Agenda Item	3
Report No	PLN/075/25

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee

Date: 17 December 2025

Report Title: 2405062/FUL: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc

Land 2430M SW Of Loch Buidhe, Bonar Bridge

Report By: Area Planning Manager - North

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Carnaig Substation - Construction and operation of a 400kV substation and associated infrastructure, site access, and landscaping

Ward: 01- North, West and Central Sutherland

Development category: National Development

Pre-determination Hearing: Yes

Reason referred to Committee: National Development

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 This proposal is part of a wider project to reinforce the onshore transmission infrastructure. This planning application is for construction of a 400kV air insulated outdoor electricity sub-station on land 7km northwest of Bonar Bridge. The proposed development comprises the following:

- A new level platform (530m by 324m) to be delivered through cut and fill earthworks;
- Outdoor Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) 400 kV substation with double busbar arrangement;
- Four synchronous condenser buildings (approximately 33m by 32m and 14.5m in height);
- Three new Supergrid Transformers (SGTs) and other associated equipment;
- Control building (48m by 23m and 5.8m in height);
- Access roads and temporary construction compound;
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and retention basins;
- Security fencing (2.4m high palisade security fencing with a 1.6m electrified anti-climbing extension) and deer fencing; and
- Landscaping, peatland restoration and biodiversity enhancement.

1.2 This new substation is required to connect a proposed 400 KV overhead line between Spittal and Beauly. There is also the requirement to connect the development with the adjacent existing 275/132 kV Loch Buidhe substation. This will enable the significant power transfer capability required to take power from onshore and offshore renewable schemes and transport it to areas of demand. This includes the consented West of Orkney Offshore Wind Farm, as well as the planned Ayre Offshore Wind Farm. The requirement for this development is identified in the SSEN Transmissions Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design to meet the UK's 2030 net zero targets.

1.3 This existing Loch Buidhe substation is part of an existing 275/132kV line and does not have the necessary infrastructure or capacity to support the proposed new 400kV line. The proposed new Carnaig substation would be located alongside the existing Loch Buidhe substation.

1.4 The applicant utilised Highland Council's Pre-application Advice Service for Major Developments (23/04004/PREMAJ). The pre-application response pack dealt mainly with high level issues and highlighted that the Council was generally supportive of the generation and transmission of renewable energy and understood the benefits of the project in this respect. It advised that providing that the concerns of the Council, communities, and other key consultees regarding the preferred OHL route and substation locations, were satisfactorily addressed, the Council would be able to support the project.

1.5 The applicant has undertaken statutory pre-application consultation. A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) was submitted to Highland Council. The PAN (24/00290/PAN) provided an outline of the application details, dates of public events, publicity arrangements, and confirmation of the site location. This included a series of pre-consultation events which were held in March and June 2024 at Bonnar Bridge

Community Hall. The applicant also raised awareness of these events by contacting local ward members, MSP, and through maildrops, consultation posters, press release, website and newspaper adverts.

1.6 The application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) which was subject of EIA Scoping. The EIAR contains chapters on: Introduction and Background; Project Description; The Need for the Project; Site Selection and Alternatives; EIA Process and Methodology; Scope and Consultation; Landscape and Visual; Carbon Change and Balance; Ecology and Nature Conservation; Ornithology and Nature Conservation; Forestry; Geology and Soils; Hydrology and Hydrogeology; Traffic and Transport; Cultural Heritage; Noise and Vibration, and Socio-economics. The application is also accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report, Planning Statement, and Design and Access Statement.

1.7 During the course of the application's determination amendments have been made to the development with supplementary environmental information (SEI) having been submitted in August and September 2025. The amendments and SEI sought to address consultee concern, and in particular, objections from NatureScot and SEPA. The original proposals for peatland restoration involved relocating excavated peat to an existing area of degraded peatland within the site boundary and deposit at depths of up to 2m in height in the form of a convex dome on top of the existing peatland. This method raised concerns given that this method was untried and created a risk of peat slide with potential consequences for the receiving water environment and areas of special protection. The revised peatland restoration scheme now involves spreading excavated peat at depths of no more than 0.5m in bunded cells.

1.8 Pertinent SEI and amendments made include:

- Introduction of an onsite borrow-pit, providing stone for construction of the substation platform and access tracks;
- Infilling of the borrow-pit at the end of construction, using waste material excavated from the site, including peat;
- Updated Peat Management Plan (PMP) and Peat Slide Risk Assessment (PSLA); and
- Additional proposed watercourse diversion details, as requested by SEPA.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site is located 9.5km northeast of Bonar Bridge, on the east side of the Lochbuie Road (U3521), and approximately 1km south of Loch Buidhe. The Lochbuie Road is single track with passing places. The site lies at around 200m Above Ordinance Datum (AoD) and on the west facing slopes of a small hill (Meall Mhor). The site and surrounding land have been subject to commercial forestry plantation which has been partially felled. The site lies immediately southwest of the existing Loch Buidhe 275 kV/132kV Substation.

2.2 The site is located within the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), designated for hen harriers. The site is not affected by any national or local landscape designations, the nearest being the Loch Fleet, Loch Brora and Glen Loth Special Landscape Area (SLA), 8km to the east. There are no Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings or Conservation

Areas within the site. The SEPA flood map shows parts of the site as being potentially vulnerable to pluvial (surface water) flood risk.

2.3 The site lies within the Rounded Hills – Caithness and Sutherland Landscape Character Type (LCT 135) in NatureScot's Landscape Character Assessment. This LCT is described as occurring extensively across Caithness and Sutherland where, in south-eastern Sutherland it forms higher and more defined rounded hills adjacent to the lower and more gently undulating and lower-lying Sweeping Moorland and Flows. This LCT also extends into Ross and Cromarty to the south of Loch Shin and the Dornoch Firth. The land to the south and east of the site forms part of the wider forestry plantation, whilst to the north and east the land is open moorland, more typical of the LCT.

