

Agenda Item	5.1
Report No	PLS-13-22

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee

Date: 22 March 2022

Report Title: 22/00392/PAN: Intelligent Land Investments Group Plc
Land 10850M SW Of Balsporan Cottage, Dalwhinnie

Report By: Area Planning Manager – South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Construct a pumped storage hydro scheme (PSH) at a small freshwater loch, Loch Monaidh, which is situated between Loch Ericht, Loch Garry1 and Loch Rannoch, approximately 9 km south west of Dalnaspidal and 11 km north of Bridge of Ericht. Corrievarkie PSH will have a storage capacity of approximately 14.5 gigawatt hours (GWh) with approximately 600 MW installed electrical generation capacity (subject to further investigation and feasibility works)

Ward: 20 – Badenoch and Strathspey

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the submission of the PAN and highlight any material issues they wish to be brought to the attention of the applicant before the submission of an application for planning permission.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report informs the Planning Applications Committee of the submission of the attached Proposal of Application Notice (PAN). It should be noted that not all of the proposed development is within The Highland Council area, with much of the development being within the Perth and Kinross Council area.
- 1.2 The submission of the PAN accords with the provisions of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and was made valid on 21 February 2022. The development which is subject to the PAN is of a scale which will be an application to Scottish Ministers under the Electricity Act 1989. Therefore the submission of this PAN is voluntary and no public events are required under the provisions of the Electricity Act, albeit it is recognised as good practice. Members are asked to note this may form the basis of a subsequent application to Scottish Ministers and The Highland Council will be a consultee on the application.
- 1.3 The submitted information attached includes:
- Proposal of Application Notice (Application Form)
 - Location Plan
- 1.4 Due to relaxations in COVID-19 restrictions being relaxed in the coming weeks, the prospective developer proposes to hold face to face public event on the dates noted below:
- 9 March 2022 1500-2100hrs – Kinloch Rannoch Village Hall
 - 23 March 2022 1500-2100hrs – Dalwhinnie Village Hall
- 1.5 The virtual exhibition is available on a dedicated website:
<http://www.corrievarkiepsh.co.uk/>
- 1.6 The online consultation will be publicised and advertised in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements with adverts to be placed within the badenoch and Strathspey Herald and Inverness Courier at least seven working days before each consultation event.. Details of all notified parties are contained and appended to the PAN form, this states that a copy of the PAN was sent to the Dalwhinnie, Newtonmore and Laggan community councils as well as, local Inverness South ward Councillors, the ward manager, MSP and MP.
- 1.7 The forthcoming application will be accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report explaining the consultation undertaken, feedback received, and any resultant amendments made to the planning application.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The PAN provides notice of the developer's intention to submit an application under the Electricity Act 1989. The proposal comprises a Pumped Hydro Electric Scheme at Loch Monaidh, which is situated between Loch Ericht, Loch Garry and Loch Rannoch, approximately 9 km south west of Dalnaspidal and 11 km north of Bridge of Ericht. Corrievarkie PSH will have a storage capacity of approximately 14.5 gigawatt hours with approximately 600 MW installed electrical generation capacity.
- 2.5 The applicant has sought an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion for the development from Scottish Ministers. The Council contributed this in August 2021 (Ref: 21/03366/SCOP). The response was provided to the applicant outlined the environmental and technical assessment requirements to help inform the design of the forthcoming proposal.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The PAN boundary comprises some 4,124.3ha of land and water. The site is currently used for estate purposes. The site would likely be served from the A889. There are a number of tracks in and around the area utilised for recreational access.
- 3.2 There are a number of commercial forestry plantations within the site and a significant number of watercourses. There are a number of sites designated for natural heritage interests in the wider area, with those of the Drumochter Hills Special Protection Area and Ben Alder Special Protection area of particular note.
- 3.5 There is a large number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings in proximity of the site, albeit they are concentrated around settlements. There are a number of archaeological records and non-designated features, identified within the Highland Historic Environment Record, which exist in wider proximity of the site.
- 3.6 The site predominantly lies within the Loch and Glen Landscape Character Type as identified by NatureScot. Some elements of the scheme may however also cut across Smooth Rounded Hills and Upland Glen Landscape Character Types. The Cairngorms National Park lies immediately to the east of the proposed site.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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

