

Agenda Item	6.1
Report No	PLS/45/25

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee
Date: 22 August 2025
Report Title: 24/02830/FUL: SSEN Transmission
Land 290M SW Of Teanacoil, 2 Leanassie, Beauly
Report By: Area Planning Manager - South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Aigas Substation - Construction of 132kV replacement substation, platform, plant and machinery, access, laydown/work compound area(s), drainage, landscaping, and other ancillary works

Ward: 12 – Aird and Loch Ness

Development category: Local development

Reason referred to Committee: Community Council objection

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.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **GRANT** the application as set out in section 11 of the report

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The proposal is for the construction and operation of a 132kV/11kV substation to replace the existing substation serving Aigas Power Station and Dam. The scheme forms part of the West of Beauly – Asset Replacement Project, to replace existing substations as part of the Affric/Beauly Hydro-electric Scheme, which has been operating since the 1960s. The proposed development comprises the following elements:
- construction of a new substation platform (130m x 25m);
 - construction of a new control building (11m x 26m), with a maximum height of 5.9m;
 - installation of a new 132/11kV transformer;
 - installation of Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) (40m x 20m), with a maximum height of 11.5m;
 - installation of a substation boundary palisade fence (2.4m in height);
 - drainage, including a sustainable drainage system (SuDS); and
 - an upgraded access track connecting the substation to the local road network.
- 1.2 The development requires planning permission however the applicant anticipates to carry out the following works under Permitted Development Rights (Class 40 of the General Permitted Development Order):
- an underground cable (UGC) connecting the Proposed Development to Aigas Power Station and Dam;
 - an UGC connecting the Proposed Development to the existing cable sealing end (CSE) compound; and
 - a temporary site compound and construction laydown area anticipated to the east of the application site.
- 1.3 Following completion of the proposed development, redundant equipment within the existing substation at Aigas Power Station and Dam will be removed. The decommissioning will require the removal of an 132/11kV Grid Transformer and associated equipment, an earthing transformer and a matching transformer. The existing substation will be retained as “operational land” as it will be required to host existing and new 11kV equipment to facilitate connections between the new substation and the power station.
- 1.4 Access to the proposed development site will use an existing sand and gravel quarry access with the A831, which will be upgraded as part of the works and measure approximately 200m in length by 5m in width. Drainage is to be managed through a sustainable drainage system (SuDS), which includes a swale and attenuation pond located southeast of the substation serving the construction and operational phases

of the development. There is a small exclusion zone in the northwest of the site to protect an existing telecommunications mast.

- 1.5 The applicant utilised the Highland Council's Pre-Application Advice Service for Major Developments for this proposal jointly with the proposed substation replacement at Kilmorack Power Station (23/02354/PREMAJ). The pre-application response issued 11 July 2023 highlighted the Council's support for careful, considered, and bespoke design solutions to nestle the development into its hosting landscape and community contexts, along with several issues relating to landscaping, habitat, and biodiversity that require to be adequately addressed for the Council to support the proposal.
- 1.6 The applicant also conducted a series of pre-consultation events. The first series of in person events were held at Kilmorack Hall on 31 October 2022 and Cannich Village Hall on 01 November 2022, with these venues hosting follow up events in October 2023 following further design refinement. The applicant also provided opportunity for the public to give feedback online through a dedicated webpage on its website. While the current application is not required to undergo public consultation as a local scale development, these events covered all four of the Beauly Asset Replacement substations. Appendix 3.1: Report on Consultation of the Environmental Appraisal submitted with the application sets out how public comments have been addressed and informed the proposal design.
- 1.7 A formal request for an EIA Screening Opinion was submitted in September 2023. The Council confirmed in their response in November 2023 that the proposed development does not constitute EIA development; this means the planning application, under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 is not required to be accompanied by an EIA Report.
- 1.8 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Appraisal report (EAR) in addition to Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Transport Statement, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report, Drainage Strategy Report, Construction Traffic Management Plan, and other associated documents and drawings.
- 1.9 The scheme has not changed materially during the course of the application's consideration however the applicant has provided clarification in relation to traffic and transport of abnormal loads (AIL), consideration of socio-economic impacts, and proposed biodiversity enhancement measures and calculations.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The 1.9ha brownfield site comprises disturbed ground previously used for the extraction of sand and gravel and is located approximately 1km northwest of the Aigas Power Station and Dam, 19km west of Inverness and 2km southwest of Kilmorack. The site is elevated being on an embankment above the A831, which

runs between it and the River Beauly. The river is approximately 40m from the site's southern boundary. To the southwest and east are trees and woodland some of which is designated Ancient and Long established woodland, while to the north there are agricultural fields. The site is wholly within the Farmed Strath – Inverness Landscape Character Type (LCT227), while to the north is LCT345 Farmed and Forested Slopes – Ross and Cromarty.

- 2.2 Six residential properties and one school are within 500m of the proposed substation platform and a further residential property lies within 600m. The nearest property is Teanacoil located approximately 50m east of the existing quarry site entrance (215m from the centre of the substation platform) with further properties to the east on the north side of the A831, while the village and Primary School of Teanassie is to the southwest. Additionally, there are Core Paths within the wider area but none will be significantly influenced by the proposal.
- 2.3 There are no designated natural heritage sites located within the proposed site however the Inner Moray Firth Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar, which also corresponds with the Beauly Firth Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), are approximately 4.5km northeast of the proposal site. The designations cover internationally important populations of non-breeding waterfowl, habitats and plant features.
- 2.4 Similarly, there are no designated cultural heritage assets within the site however there are 16 Listed Buildings (10 Category B and 6 Category C) within 5km, with the Category B Kilmorack Manse being the closest at 1.4km to the east. In addition, there are 6 Scheduled Monuments and the Beaufort Castle Garden and Designed Landscape within 5km. There are no statutory or non-statutory landscape designations within the site or the surrounding 3km study area and there is no known flood risk.
- 2.5 In terms of cumulative impacts and transmission related infrastructure in the vicinity, Fanellan substation (25/00826/FUL), which is pending consideration (with the associated 400kV overhead line connection applications anticipated to be submitted shortly), is 1.2km to the south beyond the low summit of Tor Mòr and Ruttle Wood. 1.5km east is the replacement substation site for Kilmorack Power Station (24/02831/FUL), which SPAC agreed to grant planning permission at its meeting of 11 June 2025. Marginally closer to the application site, a 49.9MW battery energy storage system (BESS) facility was approved at appeal on agricultural land just west of the Kilmorack substation (23/03113/FUL). Additionally, the Beauly substation is 2.5km east of the proposal site. With the exception of the Fanellan substation, these wider proposals will share access via the A831.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1	17 November 2023	23/04925/SCRE - Replacement substation	Aigas	EIA Not Required
3.2	12 July 2023	23/02354/PREMAJ - Review of alternative substation replacement for existing Kilmorack substation sites		Pre-App Response Issued
3.3	14 June 2021	20/04397/FUL: Erection of storage building		Application Permitted
3.4	09 May 2019	19/01467/TPNO - Installation of 25m lattice mast, 4 antenna, 2 600mm transmission dishes, associated cabinets and plant and fencing		Prior Approval Not Required
3.5	21 February 2018	17/04091/PNO: Prior Notification for Farm-related Building Works (Non-residential)		Application Withdrawn
3.6	01 September 2017	17/03436/FUL - Erection of storage shelter ancillary to the development of a hardstanding and storage yard associated with an existing plant contractors business, (16/03327/FUL)		Application Withdrawn
3.7	23 January 2017	16/03327/FUL - Formation of hard standing storage yard & erection of office cabin, associated with plant contractor business, with retrospective upgrading of existing road access to A831		Application Permitted

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 4.1 Advertised: Unknown Neighbour and Schedule 3 Development (Inverness Courier)
Date Advertised: 02.08.2024
Representation deadline: 16.08.2024
Number of representations: 13 objection comments
1 general comment
- 4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:
- Siting, layout, and design concerns including proximity to residential properties, the size of the substation platform;
 - Landscape and visual impacts;

- c) Residential and community amenity impacts including from construction and operational noise, light pollution and impacts on human health;
- d) Ecology and environmental impacts including from construction activities;
- e) Traffic, transport, and roads impacts during construction activities including road safety;
- f) Cumulative impacts with nearby energy developments;
- g) Economic impacts including on local businesses and enterprises;
- h) Recreational interest impacts; and
- i) Previous unauthorised works at the location (quarry development) and a preference to reinstate the land to its former condition.

4.3 Non-material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- a) The profile of the applicant and its investors;
- b) Speculation that the proposal will lead to future energy generation developments;
- c) Disagreement with the 'need' for the development; and,
- d) House price impacts.

4.4 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **Kilmorack Community Council (host) objects** on the grounds of issues relating to current use of the site, traffic management, working hours and lack of screening. Further comments were made in relation to impacts on residential properties, provision of SuDS, and size of the proposed substation platform.

5.2 **Access Officer** does not object to the application and has no further project specific comments.

5.3 **Contaminated Land Officer** does not object to the application, subject to a condition that no development commences until the full extent of potential land contamination has been assessed and mitigated where required, due to the land's prior use as a sand and gravel quarry.

5.4 **Development Plans Team** does not object to the application and provides advice regarding the proposal's overall conformity with the approved development plan.

5.5 **Ecology Team objects** to the application due to the lack of detail of off-site biodiversity compensation and enhancement measures.

Planning case officer note: The Committee is however asked to note that the Economy and Infrastructure Committee has recently agreed to the principle of allowing the Council's Assistant Chief Executive – Place to conclude and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with developers, including Scottish Hydro Electric

Transmission, for off-site biodiversity and tree/woodland compensatory and enhancement measures (to be delivered through a Memorandum of Understanding).

The Ecology Officer also requests that any planning permission includes conditions to secure a finalised Habitat Management Plan, and that works are undertaken in accordance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) under the supervision of an Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW) to ensure that pre-construction surveys, including for any nesting birds, are undertaken prior to the commencement of any works on site.

- 5.6 **Environmental Health Officer** does not object to the application, subject to limit impacts from construction and operational noise, dust, and private water supplies.
- 5.7 **Forestry Officer** does not object to the application, subject to conditions to secure approval of an updated Arboricultural Method Statement, and a Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan prior to development commencing, and to secure the installation of appropriate tree protection measures throughout construction works.
- 5.8 **Flood Risk Management Team** does not object to the application, subject to a condition to secure its approval of the finalised detailed drainage design prior to development commencing on site.
- 5.9 **Historic Environment Team – Archaeology** does not object to the application. The development's location within a former sand and gravel quarry means that the potential for unrecorded buried remains to survive is negligible.
- 5.10 **Transport Planning** does not object to the application subject to condition to control construction traffic routing via Wester Balblair, advanced public road improvements, and demonstration of the control of land to deliver road improvements, site access details, a wear and tear agreement, a Construction Traffic Management Plan, and a detailed Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) Route Assessment.
- 5.11 **Historic Environment Scotland** does not object to the application. Having considered the potential impact on Dun a Chliabhain (fort) Scheduled Monument 2km north of the site, it does not consider the application raises historic environment issues of national significance.
- 5.12 **NatureScot** does not object to the application and has no project specific comments.
- 5.13 **Scottish Forestry** did not respond to the consultation request.
- 5.14 **Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)** does not object to the application. Whilst the proposal falls below its threshold for consultation it noted that the ponds and wetlands proposed in the drainage strategy were not included in the initial layout drawings.

5.15 **Scottish Water** does not object to the application. It provides standing advice on matters relating to surface water, asset impact assessment, and drinking water protected areas.

5.16 **Transport Scotland** does not object to the application, subject to conditions relating to abnormal loads and managing construction traffic on the A9 and A835 trunk roads.

6. **DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY**

6.1 Appendix 1 of this report provides details of the documents which comprise the adopted Development Plan, including details of pertinent planning policies as well as adopted supplementary guidance.

7. **OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 Appendix 1 of this report also sets out all other material considerations which are relevant to the assessment of the application.

8. **PLANNING APPRAISAL**

8.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8.2 This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

8.3 The key considerations in this case are:

- a) Compliance with the Development Plan and Other Planning Policy
- b) Energy and Carbon Saving
- c) Construction Impacts
- d) Operational Impacts (including Noise)
- e) Siting, Layout and Design Landscape and Visual Impacts
- f) Built and Cultural Heritage
- g) Water Environment
- h) Natural Heritage
- i) Habitat, Woodland, and Biodiversity Enhancement
- j) Roads, Transport and Wider Access

- k) Economic Impacts
- l) Any Other Material Considerations

Development Plan / Other Planning Policy

- 8.4 The Development Plan comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Highland-wide Local Development Plan, the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMFLDP2), and associated Supplementary Guidance.
- 8.5 Appendix 2 of this report provides an assessment of compliance with the Development Plan / Other Planning Policy.
- 8.6 In summary, the principle of development is established in national policy, with the proposed development being of important for the delivery of the national Spatial Strategy. NPF4 considers that Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure will assist in the delivery of the Spatial Strategy and Spatial Priorities for the north of Scotland, and that Highland can continue to make a strong contribution toward meeting Scotland's ambition for net zero. Alongside these ambitions, the strategy for Highland aims to protect environmental assets as well as to stimulate investment in natural and engineered solutions to address climate change. This aim is not new and will clearly require a balancing exercise to be undertaken, which is reflected throughout NPF4.

Energy and Carbon Savings

- 8.7 The Environmental Appraisal Report (EAR) at section 1.2 advises that the four Affric/Beaulie Hydro Electric Scheme substations at Deanie, Culligran, Aigas, and Kilmorack are coming to the end of their operational lives and as such there is an operational need for their replacement. In that way, the proposal will allow the electricity generated at their respective hydroelectric power stations to continue to supply renewable energy to the National Grid's transmission and distribution network.
- 8.8 By avoiding the costly need to dismantle the generating stations or leaving them unused, replacing the substations with modern energy saving equipment is intrinsically carbon saving as it is a less carbon intensive than demolition, which would release the embodied carbon. Moreover, energy losses and energy use at the substations are substantially reduced thus reducing generating stations' greenhouse gas emissions overall. The proposal is, therefore, considered to comply with NPF4 Policies 1 and 2 for Climate and Nature Crises as well Climate Mitigation and Adaptation.