2.4 There are scattering of properties in the surrounding area, the nearest being to the southeast of the site at Sleasdaraidh (650m from site boundary) and Clashban (800m from site boundary). Other nearby residences are also south of the site, with very little in the way of occupied houses along the U3521 Loch Buidhe Road as it swings east past the site and heads through Strath Carnaig, back to the A9. Recreational interests in the surrounding area include walking and cycling, with a Core Path, just east of the proposed substation but passing through the planning application site, linking Loch Buidhe with the minor road at Achvaich, and passing the highest nearby summit of Beinn Domhnaill (347m). Loch Buidhe is known to be popular for fishing.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1	30.05.2013	12/04527/FUL - Construction of Substation (Loch Buidhe Substation), incorporating control building, access roads and outdoor electrical switch gear all within compound surrounded by pallisade high security fencing.	Planning Permission Granted
3.2	26.01.2024	24/00290/PAN - The construction and operation of a 400kV substation, access, construction compound, landscaping and ancillary infrastructure.	Proposal of Application Notice Reported to Committee
3.3	06.02.2024	23/05829/SCOP - Spittal Substation and HVDC Converter Station - New 400kv Substation and HVDC Converter Station To Connect To The Proposed New 400kv Overhead Line between Spittal and Beauly, The New Spittal To Peterhead HVDC Link, And The Existing Spittal 275/132kv Substation	EIA Scoping Response Issued
3.4	18.12.2024	24/04588/SCOP - Construct and operate a 400 kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line (OHL) supported by steel lattice towers over a distance of approximately 167 km, between proposed substations at Spittal (Banniskirk), Loch Buidhe (Carnaig) and Beauly (Fanellan), rationalisation	Scoping Response Issued

		and crossing of existing transmission infrastructure.	
3.5	20.11.2025	25/03629/SCRE - EIA Screening Opinion Request for the construction and operation of a new 132kV overhead line (OHL) connection between Shin Substation and a proposed cable sealing end (CSE) compound approximately 2 km west of Loch Buidhe Substation, and the dismantling of the existing 132kV OHL connection between Shin Substation and Loch Buidhe Substation	EIA Screening Opinion Issued – EIA Required
	Pertinent planning history for associated suite of transmission projects and connecting renewable energy projects. These do not form part of this current application.		
3.6	Application received: 03.09.2025	25/03311/S37 Spittal to Beauly 400 kV OHL - Install, operate and keep installed 173km of new 400 kV overhead electricity line, supported on steel lattice tower structures, between proposed new substations at Banniskirk (ND 15905 56823) in the area of Spittal, and Fanellan (NH 48534 43208) in the area of Beauly, with a connection via a proposed new substation at Carnaig (NH 65053 97458) near to the existing substation at Loch Buidhe, in the area of Bonar Bridge; associated permanent diversion works to 18km of existing 132 kV and 275 kV overhead electricity lines, including the temporary diversion works, and ancillary development and associated works.	Section 37 Electricity Act application pending consideration – THC Objection Raised 30.10.2025
3.7	Application received: 21.10.2025	25/03986/S37 Beauly to Peterhead 400 kV OHL - Install, operate and keep installed 186km of new 400 kV overhead transmission line (OHL), supported on steel lattice tower structures, between proposed new substations at Fanellan (NH 48321 42717) in the area of Beauly, Greens (NJ 81960 47587) in the area of New Deer and Netherton (NK 05761 45576) in the area of Peterhead; associated crossing works, temporary diversions and permanent realignment to 14.7 km of existing 132 kV and 275 kV OHLs, and ancillary development and associated works.	Section 37 Electricity Act application pending consideration
3.8	Application received: 21.11.2024	24/04898/FUL Banniskirk Substation - Erection and operation of an Air Insulated Switchgear 400kV substation and HVDC converter station with associated buildings, installation of new	Planning application approved by THC North

		platforms, drainage infrastructure, temporary construction compound, landscaping, mounding and other ancillary works.	PAC on 26.11.25
3.9	Application received: 20.03.2025	25/00826/FUL Fanellan Substation - construction and operation of a 400 kV substation and converter station and associated infrastructure, site access, landscaping and demolition works	Planning application pending consideration
3.10	18.06.2024	23/05353/PIP West of Orkney Wind Farm - construction of onshore transmission infrastructure comprising up to two cable landfalls, an onshore substation and up to five associated export circuits	Planning Permission in Principle Granted
3.11	Application received: 20.08.2025	25/02964/PIP Ayre Offshore Wind Farm - construction of onshore transmission infrastructure comprising cable landfall, substation, cable circuits, temporary construction areas, access, drainage, landscaping and associated infrastructure	Planning application pending consideration

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: EIA Development, EIA SEI, Schedule 3 Development, and unknown neighbour

Date Advertised: Edinburgh Gazette and Northern Times – 31.01.2025 and 03.10.2025

Representation deadline: 02.11.2025

Timeous representations:	Objections 49 (from 46 households)
Late representations:	0

4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- Landscape impact on the wider area and setting of Loch Buidhe and Strath Carnaig and Kyle of Sutherland.
- Ecological impact, along with proposed OHL and nearby windfarms.
- Ecological impact, pollution risk to the local environment and watercourses, including to Atlantic salmon and fresh water pearl mussels in protected watercourses that the site drains to.
- Impact on Strath Carnaig SSSI.
- Caithness blanket bog was given World Heritage Status – It should not be dug up.
- Cumulative impacts – piecemeal development, not everything has been included in the assessment; installation will lead to more pressure for wind farms and battery storage developments in the landscape.

