

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE  
29 NOVEMBER 2016**

Agenda Item	5.1
Report No	PLN/061/16

**Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (SHET)  
Fort Augustus – Skye 132kv Overhead Line**

**Report by Head of Planning and Environment**

**Proposal of Application**

**Description :** Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (SHET) proposes to construct a new 132KV overhead line (OHL) between Skye (Edinbane) and Fort Augustus (Auchteraw Substation).

**Wards :** In North Area – Ward 6 Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh and Ward 11 Eilean a` Cheo.

**1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report seeks to inform the North Planning Applications Committee of the pre-application consultations being undertaken by Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (SHET) on a forthcoming Section 37 application under the Electricity Act 1989. Such applications are not formally required to submit a Pre Application Notice to the Planning Authority, but the consultation is nevertheless welcome. It highlights that yet further public consultations, on a preferred route alignment, will take place in 2017. It is intended that an application for the proposed route will be submitted in 2018 or 2019.
- 1.2 The current available information highlights a preferred development corridor (Plans attached), following on from a general assessment of the overall study area. Members are asked to note may lead to planning applications for substation development under Town and Country Planning legislation at Edinbane, Broadford and Auchteraw (Ft Augustus). Such planning applications may be considered national development and could require determination by the Full Council.

**2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 2.1 The project seeks to increase of electrical grid capacity for the Isle of Skye. An additional 132kV transmission connection is required to enable the connection of new electricity generators, located in the north west of the island. The project will help improve the resilience of the transmission network between Fort Augustus and Skye.

2.2 The main elements of the project are as follows:

- Construction of a new single circuit 132 kV transmission connection using a double trident H wood pole (H pole) overhead line (OHL) between Fort Augustus and Broadford substations;
- Construction of a replacement, higher capacity 132 kV OHL trident H pole between Broadford and Edinbane Substations;
- Installation of additional equipment within the existing Broadford and Edinbane substations footprint; and
- Following energisation of replacement OHL between Broadford and Edinbane, dismantle and remove existing OHL.

2.3 At this stage a general broad corridor is being investigated to identify the potential route corridor options, with an indication being given as to the preferred route option. The following Sections / Route options (plans attached) are identified: -

<b>Section</b>	<b>Routes</b>
1 Edinbane to Sligachan	(Route 1A (preferred) and Route 1B).
2 Sligachan to Broadford	(Route 2A (preferred) and Route 2B).
3 Broadford to Kylerhea	(Route 3A (preferred) and Route 3B).
4 Kylerhea to Loch Quoich	(Route 4A (preferred) and Route 4B)
5 Loch Quoich/ Invergarry	(Route 5A (preferred), Route 5B and 5C).
6 Invergarry/ Ft Augustus	(Route 6A (preferred in part) Route 6B (preferred in part), Route 6C and Route D).

2.3 A consultation document on this project was issued to the public in September 2016. Consultations with communities were conducted locally throughout October and early November. The Council will respond to consultation prior to Christmas 2016 following the receipt of comments from both the North and South Planning Application Committees.

### **3 SITE DESCRIPTION**

3.1 The development covers an extensive area across the Council, touching upon four electoral wards. A preferred route corridor has been defined as shown in greater detail on the attached plans.

3.2 For the most part a route option similar to the existing grid line routing is preferred. The distance end to end via the public road covers over 100 miles, and whilst construction access will in part use the trunk road network, this project will require construction access from a number of Council roads. This latter network varies considerably in standard, but there is potential for the development to require the use of numerous single track roads such as Invergarry to Kinlochhourn which is single track and has considerable lengths of road with weight restrictions.

3.3 Across the length of all corridors route options are a significant number of potential impacts on: -

- Settlements/ Communities (e.g. Broadford, Glenelg, Fort Augustus;
- National Scenic Areas (e.g. the Cuillin Hills, Knoydart and Kintail);
- Listed Buildings (e.g. Dunvegan Castle, Eilean Donan Castle, Caledonian Canal);
- Historic Sites / Monuments (e.g. Bernera Barracks, Glenshiel Battlefield);
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (e.g. Sligachan Peatlands, Strath;);
- Special Protection Areas (SPA's) (e.g. Kinloch and Kyleakin Hills);
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) (e.g. Loch Duich, Long and Alsh Reefs)
- Special Landscape Areas (e.g. Trotternish and Tianavaig; Loch Ness and Duntelchaig);
- Areas of Wild Land (e.g. Cuillins; Central Highlands; Kinlochhourn – Knoydart – Morar);
- Priority Peatland;
- Conservation Areas
- Ancient Woodland:

3.4 The above interests represent a very short list of the designated interests which the development could impact, but highlights some features to given Members a taste of potential impacts. In and around existing communities and households there will also be a number of infrastructural constraints which the development will also have to have regard. These include private water supplies, rights of way, core paths.

## 4 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The following policies are likely to be relevant to the assessment of the proposal:

### 4.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

Policy 28	Sustainable Design
Policy 29	Design Quality and Placemaking
Policy 30	Physical Constraints
Policy 31	Developer Contribution
Policy 49	Coastal Development
Policy 51	Trees and Development
Policy 55	Peat and Soils
Policy 57	Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
Policy 58	Protected Species
Policy 60	Other important Species
Policy 61	Landscape
Policy 63	Water Environment
Policy 64	Flood Risk
Policy 66	Surface Water Drainage
Policy 69	Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
Policy 72	Pollution

Policy 77            Public Access  
Policy 78            Long Distance Routes

#### 4.2    **Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan 2014**

None

#### 4.3    **West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan 2010**

#### 4.4    **West Highland and Islands Local Plan 2016 (Review – MIR)**

Main                    Broadford; Kyleakin; Edinbane.  
Settlements

Growing                Glenelg  
Settlement

#### 4.4    **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance and other Advice**

- Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment: Supplementary Guidance (January 2013);
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy: Supplementary Guidance (March 2013);
- Sustainable Design Guide: Supplementary Guidance (January 2013); and
- Highland Statutorily Protected Species: Supplementary Guidance (March 2013).
- Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects.

### 5    **POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1
  - National Policy – SPP – June 2014.
  - Water,
  - Flood Risk / Drainage
  - Peat;
  - Natural Heritage;
  - Built and Cultural Heritage;
  - Design;
  - Landscape and Visual Impact;
  - Wild Land;
  - Noise;
  - Access and Recreation;
  - Construction impacts and control;

### 6    **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1    The report presents the information submitted to date in a manner consistent with a PAN under Town and Country Planning. There is no such requirement however for such an approach under the Electricity Act. Summarised are the policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered as

well as the potential material planning considerations and key issues based on the information available to date. The list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise as and when an application is or applications are received and in the light of public representations and consultation responses.

## **7 RECOMMENDATION**

**7.1** It is recommended the Committee notes the submission and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention at this early stage. A similar exercise will be undertaken when the preferred route option, as opposed to corridor option is identified and public consultation undertaken.

Signature: Malcolm MacLeod  
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Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.  
Relevant Plans: Route Corridor - general and detailed