

Agenda Item	3.1
Report No	PLN/060/19

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Highland Council

Date: Special Meeting – 22 November 2019

Supplementary Report:
19/00374/FUL: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc

Report Title: Land 1000M SE Of Dalchork House, Lairg

Report By: Acting Head of Development Management – Highland

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 **Description:** The erection and operation of a 132kV substation comprising platform area, control building, associated plant and infrastructure, ancillary facilities, public road improvements to the A836 between the site entrance and the junction with the A838, upgrade of an existing forest track, site compound (half of which will remain permanent for operational purposes) and landscape works.
- 1.2

Ward: 1 – North, West and Central Sutherland

Development category: National

Reason referred to Committee: National Development / Deferred Item

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to agree the recommendation to Grant planning permission as set out in section 11 of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members will recall that this application was deferred at a Special Meeting of Highland Council in September 2019. This was to allow the applicant to provide:

- Copies of visualisations
- Drone footage
- Clarification on HGV movements.

3.2 The applicant has now prepared this supplementary information and hard copies of the visualisations/drone footage will be provided at the meeting of 22nd November. The applicant's clarification on HGV movements is provided as an Appendix.

3.3 Since the meeting of September 2019, the Council's Archaeology Team have also provided a late consultation response. This outlines that the proposed development is considered to have significant archaeological impacts. The remains of at least five prehistoric houses and associated features, as well as a later post-medieval house have been identified as likely to be destroyed by the development. The mitigation required will be a significant undertaking and will represent excavation on a major scale. In response, the applicant has provided a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which sets out mitigation – this has been reviewed by the Archaeology Team and is considered acceptable. The WSI should therefore form part of the approved documents to ensure work proceeds in accordance with the submitted details.

3.4 The applicant has also requested some amendments to the conditions/time limit proposed for this application, as follows:

- A 5 year time limit is requested instead of the standard 3 year limit. Nominal details are provided as to why this is required however it is noted that a 5 year consent would tie in with the proposed substation at Dounreay which was approved at the September full council meeting;
- An amended time frame is requested for conditions relating to compensatory planting and biodiversity net gain. The applicant seeks for this to be amended to 'prior to final commissioning'.

The above amendments are considered to be acceptable and should consent be granted by Members, the proposed conditions would require to be amended accordingly.

3.5 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

Designation: Acting Head of Development Management – Highland

Author: Gillian Pearson

Background Papers: Committee Report of 12 September 2019 and associated plans

Dalchork Substation Construction Traffic Management Plan

Predicted Worse Case Daily Traffic Impact

Count Point	Location	2016 Baseline Flows		Predicted Worse-Case Daily Flow		Traffic Increase	
		Total	HGV	Total	HGV	Total	HGV
CP4721	A9	8307	630	54	34	0.65%	5.40%
CP10722	A9	8287	544	54	34	0.65%	6.25%
CP30723	A9	7487	473	54	34	0.72%	7.19%
CP721	A9	7534	541	54	34	0.72%	6.28%
CP80001	A9	7613	467	54	34	0.71%	7.28%
CP80002	A9	6672	302	54	34	0.81%	11.26%
CP80006	A949	881	54	54	34	6.13%	62.96%
CP50937	A836	1775	103	54	34	3.04%	33.01%
CP20934	A836	1057	72	54	34	5.11%	47.22%
CP40936	A836	1991	133	54	34	2.71%	25.56%
CP10935	A836	830	69	54	34	6.51%	49.26%

In daily traffic terms the traffic forecast undertaken suggests that across the construction period, Months 2 and 3 will be the busiest in terms of vehicular activity; primarily due to the importation of material required to upgrade the access road. The proposals would generate an average level of 54 movements per day of which 34 movements would be HGV. SHET estimate there would be c.5 one way HGV movements per day through the remainder of the substation construction (Month 4-13).

In approx. Month 9 our OHL contractor will install the access track for tower 53 to 61 and the OHL tie-in to connect the Dalchork Substation to our existing network using the Dalchork Substation access road. This will involve c.400 HGV movements over a one month period: i.e. c.13 one way HGV movements per day. This would bring traffic volumes up to those experienced during month 2-3. In month 25-26 the OHL contractor will remove their temporary works with a similar volume of traffic.

The predicted increases in total traffic are below 10% and therefore the overall increase is below the day to day variation in traffic flows and therefore imperceptible to sensitive receptors. Whilst the predicted increases in HGV traffic on the A949 and A836 exceed the 30% IEMA threshold, given that the construction period is of a temporary nature and the assessment is based on the worst-case scenarios in terms of vehicular movement, it is considered that the impact on amenity would be of a temporary nature and limited.

As per draft conditions received the update to the CTMP would be produced by the appointed contractor detailing control measures aimed at minimising the impact of construction vehicles associated with the construction phase.