- Impact on the cultural heritage.
- Carbon costs have not been calculated accurately.
- Health impacts including on mental health and risk from electro-magnetic fields.
- Contrary to ECHR in terms of Right to Life and Right to Health.
- No details of de-commissioning and restoration.
- Pollution risk, could contaminate surrounding farmland and crops.
- Does not comply with the Electricity Act 1989; contrary to the development plan relating to landscape, habitat and community impact.
- Traffic and road safety concerns from construction phase, particularly in Bonar Bridge, passed shop and school and on minor roads leading to the site.
- Disruption to communities from construction.
- Noise, light, dust, litter all will impact on the life of nearby residents.
- Impact on dark skies via light pollution.
- Lack of community engagement and consultation.
- Failure to consider options, such as off-shore sub-sea cabling.
- Impact on local tourism economy and on recreational value of the area; lack of benefit to local economy and community.
- Application is premature pending decision on the Spittal-Beauly OHL.
- Formation of the substation will involve excavation of peat which will release radioactive material into the atmosphere.
- Additional information does not address all objections
- Cumulative assessment is out of date

4.3 Non-material planning considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- Call for a moratorium on electricity infrastructure in the Highlands.
- Lack of transparency in planning process.
- Loss of property values.
- Failure to compensate local businesses and communities.
- Electricity will be exported to England and no benefit to Highland customers; Scotland produces more energy than it needs; new infrastructure should be located where it is needed.
- Construction on peatland will release toxic heavy metals and radioactive material from Chernobyl fall out
- No demonstrated need for the development.
- Costs to local and national purse is unknown.
- Does not align with Just Transition principles.
- Shareholder profits before communities.
- Questions over UK energy market and pricing.
- Fire risk.
- Issues should be addressed via a public inquiry not as individual applications

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 **Creich Community Council (Host): Object** to the application. Prematurity - determination should be alongside, not ahead of, the proposed new Spittal to Beauly OHL. The overall project is being salami sliced into smaller projects but the cumulative impacts are not considered. All impacted roads should be surveyed pre and post construction, with repairs and lasting improvements made. Local liaison is required during construction to agree a transport schedule with forestry and Scottish Water, avoiding school start and finish times. Contractors should be obliged to obtain local goods and services and offer local employment. Non-material considerations raised: Financial compensation should be provided and administered via the community council, with directly affected households and businesses offered compensation over and above this.

5.2 **Dornoch Community Council** – within peatland management plan area of application site): did not respond to the consultation.

5.3 **Ardgay Community Council:** did not respond to the consultation.

5.4 **Golspie Community Council:** does not object to application. The application site is much larger than the size of the planned substation, however, the development should occupy the minimum amount of ground required. Impact on peat should be minimised to ensure compensatory restoration to reduce carbon emissions by more than 10 times. Overall impact on carbon reduction of the project should be stated by the developer. SSE should clearly demonstrate overall carbon footprint of the project and measures to off-set carbon debt and plans for decommissioning. The need for battery storage should be evidenced and with safety fully assessed. The response also raises concerns about the need for and safety of battery energy storage systems (BESS), although it should be noted that there is no BESS element in the planning application.

5.5 **Edderton Community Council:** did not respond to the consultation.

5.6 **Lairg Community Council:** did not respond to the consultation.

5.7 **Rogart Community Council:** did not respond to the consultation.

5.8 **Access Officer:** does not object. Recreational access along the existing substation track would be restricted during construction. Core Path SU09.19 that runs from Achvaich to Loch Buidhe would require to remain open during construction, with details of peat management proposals in its vicinity to be submitted prior to development commence. A Recreation Access Management Plan will be required.

5.9 **Community Wealth Building Team:** do not object. Confirmed that it will be contacting the applicant regarding the Highland Social Value Charter.

5.10 **Contaminated Land Officer:** does not object to application and has no further comment.

5.11 **Development Plans Team:** does not object to application. The proposals are in overall conformity with the development plan.

5.12 **Environmental Health Team:** do not object. They note that there is potential for "significant" construction noise but that this would be reduced to minor as all activities would not take place at the same time. It is noted that a desk based construction noise a report has been undertaken and a Construction Noise Management Plan (CNMP) will be provided by the contractor. There are concerns about proposals for seven-day working. In respect of operational noise, two relevant noise sensitive properties have been identified in the applicant's assessment. From the figures shown, the predicted noise levels at these premises should not exceed the Council's required level of 5dB above background of 30dB, whichever is lower. A set of conditions on construction noise, hours of operation (that exclude Sundays), operational noise and requiring a revised Noise Impact Assessment are proposed. Investigation of impacts on any private water supplies will be required.

5.13 **Flood Risk Management Team:** Does not object to application. No concerns on flood risk grounds and request a condition on the final details of surface water drainage arrangements.

5.14 **Forestry Team: objects** to application. Initial response questioned whether the existing East Sutherland Land Management Plan (LMP) approved by Scottish Forestry already identifies the areas proposed for peatland restoration. If it does, then this cannot count towards biodiversity enhancement as it does not demonstrate additionality. Compensatory Planting will be required to mitigate for this loss of woodland. There is a significant area of clear fell awaiting restock to the north of the proposed peatland restoration area that has no management prescription. This may need to be added to the area of permanent woodland removal if it is to remain unplanted or converted to another habitat type. A significant area surrounding and to the east of the proposed substation is identified for conversion from woodland to upland heath/moorland to provide nesting and foraging habitat for hen harriers. This contradicts the Forestry Replanting Plan which identifies this area to be replanted and will therefore need to be added to the area of permanent woodland removal. Following confirmation from applicant that the area for forest to bog restoration was identified in the LMP for replanting , further comments provided - There are no details of the location and area of compensatory planting, which may require to exceed the 23.52 Ha proposed as peat restoration areas may not be considered as priority peatland; as forest to bog proposals use a new methodology and may not be considered as peatland restoration, the area for replanting will require to equate to that being removed from productive use and could be significantly greater than applicant's figure. There is also no assessment of tree impacts of abnormal indivisible load (AIL) transportation on trees. Objection maintained based on above points and that as such the development is contrary to Policy 6 of NPF4 and Policies 51 & 52 of the HwLDP. Conditions proposed if approval is to be granted, in respect of compensatory planting and AIL routing.