4.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012)

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality & Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 31 - Developer Contributions
- 42 - Previously Used Land
- 51 - Trees and Development
- 55 - Peat and Soils
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage

58 - Protected Species
59 - Other Important Species
60 - Other Important Habitats
61 - Landscape
63 - Water Environment
64 - Flood Risk
65 - Waste Water Treatment
66 - Surface Water Drainage
67 – Renewable Energy Development
72 - Pollution
73 - Air Quality
74 - Green Networks
77 - Public Access

4.2 **West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (2019)**

There are no relevant policies or proposals within the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan for this site.

4.3 **Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (2015)**

There are no relevant policies or proposals within the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan for this site.

4.4 **Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021)**

2 – Supporting Economic Growth
3 – Design and placemaking
4 – Natural heritage
5 – Landscape
7 – Renewable energy
9 – Cultural heritage
10 – Resources
11 – Developer obligations

4.4 **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance**

- Developer Contributions (Nov 2018)
- Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013)
- Physical Constraints (Mar 2013)
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
- Standards for Archaeological Work (Mar 2012)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Special Landscape Area Citations (2014)
- Open Space in New Residential Development (Jan 2013)

- Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)

4.4 **Scottish Government Policy and Guidance**

- Scottish Planning Policy (Jun 2014)
- National Planning Framework 3, NPF3 (Jun 2014)
- National Planning Framework 4, NPF4 Consultative Draft (Nov 2021)
- Scotland's Energy Strategy 2017 and Scotland's Energy Strategy Position Statement (Mar 2021)
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS, 2019)
- PAN 1/2011 - Planning and Noise (Mar 2011)
- Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (May 2017)
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (Jan 2008)
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy (Jun 2011)
- Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map, Scottish Government (May 2018)
- Assessing Impacts on Wild Land Areas, Technical Guidance, NatureScot (Sep 2020)

5.0 **POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- a) Development Plan
- b) National Policy
- c) Energy and Economic Benefits
- d) Construction
- e) Roads, Transport and Access
- f) Water, Flood Risk, Drainage and Peat
- g) Natural Heritage (including Ornithology)
- h) Built and Cultural Heritage
- i) Design, Landscape and Visual Impact (including Wild Land Areas, impact on the Cairngorms National Park and cumulative impacts)
- j) Noise and Shadow Flicker
- k) Telecommunications
- l) Aviation (including any requirement for visible turbine lighting)
- m) Other Material Considerations including matters raised within representations.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The report presents the information submitted to date as part of the PAN. The policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered have been summarised 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 a planning application is received and in the light of public representations and consultation responses.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended the Committee notes the submission of the PAN and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention.

Signature: David Mudie

Designation: Area Planning Manager – South

Author: Simon Hindson

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 – Proposal of Application Notice

Plan 2 - Location Plan

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

The Council will respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required. Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.

<p>Applicant Ross McLaughlin Address. Intelligent Land Investments Group Plc The Shires, 33 Bothwell Rd, Hamilton, ML3 OAS</p> <p>Phone 01698 891352 E-mail rm@ili-energy.com</p>	<p>Agent Victoria Deacon Address AECOM 1 Tanfield Edinburgh EH3 5DA</p> <p>Phone 07823 356366 E-mail victoria.deacon@aecom.com</p>
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Address or Location of Proposed Development

The Development is located at central national grid reference NN 56198 71961. It is situated to the east of Loch Ericht primarily within Perth and Kinross with the northern section within the Highland Council administrative area.