Construction Impacts

- 8.9 The proposal site is located in proximity to individual scattered residential properties, with the closest noise sensitive receptors being 215m east of the substation platform. Some unavoidable intermittent impacts are to be expected during construction works from construction traffic and AIL delivery, noise, and dust. Such impacts are expected to varying degrees through the estimated 18 months of construction. To manage and mitigate against such impacts, the applicant has committed to ensure that all works will be undertaken in accordance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be finalised in consultation with, and implemented by, the contractor and a suitably qualified Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW) with support from other environmental professionals as required. Chapter 9 of the EAR provides a Schedule of Mitigation which sets out the principles of environmental management that will be adhered to through the CEMP. The finalised versions of both the CEMP and Schedule of Mitigation are to be secured by condition.
- 8.10 The Council's Environmental Health team has highlighted potential disturbance to local residents in respect of construction noise and vibration. Accordingly, a noise assessment has been undertaken which confirms that the predicted construction noise level, which will peak during initial enabling works, will not exceed the daytime guidance levels in BS5228. The construction vibration assessment indicates that any vibration is unlikely to impact on the nearest sensitive properties (see EAR Paragraph 8.6.5). Furthermore, a Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan (CNVMP) will be produced by the principal contractor once appointed which is to be conditioned as part of the CEMP.
- 8.11 The Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) has no objection to the proposal and advises that any impacts resulting from construction issues would be controlled through Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. The EHO also advises that an 8am weekday start time would reduce the likelihood of statutory complaints, with 7am starts likely to cause of further complaints due to HGV movement. However, the Environmental Health team has no powers in relation to noise from traffic on the public road.
- 8.12 It is expected that the developer will employ the best practicable means to reduce the impact of noise and dust from construction activities with schemes demonstrating how this will be achieved required as part of the CEMP. Timing of HGV and abnormal load deliveries should also be agreed through the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) with construction traffic and AIL delivery avoiding school travel times and identified community events.
- 8.13 Should the development be granted consent a condition should be included to require the developer to set up a Community Liaison Group to ensure the Community Council and other stakeholders are kept up to date and consulted on construction

activities before, during, and after the construction period. Owing to the concerns raised by the Community Council, through the representations received, and the cumulative impact this proposal would have with other recent and ongoing transmission infrastructure projects in the area, an updated informative is recommended at the end of the report to further limit the proposed construction hours to 8am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays, with no Sunday or Bank Holiday working. Note that an 8am start time on Saturdays is to be subject to prior agreement with the Community Liaison Group and should their agreement not be forthcoming, a 9am start time on Saturdays shall apply.

Operational Impact (including Noise)

- 8.14 During the operational period of the development, routine maintenance is expected on an infrequent basis and would take place every 3 months. The EAR includes an assessment on the operational noise from the proposed development. The EHO is satisfied that the assessment has been undertaken in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 Method for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound, and that the assessment demonstrates that predicted noise levels at the nearest property will be very low with 17dB being the highest. This noise level easily meets the recommended limits for this type of development however a standard condition to limit noise levels at sensitive properties is suggested as a precautionary approach.
- 8.15 Representations also raised concerns regarding potential Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs) emissions during the substation's operation and related health impacts. Magnetic field levels at the boundary of a substation are typically present, but this decreases very quickly as receptors move away. The EMFs close to the sites tend to be dictated by the overhead lines and cables entering the installation, not the equipment within the site, with exposure being greatest directly above and below cables. The UK guidelines are set by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and have been adopted by the Government. These standards must be met by all transmission network operators to ensure health and safety is maintained and are regulated by the Health and Safety Executive and not through the planning system.

Siting, Layout and Design Landscape and Visual Impacts

- 8.16 The location of the proposal is based on a proximity requirement to allow efficient connection to both the Aigas Power Station and the existing 132kV overhead line network. In situ replacement of the existing dam's substation was discounted owing to modern equipment and health and safety standards dictating the need for more space as well as the challenge of keeping the hydroelectric power stations connected during the project's construction timeline. A site selection process undertaken by the applicant discounted four site option areas prior to preapplication discussions with Council Officers and consultees. The result of these discussions was that the current

location within the quarry was agreed as optimal in order to avoid flood risk and minimise disturbance and environmental degradation.

8.17 It is noted here that representations to the application have referenced potential breaches of planning control in relation to quarrying activity at the application site and surrounds, which the Planning Service is investigating. The decision to locate the substation within the unrestored quarry area will reduce the overall quarry's site restoration area. However, requirement to restore areas beyond this application site would be pursued separately with the landowner, and is not, therefore, a consideration for the current application.

8.18 The layout and design of the proposal has specifically considered the potential impacts on sensitive receptors and features of the surrounding environment as well as the physical constraints of the site itself. The design process has sought to minimise the potential permanent effects on landscape, visual, and noise receptors. Noteworthy key design considerations and changes made are as follows:

- protecting retained vegetation from accidental encroachment and damage, in particular the tree belt along the A931 at the southern boundary, and woodland to the west and east of the site;
- respect areas of high amenity value and take advantage of the containment of natural features such as woodland, fitting in with the landscape character of the area;
- take advantage of ground form with the appropriate use of site layout and levels to avoid intrusion into surrounding areas;
- use space effectively to limit the area required for development, minimising the effects on existing land use and routes;
- alternative substation designs may also be considered, e.g. 'enclosed', rather than 'open', where additional cost can be justified;
- use recessive colours and materials for buildings and structures within the site;
- consider the relationship with existing transmission infrastructure, background and foreground features, to reduce the prominence of structures from main viewpoints;
- take account of the effects of line connections that will need to be made; and,
- landscaping to include planting a small area of native woodland at the site's southeast as well as reseeding disturbed unbuilt areas with appropriate species rich grasses.

8.19 The Community Council has questioned the size of the platform and the lack of screening of the air insulated switchgear (AIS). The platform siting is proposed within a relatively flatter area of the ground already disturbed by the quarrying works and is currently used for storage and vehicular parking. In that regard the location is logical and justifiable. The noise assessment provided with the application has also justified

the decision to go forward with an AIS layout without requirement for further mitigation in the form of housing all components within a building.

- 8.20 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), EAR Figure 4.1, indicates that the bare earth visibility of the 11.5m high substation infrastructure site on a ground level of 45m AOD would be channelled along the strath sides to the south west, south and north east of the proposal site, with topography of the quarry screening the built elements to the north. In reality however, vegetation, trees and protected woodland to the west, south, and east (to be supplemented by additional planting) will go a long way to screening the proposal from receptors given that much of the surrounding area is comprised of extensive agricultural fields and woodland, as demonstrated by the visualisations submitted with the application. As such, the AIS and control building will nestle into the wider landscape, with any landscape character effects beyond the construction period being limited to within the extent of the application site, meaning that any landscape and visual benefit brought by enclosing the AIS would be minimal.
- 8.21 With the above in mind, the proposal will not be a characterising new feature in the landscape and the applicant's assessment that the proposal will result in minor and not significant effects on LCT227 Farmed Strath – Inverness, and negligible effects on the neighbouring LCT345 Farmed and Forested Slopes – Ross and Cromarty is agreed. In addition, the applicant's assessment that the proposal will result in a minor and not significant visual impacts on residential and transport routes, including sequentially, (and by extension recreational receptors) is agreed.

Built and Cultural Heritage

- 8.22 The applicant's EAR includes a cultural heritage appraisal. There are no designated heritage assets within the site and for those in the wider study area, the proposals have been assessed with no setting impacts predicted. Both the Council's Historic Environment Team and Historic Environment Scotland have similarly raised no concerns regarding the proposal, with the potential for buried features or finds at this location being negligible given previous ground disturbance.

Water Environment

- 8.23 The site is on elevated ground above the River Beauly and well above the risk of fluvial flooding from that source. In terms of drainage, the Council's Flood Risk Management Team has reviewed the Drainage Impact Assessment and is satisfied that the SuDS proposals to collect, treat, and discharge surface water runoff from the site are adequate: discharge will be restricted to the 1 in 2 year greenfield runoff rate; storms up to and including the 1 in 200 year plus climate change event will be managed within the site; discharge will be to a small watercourse close to the site access; a cutoff drain will be provided on the upslope side of the site to ensure that the infrastructure is protected from surface water flooding from above; an identified existing culvert under the road may need to be upgraded to prevent flooding to the

public road. The Council's approval of the final details of the drainage strategy and design prior to works commencing on site should be secured by condition.

Natural Heritage

- 8.24 EAR Chapter 5 Ecology and Nature Conservation and the accompanying Appendices include assessments of the proposal's likely impacts on designated sites, protected species and birds, and habitats.
- 8.25 No statutory sites of international, national or local importance are within 2km of the site and all impacts on all designates sited have been scoped out of assessment. This approach is not disputed with the site being well located from a designation perspective.
- 8.26 Preliminary and targeted species surveys across 2022 and 2024 confirmed the presence of badger, bats, red squirrels, pine martens, otters, reptiles, amphibians and breeding birds across the development footprint and within the relevant survey buffers. However due to the pre-disturbed nature of the development site, no impacts are anticipated on populations of red squirrel, pine marten, reptiles, and amphibians, or on breeding birds and no further assessment was included. Several trees and buildings with bat roost potential, four badger setts, twelve otter field signs, and a sand martin colony were recorded with the proposal considered to have potential impact on each through habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, species mortality and injury; and the loss of, obstruction of, or disturbance to resting sites.
- 8.27 The outline Species Protection Plans appended to the EAR (Appendix 2.2: Species Protection Plans) sets out mitigation for each of these noted species (badgers, bats, birds, and otter). Measures follow the mitigation hierarchy to avoid disturbance in the first instance, and include appropriately timed pre-construction surveys, timings of works, controlling light pollution, capping exposed pipes, providing exit ramps in exposed trenches and holes, emergency procedures in the event works encounter protected species and/or their habitation, which are considered sufficient. Finalised SPPs should be secured by condition, with the appointment of an Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW) to oversee construction, while habitat management should also include additional mitigation and enhancements. Overall, impacts on protected species can be appropriately managed.

Habitat, Woodland, and Biodiversity Enhancement

- 8.28 Habitats on the site include built linear features (road and tracks), inland rock and scree (quarry activities), open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, broadleaf woodland, and mixed scrub and modified grassland. Surrounding tree cover is recorded in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland as mature upland oakwood while the eastern part of the site is recorded in the Ancient Woodland Inventory as Long-established plantation origin (LEPO1860), and the southwestern

corner within an area listed on the AWI as Ancient semi-natural origin (ASNO1860). However, there is little woodland remaining on site in the area covered by the AWI.

- 8.29 The proposal would remove all trees and tree groupings on the eastern side of the site (two moderate quality trees, two moderate quality groups, one low quality tree, and two low quality groups), with the proposal seeking to retain and safeguard trees on the western side of the site as per the submitted Tree Removal and Protection Plan (ref. 70102201-DRW-10). Amended drainage arrangements would protect trees at the southern boundary above the A831 from removal. The EAR also advises that horizontal directional drilling techniques will be used to install underground cabling for the grid connection, which will protect the trees within the adjacent Ancient Woodland. Given that the applicant will use its permitted development rights for this aspect of the development, impacts on trees outwith the application site fall outwith the scope of this application and any subsequent tree removal may require the authorisation of Scottish Forestry.
- 8.30 Overall, the proposal would result in a 16% loss in biodiversity units at the site, largely due to the removal of trees and tree groups mentioned above, and the open mosaic habitat that has colonised part of the former quarry. Although on-site enhancements are detailed within the Outline Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan (EAR Figure 4.5 REV P06), which include planting species rich grasslands and additional scrub along with planting within ditches, the proposal would not achieve a level of enhancement commensurate with the development type. There are no further opportunities for habitat enhancement or creation within the proposal site, therefore a 10% net gain will need to be achieved through the compensatory and enhancement tree planting along with the creation of new, or enhancement of existing, habitats, equating to 1.16 BU, offsite.
- 8.31 Whilst the Ecology Officer's objection is noted, given the significant number of current and upcoming applications relating to electricity transmission and associated infrastructure in Highland, SSEN are in the process of preparing an overarching strategy for the delivery of offsite biodiversity enhancement across the region, in line with the recent Scottish Government Minister and Chief Planner letter dated 28 April 2025, which states:
- 'NPF4 policy 11 (energy) supports development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies including enabling works, such as grid transmission and distribution infrastructure. Whilst proposals for much of the large-scale infrastructure required to achieve net zero will be considered by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit under the Electricity Act, applications for standalone sub-stations are made to planning authorities under the Planning Act. The use of suspensive conditions to secure the submission and implementation of schemes such as compensatory planting and other biodiversity measures can be appropriate. Careful thought should be given to the wording of such conditions to ensure

that they are proportionate and do not unduly delay development, whilst still meeting the tests for conditions set out in Circular 4/1998. For example, it is worth considering whether it would be reasonable for a condition to require a scheme to be agreed before the development can come into operation, rather than before any development can commence. The tests governing the use of planning obligations are contained in Circular 3/2012; the Circular underlines that planning obligations should not be used to address issues that can be resolved in another way, such as through a planning condition or the use of an alternative legal agreement.'

- 8.32 To that end, The Highland Council at its Economy and Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 29 May 2025 agreed the principal of the Assistant Chief Executive Officer for Place entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with developers, including the applicant, for offsite compensation and enhancement measures. While no proposal site(s) have been shared to date, discussions are ongoing with the applicant and the MoU should outline a shared understanding and commitment to collaborate on locations set aside for biodiversity. As such, it is considered appropriate to include an appropriately worded condition to require CPP and BNG enhancements to be detailed within 18 months of the development's final commissioning so as not to unnecessarily delay the development, as set out in the Scottish Minister and Chief Planner letter.
- 8.33 The Ecology Officer has requested that the submission of a Habitat Management Plan which delivers biodiversity enhancement, GIS data, Construction Environmental Management Plan, overview from an Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW), undertaking a pre-construction survey, including for any nesting birds are to be controlled by conditions, which are recommended to be imposed.

Roads, Transport and Wider Access

- 8.34 The applicant's Transport Statement anticipates that construction works will take between 12 and 18 months, with the peak of construction traffic anticipated at the very low level of eight two-way car/van and eight two-way HGV trips per day with the majority expected to arrive from the direction of Beauly.
- 8.35 In addition to regular construction traffic, the proposal will require an abnormal indivisible load (AIL) delivery for the transformer. This delivery will follow a route from Inverness Harbour via Longman Drive to the A9(T) before leaving the A9 at the Tore Roundabout to join the A835(T) before turning left on THC maintained B9169. The route then takes in THC maintained A862 and A831, where it enters the site at the existing junction where the road is still two-way laned. The existing junction is adequate for use by all vehicles.
- 8.36 Construction works on the substation replacements are likely to run concurrently with each other and, at least in part, with the other projects such as the VISTA project in

Glen Strathfarrar NSA, while the wider area is subject to applications for other much larger transmission developments and offshoot energy storage systems. As such, Transport Planning requires the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to include detail on likely cumulative impacts including impacts on road condition and an assessment of any preliminary upgrades to the road network that would be required.

