

Agenda Item	12
Report No	SR/25/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Isle of Skye and Raasay

Date: 31 August 2026

Report Title: Portree Link Road – Progress update

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update of progress on the construction of the Portree Link Road project. The link road has been identified in successive development plans including the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WestPlan) which was adopted in 2019. The Link Road will connect the A87 Dunvegan Road with the A855 Staffin Road, removing through traffic from the town centre. It will also provide access for developments at Home Farm and Kiltaraglen. The Scottish Government Infrastructure Loan Fund will provide the initial funding to deliver the link road. Developer contributions will then accrue to fund the project loan costs over time.
- 1.2 Planning consent was granted on 6 February 2023 (App no. 22/02739/FUL). A tender for the construction of the project was issued on 29 August 2025, with tenders to be returned on 25 September. The contract was awarded to Strath Civil Engineering Limited on 20 November 2025. The contract allowed 42 weeks for construction.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to **note** progress on construction of the scheme.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - The Scottish Government Infrastructure Fund has provided £1.6M of the upfront funding required to construct the project with an additional £0.95M allocated in the Highland Investment Plan in June 2026 to cover the remaining cost of the scheme. This is expected to be recouped through associated developer contributions as development progresses.
- 3.2 **Legal** - All land access agreements are in place for the development to proceed.

- 3.3 **Risk** – No significant archaeological finds were made during the top soil strip and all required utility diversions have been completed. The anticipated funding required to complete the scheme has been allocated. While some rock breaking is still progressing, the majority of the excavation for the new road is complete. This means that the usual major risks associated with delivery of a project of this nature are largely passed.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No accidents have been reported during the construction, and a Stage 3 road safety audit will be carried out once the works are complete.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** – A comprehensive signing strategy has been developed to prioritise signing for through traffic to use the new link road, avoiding the town centre. The signs include Gaelic complying with the current Council policy and the scope extends to replacing many signs on the Trunk Road.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.

- 4.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Background

- 5.1 Completion of the route linking the A87 and the A855 around the North side of Portree will allow for better distribution of traffic in the area, avoiding the need for through traffic to travel through the town centre. This will help reduce congestion in the town centre and in particular at the junction to the harbour. The creation of a Link Road also forms an integral part of the long term and strategic expansion of Portree. The current construction includes a new roundabout to serve developments either side of the road at Home Farm. Scheme layout drawings are included at **Appendix 1** and Signage drawings are included at **Appendix 2**.