Description of Development

The Applicant proposes to construct a pumped storage hydro scheme (PSH) at a small freshwater loch, Loch Monaidh, which is situated between Loch Ericht, Loch Garry1 and Loch Rannoch, approximately 9 km south west of Dalnaspidal and 11 km north of Bridge of Ericht. Corrievarkie PSH will have a storage capacity of approximately 14.5 gigawatt hours (GWh) with approximately 600 MW installed electrical generation capacity (subject to further investigation and feasibility works).

The total area within the red line boundary submitted during Scoping is approximately 4,029 hectares (ha). Not all of this area within the boundary will be developed.

The development will comprise a Headpond at Loch Monaidh, with four embankments. The maximum embankment height is 93 m high above existing ground level (735m AOD (736.5m including 1.5m fencing)). Tailpond location within Loch Ericht: NN 55100 73535. There will also be upgrades to existing tracks, and new tracks.

In order to facilitate delivery of large machinery to site, two loch structures will also be required: Northern Pier Location: NN 61544 83509

Southern Pier Location: NN 55186 72689

Pre-application Screening Notice

Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?

If yes, please provide a copy of this Opinion.

Development is a s36 application, scoping undertaken reference ECU00003281

Community Consultation [See checklist of Statutory minimum consultation attached]

State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Community Council/s:

Dalwhinnie Local Community Council
dalwhinniechair@gmail.com
dalwhinnievicechair@gmail.com
dalwhinniesecretary@gmail.com

Newtonmore Local Community Council
nvccsec@gmail.com

Laggan Local Community Council
chairlcc@laggan.com
secretarylcc@laggan.com
info@laggan.com

All PoANs sent simultaneously.

Please give details of proposed consultation

Proposed public event	Venue	Date and time
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There will be public exhibitions presenting the proposed Corrievarkie Pumped Storage Hydro Project on:

- Wednesday the 9th of March at Kinloch Rannoch Village Hall between 3pm and 9pm.
- Wednesday the 23rd of March at Dalwhinnie Community Trust Village Hall between 3pm and 9pm.

Both events will commence with a brief presentation, followed by QA session. Roller boards presenting information on the proposals will be situated in the venue, with both members of the client and consultant teams present to aid members of the public.

Questionnaires and feedback forms will also be available.

Newspaper Advert – name of newspaper	Advert date(where known)
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It is proposed to advertise the events in the following local papers (hard copy and online):

- The Courier.co.uk (<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/category/news/local/perth-kinross/>)
- Perth Gazette (<https://perthgazette.co.uk>)
- The Inverness Courier (<https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/highland-council/>)
- Strathspey and Badenoch Herald ([Strathspey Herald - the latest News and Sport for Badenoch \(strathspey-herald.co.uk\)](http://strathspey-herald.co.uk))
- The Oban Times ([The Oban Times | Lochaber](http://www.theobantimes.co.uk))