- 8.37 Moreover, the rural road network is also used for recreational purposes by walkers, runners, cyclists, horse riders, as well as access for local residents of all ages. There will also be a continued cumulative impact on these road users and further mitigation will be necessary to address impacts using this promoted tourist route. A proportionate contribution to the delivery of active travel projects is therefore necessary, with this to be secured through the CTMP condition and finalised in consultation with Transport Planning. There are no further impacts anticipated on recreational users accessing the wider countryside beyond local roads and given the current and proposed use of the proposal site, walkers will not be encouraged to access the site.

Economic Impacts

- 8.38 NPF4 Policy 11, in particular paragraph c), notes that development proposals should only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities. Additionally, NPF4 Policy 25 provides support for development that is consistent with local economic priorities and where they contribute to local and/or regional community wealth building strategies. A condition is attached requiring the submission of a Local Employment Scheme prior to the start of works to maximise the socio-economic benefits of the proposed development.
- 8.39 The development of grid infrastructure has been identified as a national priority together with investment in renewable energy. The proposed development, along with the associated schemes noted, are not only beneficial in strengthening the robustness of the country's grid network but also result in further job and investment opportunities through the development of associated supply chains. The development is required to facilitate the continued supply of renewable energy to the national grid which will allow the export of electricity generated to consumers. The relationship of the development to the economic and social benefits of renewable energy developments is therefore relevant, in a positive way.
- 8.40 The Highlands is experiencing significant construction activity in the transmission network. The approval of the proposed development would have a positive economic impact, particularly during the proposed construction period, although significantly less impact at the operational stage. There is also likely to be some adverse effects caused by construction disruption and construction traffic. These adverse impacts are most likely to be within the service sector particularly during the construction

phase when additional traffic, HGVs and / or abnormal loads are being delivered to site. These will be temporary in nature.

- 8.41 Scenery and the natural environment within the Highlands are important factors for many visitors when choosing the area as a holiday destination. Any impact of the proposed development on tourism, whether visually, environmentally or economically should be identified and considered in full. In this instance, the proposed development, will add electricity transmission equipment into an area which has had to accommodate a substantial amount of transmission infrastructure already. This addition is however well sited with appropriate mitigation to help limit these impacts to an acceptable degree. In light of NPF4 Policy 11 section c), a condition can also be secured to commit to the delivery of a Local Employment Scheme.

Other Material Considerations

- 8.42 The application was screened for EIA development with the screening concluding that the proposal is not EIA. Given that construction of each of the substation replacements associated with the West of Beaulay Asset Replacement Project can be carried out on an individual basis, it is not considered reasonable to conclude that the individual schemes are 'salami slicing' a larger EIA development.

Non-material Considerations

- 8.43 The following issues raised in representations are not material planning considerations and have not been assessed in the report:
- a) The profile of the applicant and its investors;
 - b) Speculation that the proposal will lead to future energy generation developments;
 - c) Disagreement with the 'need' for the development; and,
 - d) House price impacts.

Matters to be secured by Legal Agreement / Upfront Payment

- 8.44 Proportionate mitigation in the form of physical provision, or an equivalent financial contribution, towards the delivery of active travel is also required. Should a financial contribution be the outcome, this can be secured by way of condition and an upfront payment or legal agreement under Section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.
- 8.45 A condition is also required to secure a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) supported by a formal "Wear and Tear Agreement" in accordance with Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The Scottish Government and the Council each have policies offering support to projects that sustain and increase the capacity of the grid network to serve renewable energy projects. NPF4 offers strong support for such development highlighting upgraded infrastructure supporting onshore high voltage electricity lines, cables, substations and interconnectors.
- 9.2 Highland has been successful in attracting inward investment in renewables, enabled in part by a significant level of investment in the improvement of the electricity transmission network. This success has led to the Highlands having a good understanding of this type of project and Highland Council having appropriate policies and guidance to assist in its assessment, and to effectively manage their implementation on the ground.
- 9.3 Whilst objections have been raised through representations and from the host community council, other consultees responding to this application have not raised any fundamental objections subject to conditions. Although this infrastructure comes as an unwelcome addition to an area which has already accommodated substantial amount of renewable energy infrastructure, this proposal is necessary for the continued operation of the existing hydroelectric scheme. Care has been taken to appropriately site and design this substation to address the environmental effects of this development. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission and the development demonstrably delivers onsite biodiversity and woodland enhancement.
- 9.4 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.

10. IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Resource: Not applicable
- 10.2 Legal: Not applicable
- 10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable
- 10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable
- 10.5 Risk: Not applicable
- 10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued None

Recommended to **GRANT** the application subject to the following conditions and reasons, with authority for the finalised condition wording to be delegated to the Area Planning Manager:

1. Commencement of Development

The development to which this planning permission relates must commence within FIVE YEARS of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period, then this planning permission shall lapse.

Reason: In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

2. Final Layout and Design

(1) There shall be no Commencement of Development on the substation until final details of the location, layout, external appearance, dimensions, and surface materials of the substation and control room buildings, any above ground electrical equipment, associated compounds, construction compound, fencing, stone walls, external lighting and parking areas have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt the details of the sub-station shall not exceed the parameters assessed in the Environmental Appraisal Report (EAR) dated May 2024 submitted to the Council on 29 June 2024.

(2) Thereafter, the substation and control room buildings, any above ground electrical equipment, associated compounds, fencing, external lighting and parking areas shall be constructed in accordance with the details approved under part (1) and maintained as such in perpetuity.

Reason: to ensure that the environmental impacts of the substation and ancillary development conform to the impacts assessed in the EAR and in the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

3. Signage

No part of the Development shall display any text, logo, sign or advertisement (other than health and safety signage as required by law) or be illuminated unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: in the interests of health and safety on site and the visual amenity of the area.

4. **Implementation of Mitigation Measures**

- (1) No development shall commence until a finalised Schedule of Mitigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This Schedule shall encompass a list of all mitigation measures from the EAR, any other commitments made by the applicant and all relevant mitigation secured by conditions attached to this permission with defined timescales for implementation of each mitigation measure.
- (2) Thereafter, the approved Schedule of Mitigation shall be implemented in full unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure that the identified mitigation through the EAR and supporting documents is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

5. **Planning Monitoring Officer**

- (1) There shall be no Commencement of Development until the terms of appointment by the Company of an independent and suitably qualified consultant as Planning Monitoring Officer (“PMO”) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The terms of appointment shall:
 - (a) impose a duty to monitor compliance with the terms of the deemed planning permission and the conditions attached to it;
 - (b) require the PMO to submit a quarterly report to the Planning Authority summarising works undertaken on site, matters of compliance or otherwise with the terms of the deemed planning permission and conditions attached to it, alongside a summary of the incidents recorded and reported by the EnvCoW; and,
 - (c) require the PMO to report to the Planning Authority any incidences of non-compliance with the terms of the deemed planning permission and conditions attached to it at the earliest practical opportunity, and no later than 10 working days following the incidence of non-compliance.
- (2) The PMO shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the period from Commencement of Development to completion of construction works and post-construction site reinstatement works.

(3) the PMO shall be appointed on the terms approved under part (1) throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development.

Reason: to ensure compliance with the planning permission and the conditions attached to it.

6. Environmental Clerk of Works

(1) There shall be no Commencement of Development until the terms of appointment of an independent Environmental Clerk of Works (“EnvCoW”) by the Company have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The terms of appointment shall:

(a) impose a duty to monitor compliance with the ecological and environmental commitments provided in the: EIA Report, including any micrositing; the Construction and Environmental Management Plan; the Habitat Management Plan, and Species and Habitat Protection Plans;

(b) require the EnvCoW to report to the nominated construction project manager any incidences of non-compliance with the EnvCoW works at the earliest practical opportunity;

(c) require the EnvCoW to submit a monthly report to the construction project manager, developer and Planning Authority summarising works undertaken on site.

(2) Prior to the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development or the expiration of the operational period of the consent (whichever is the earlier), details of the terms of appointment of a suitably qualified, experienced, and independent EnvCoW by the Company throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

(3) The EnvCoW shall be appointed on the terms approved under part (1) throughout the decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases of the Development.

Reason: to secure effective and transparent monitoring of and compliance with the environmental mitigation and management measures associated with the Development during the construction, decommissioning, restoration and aftercare phases

7. Construction Environmental Management Plan

(1) There shall be no Commencement of Development until a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) containing site specific details of all on-site construction works, post-

construction reinstatement, drainage and mitigation, together with details of their timetabling, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The CEMP shall be informed by the site and ground investigation works and best practice guidance. The CEMP shall include:

- (a) a site waste management plan (dealing with all aspects of waste produced during the construction period other than peat and other carbon rich soils), including details of contingency planning in the event of accidental release of materials which could cause harm to the environment, evidencing that all proposals comply with SEPA's guidance and the requirements of the waste management licensing regime as appropriate;
- (b) details of the location, layout, formation of the construction compound, welfare facilities, any areas of hardstanding, turning areas, internal access tracks, car parking, material stockpiles, oil, fuel and chemical storage, lighting columns, and any construction compound boundary fencing required for the construction period;
- (c) site specific details for management and operation of any concrete batching plant (including disposal of pH-rich waste water and substances);
- (d) a Pollution Prevention and Incident Plan incorporating a Pollution Prevention Plan, Pollution Incident Plan and a Pollution Control Monitoring Plan, which shall provide measures to protect watercourses, groundwater, management of natural surface hydrological flows (flushes, springs, etc.) and protection of peatland/soils, arrangements for the storage and management of oil and fuel and other chemicals on the site and sewage disposal and treatment;
- (e) a drainage management strategy, demonstrating how all surface and waste water arising during and after construction is to be managed and prevented from impacting on the water environment and to mitigate flood risk;
- (f) a surface water and groundwater management and treatment plan, including details of the separation of clean and dirty water drains, and location of settlement lagoons for silt laden water;
- (g) details of temporary site illumination, including measures to ensure light spill/pollution is minimised and avoids habitats within the site and does not extend beyond the immediate working area, and not beyond the site boundary;
- (h) Species and Breeding Bird Protection Plans which shall be informed by protected species surveys and appropriately timed pre-construction surveys including for, but not limited to, badger, breeding birds, otter, red squirrel, roosting bats, water vole,

reptiles and amphibians and any other identified species as appropriate. The Plans shall provide mitigation measures to protect these species and birds, as required, and a timetable for implementation;

- (i) details of the construction of the access into the site, including associated drainage and the creation and maintenance of associated visibility splays;
- (j) details of post-construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas not required during the operation of the Development;
- (k) a Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan including details of the management of noise and vibration during construction and post-construction restoration, including that caused by construction traffic, to the lowest practicable levels and in accordance with BS 5228:2009 “Code of Practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Part 1: Noise and Part 2: Vibration” (or any updated version/document which superseded this document) and how any properties likely to be affected by construction noise will be kept informed. The assessment shall include but is not limited to:
 - i. a description of the most significant noise sources in terms of equipment, processes, and phases of construction;
 - ii. the proposed working hours and the estimated duration of the works for each phase, with no site construction or other site works taking place before 09:00 hours on Saturdays without the prior written agreement of the Community Liaison Group;
 - iii. a detailed plan showing the location of noise sources and noise sensitive premises;
 - iv. a description of mitigation methods and best practical means that will be implemented to reduce/minimise construction noise/vibration with any divergence from the above code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites justified.

Thereafter, the development shall proceed in accordance with the approved Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan.

- (l) Construction Method Statements for all roads/tracks to be altered/formed within the development site including their width, likelihood of widening or passing places, means of drainage (which shall have regard to SUDS principles), means of construction, and edge reinstatement including verge width. The

specification shall be accompanied by relevant plans at a sufficient scale;

(m) A phasing plan for the construction works; and,

(n) A written scheme which details the methodology for dealing with any revisions to any of the documents required under this part (1) of the condition. Any revised documents will require to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the revisions being implemented on site.

(2) Thereafter, the development shall be implemented in accordance with the CEMP approved under part (1) of this condition unless otherwise approved in advance in writing by the Council.

Reason: to ensure that all construction operations are carried out in a manner that minimises their impact on road safety, amenity and the environment, and that the mitigation measures contained in the Environmental Appraisal Report accompanying the application, or as otherwise agreed, are fully implemented.

8. **Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan**

(1) No felling or development shall commence, including site and ground investigations, until:

a) a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) taking account of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan (EAR Figure 4.5 REV P06, dated 14 April 2025), has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Council.

b) the applicant has entered in to either a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Council or an appropriate legal agreement to provide an updated Habitat Management Plan for offsite habitat and biodiversity enhancement for the development hereby approved.

(2) Thereafter, no more than 18 months following the final commissioning of the development hereby approved, an updated Habitat Management Plan (HMP) to include an additional offsite HMP area, which shall, for this development only, demonstrate adequate:

a) compensatory tree planting for the removal of trees and tree groupings T2, T4, T5, G3, G6, and G7 as shown on the Tree Removal and Protection Plan DRG Number 70102201-DRW-1; and,

b) compensation and enhancement measures to ensure that the development results in no less than 10% biodiversity net gain.

(3) The HMP shall set out proposed habitat management of the HMP area(s) during the period of construction, operation, and

decommissioning, restoration and aftercare, and shall provide for the maintenance, monitoring and reporting of site-specific details or particular species, habitats or wetlands on site.

- (4) The HMP shall include a Tree Planting Plan and Maintenance Programme for the planting of structural tree species, which shall be implemented in full to the satisfaction of the Council during the first planting season following commencement of development or as otherwise prior agreed in writing with the Council.
- (5) The HMP shall provide provision and details for regular monitoring and review to be undertaken against the HMP objectives and reasonable measures for securing amendments or additions to the HMP in the event that the HMP objectives are not being met.
- (6) The HMP shall include GIS Shapefiles of the HMP area including the location of the proposed deer fence.
- (7) Until otherwise approved in advance in writing by the Planning Authority, the approved HMP (as amended from time to time with written approval of the Council) shall be implemented in full in line with the timescales set out in the approved plan.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity enhancement, good land management and the protection of habitats and to allow the HMP area to be appropriately mapped on the Council's electronic systems.

9. **Tree Protection**

- (1) No development, site excavation, or groundwork shall commence until a suitably qualified Arboricultural Consultant has been appointed by the developer. For the avoidance of doubt, the Arboricultural Consultant shall be appointed prior to the commencement of the development and as a minimum retained until the completion of the development and their remit shall, in addition to any functions approved in writing by the Planning Authority, include:
 - (a) Ensuring that the approved Tree Protection Plan (ref. 70102201-DRW-1) and an updated Arboricultural Method Statement, which shall be approved in writing by the Council, are implemented to the agreed standard; and,
 - (b) The preparation of Certificates of Compliance for each stage of work involved in the development, which shall be submitted to the Planning Authority upon completion of the stage to which they relate. Prior to development, site excavation or groundwork commencing, details of each stage of work (including a general description of the type and extent of work to be carried out within

that stage) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

- (2) Thereafter, no development, site excavation or groundwork shall commence until all retained trees have been protected against construction damage using protective barriers located as per the approved Tree Protection Plan and in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction) or any superseding guidance prevailing at that time, which. These barriers shall remain in place throughout the construction period and must not be moved or removed during the construction period without the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure the retention of retained trees and woodland during construction and thereafter.