5.15 **Historic Environment Team (Archaeology):** does not object to application. Required mitigation can be secured by a suspensive planning condition.

5.16 **Transport Planning Team:** does not object to the application. There is a lack of detail in the submission, and as such, planning conditions are required in relation to a number of matters. There is a need to upgrade the U3521 road serving the site in order to accommodate construction traffic, including timber transport, given felling is proposed

as the first phase of activity. Substantial upgrades to the U3521 will be necessary to enable construction of the substation. Currently, the service is unable to provide detailed comments as the appointed contractor is still in the process of investigating and assessing several key transport related aspects of the project. Further mitigation measures may be required on routes from quarries and other supply nodes to the site. Of particular concern is the volume of traffic projected to pass through the community of Bonar Bridge. Given the duration of the construction period, it is imperative that the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) includes robust traffic management measures. It is essential that the CTMPs for the OHL and the substation are considered together in an integrated and coordinated manner. The applicant will be required to enter into a Section 96 agreement under the Roads (Scotland) Act, to safeguard the integrity of the public road network. The impact of construction traffic in Bonar Bridge is of significant concern, with a 47% increase in traffic in the village predicted and a high volume of this being HGVs. Given the scale and duration of the construction project, a planning condition sets out the need for road safety measures in Bonar Bridge, as part of wider mitigation measures. Such measures would include footway improvements, junction enhancement, gateway features and speed management measures. Proposed condition topics:

- Migdale Road Mitigation Schedule;
- Bonar Bridge Road Safety Mitigation Schedule;
- Construction Traffic Management Plan;
- Section 96 Wear and Tear Agreement;
- Site Access Junction Design;
- Abnormal Indivisible Load Plan; and
- Surface Water Drainage Design.

5.17 **Historic Environment Scotland:** does not object to application. Historic environment interests in the vicinity fall outwith the zone of theoretical visibility of the proposed development and the proposal would not have any significant impacts on heritage assets within our remit.

5.18 **Ministry of Defence:** does not object to application. The proposed development falls outside of MOD safeguarded areas and does not affect other defence interests.

5.19 **National Air Traffic Service:** does not object to application and has no further comment.

5.20 **NatureScot:** does not object to application. Following the submission of the SEI, initial objection has been withdrawn. Initial concerns related to the proposed peatland restoration, involving large volumes of peat at depths of up to 2m on sloping land above Loch an Lagain which could create a pollution risk, including via peat slide to Loch an Lagain which drain to the River Evelix. This could have affected internationally important natural heritage interests (fresh water pearl mussels) in the River Evelix SAC. Following the submission of SEI, the revised peatland restoration plan using a honeycomb bunding approach is considered more stable, although uncertainties remain as to its success in restoring blanket bog. Conditions are advised to mitigate impacts on the River Evelix SAC and its fresh water pearl mussels. These require a General Environmental Management Plan (GEMP) and Species Protection Plan (SPP) to be prepared and implemented and an Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) to be

employed, as per the applicants proposed mitigation. In addition, the measures set out in the applicant's Peat Slide Risk Assessment (PSRA) are to be implemented.

In respect of the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA, conditions are required to ensure accordance with the Breeding Bird Protection Plan, in respect of hen harriers. Similarly, mitigation measures are required in respect of hen harrier habitat and measures to enhance this habitat are welcomed. Advice is also given on revisions to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) proposals in order to enhance the condition of the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA.

5.21 **Scottish Water:** does not object to application and provides standing advice.

5.22 **SEPA:** does not object to application. Following the submission of the SEI, initial objection has been withdrawn. Initial concerns were due to lack of information on potential impact to the water environment and incompliance with NPF4 Policy 5d. More information on treatment of unmapped watercourses in the site was initially sought, including plans detailing how this natural watercourse will be diverted, as well as information on the 'vision' for this diverted watercourse. Volumes of peat proposed to be excavated (estimated at over 300,000m3) are a concern and appear to be contrary to Policy 4 Policy 5. The peat restoration plan appeared to involve an operation that would be deemed to be waste disposal by SEPA, and also involves a methodology that is not supported by SEPA as it involved the addition of up to 2 metres thickness of peat as a convex deposit on an area of shallow peat, which does not seem warranted on an ecological basis. SEPA recommend that the Council confirms with the applicant whether a borrow pit will be required and if so, a planning condition in respect of it. A condition is also proposed requiring a Forestry Felling Plan.

Following the submission of SEI, the objection has been withdrawn subject to the application of planning conditions. Having assessed the revised peat restoration plans, related water diversion proposals are now supported. The revised peatland restoration proposals are welcomed but defers to NatureScot on the ecological suitability of peat management plans, and whilst it removes its objection, concerns remain that some of the peat re-use proposals, involving infilling of a borrow-pit would still constitute waste disposal. Details of this element require to be subject to planning conditions covering methodology, implementation and future management of all measures affecting peat and watercourses.

5.23 **Transport Scotland:** does not object to application, subject to conditions on construction traffic management, movement on abnormal loads and related traffic management measures.

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, and other material policy considerations which are relevant to the assessment of the application.

7. PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.1 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. 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

7.2 The key considerations in this case are:

a) Development Plan and Other Planning Policy
b) Energy and Carbon Impact
c) Siting, Layout and Design
d) Landscape and Visual Impact
e) Construction Impact
f) Roads, Transport and Wider Access
g) Operational Impact (including Noise)
h) Natural Heritage (including Ornithology)
i) Designations
j) Other Protected Species
k) Peat
l) Biodiversity
m) Forestry
n) Water, Flood Risk, and Drainage
o) Built and Cultural Heritage
p) Other Material Considerations

Development Plan and Other Planning Policy

7.3 The Development Plan comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP), the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (2018) (CaSPlan) and various Supplementary Guidance documents associated with these Local Development Plans.

