



Case study

Environmental assessments for railways

THE CHALLENGE

A major rail company needed to replace and refurbish four station platforms on the Wick to Thurso line in Scotland. However, before beginning this work, our client Babcock Rail, was commissioned to undertake the necessary **Guidance to Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) stage 4** site investigations, covering all the pre-build feasibility and detailed design analysis.

One of these stations, Forsinard Station, was located very close to the Forsinard Flows, which is a National Nature Reserve designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar conservation site. On top of this, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) also has a visitor centre on the railway station platform.

This environmentally sensitive location made it even more critical that the station design and subsequent building works were completed in a sensitive manner, giving great consideration to the environmental stakeholder groups who may be affected by this project. Babcock Rail therefore appointed Frazer-Nash to undertake comprehensive environmental assessments to identify pertinent risks and potential environmental impacts that would arise through the proposed works.

OUR SOLUTION

Despite the geographical remoteness of the area, it was important to supplement our standard desk-top research and site survey enquiries by engaging with statutory bodies and stakeholders on-site. These visits provided a valuable insight into the stakeholders' specific concerns and requirements, and enabled us to build trust and achieve 'buy-in' from the outset.

Following these consultations, we then compiled a report for our client which detailed each of environmental risks associated with the proposed works. These included the risk of harming the sensitive local environment, and the risk of disruptions reducing visitor numbers to the RSPB visitor centre. We highlighted that access to the RSPB visitor centre was not possible through any route other than from the station platform, and recommended that that works should be timed to avoid disruption to this route during the peak tourist season. This would avoid loss of revenues to the RSPB and possible disputes resulting from disturbances to visitors to the Forsinard Flows.

Our report also provided a **construction best practice environmental checklist** which was a framework to be used by site contractors, to ensure the proposed works would be completed with the least environmental impact possible.

In summary, our environmental assessments enabled our client to significantly reduce the environmental risks associated with the project, and develop positive on-going relations with a diverse range of key stakeholders.

Client

Babcock Rail

Business need

Specialist environmental support to rail site investigations

Why Frazer-Nash?

Our Environmental Management Consultants have extensive experience in the waste management sector and enable our clients to develop bespoke solutions that extend far beyond the requirements of environmental compliance.

Our staff are Personal Trackside Safety (PTS) trained and we are also an accredited supplier under the RISQS scheme (No.055712), Audited and Qualified.



Find out more

To find out more about our work and how we can add value to your business visit our website.

www.fnc.co.uk - www.fncaustralia.com.au

Offices throughout the UK and Australia

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