10. **Construction Traffic Management Plan**

- (1) There shall be no Commencement of Development until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with The Roads Authorities. The CTMP shall provide:
 - (a) the routing of all traffic associated with the Development on public roads including identification of any local quarries and suppliers that will be used in the construction of the development;
 - (b) details of the volume of material quantities to be imported and removed from the site;
 - (c) details of the number and type of vehicle movements that will be generated;
 - (d) a risk assessment for construction traffic during daylight hours and hours of darkness with reference to the peak tourist season.
 - (e) an assessment of the suitability of the proposed routes including identification of any sensitive receptors such as schools and lengths of road (outwith those which are to be upgraded) which are susceptible to damage due to extra-ordinary construction traffic or abnormal loads;
 - (f) an assessment of any structures along the public road which are susceptible to damage due to extra-ordinary construction traffic or abnormal loads;
 - (g) measures to ensure that the specified routes are adhered to, including monitoring procedures of HGV movements, the establishment of 'acceptable' levels of HGV activity manage HGV movement levels on the public road network;

- (h) details of all proposed traffic management and mitigation measures including but not limited to temporary speed limits, suitable temporary signage, road markings, and speed activated signs to be put in place;
 - (i) consideration of all base line traffic flows and concurrent construction traffic impacts from other consented traffic generating proposals, including logging activity, on all publicly adopted roads within the transport study area identified within the Environmental Impact Assessment;
 - (j) details of a contingency plan prepared by the abnormal load haulier. The plan shall be adopted only after consultation and agreement with the Police and the respective roads authorities which shall include measures to deal with any haulage incidents that may result in public roads becoming temporarily closed or restricted;
 - (k) provisions for emergency vehicle access;
 - (l) a procedure for the regular monitoring of road conditions and the implementation of any remedial works required during the construction period;
 - (m) measures to ensure that all affected public roads are kept free of mud and debris arising from the development;
 - (n) provision for the submission of a Section 96 agreement (which may require to be entered in to with additional developers should development that also generates significant traffic on the identified road network) including of a roads condition survey pre-and post-construction accompanied by an appropriate agreement between the Planning Authority and the Company to ensure the delivery of any post-construction public road restoration that may be required;
 - (o) mitigation in the form of physical provision, or an equivalent financial contribution, towards the delivery of active travel improvement scheme to serve users of the A831;
 - (p) An up to date review of road accidents; and,
 - (q) identification of a nominated person to whom any road safety issues can be referred.
- (2) The approved Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise approved in advance in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and amenity.

11. **Public Road Improvements**

- (1) There shall be no Commencement of Development until the following has submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Council:
 - a. an engineering assessment of the public road to identify sections of road with historic verge damage and provide proposals for widening and/or strengthening on these sections;
 - b. an engineering assessment of the public road network up to the site entrance with proposals for widening the road to a minimum of 3.5 metres (including a detailed design of how the road will be widened) and the provision of passing places for use by HGV;
 - c. full details including a detailed layout drawing of the upgrades required to the site access junctions with the U1335 and the A831;
 - d. A programme for the delivery of the proposals for the public road mitigation including road widening and strengthening, provision of passing places, upgrades of the site access junctions and provision of the footway as set out in Part (1) above;
- (2) All works on the public road network shall comply with the Council's 'Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments';

Thereafter, all works as set out in Part (1) shall be completed in full to the satisfaction of the Council and made available for use in accordance with the agreed delivery programme.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and amenity.

12. **Abnormal Loads**

- (1) There shall be no abnormal load deliveries to the site until an Abnormal Load Route Assessment Report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Transport Scotland. The Abnormal Load Route Assessment Report shall provide:
 - (a) Details of a communications strategy to inform the relevant communities of the programme of abnormal load deliveries;
 - (b) Details of any accommodation measures required for the local road network including the removal of street furniture, junction widening and traffic management;
 - (c) Any additional signing or temporary traffic control measures deemed necessary on the trunk road network due to the size or length of any loads being transported must be undertaken by a

recognised QA traffic management consultant, to be approved by Transport Scotland;

- (d) Details of the route for abnormal loads on the local and trunk road networks and any recommendations for delivery of abnormal loads;
 - (e) An assessment of the capacity of any bridge crossings on the route to cater for abnormal loads, and details of proposed upgrades and mitigation measures required for any bridge crossings; and
 - (f) A plan for access by vehicles carrying abnormal loads, including but not limited to the number and timing of deliveries and the length, width and axle configuration of all such traffic associated with the Development.
- (2) Prior to the first delivery of an abnormal load, a programme for abnormal load deliveries shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Transport Scotland which shall avoid peak times on Council maintained roads including school travel times, and scheduled community events.
 - (3) Prior to any movement of abnormal loads (including trial runs) the Company must complete any mitigation works set out in in the scheme approved under part (1) of this condition, and maintain such measures during the period of abnormal load deliveries.
 - (4) The trial-run shall be undertaken in accordance with the details approved under part (1) prior to the movement of any abnormal loads.

The details in the approved report shall thereafter be implemented in full prior the first delivery of an abnormal load.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and to ensure that abnormal loads access the site in a safe manner.

13. **Community Liaison Group**

- (1) No development shall commence until a West of Beaully Asset Replacement and VISTA Projects Community Liaison Group has been established in collaboration with local Community Councils and stakeholders to the satisfaction of the Council. The purpose of the liaison group shall be to allow advanced dialogue between the developer and stakeholders on:
 - a. the programme and timing of construction activities including construction related traffic and AIL deliveries;
 - b. the provision of all transport and public outdoor access related mitigation measures; and
 - c. project progress.

The timing and delivery of ALL components shall be kept under review in order to ensure that local events, tourist seasons, and other developments in the wider area are considered and appropriate measures to co-ordinate deliveries are undertaken.

- (2) Thereafter, the liaison group shall be maintained until the West of Beaulieu Asset Replacement and VISTA Projects have been completed and are fully operational.

Reason: to reduce conflicts between all construction traffic and other road users and recreational outdoor access users, in the interests of safety and amenity.

14. **Drainage**

No development shall commence until full details of all surface water drainage provision within the application site (which shall accord with the Drainage Strategy set out in Appendix 7.2 of the Environmental Appraisal Report) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, only the approved details shall be implemented, and all surface water drainage provision shall be completed prior to the first occupation of any of the development.

Reason: to ensure that drainage infrastructure is provided timeously for the development to protect the water environment.

15. **Operational Noise**

- (1) Any noise arising from the operation of this development shall not exceed 30 dB at the curtilage of any noise sensitive premises when measured and/or calculated as an LZeq, 5min, in the 100Hz one third octave frequency band, at the curtilage of any noise sensitive receptor.
- (2) The Rating Level of noise arising from operational land of the substation, as determined in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound, shall not exceed 32 dB LAeq 15 mins at the curtilage of any noise sensitive receptor.
- (3) For the purposes of this condition, "noise-sensitive premises" includes, but is not necessarily limited to, any building, structure or other development the lawful use of which a) falls within Classes 7 (Hotels & Hostels), 8 (Residential Institutions) or 9 (Houses) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997 (as amended), or b) is as a flat or static residential caravan.
- (4) Within 21 days from receipt of a written request of the Council following a complaint alleging noise disturbance at a noise sensitive location, the site operator shall, at its expense, employ an independent consultant to

assess the level of noise in terms of compliance with consented noise limits. The site operator shall submit the report of the independent consultant's assessment for the approval of the Planning Authority within 2 months of receiving the written request.

- (5) In the event that the noise level is found to exceed the prescribed noise limits, the assessment report shall include a Flare 206271/ZS02359 scheme of mitigation to be enacted, including timescales for implementation, to ensure compliance with consented noise limits following which, details of the proposed compliance monitoring shall be agreed in writing beforehand with the Council.

Reason: In the interests of residential and community amenity.

16. **Lighting**

No development shall commence until full details of any external lighting to be used within the site and/or along its boundaries and/or access have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Council. Such details shall include full details of the location, type, angle of direction and wattage of each light which shall be sensor activated and so positioned and angled to prevent any direct illumination, glare or light spillage outwith the site boundary. Thereafter only the approved details shall be implemented.

Reason: to ensure that the site is not normally illuminated during the hours of darkness and that any lighting does not spill beyond the intended target area, does not impact adversely upon the qualifying interests of the Strathglass Complex Special Area of Conservation of adjacent properties and does not result in 'sky glow'.

17. **Local Employment Scheme**

- (1) Prior to the Commencement of Development, a Local Employment Scheme for the construction and operation of the development shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by The Highland Council. The submitted Scheme shall make reference to the Environmental Impact Assessment received by the Planning Authority (April 2024). The Scheme shall include the following:

- (a) Details of how the staff/employment opportunities at the development will be advertised and how liaison with the Council and other local bodies will take place in relation to maximising the access of the local workforce to information about employment opportunities;

- (b) Details of how sustainable training opportunities will be provided for those recruited to fulfil staff/employment requirements including the provision of apprenticeships or an agreed alternative;
 - (c) A procedure setting out criteria for employment, and for matching of candidates to the vacancies;
 - (d) Measures to be taken to offer and provide college and/or work placement opportunities at the development to students within the locality;
 - (e) Details of the promotion of the Local Employment Scheme and liaison with contractors engaged in the construction of the development to ensure that they also apply the Local Employment Scheme so far as practicable having due regard to the need and availability for specialist skills and trades and the programme for constructing the development;
 - (f) A procedure for monitoring the Local Employment Scheme and reporting the results of such monitoring to The Highland Council; and
 - (g) A timetable for the implementation of the Local Employment Scheme.
- (2) Thereafter, the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: in order to ensure compliance with NPF4 Policy 11c) and to maximise the local socio-economic benefits of the development to the wider local community.

REASON FOR DECISION

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.

INFORMATIVES

Initiation and Completion Notices

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires all developers to submit notices to the Planning Authority prior to, and upon completion of, development. These are in addition to any other similar requirements (such as Building Warrant completion notices) and failure to comply represents a breach of planning control and may result in formal enforcement action.

1. The developer must submit a Notice of Initiation of Development in accordance with Section 27A of the Act to the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
2. On completion of the development, the developer must submit a Notice of Completion in accordance with Section 27B of the Act to the Planning Authority.

Copies of the notices referred to are attached to this decision notice for your convenience.

Flood Risk

It is important to note that the granting of planning permission does not imply there is an unconditional absence of flood risk relating to (or emanating from) the application site. As per Scottish Planning Policy (paragraph 259), planning permission does not remove the liability position of developers or owners in relation to flood risk.

Scottish Water

You are advised that a supply and connection to Scottish Water infrastructure is dependent on sufficient spare capacity at the time of the application for connection to Scottish Water. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee a connection. Any enquiries with regards to sewerage connection and/or water supply should be directed to Scottish Water on 0845 601 8855.

Septic Tanks and Soakaways

Where a private foul drainage solution is proposed, you will require separate consent from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Planning permission does not guarantee that approval will be given by SEPA and as such you are advised to contact them direct to discuss the matter (01349 862021).

Local Roads Authority Consent

In addition to planning permission, you may require one or more separate consents (such as road construction consent, dropped kerb consent, a road openings permit, occupation of the road permit etc.) from the Area Roads Team prior to work commencing. These consents may require additional work and/or introduce additional specifications and you are therefore advised to contact your local Area Roads office for further guidance at the earliest opportunity.

Failure to comply with access, parking and drainage infrastructure requirements may endanger road users, affect the safety and free-flow of traffic and is likely to result in

enforcement action being taken against you under both the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Further information on the Council's roads standards can be found at: <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/roadsandtransport>

Application forms and guidance notes for access-related consents can be downloaded from:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/101/permits_for_working_on_public_roads/2

Mud and Debris on Road

Please note that it is an offence under Section 95 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to allow mud or any other material to be deposited, and thereafter remain, on a public road from any vehicle or development site. You must, therefore, put in place a strategy for dealing with any material deposited on the public road network and maintain this until development is complete.

Construction Hours and Noise-Generating Activities

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has advised that construction work associated with the approved development (incl. the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery), for which noise is audible at the boundary of the application site, should not normally place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays with no Sunday or Bank Holiday in Scotland, as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (as amended).

Work falling outwith these hours which gives rise to amenity concerns, or noise at any time which exceeds acceptable levels, may result in the service of a notice under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (as amended). Breaching a Section 60 notice constitutes an offence and is likely to result in court action.

If you wish formal consent to work at specific times or on specific days, you may apply to the Council's Environmental Health Officer under Section 61 of the 1974 Act following consultation with the local community through the Community Liaison Group required under Condition 14 of this permission. Any such application should be submitted after you have obtained your Building Warrant, if required, and will be considered on its merits. Any decision taken will reflect the nature of the development, the site's location and the proximity of noise sensitive premises. Please contact env.health@highland.gov.uk for more information.

Protected Species – Halting of Work

You are advised that work on site must stop immediately, and NatureScot must be contacted, if evidence of any protected species or nesting/breeding sites, not previously detected during the course of the application and provided for in this permission, are found on site. For the avoidance of doubt, it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or disturb protected species or to damage or destroy the breeding site of a protected species. These sites are protected even if the animal is not there at the time of discovery. Further information regarding protected species and developer responsibilities is available from NatureScot: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/protected-species>

Signature: Bob Robertson
Designation: Area Planning Manager - South
Author: Mark Fitzpatrick
Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans: Plan 1 - Location Plan
Plan 2 - Site Layout Plan
Plan 3 - Earthworks and Drainage Layout Plan
Plan 4 - Site Section Elevations
Plan 5 - Control Building Elevations
Plan 6 - Substation Site Elevations

Appendix 1 – Development Plan and Other Material Policy Considerations

National Planning Framework 4

- A1.1 Policy 1 - Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises
- Policy 2 - Climate Mitigation and Adaptation
- Policy 3 - Biodiversity
- Policy 4 - Natural Places
- Policy 5 - Soils
- Policy 6 - Forestry, Woodland and Trees
- Policy 7 - Historic Assets and Places
- Policy 11 - Energy
- Policy 18 - Infrastructure First
- Policy 20 - Blue and Green Infrastructure
- Policy 22 - Flood Risk and Water Management
- Policy 23 - Health and Safety
- Policy 25 - Community Wealth Building
- Policy 29 - Rural Development
- Policy 33 - Minerals

Highland Wide Local Development Plan 2012

- A1.2 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality and Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
- 51 - Trees and Development
- 53 - Minerals
- 55 - Peat and Soils
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
- 58 - Protected Species
- 59 - Other important Species

- 60 - Other Importance Habitats
- 61 - Landscape
- 62 - Geodiversity
- 63 - Water Environment
- 64 - Flood Risk
- 65 - Waste Water Treatment
- 66 - Surface Water Drainage
- 68 - Community Renewable Energy Developments
- 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
- 73 - Air Quality
- 74 - Green Networks
- 77 - Public Access

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMFLDP2))

A1.3 There are no site-specific policies however the following subject policies are relevant:

- 1 – Low and Zero Carbon Development
- 2 – Nature Protection, Restoration and Enhancement
- 5 – Green Networks

Condition 8 requiring the implementation of an approved Habitat Management Plan, including an additional offsite Habitat Management Plan area, to compensate for biodiversity losses on site and for measures to enhance biodiversity ensures the proposal is in compliance with Policy 2 - Nature Protection, Preservation and Enhancement as commensurate with the type and scale of the development.