7.4 Appendix 2 of this report provides an assessment of compliance with the Development Plan / Other Planning Policy.

7.5 In summary, the principle of development is established in national policy, with the proposed development being of national importance 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.

7.6 At a regional level, the principal Highland-wide Local Development Plan policy is Policy 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure. This policy offers support for electricity transmission infrastructure, having regard to their level of strategic significance in transmitting electricity from areas of generation to areas of consumption. Such support is subject to the proposals not having an unacceptable significant impact on the

environment. As the development would help to reinforce the onshore transmission infrastructure and facilitate an increasing proportion of electricity generation from renewable sources, the principle of the development receives support under HwLDP Policy 69, subject to site selection, design and overcoming any unacceptable significant environmental effects.

Energy, Carbon and Economic Impact

7.7 The EIA advises that renewable energy generation volumes, particularly from offshore wind are expected to increase towards the end of the decade and into the 2030s in the far north of the SSEN Transmission network and as a result there is a need for additional transmission system capacity to the north of Beauly to meet this demand. The UK Government's ambition is for 50 Gigawatt (GW) of offshore wind by 2030 and to support this, there is a requirement to reinforce the electricity transmission network between Beauly Substation and the existing Loch Buidhe Substation and the need to create new electricity transmission between Loch Buidhe Substation and Spittal. This network reinforcement and creation require new standalone substations at Spittal, Loch Buidhe and Beauly capable of operating at 400 kV. The related new 400 kV overhead line (OHL) connecting Spittal, Loch Buidhe and Beauly substations are being progressed through a separate application and consenting process.

7.8 The effects of the proposed Carnaig 400 kV Substation on climate change and carbon balance have been evaluated through an assessment based on the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) guidance for assessing greenhouse gas emissions (2022). This assessment comprises a Climate Change Resilience (CCR) Assessment, which considers the impact of climate change on the proposed development; an In-Combination Climate Impacts (ICCI) Assessment which considers the effects of climate change on environmental receptors assessed within the EIA and; a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Assessment which consider the influence of the proposed development on the climate.

7.9 It should be noted that emissions from construction materials and manufacturing were not included in the assessment as complete data was not available at the time of the assessment and would not usually be available or confirmed until the construction phase. Carbon losses associated with peatland disturbance and forestry felling were calculated as 110,590 tonnes CO2 equivalent, with an additional 1,924.45 tonnes CO2 associated with construction traffic, totalling 112,514.45 tCO2 equivalent overall for the proposed development. These losses are underestimated due to construction materials and manufacture not being included. Overall, the reported losses would account for approximately 0.03% of the UK's annual territorial GHG emissions which is assessed as a negligible magnitude of impact on a very highly sensitive receptor, resulting in a minor adverse effect on the climate, which is not significant under the EIA Regulations.

7.10 These calculations do not take account of positive peatland restoration proposals which could achieve savings up to a maximum of approximately 45,566 t CO2 equivalent. In addition, the development is required to enable the connection, transmission, and distribution of electricity from renewable energy developments which have associated carbon savings. The emissions saved from these developments are expected to balance and exceed the losses associated with the proposed development. When climate is considered holistically, the proposal is considered capable of compliance with NPF4 Policies 1 and 2 for Climate and Nature Crises as well Climate Mitigation and

Adaptation, however, that is entirely reliant upon the carbon balance assessments provided within connecting renewable energy development applications, taking a full and accurate account of all associated transmission infrastructure. This requires the methodology for such assessments to be reviewed at a national level in light of the suite of ASTI projects.

7.11 The advancement of substation projects as presented within this application are not only beneficial in strengthening the robustness of the country's grid network, but they will also result in further job and investment opportunities through the development of associated supply chains. EIAR Chapter 15 outlines the expected effects on the local economy during construction and operational phases. The applicant anticipates that the construction of the proposed development could support 58 job years in Highland, where one job year represents one year of continuous employment. This is conditional on commitment by the supply chain to employing local labour as far as possible. The estimated number of job years supported for the whole of Scotland is 738 and 1,627 for the whole of the UK. These figures include direct, indirect and induced employment (which is the economic effect caused by household spending, which results from wages earned through direct and indirect employment). The EIA reports that overall, this would equate to £6.17 million in total (direct, indirect and induced) Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Highlands and £86.1 million to Scotland. As such the project could offer investment / opportunities to the Highland and Scottish economy including businesses ranging across construction, haulage, electrical and service sectors.

7.12 Public representations have raised concerns relating to amenity impacts on the local area and economic impacts associated with the development having a detrimental impact upon tourism. There is also likely to be adverse effects during the construction phase, particularly in relation to construction traffic, this can addressed by a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and Access Management Plan (AMP). The provision of a Community Liaison Group will also be secured by condition. Many of the impacts will be temporary in nature and managed through the mitigation measures identified in this report on handling. As such the applicant contends that there will be no long-term detrimental effect on the tourism industry.

7.13 Scenery and the natural environment within the Highlands are important factors for many visitors when choosing the area for outdoor recreation and as a holiday destination. The LVIA concludes that during construction, significant adverse visual effects are expected and at Year 1 of operation, the substation would remain a prominent feature, with mitigation planting beginning to reduce its visibility, albeit that major/moderate and significant adverse effects would still exist. By Year 15, the proposed vegetation is expected to mature, integrating the development into the landscape, with only minor/moderate effects, that are considered not to be significant. The proposed landscape and visual mitigation measures principally involve planting and earthworks to screen the development. The combined long-term effects of the substation along with the Spittal-Loch Buidhe-Beauly 400kV OHL and underground cabling are also expected to be not significant once mitigation planting is established.

7.14 The EIAR, Chapter 15 has considered the effects of the development on tourism and recreation. The impacts on four tourism receptors were assessed within a 5km study area of the site. These were fishing activities at 3 nearby lochs (Loch Buidhe, Loch a'Ghobhair and Loch an Lagain) and one other location at Midgey Beach historical landmark, at the eastern end of Loch Buidhe. The impacts on these receptors has

been assessed as Moderate at worst, during construction, and no long-term impacts on tourism are expected to result from the development nor significant changes to tourism conditions.