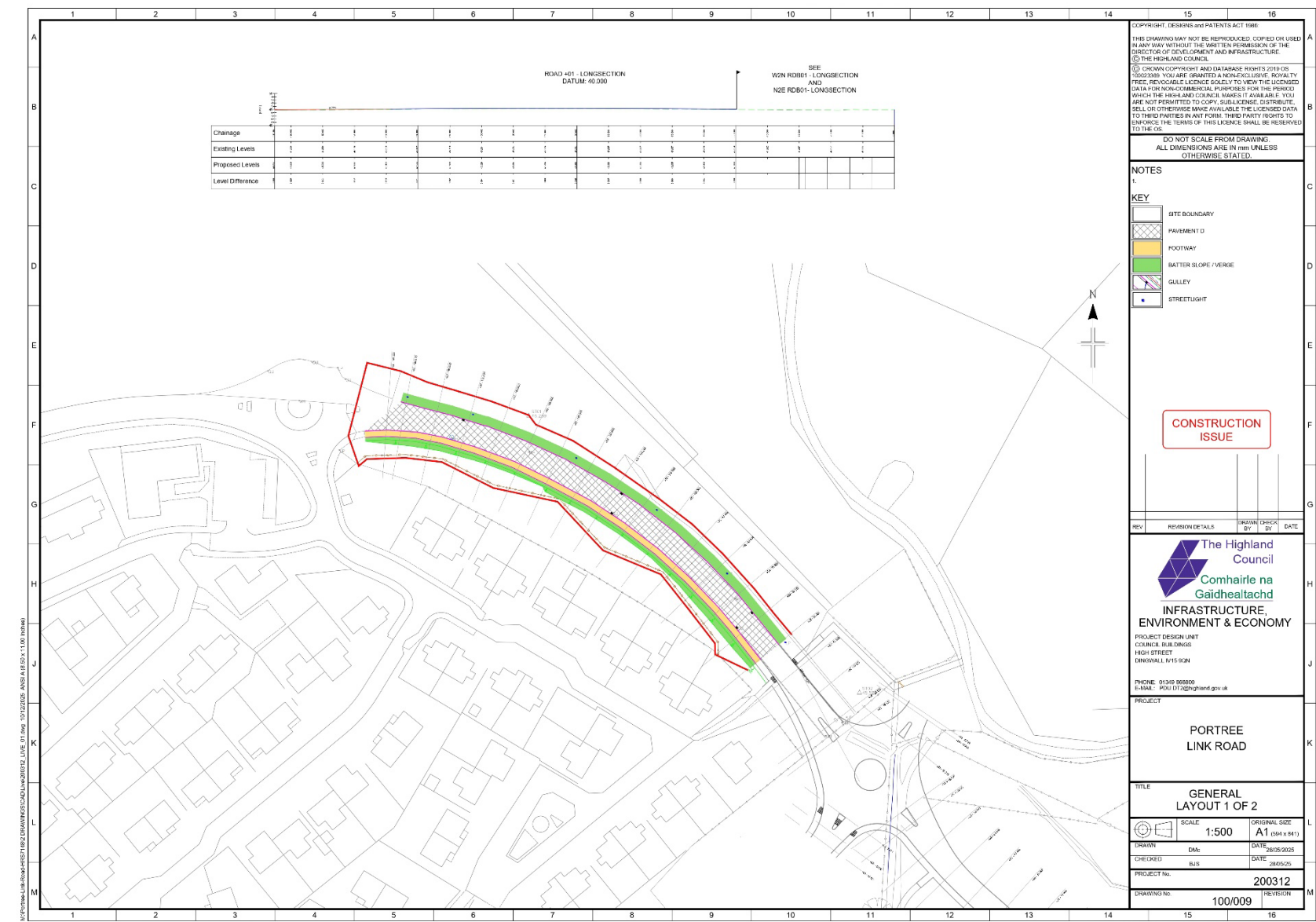
6 Construction progress

- 6.1 Progress photographs are included at **Appendix 3**.
- 6.2 The previously partially complete length of road which had become overgrown has been cleared, kerbs replaced and a new footway constructed in the South-west verge. The South-east end has been amended to tie into the new roundabout constructed to serve housing developments on either side of the road. The binder surfacing layer has been laid to both footway and carriageway over this length and on the new roundabout.

- 6.3 The new link through to the A855 Staffin Road has now been formed. About a third of this has also been surfaced up to binder level with the footway continuing along the South side of the new road.
- 6.4 With two watermain now diverted, work is progressing to form the remaining section including the new roundabout to be formed to tie into the A855 Staffin Road. This last section has required a lot of rock breaking to get down to the existing road level. The road corridor is now complete but rock breaking is continuing to complete the drainage.
- 6.5 The photographs included below were taken on 6 August 2026. The surfacing contractor is expected back in the last week of August which will then allow works to commence on realignment, and tie works on the existing A855 at the start of September.
- 6.6 The current programme anticipates completion in early October.