Highland Council Supplementary Planning Policy Guidance

- A1.4 Biodiversity Enhancement Planning Guidance (May 2024)
- Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (August 2010)
- Developer Contributions (March 2018)
- Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)

Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (May 2006)

Managing Waste in New Developments (March 2013)

Physical Constraints (March 2013)

Public Art Strategy (March 2013)

Small-Scale Wind Turbine Proposals: Interim Supplementary Guidance (Nov 2012)

Special Landscape Area Citations (June 2011)

Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012)

Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Other National Policy and Guidance

A1.5 A Vision for Scotland's Electricity and Gas Networks (2019)

Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure: Government Response, UK Department for Energy and Security and Net Zero (2024)

Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)

Draft Scottish Biodiversity strategy to 2045: tackling the nature emergency (2023)

Scottish Energy Strategy (2017)

Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map, Scottish Government (2018)

Highland Nature Biodiversity Action Plan 2021 – 2026 (2022)

Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, HES (2019)

PAN 1/2011 - Planning and Noise (2011)

PAN 60 - Planning for Natural Heritage (2008)

Circular 4/1998 - The use of Conditions in Planning Permissions

Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2017)

Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure: Government Response, UK Department for Energy and Security and Net Zero (2023)

Appendix 2 - Compliance with the Development Plan / Other Planning Policy

National Policy

- A2.1 At the high level, NPF4 considers that Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure, which includes converter, switching and substations supporting on and offshore high voltage electricity lines, will assist in the delivery of the Spatial Strategy and Spatial Priorities for the north of Scotland. And, that Highland can continue to make a strong contribution toward meeting Scotland's ambition for net zero. Alongside these ambitions, the strategy for Highland aims to protect environmental assets as well as to stimulate investment in natural and engineered solutions to address climate change (NPF4 page 26).
- A2.2 Part 3 at Annex B of the document describes several National Developments with provides statements of need to set out the rationale for each in terms of how they deliver the Spatial Strategy. Unlike the related schemes to replace the respective substations of Deanie, Culligran, and Kilmorack power stations (the West of Beaully Asset Replacement Project), this proposal does not fall under the third National Development descriptor, Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure by virtue of being of a local scale development. This is because the annex requires a proposal to be for an upgraded substation directly supporting onshore high voltage electricity lines, cables and interconnectors 'of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by 'The Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009' (NPF4 Page 103).
- A2.3 Since its adoption, NPF4 Policies 1, 2, and 3 now apply to all development proposals Scotland-wide, which means that significant weight must be given to the global climate and nature crises when considering all development proposals, as required by NPF4 Policy 1. To that end, development proposals must be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as is practicably possible in accordance with NPF4 Policy 2, while proposals for local scale developments must include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance, as required by NPF4 Policy 3 c). Condition 8 included with this proposal ensures that the proposal would achieve the minimum 10% of biodiversity enhancement as required in Paragraph 4.24 of the Council's adopted Biodiversity Enhancement Planning Guidance (May 2024), and consistent with NatureScot's Developing with Nature, in accordance with NPF4 Policy 3 c).
- A2.4 NPF4 Policy 4 compliments the above policies by setting out the developer and officer requirements for ensuring that protected species are given adequate consideration prior to an application's determination. NPF4 Policy 5 for Soils seeks to protect carbon-rich soils, and restore peatlands, and minimise disturbance to soils from development. To that end, the application requires to demonstrate that

the mitigation hierarchy has been followed in siting the facility. In other words, that the proposal has sought to avoid carbon-rich soils and peat in the first instance, and then minimise disturbance where this is unavoidable, and to include adequate mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures for any disturbance. Similarly, NPF4 Policy 6 for Forestry, woodland and trees aims to protect and expand forests, woodland and tree coverage. Similarly for built and cultural resources, Policy 7 seeks to protect and enhance historic environment assets and places and, relevant for this proposal, sets out the developer requirements for dealing with archaeology resources.

- A2.5 Policy 18, Infrastructure First, seeks to ensure that infrastructure considerations are integral to the design and decision-making process so that any impacts on infrastructure are adequately and timeously understood and addressed as required at Part b). NPF4 Policy 20 for Blue and Green Infrastructure supports facilities that design protect and enhance blue and green infrastructure and their networks by making climate mitigation, nature restoration, biodiversity enhancement, flood prevention and water management (as per Policy 22 for Flood Risk) integral to design.
- A2.6 Policy 23 for Health and safety is also relevant to the assessment as it seeks to protect people and places from environmental harm, mitigate risks arising from safety hazards, and encourage, promote, and facilitate development that improves health and wellbeing. Furthermore, NPF4 Policy 25 for Community Wealth Building sets out at Part a) that development proposals should contribute to local or regional community wealth building strategies and be consistent with local economic priorities.
- A2.7 While the above policies are salient for the application's assessment, the principal policy for developments related to energy generation and distribution is Policy 11 Energy, which aims to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development and the infrastructure that supports it (at Part a) ii.). Part c) of the policy confirms that development proposals should maximise net economic impacts, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment along with associated business and supply chain opportunities. Section d) requires impacts on international or national designations to be assessed in relation to Policy 4, while at the same time requiring decision makers to give significant weight to the proposal's contribution to renewable energy generation targets and targets for greenhouse gas emissions. In this instance it is noted that the replacement substation will directly support a longstanding hydroelectric renewable energy generator.
- A2.8 Indeed, national guidance supplements the in principle support for the proposal with both A Vision for Scotland's Electricity and Gas Networks (2019) and the Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan acknowledging that significant

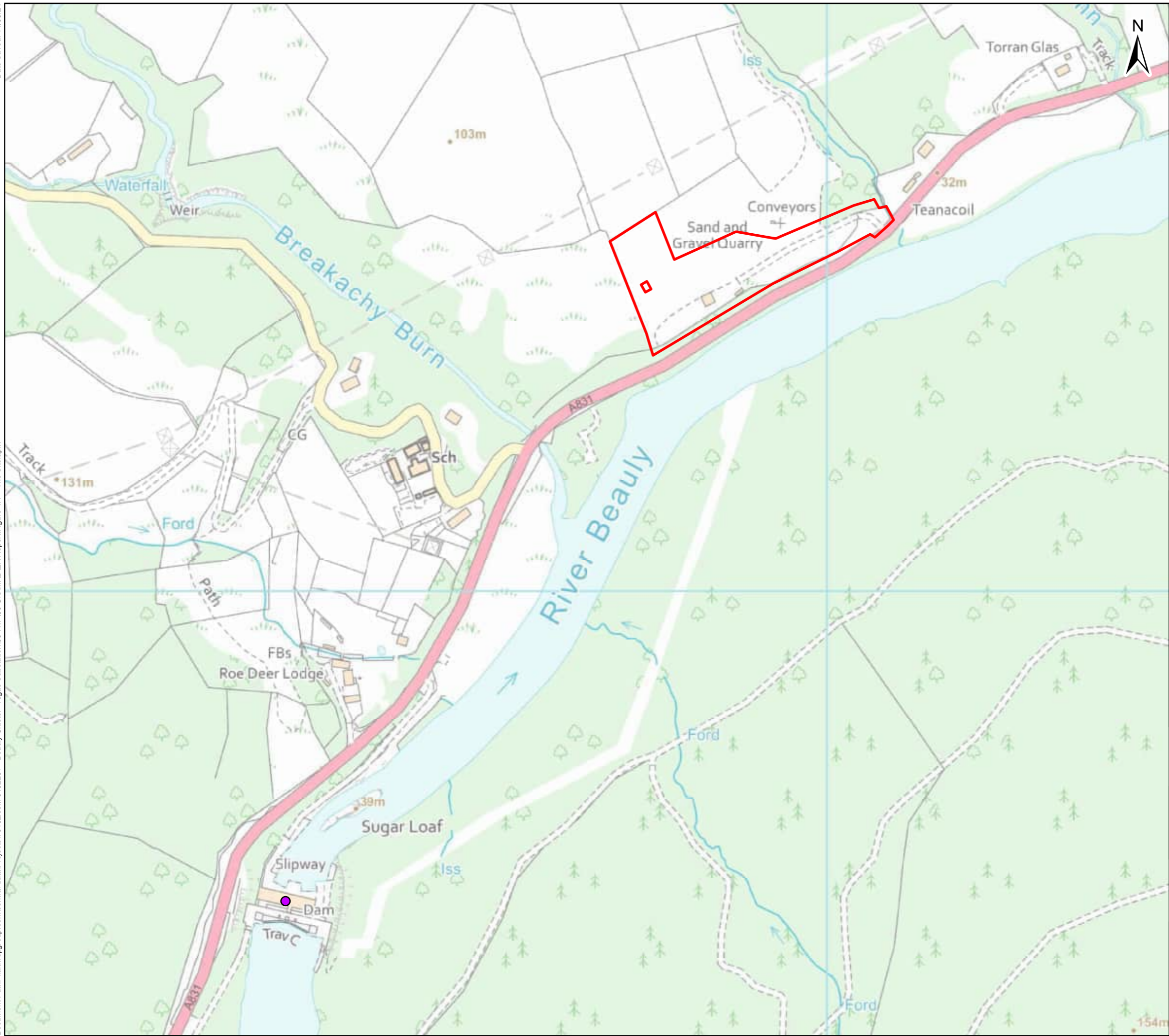
investment is required in Scotland's transmission system to ameliorate constraints and ensure a secure and resilient network so that energy from renewable sources can be reliably transmitted and distributed to where it is consumed no matter how remote.

Local Development Plan Policy

- A2.13 Although the proposal site is not allocated for the specific proposed land use or any land uses in the LDP (HwLDP and IMFLDP2), meaning that there are no site-specific policies that would apply, the in principle support in favour of the proposal is still reinforced within the LDP under HwLDP Policy 69 for Electricity Transmission Infrastructure. The policy requires the assessment of the proposal to have regard to the strategic importance of the proposal taking account of appropriate siting and mitigation of environmental impacts by design. This policy is supplemented by several HwLDP policies including for Sustainable Design (Policy 28) and for Development in the Wider Countryside (Policy 36), as well as the remaining subject policies listed in paragraphs 6.2 - 6.3, which set out key environmental and social considerations against which the application requires to be assessed. These policies are considered to supplement those described for NPF4 above (paragraphs 8.5 – 8.10) with no relevant policy conflicts identified.
- A2.14 As described above, subject to the proposal being satisfactory in all other aspects, the proposal benefits from in principle support in the Development Plan.

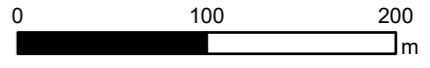
Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)

- A2.19 The Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan has been published for consultation. Limited weight can however be applied to the document given its draft status. Unsurprisingly, the material on in the document reflects in large part that contained in NPF4 and the Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (OWPS) 2022. A fundamental part of the Strategy is expanding the energy generation sector. The draft Strategy specifically addresses energy networks (page 36) and states "significant infrastructure investment in Scotland's transmission system is needed to ameliorate constraints and enable more renewable power to flow to centres of demand." It states that National Grid has identified the requirement for over £21 billion of investment in GB electricity transmission infrastructure to meet 2030 targets and that over half of this investment will involve Scottish transmission owners SPEN and SSEN. Overall, the draft Energy Strategy forms part of the new policy approach alongside the OWPS and NPF4 and confirms the Scottish Government's policy objectives and related targets reaffirming the crucial role that onshore wind and enabling transmission infrastructure will play in response to the climate crisis which is at the heart of all these policies.



