**EIA Quality Mark Case Study**

**STRIPE – Scottish Trunk Road Infrastructure Project Evaluation**

- Environmental review is carried out on all trunk road/motorway schemes in Scotland. This includes a review of relevant documents and a site visit.
- This information is then fed into a STRIPE report and used to improve future schemes.
- The Table of Environmental Commitments is a key document used during the STRIPE review. The Landscape Drawings are also used, as is the Environmental Statement.
- There is a significant amount of good environmental mitigation happening on site, including extensive planting and mitigation for mammals.
- Mammal fencing was an area that could be improved (explained further overleaf).
- Carrying out environmental evaluations is a significant learning experience for anyone involved with EIA.

The purpose of the project is to carry out evaluation of road schemes once they have been constructed to check that works were carried out as planned and they are operating as forecast. This enables any issues to be identified early and provides guidance for future schemes. STRIPE considers a range of aspects including engineering, environment, traffic, safety, economy, integration, accessibility and social inclusion and cost.

**Description of the project**

This Transport Scotland project covers all trunk roads and motorways in Scotland. It reviews road schemes one year after opening and again at three years, with some also being audited again at five years. The schemes range in size from relatively minor ones, such as dualling a short section of trunk road, to major schemes, such as the construction of motorways.
EIA Learning Outcomes

Lessons learnt

Environmental fencing is used on most schemes and is generally erected effectively. However, improvements could be made to fencing design and implementation. These include: making sure that mammal fencings is included on all gates and above culverts to ensure the integrity of the fencing; ensuring, if mammal tunnels are used, stock fencing does not restrict the movement of mammals at either end; if mammal ‘fencing corridors’ are set up, that they exit into suitable habitat and not back on to the road; and that multiple fence lines are avoided by combining fencing. Detailed consideration is therefore required during the fencing design, and the advice of an ecologist is recommended.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) ponds varied in their design and planting, with mixed success. Some, particularly those with water, created very successful habitats.

Otter ramps were provided at many locations. Generally these were well designed (as shown in the photo on this page). It is recommended, though, that otter ramps are set above flood levels and that access at either end is considered in the design to tie it into the local landscape. Again, consideration of the detail of the design in its actual location is required.

Lessons learnt cont.

Landscape planting was generally observed to be extensive and effective. However, with major schemes, where there are large bridges (such as motorway schemes), planting in the shadow of the bridge, even if not under the bridge, was not thriving. Consideration is therefore required of the likely light levels around major structures and appropriate planting used (e.g. shade-tolerant plants).

Finally, carrying out post-opening environmental evaluations is a valuable learning experience for EIA practitioners to observe the effectiveness of mitigation.

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