7.15 Recreation receptors assessed also included the three fishing locations assessed for tourism as well as forest walks at Balblair, just north of Bonar Bridge and the Meall Mor Fire Road, part of the Core Path route running to the east of the substation site. All effects on recreational walking routes have been assessed as negligible, with no significant impacts, whilst impacts on fishing are assessed as having a moderate effect and being of moderate significance, but again only during construction. These findings are not disputed by officers with no long-term significant adverse impacts on the recreational assets resulting from the development.

7.16 Given the requirement of NPF4 Policy 11c) for development proposals to only be supported where they maximise socio-economic impacts, in July 2023 the applicant launched a consultation on plans for their first ever community benefit fund. This is a £10 million fund which will see SSEN working with communities across the north of Scotland to channel funds into local projects. Following the Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023, the UK's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero also published its "Response to the consultation on Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure". In light of this, the applicant is expecting further community benefit funding opportunities, in the region of £100 million to be available for local projects. Community benefit however remains a non-material planning consideration and therefore the existence or absence of this fund can be given no weight in the decision-making process.

7.17 A further recent announcement was made by the UK Government on 10 March 2025 that the Planning and Infrastructure Bill will deliver an energy discount scheme for homes close to overhead transmission pylons required to deliver Clean Power 2030, with this scheme to be rolled out across England, Wales and Scotland. The statement explains that communities could get £200,000 worth of funding per km of new high voltage overhead line and £530,000 per substation. As the bill is at an early stage and is making its way through parliament, it remains unclear if this detail will remain unaltered or what the scheme eligibility / commencement cut-off date will be. The applicant has however confirmed that this project would be eligible under such a scheme. Again, although this emerging scheme may deliver socio-economic benefits, it is also to be regarded as another form of community benefit which at the present time should be given no weight in the decision-making process. The Council's Community Wealth Building Team have also confirmed that it is in regular dialogue with the applicant regarding the Highland Social Value Charter.

7.18 Given the requirement of NPF4 Policy 11c) for development proposals to only be supported where they maximise socio-economic impacts, it is recommended that a planning condition is used which requires the applicant to commit to the delivery of the socio-economic benefits of the scheme in line with those set out within the EIA.

Siting, Layout and Design

7.19 Volume 2: Chapter 3 of the EIAR deals with site selection and alternatives. The site selection process comprised 3 stages (Stages 0, 1 and 2). Stage 0 involved strategic options appraisal, where the key requirements of the development were deemed to be:

proximity to the existing Loch Buidhe Substation to minimise cable length; site size in order to accommodate the substation footprint and associated access, landscaping and construction compounds, enabling connection and capacity for future connections; and avoidance of environmental designations and minimisation of environmental impacts.

7.20 Five options were considered at the Initial Site Selection Stage (Stage 1), and following multi-criteria assessment. Options 4 and 5 were dismissed at this stage (Option 4 had poor access and would impact on forestry and Option 5 required access track upgrading and would have a direct impact on the Strath Carnaig and Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI). The selection was therefore narrowed down to 3 sites assessed at the Detailed Site Selection Stage (Stage 3). Appraisal of options at this stage involved systematic consideration against a range of environmental, engineering and cost factors, resulting in the planning application site emerging as the preferred site. The plan below is an extract from the EIA (Volume 2: Chapter 3 – Table 3.1) that shows the sites considered. The green square identifies the application site as the site selected (Option 3).

Table 3.1 Initial Site Screening of the five substation options

Option 1

Environment

- Potential for visual screening with forest plantation surrounding the site.
- Out with Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA / SSSI.

Engineering

- Relatively level site.
- The existing track is steep and may require assessment and upgrades.
- Access to site from the A386 from an existing forest track.

Option 2

Environment

- Out with Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA / SSSI.

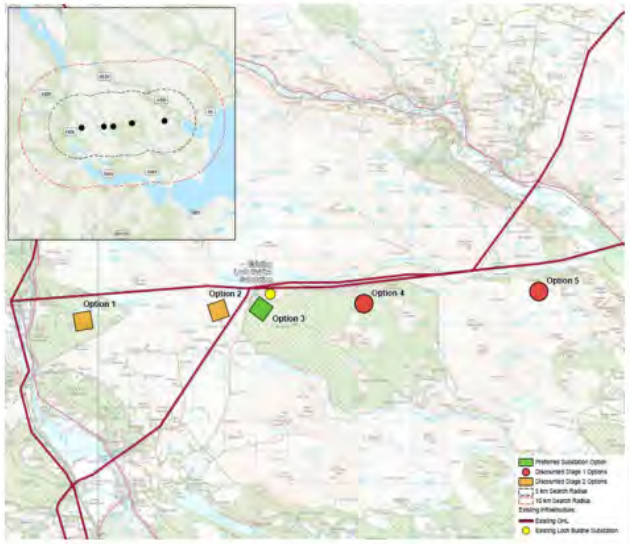
Engineering

- Relatively level site.
- Access to site from existing track upgraded for the existing substation.

Option 3

Environment

- More favourable from a landscape and visual perspective as adjacent to the existing Loch Buidhe Substation.



Sites taken to Stage 2 Assessment

Options 1, 2 and 3 were taken forward to Stage 2 based on access constraints, land use impacts and environmental sensitivities.

- Although within the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA / SSSI out with the preferred habitat for hen harrier (qualifying feature of the SPA / SSSI).
- Likely to have an impact on plantation forestry.

Engineering

- Immediately adjacent to the existing Loch Buidhe Substation and with direct access from the road upgraded for the existing Loch Buidhe Substation.
- Shortest cable connection (c.600 m) between the proposed 400 kV substation and the existing 275 kV substation.