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Aigas Power Station and Dam

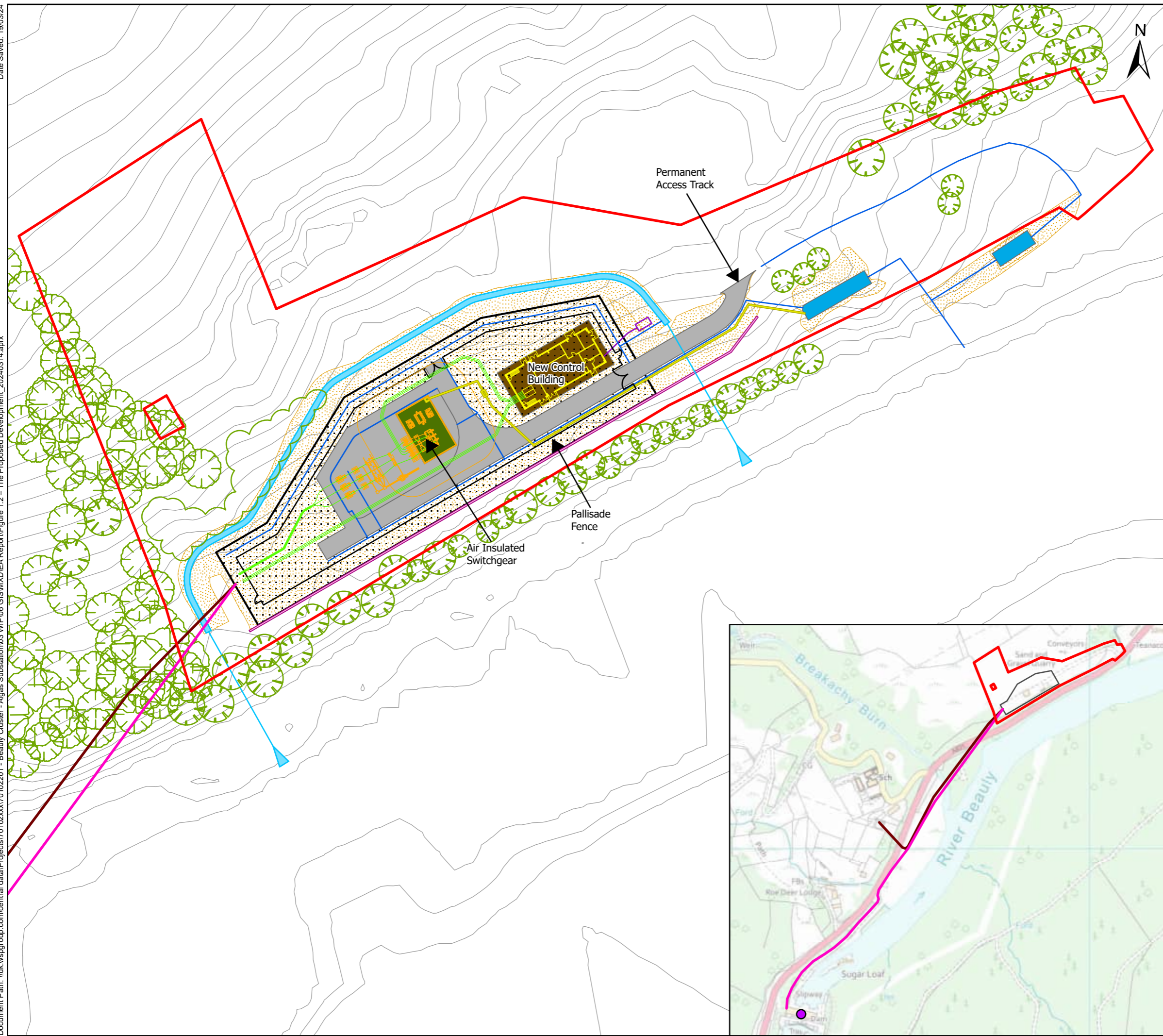


Client:  TRANSMISSION

Project: **Aigas 132 kV Replacement Substation**

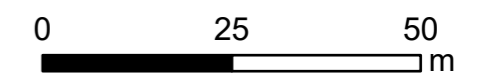
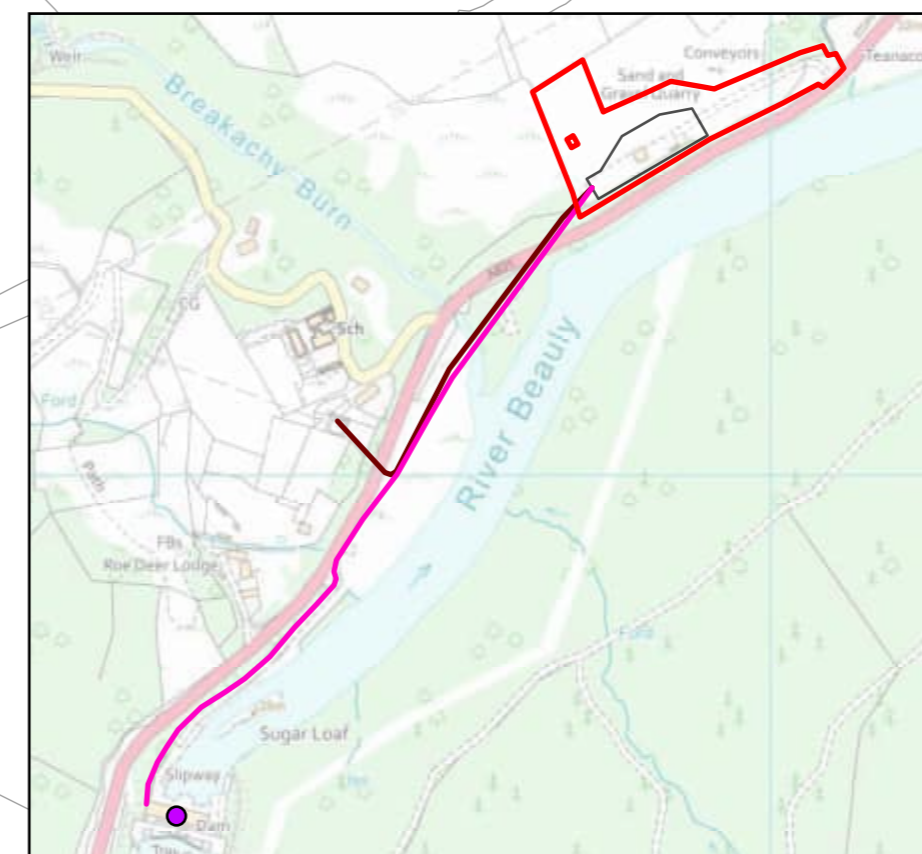
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Date: 14/03/2024 Scale: 4,000 @ A3
 Drawn: AS Checked: IM Approved: EJ
 Drawing Number: BEAULY-CLUSTER-AIGAS-WSP-013



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Earthworks Area
- Permanent Access Track
- Proposed Substation**
- Transformer Building
- Control Building
- Substation Platform
- Transformer Building Layout
- Control Building Layout
- Substation Cables
- Fence - Palastude
- Surface Water Drainage Filter
- Ponds
- Surface Water Drainage**
- Surface Water Drainage
- Drainage Filter
- Foul Drainage
- Oily Drain
- Landscape**
- Existing Vegetation

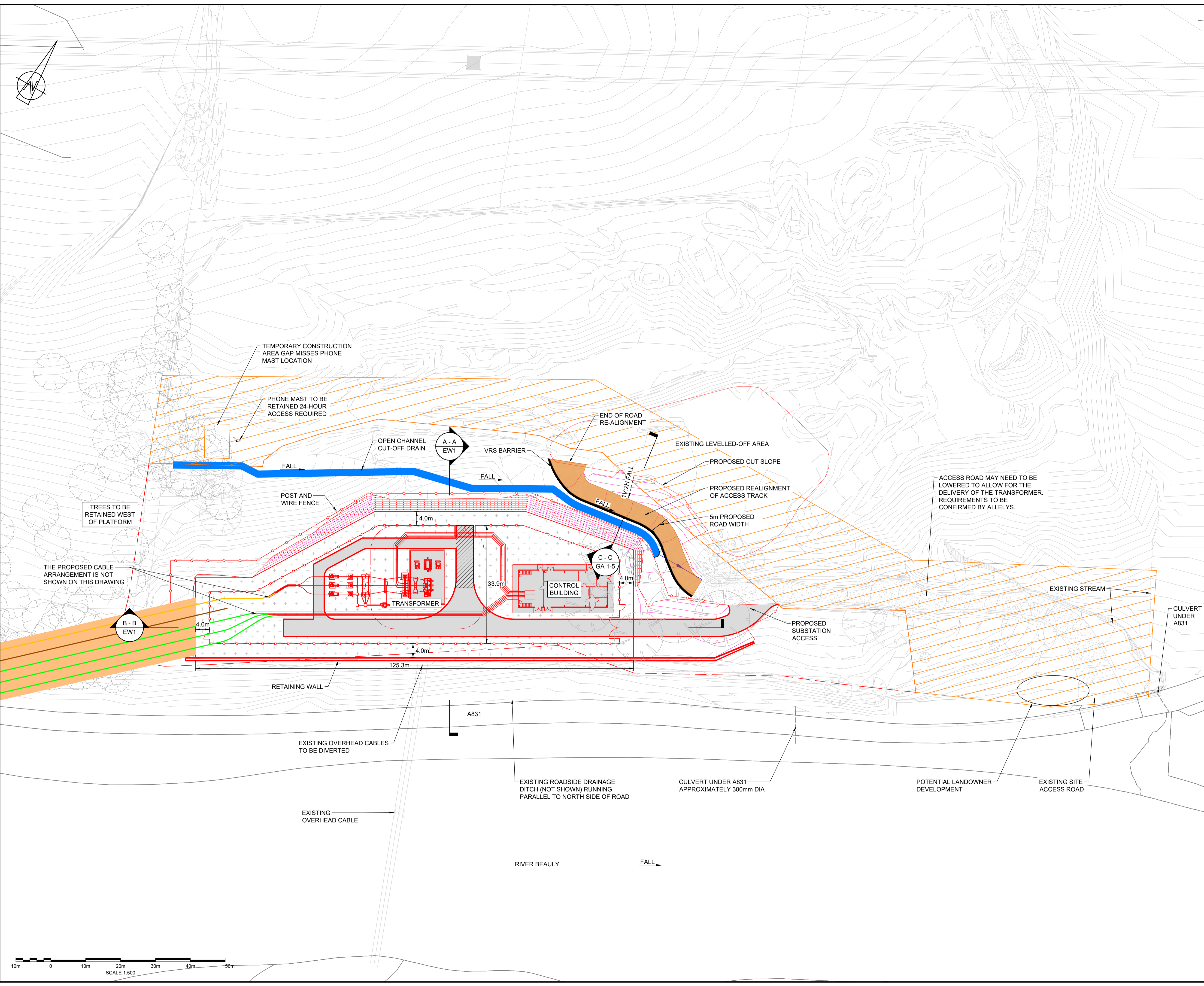


Client: Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks
TRANSMISSION

Project: **Aigas 132 kV Substation**

Title: **The Proposed Development - Location Plan**

Date: 19/03/2024 Scale: 1:1,000@A3
 Drawn: MAL Checked: IM Approved: BH
 Drawing Number: BEAULY-CLUSTER-AIGAS-WSP-012



DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING

- NOTES
1. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.
 2. TREE LOCATIONS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE. NO ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY IS AVAILABLE AT TIME OF DRAWING PRODUCTION.

- LEGEND :
- EXISTING WOODED AREA
 - PROPOSED TREES TO BE FELLED
 - PROPOSED CLEAN WATER CUT-OFF DRAIN
 - SITE BOUNDARY
 - EXISTING CULVERT
 - PROPOSED ROAD / IMPERMEABLE AREA
 - TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION AREA
 - PURCHASE AREA
 - PROPOSED UNBOUND ROAD

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P04	KW	AC	TA	05/06/23	FOR REVIEW
P03	HT	AC	TA	15/12/23	FOR REVIEW
P02	HT	AD	TA	10/10/23	PRELIMINARY DESIGN DRAFT
P01	HT	AD	TA	05/07/23	PRELIMINARY DESIGN DRAFT

CODE	DRAWING STATUS
S3	FOR PLANNING

Tony Gee
www.tonygee.com
Consulting Engineers

ON BEHALF OF
SSE-N

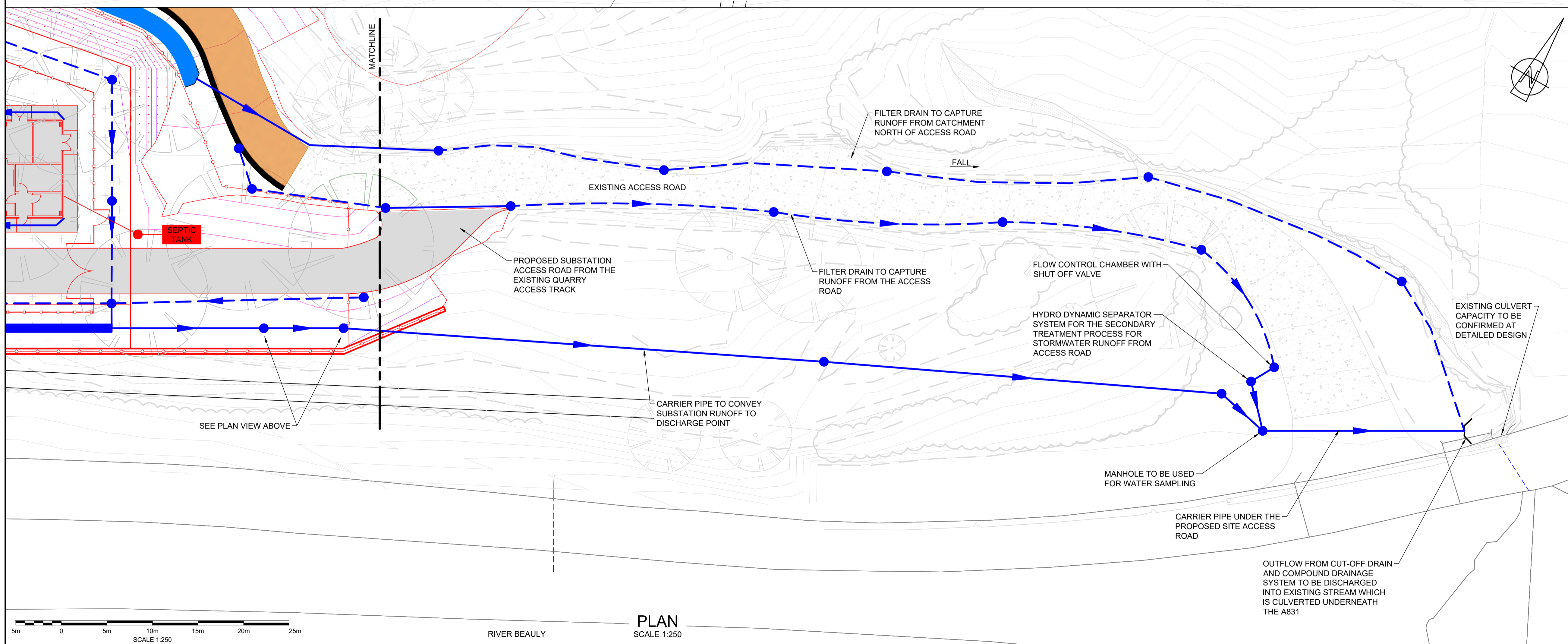
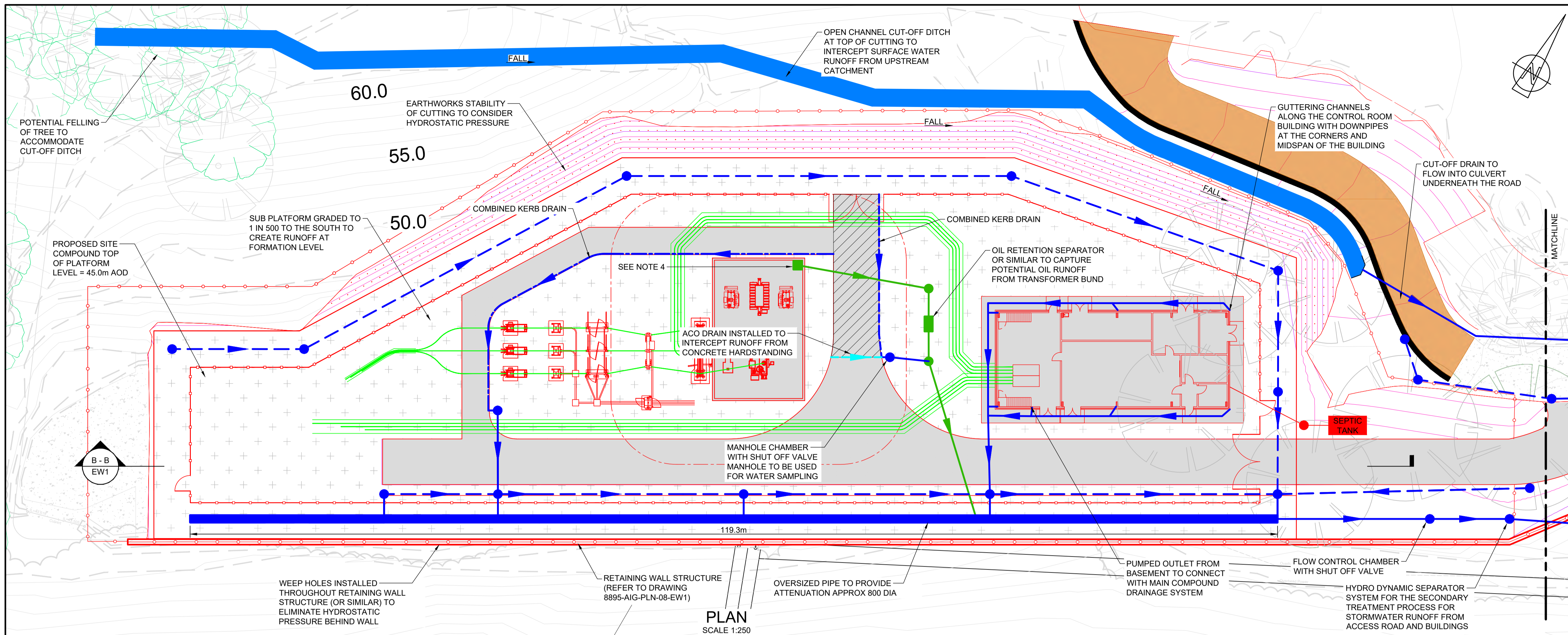
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SUBSTATION**