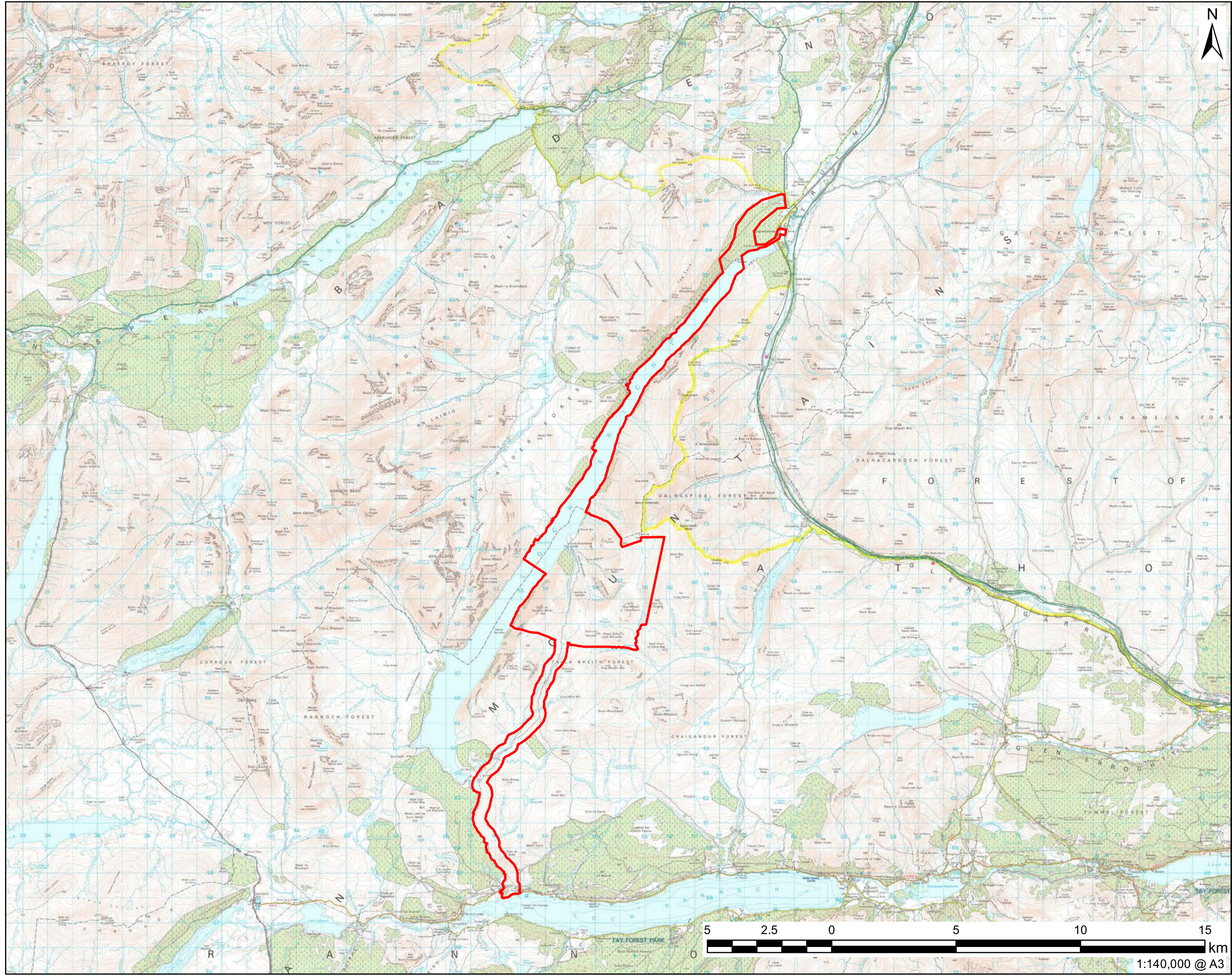
Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)

The applicant has set up a project specific website with feedback forms:
<http://www.corrievarkiepsh.co.uk/>

A pre-scoping community Online Interactive Event was held was held 19th May 2021. The following were invited to attend:

- Rannoch and Tummel Local Community Council (PKC)
- Dalwhinnie Local Community Council (THC)
- Blair Atholl and Struan Local Community Council (PKC)
- Killiecrankie and Fincastle (PKC)
- Pitlochry and Moulin (PKC)
- Newtonmore Local Community Council (THC)
- Laggan Local Community Council (THC)
- Ben Alder Estates
- Talladh a Bheithe
- Ardverikie Estates
- North Drumochter & Ralia Estates
- Caochan Farm
- Craiganour
- Rannoch Community Trust
- Loch Rannoch Conservation Association
- Badenoch Angling Association

Signed V. Deacon Date 26-01-2022



AECOM

PROJECT
Corrievarkie
Pumped Storage Hydro

CLIENT
ILI (Trossachs PSH) Ltd.
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Hamilton, ML3 0AS

CONSULTANT
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LEGEND
— Development
— Boundary



NOTES
Contains Ordnance Survey Data
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ISSUE PURPOSE
FINAL
PROJECT NUMBER
60570241
SHEET TITLE
Site Location

SHEET NUMBER
Figure 1.1

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