Option 4

- Poor access to site, which would require upgrade of c.4 km of public road.
- Likely to have an impact on plantation forestry.

Option 5

- Access track would require upgrade.
- Located within Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA / SSSI on peatland habitat which has potential to support hen harrier (qualifying feature of the SPA / SSSI).

7.21 From the 3 final sites identified at Stage 2, Option 1 was located 6 km SW of existing substation, had no designated sites but potential impact on peatland and cultural heritage, had high excavation needs, a steep access road and was least preferred by Historic Environment Scotland (HES). Option 2 was located 1.5 km SW, and contained peatland, partially overlapped Garvary Wind Farm boundary but had moderate civil works required and attracted no major concerns from HES or NatureScot at pre-application stage. Option 3 (the application site) was adjacent to existing Loch Buidhe Substation, within SPA/SSSI but in an area of low hen harrier activity, had the least visual impact, shortest cable connection, was technically and economically most viable and preferred by statutory consultees with mitigation for protected species. Following this stage, further design work narrowed down the exact location, in respect of

constraints included steep topography, deep peat, and proximity to existing infrastructure.

Landscape and Visual Impact

7.22 Volume 2 Chapter 5 of the EIA comprises a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which evaluates the potential effects of the Carnaig 400kV substation on landscape character and visual amenity during construction and operation. The study area for the LVIA was defined as 1km for visual receptors and 2km for landscape character, based on visibility mapping and fieldwork. The 1 km Study Area for the assessment of visual amenity was considered appropriate, given the lightly settled nature of the area surrounding the site and the limited nature of views due to intervening landform and vegetation. The 2 km Study Area for the assessment of landscape effects was informed by the predicted extent of significant indirect effects on the landscape due to the scale of the proposed development and the existing landscape, including large areas of commercial forestry and landforms that limit longer distance views towards the site.

7.23 The site lies within the Rounded Hills – Caithness and Sutherland Landscape Character Type (LCT), as defined by NatureScot's Landscape Character Assessment which is judged to have a medium sensitivity to change. This LCT is a largely undeveloped moorland area with coniferous plantations and five representative viewpoints were selected to assess visual impacts, primarily from Lochbuie Road and Carnegie Road.

7.24 The LVIA considered effects on five representative viewpoints selected to illustrate the view from transport and recreational routes and from the edge of settlement areas, effects on properties and settlements within the 1km Study Area, on people undertaking recreation, such as fishing on Loch Buidhe and walking within the study area. Sequential effects travelling along Lochbuie Road, which would provide access to the existing 275 kV Loch Buidhe Substation and the proposed development, were also considered. Residential properties in the area comprise dispersed farmsteads and cottages largely located to the south west of the proposed development and typically aligned to a southern aspect with limited or no visibility to the north towards the proposed development. A number of these properties are accessed from private farm tracks / roads, and due to the limitations of access, they were appraised from the nearest public road or footpath with the aid of aerial photographs. There is no way marked walking or cycling routes at the site. Lochbuie Road to the immediate west provides access from Bonar Bridge to Little Torboll via Loch Buidhe, the loch itself being used for informal recreational purposes. A recently adopted core path runs through the site boundary between the Loch Buidhe Road to Achvaich (SU09.19) and an off-road waymarked route known as the Carnegie Road is located to the immediate west of the proposed development.

7.25 The site lies on the west facing slope of Meall Mor, which are part of a large conifer plantation that extends east across the slopes of Beinn Domhnaill. The wider landscape is one of open moorland. Immediately adjacent to the northwest is the existing Loch Buidhe substation which has two OHLs connections on steel pylons which are prominent features running east to west across the landscape immediately north of the site. The minor Loch Buidhe Road runs northwards from Bonar Bridge towards the site and round its northern side with the hillside containing the site and existing substation to the south and Loch Buidhe to the north. The road continues east into Strath Carnaig

and joins the A9 at Loch Fleet. The road is narrow and winding and on approach from the south, the site is largely screen by plantation forestry. The road reaches a crest close to the site entrance and starts to swing east where views open up to the moorland to the north and also eastwards to Loch Buidhe and down Strath Carnaig. Similarly, on approach along the road from the east, the site is well screened within the plantation forestry and more open views to the west and south draw the eyes. Four of the selected viewpoints are on Lochbuie Road, ranging from 140m to 2.5km from the site and the other is on the Carnegie Road,750m west of the site.

7.26 The LVIA concludes that during construction, significant adverse effects are expected due to the presence of construction vehicles, machinery, earthworks, and lighting, particularly for road users and recreational receptors. At Year 1 of operation, the substation is expected to remain a prominent feature, but mitigation planting will begin to reduce its visibility, albeit that major/moderate and significant adverse effects would prevail. By Year 15, the proposed vegetation is expected to mature, integrating the development into the landscape and reducing impacts to a level considered not significant, with minor/moderate effects deemed not to be significant. Residential properties within the study area are unlikely to experience significant visual effects due to natural screening. The proposed landscape and visual mitigation measures principally involve planting and earthworks to screen the development.

7.27 The impacts of cumulative effects considered other projects, including the Spittal-Loch Buidhe-Beauly 400kV OHL and underground cabling. Due to planned phasing, no cumulative effects were reported in the LVIA to be expected during construction. Officers however point out that the phased construction of the connecting line is not restricted at present and therefore could potentially take place concurrently with the build out of the substation or shortly thereafter, thereby intensifying and extending localised landscape and visual impacts where both projects would be experienced together. This aligns with the LVIA's findings for the substation's initial operational phase, where the combined visibility of the substation and OHL are reported to increase electricity infrastructure footprint in the area, with initial effects being Moderate adverse and significant, but post-landscaping maturity, these reducing to Minor/Moderate and neutral (not significant).