**IGAS
PROPOSED
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT**

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DRAWN	DESIGNED	REVISION
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NOTES

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- PROPOSED ACO DRAIN
- PROPOSED CARRIER DRAIN & CATCHPIT
- PROPOSED FILTER DRAIN & CATCHPIT
- PROPOSED OILY WATER DRAIN
- PROPOSED FOUL DRAIN
- PROPOSED COMBINED KERB DRAIN
- PROPOSED 11kV CABLE
- PROPOSED 132kV CABLE
- PERMEABLE GRANULAR PLATFORM SURFACE AREA
- AREA OF PROPOSED IMPERMEABLE INFRASTRUCTURE
- PROPOSED CONCRETE REFUELLING AREA

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P02	HT	AD	TA	15/12/23	FOR REVIEW
P01	HT	AD	TA	10/10/23	PRELIMINARY DESIGN DRAFT

CODE: **S3** DRAWING STATUS: **FOR PLANNING**

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ON BEHALF OF
SSE-N

**AIGAS 132 kV
REPLACEMENT
SUBSTATION**

**AIGAS EARTHWORKS &
DRAINAGE
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT**

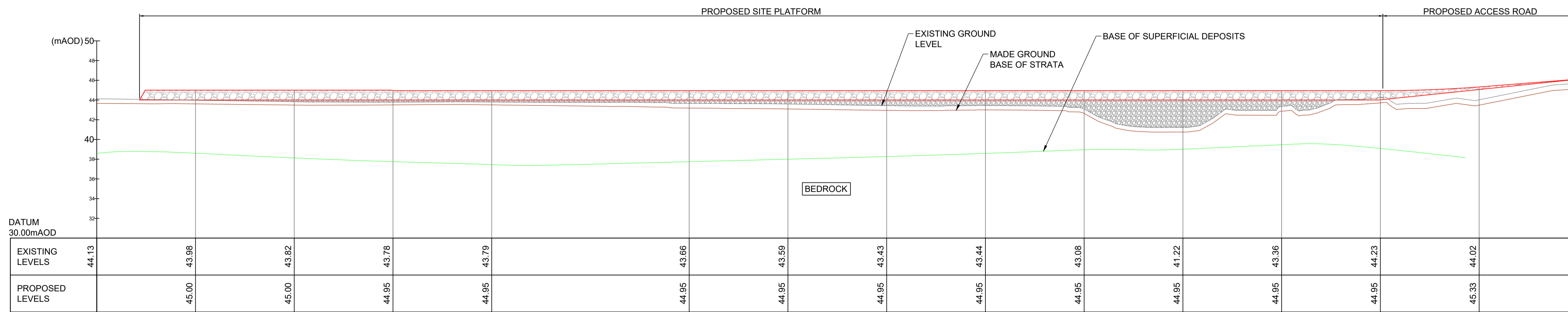
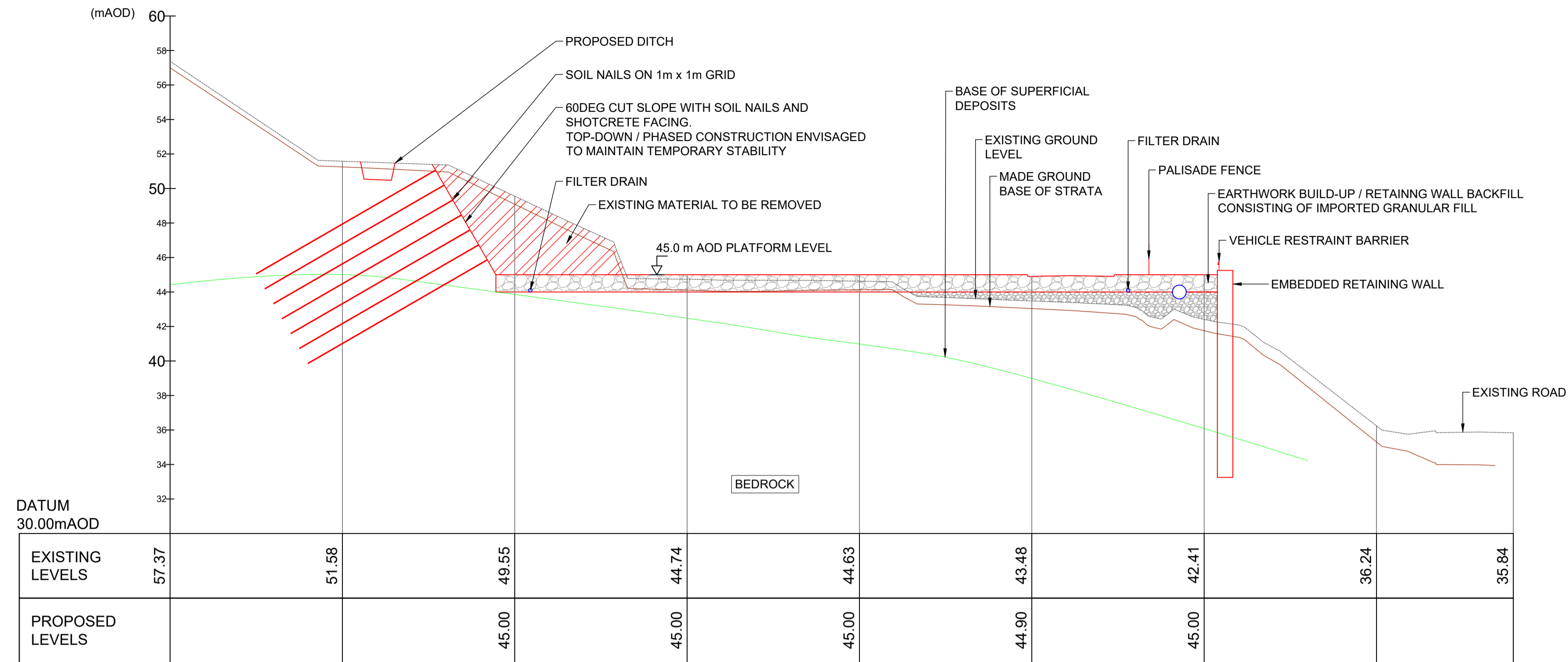
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- NOTES
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 - EARTHWORKS CUTTING/ RETENTION SHOWN IS BASED ON PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS AND IS TO BE FURTHER REFINED AT DETAILED DESIGN STAGE.
 - STRATA LEVELS ARE TAKEN FROM A 3D SURFACE CREATED FROM GI AT DISCRETE LOCATIONS ACROSS THE SITE. IT IS AN APPROXIMATION OF THE EXPECTED LEVELS AND SHOULD BE USED FOR INFORMATION ONLY.



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P03	KW	AC	TA	07/06/23	FOR REVIEW
P02	HT	AD	TA	10/10/23	PRELIMINARY DESIGN
P01	HT	AD	TA	25/09/23	PRELIMINARY DESIGN

CODE	DRAWING STATUS
S3	FOR PLANNING

Tony Gee and Partners LLP
301 Stonehouse Park
Sperry Way
Stonehouse, Gloucestershire
GL10 3UT
Tel: 01453 826773
www.tonygee.com
Consulting Engineers

ON BEHALF OF
SSE-N

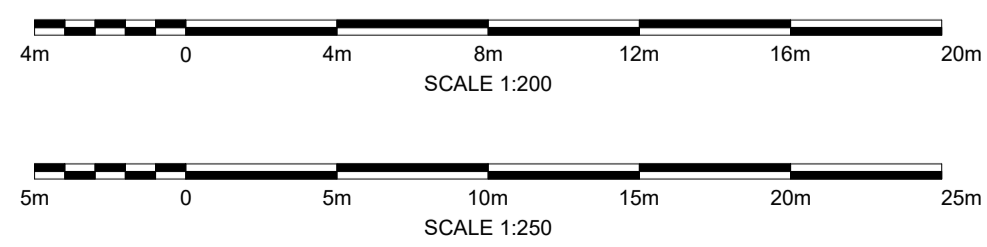
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SUBSTATION**

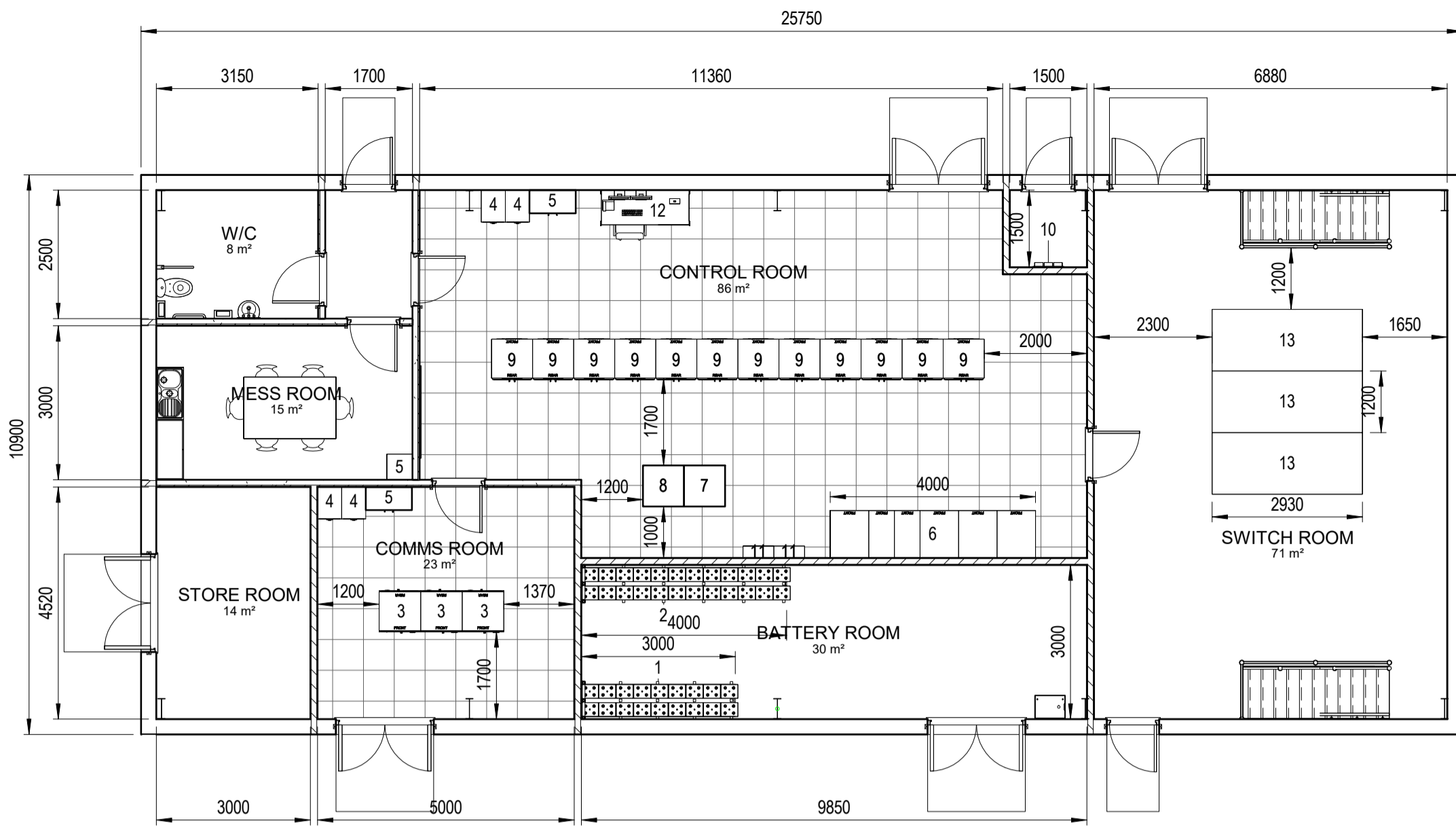
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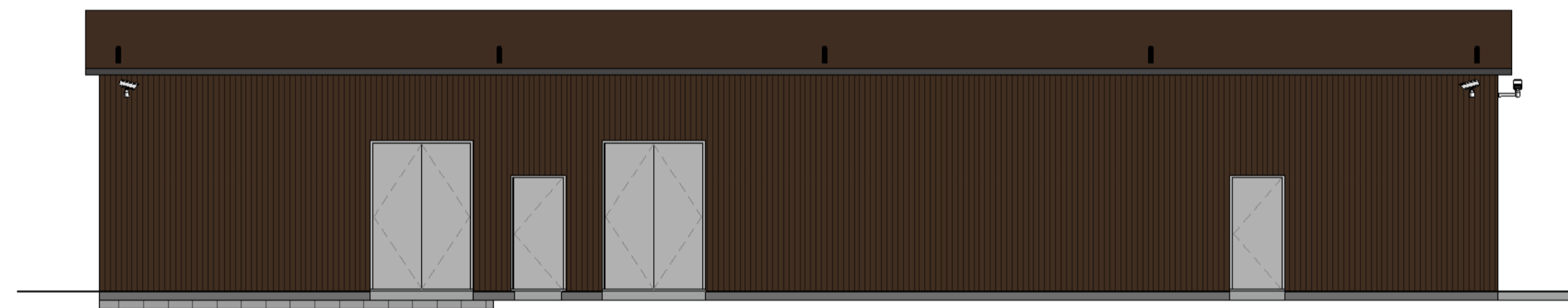
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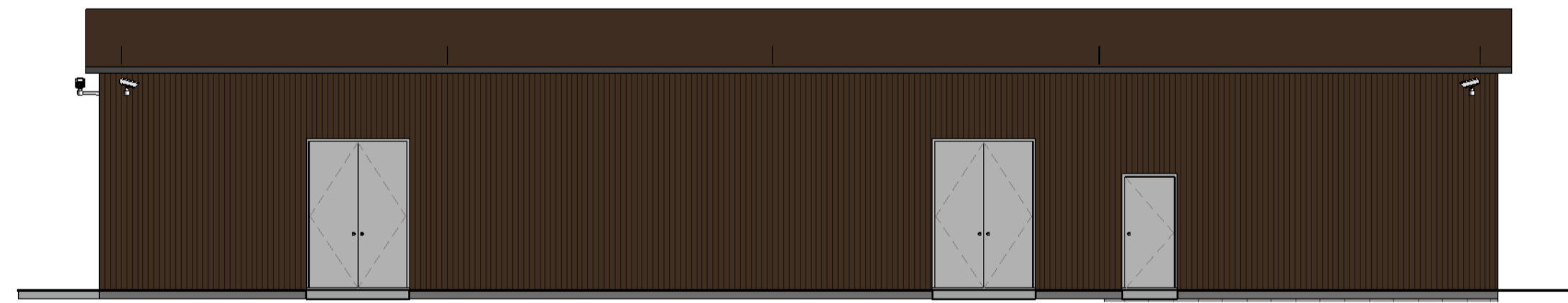




