Give Way” and “Works Exit” signage. This was not provided. In addition to this, no signing was provided to restrict right turns or “No-Entry” signage for the northern end of the works.



Figure 2: Works Exit Signage

RECOMMENDATION

While it is recommended this be closed as part of the resolution to Problem 3.1, It is recommended that any remaining works access into this (and other sites) have the necessary “Give Way”, “Works Access/ Exit” signage as well as “No Entry” and “No Right Turn” signage.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The works access has been removed. This Problem is closed.

2.13 PROBLEM

Location: Southern tie-in to diversion.

Summary: Gap in cone provision.

At the southern tie-in, there is a gap in separation cones between the cones and the wands. There is a risk that a vehicle could proceed to the wrong side of the cones and collide with an oncoming vehicle.



Figure 3: Cone provision.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that additional wands/ cones are provided to close this gap.

AUDIT TEAM REVIEW

The layout has been amended to accommodate the new Tomatin junction. This Problem is closed.

3 Items Raised at this Stage 3 Road Safety Audit

SIGNING, ROAD MARKINGS & LIGHTING

3.1 PROBLEM

Location: The A9 northbound approach to the closed Tomatin junction.

Summary: Unclear and confusing signing is present.

There are three chevron signs (sharp deviation of route) on the offside of the road, which are usually located at, or in advance of a sharp bend, and in this case are pointing to the left. As they are positioned adjacent to a slow right-hand bend, they could confuse motorists, who could brake or manoeuvre suddenly, with the attendant risk of a number of collision types.



Photo 1: Chevron signs

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the signs are removed.

3.2 PROBLEM

Location: The new Tomatin junction off the A9.

Summary: Extending the hatched markings could reduce the risk of collisions.

The right-turn lane extends as an open lane past the junction. Hatching the lane after the turn point could reduce the risks of northbound motorists mistaking the lane as an overtaking opportunity and of motorists turning right towards Tomatin making excessive forward overturns.



Photo 2: Hatching missing from lane past the junction

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the lane is hatched after the turn point.

3.3

PROBLEM

Location: The new Tomatin junction off the A9.

Summary: Extending the hatched markings could reduce the risk of overrunning the centreline.

There is an edge line (box) separation island at the end of the centre hatching in the side road, specified on the drawings to allow for cones and signage. Hatching it could reduce the risk of motorists turning right into the side road over the markings and thus of side swipe collisions with vehicles waiting to turn right out of the junction. It should be noted that the position of the right-turn arrow, which is just far enough forward in the lane, could also encourage tight right turns.



Photo 3: Marked separation island at the junction

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the separation island is hatched.

4 Audit Team Statement

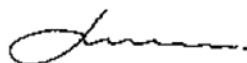
- 4.1 We certify that this Road Safety Audit has been carried out in accordance with GG 119 Rev.2.0.1 with the exceptions as noted in Section 1 of this report with regard to site visits and approval of audit briefs.

Audit Team Leader

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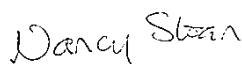
Date: 6th March 2026

Audit Team Member

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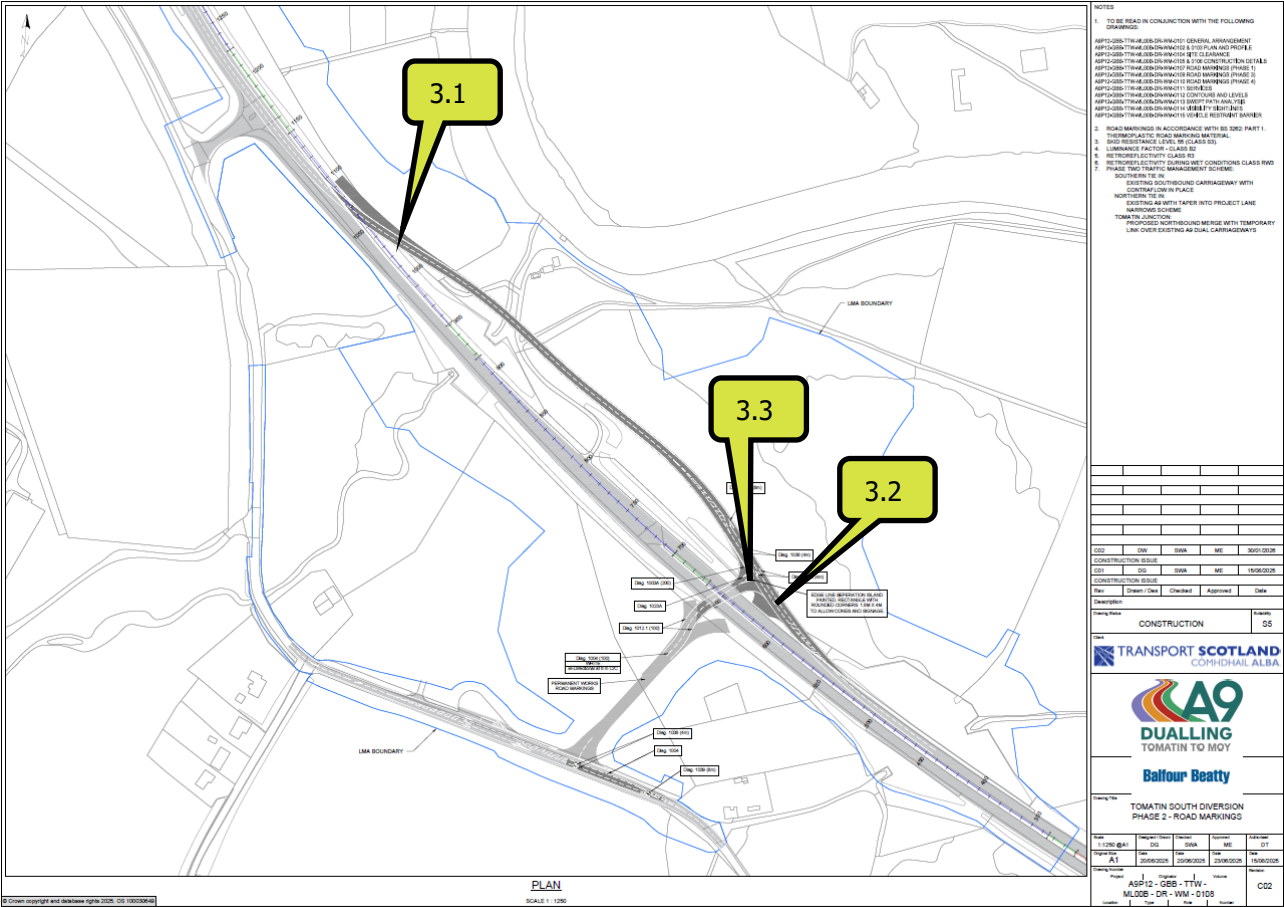


Appendix A – List of drawings/documents provided

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Appendix B – Location plan of problems identified



General Problems: None.