Designation:	Assistant Chief Executive - Place
Date:	10 th August 2026
Author:	Bryan Stout – Principal Engineer
Background Papers:	None
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Scheme Layout Drawings Appendix 2 – Signage Drawings Appendix 3 – Progress Photographs

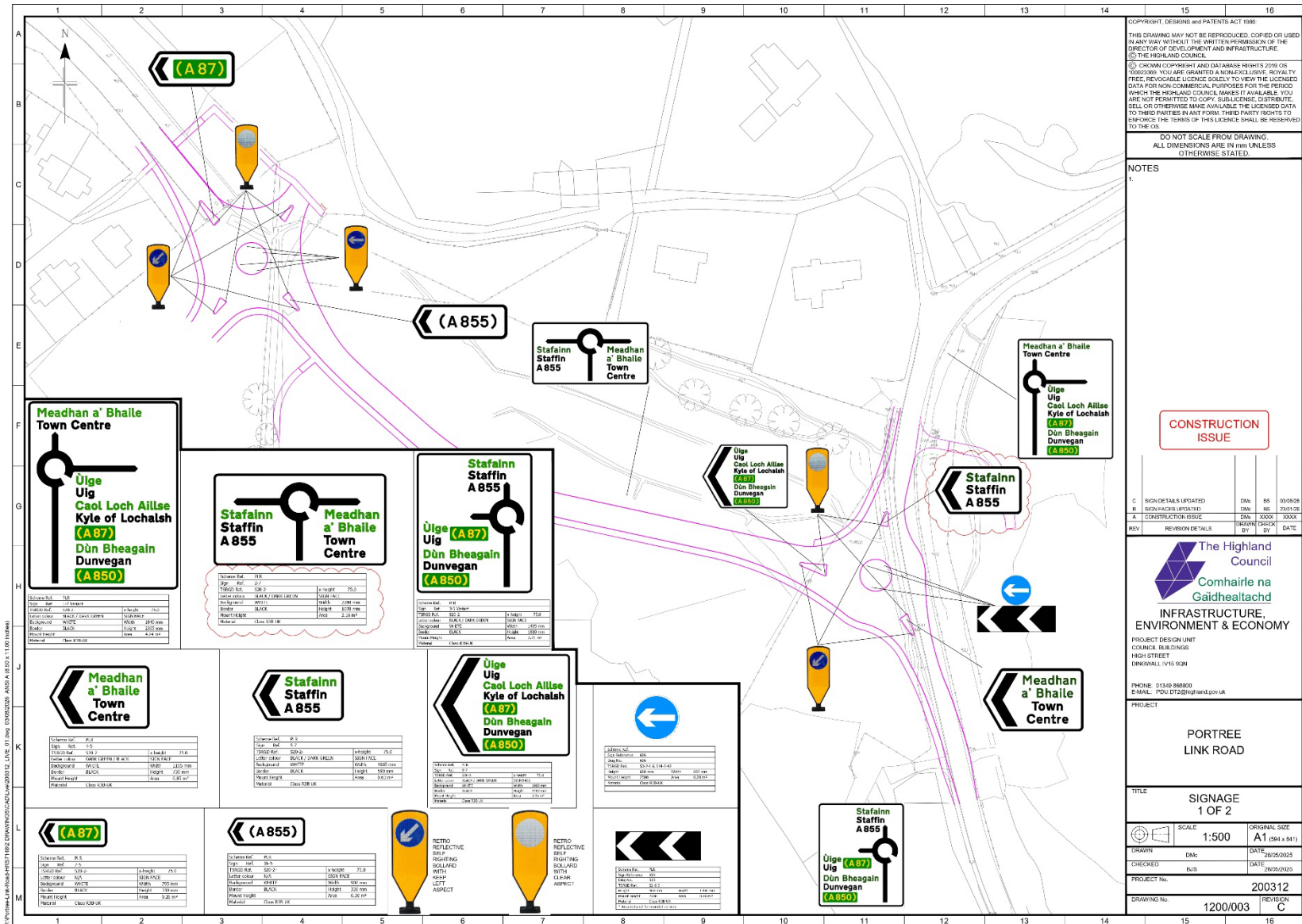