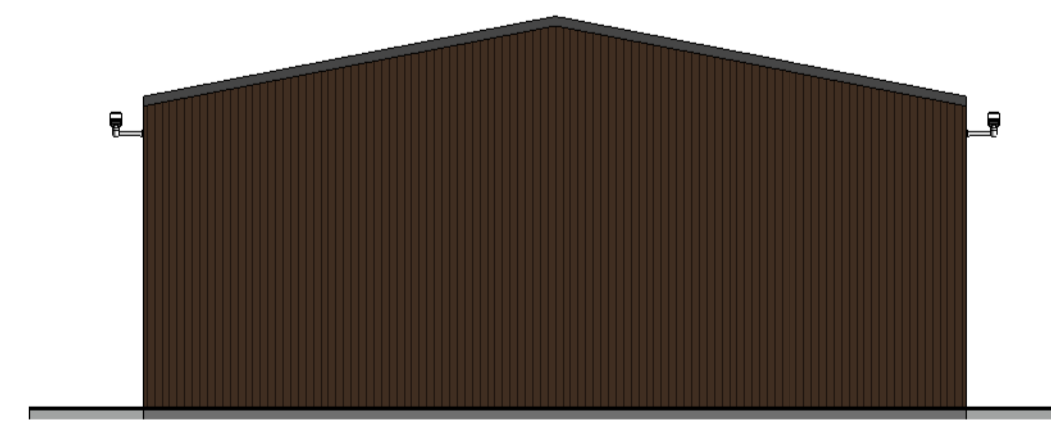
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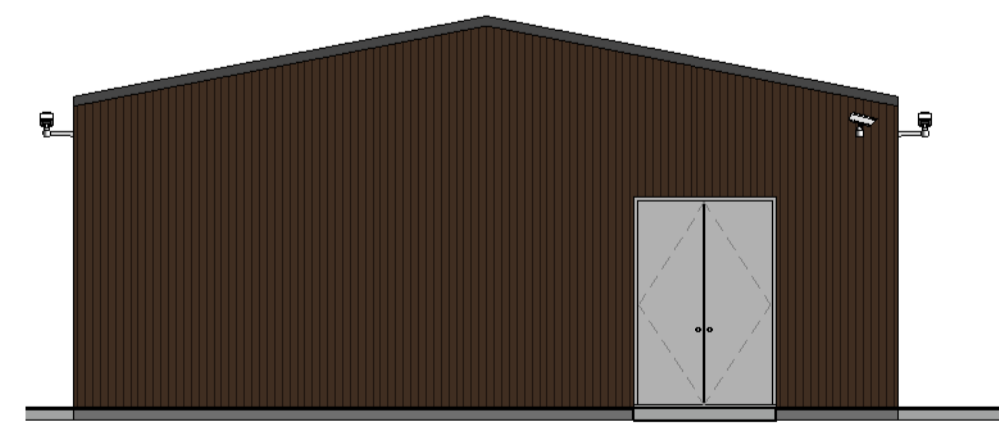
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3 SOUTH ELEVATION
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2 EAST ELEVATION
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4 WEST ELEVATION
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FOR INFORMATION ONLY

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

FOR PLANNING

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STATUS: PRELIMINARY DESIGN ONLY

CONTRACTOR:

INSERT CONTRACTOR LOGO HERE



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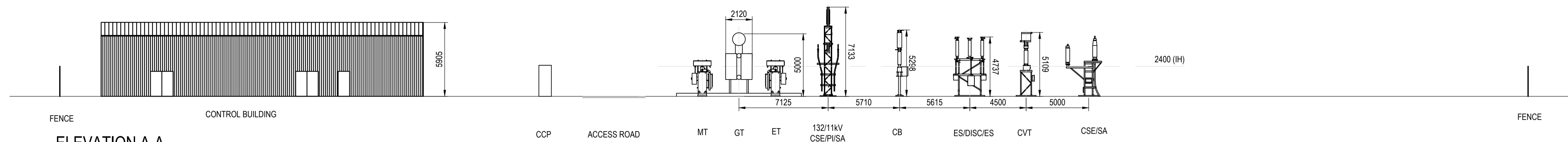
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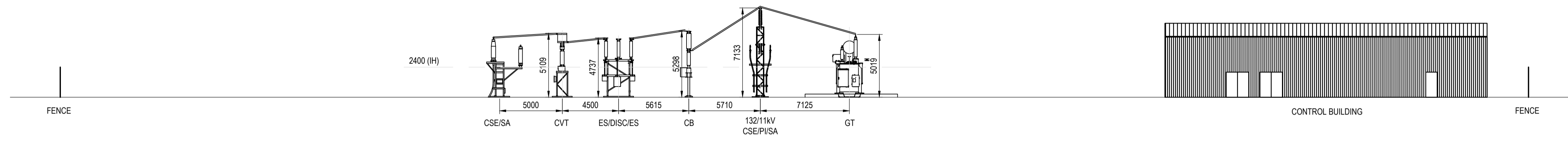
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3. LAYOUT MAY BE REQUIRED TO BE AMENDED DEPENDENT ON FINAL SITE SELECTION.
4. ELECTRICAL LAYOUT SHOWN IS PURELY FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY.
5. ALL EQUIPMENT SHOWN TO BE FINALISED AND CONFIRMED BY ENGINEER/DESIGN TEAM AND UNTIL DONE SO ALL ASPECTS OF THE SHOWN DESIGN ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
6. ALL EQUIPMENT SHOWN TO BE CONSIDERED NEW.
7. ALL DIMENSIONS GIVEN IN MILLIMETRES (mm) U.N.O.
8. CONTROL BUILDING INDICATIVE ONLY - DESIGN TO BE CONFIRMED.

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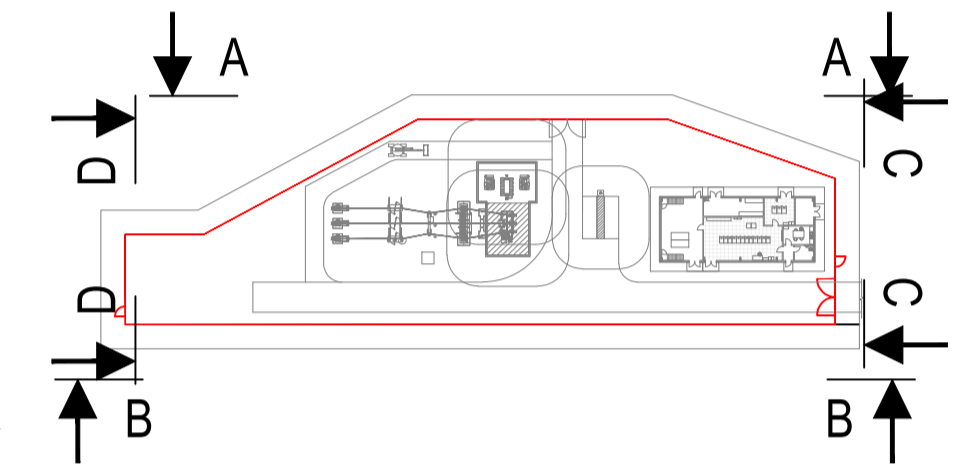
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|------|--------------------------------|
| GT | GRID TRANSFORMER |
| ET | EARTHING TRANSFORMER |
| NER | NEUTRAL EARTHING RESISTOR |
| ES | EARTH SWITCH |
| DISC | DISCONNECTOR (RCP) |
| CB | CIRCUIT BREAKER |
| CT | CURRENT TRANSFORMER |
| CVT | CAPACITIVE VOLTAGE TRANSFORMER |
| SA | SURGE ARRESTER |
| CSE | CABLE SEALING END |
| MK | MARSHALLING KIOSK |
| PI | POST INSULATOR |



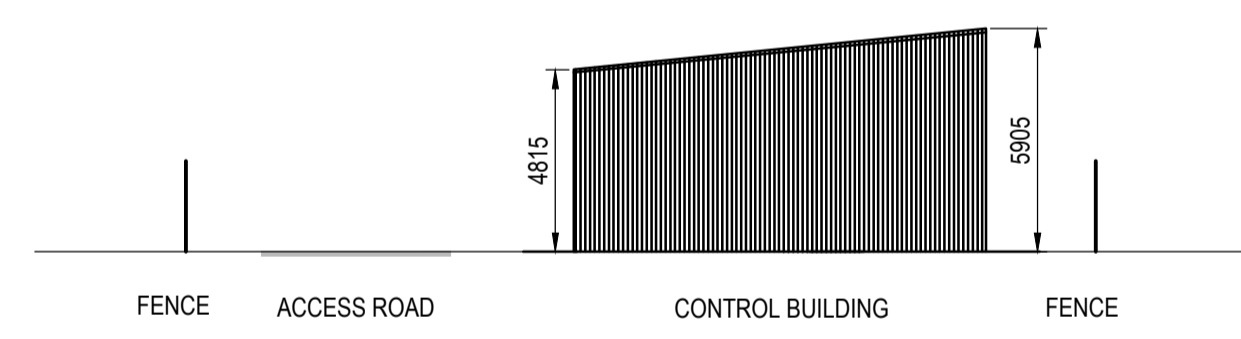
ELEVATION A-A



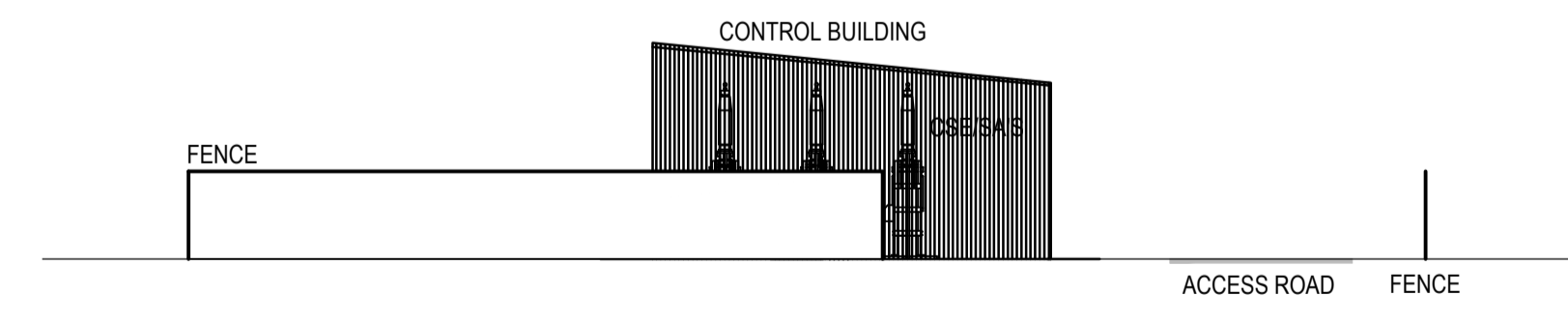
ELEVATION B-B



KEY SITE PLAN



ELEVATION C-C



ELEVATION D-D

**PRELIMINARY DESIGN ONLY
NOT TO BE USED FOR
CONSTRUCTION**

SUBSTATION MINIMUM ELECTRICAL CLEARANCES

REQUIREMENTS TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SSE SUBSTATION DESIGN SPECIFICATION DOC No. SP-NET-SST-501

REF	CLEARANCE (mm)	NOMINAL SYSTEM VOLTAGE			
		400kV	275kV	132kV	33kV
E	PHASE TO EARTH	2800	2100	1200	500
Ph	PHASE TO PHASE	3600	2400	1400	430
S	DESIGN CLEARANCE FOR SAFETY	5500	4800	3500	2900
SD	SAFETY DISTANCE	3100	2400	1400	800
Ds	WORKING & ACCESS CLEARANCE (VERTICAL)	5200	4500	3500	2900
Dsh	WORKING & ACCESS CLEARANCE (HORIZONTAL)	4600	3900	2900	2300
IH	INSULATION HEIGHT (PEDESTRIAN ACCESS)	2400	2400	2400	2400

WHERE EQUIPMENT CONFIGURATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN SUBJECT TO TYPE OF ROUTINE TESTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH IEC 60694 THE CLEARANCES FOR PHASE TO EARTH AND PHASE TO PHASE ABOVE SHALL APPLY. THEY APPLY UNDER CONDITIONS OF MAXIMUM SWING AND SAG.

WHEN DESIGNING ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS THE FOLLOWING ALLOWANCES HAVE BEEN MADE TO COVER TOLERANCES IN ELECTRICAL AND CIVIL WORK AND THE SETTLEMENT OF FOUNDATIONS:- 132kV - 80mm; 33kV - 80mm

Rev: SA	Approved:	Description:
Checked: OB	Date: 20.06.24	ELEVATIONS FOR PLANNING
Rev: MS	Approved: JC	Description:
Checked: ZQ	Date: 25.01.24	APPROVED FOR ISSUE



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Project: AIGAS 132kV REPLACEMENT SUBSTATION

Project Number: LT249 Location: AIGAS

Title: AIGAS NORTH 132/11kV REPLACEMENT SUBSTATION - PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

Drawing Status: PRELIMINARY	Drawn: MS
Scale: 1:200 @ A1	Checked: ZQ
Date: 25.01.24 OF FIRST ISSUE	Approved: JC
Drawing Number: LT251_AIGN_1104_0002	Sheet No: 01
Date Plotted: 20.06.2024	Revision No: PL

File Name: LT251_AIGN_1104_0002.dwg