Appendix 1 – Scheme Layout Drawings



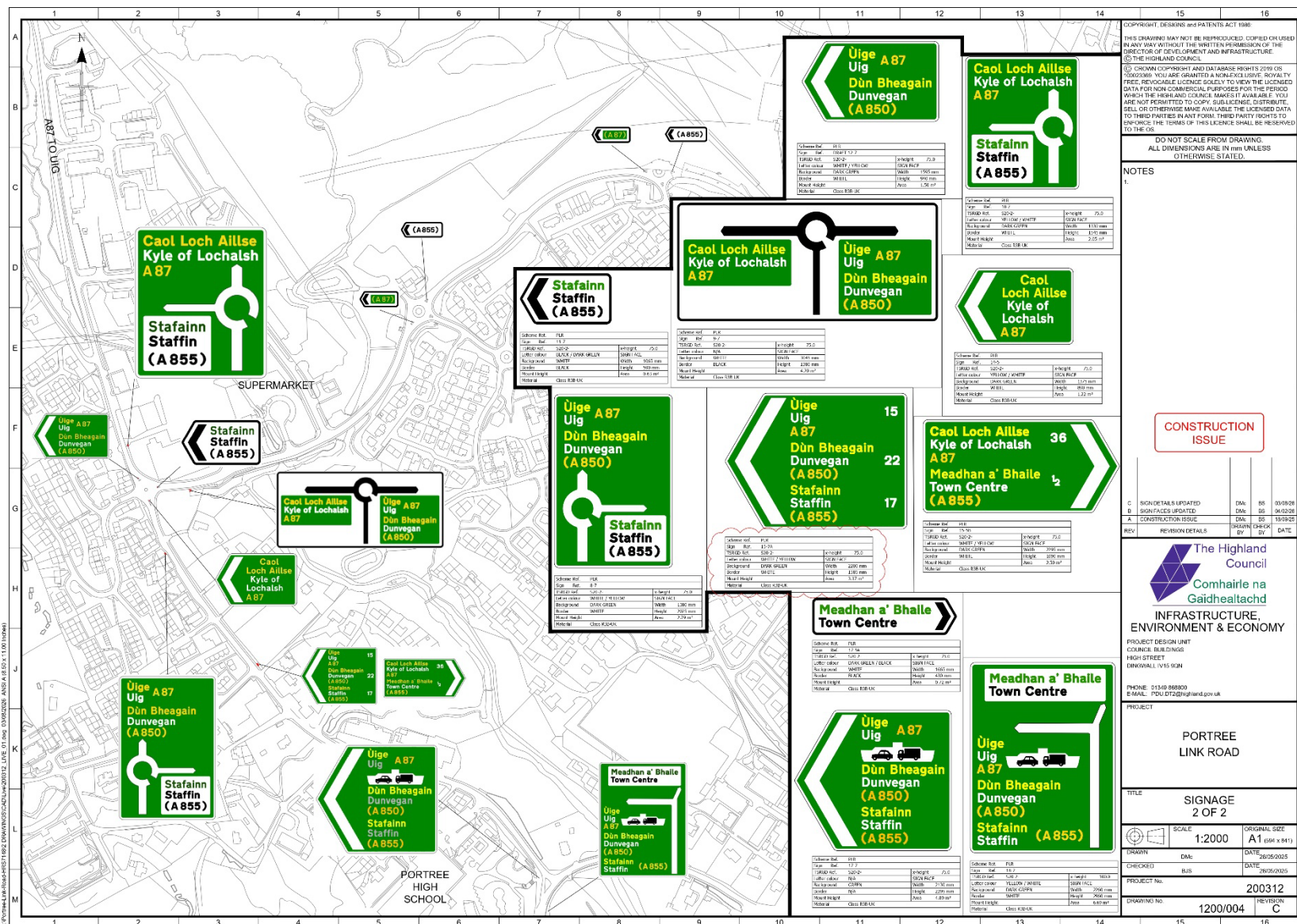
Appendix 1 – Scheme Layout Drawings



Appendix 2 – Signage Drawings



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Appendix 3 – Progress Photographs



Appendix 3 – Progress Photographs



Appendix 3 – Progress Photographs



Appendix 3 – Progress Photographs