7.28 While the OHL is considered to increase the footprint of transmission infrastructure and be more visually prominent, especially during its construction, the combined long-term effects with the substation are expected to be not significant once mitigation planting is established. Overall, the LVIA concludes that although there will be notable impacts during early phases, these will diminish over time, and the development will not significantly affect the wider landscape or visual amenity. Officers on the whole agree with the LVIA findings, with adverse in-combination effects being highly localised and well contained to an area with limited receptors where transmission infrastructure is already present. The consolidation of substation infrastructure in this location is considered appropriate. In summary, relative to the scale of the substation proposed, this development is considered to have particularly localised landscape and visual effects, which are well within acceptable limits.

Construction Impact

7.29 The total time period for construction of the development is 60 months (five years), with 18 months of this being commissioning and handover of the site prior to operational

commencement. As part of the traffic assessment, a Construction Development Programme has been provided which covers the full five-year period (EIAR Appendix Volume 4, Appendix 12.2). Creich Community Council and public representations have raised concerns particularly in relation to traffic and road impacts, amenity and construction noise.

7.30 Some unavoidable intermittent impacts are to be expected during construction works from construction traffic and abnormal indivisible load delivery, noise, and dust. Such impacts are expected intermittently throughout the construction phase. A General Environmental Management Plan (GEMP) and Species Protection Plan (SPP) have already been prepared, and 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. Similarly, a draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been prepared, and a finalised version would be required to be approved before works commence. EIAR Chapter 16 provides a Schedule of Mitigation which sets out the principles of environmental management that will be adhered to through the CEMP, covering such issues as tree protection, peat restoration, traffic management and ecological measures. The finalised versions of both the CEMP, CTMP and Schedule of Mitigation are to be secured by condition.

7.31 Developers must comply with reasonable operational practices regarding construction noise so as not to cause nuisance. Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 sets restrictions in terms of hours of operation, plant and equipment used and noise levels etc. and is enforceable via Environmental Health and not Planning. EIAR Chapter 2 identifies that working hours are currently anticipated to be between 07.00 to 19.00 and are proposed for seven days a week, however, Environmental Health have raised concerns about 7 days working as this means no respite from construction noise, and note that commonly there would be a requirement for no audible activity on Saturday afternoons and all day on a Sunday. They would seek restricted hours on this basis.

7.32 The points raised by Environmental Health in respect of construction management will be outlined in planning conditions. These matters will include the need for a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan (CNVMP) and also controls on dust and any blasting activities. These plans are to stipulate that operations, including vehicle movements associated with this development for which noise is audible at the curtilage of any noise sensitive property, shall only be permitted between 08.00 hours and 19.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 hours and 13.00 hours on Saturdays, with no working on a Sunday or recognised bank holidays in Scotland. The applicant is also expected to employ the best practicable means to reduce the impact of construction noise. Attention should also be given to construction traffic and the use of tonal reversing alarms.

7.33 As also noted from the Transportation Planning Service response, construction traffic has the potential to detrimentally impact on local communities, as well as the road network. Details of how construction traffic, including any cumulative impacts from related developments in the area, and its impacts on communities are managed and mitigated will be subject to detailed consideration through a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). Should the development be granted consent a condition should be included to require the developer to set up of 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.

7.34 Following commissioning all temporary construction areas will be reinstated. This will include the removal of the temporary access tracks and site compound. The reinstatement principles are detailed in the GEMPs. This will be secured though the CEMP and the Landscape Management Plan.

7.35 Below is an extract from the applicant's Construction Development Programme which shows the sequence of activities and projected timescale, although it should be noted that this is predicated on a January 2026 start date, which is unlikely to be achievable. The works are split into five key phases:

- **Phase 1 - Forestry clearance:** To be undertaken in consultation with Scottish Forestry and with commercially viable timber transported off site for processing.
- **Phase 2 - Enabling Works:** Road and access improvements and formation of compound.
- **Phase 3 - Construction works:** Temporary drainage, cut and fill to form platform, excavation of peat, formation of borrow-pit, erection of buildings and equipment to form the substation and erection of fencing.
- **Phase 4 - Commissioning:** Inspection and snagging and full commissioning procedure and the energising for connection to the grid.
- **Phase 5 - Reinstatement:** Reinstatement of all construction works and temporary access tracks, drainage etc in accordance with an approved Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan. Replanting and peatland restoration completed, including infill of borrow-pit.


TASKS
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26
Apr-26
May-26
Jun-26
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Oct-30
Nov-30
Dec-30
Site Clearance
Temp site setup
Temp Drainage
Bulk Excavation
Access entrouch & road
Control Building
Precast Foundations Installation for HV Plant
Gantry Foundation
Ducting
Transformer 1 Foundations
Transformer 2 Foundations
Earthing
SynCOM Building 01
Highway improvement Works
SynCOM Building 02
Primary Plant Structures Equipment
AIL
Finishing Works
Landscaping
Kerbs
Tarmac
Chippings
Multicore Cabling
Secondary Systems
Stage 1
Energisation
Demobilise Site

Roads, Transport and Wider Access

7.36 EIAR Chapter 12 assesses the expected impact of the proposed development, particularly through the construction phase which is estimated to last up to 60 months. The applicant is committed to using a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to manage the expected traffic impacts of the development. An outline CTMP is included as Appendix 12.1 of the EIAR which notes that a final CTMP will be submitted for approval of the Council. A revised outline CTMP was submitted in October 2025. This includes a revised construction access route from the A9 to the site, as described in further detail below. The CTMP describes how the additional traffic generated due to the proposed construction works will be managed, with safety and improvement measures implemented so that the impact on local communities is minimised as far as is reasonably practicable. The works are proposed to be carried out in such a way as to maintain existing public access routes and rights of way during construction and to minimise inconvenience to the public arising from increased traffic. This would be a working document subject to a minimum of quarterly reviews.

7.37 The proposed haulage access route to and from the site would be from the A9 Trunk Road, and the westwards on the A836 from Meikle Ferry roundabout, on the south side of the Dornoch Bridge, through Edderton and Ardgay, crossing the Bonar Bridge itself and arriving in the village of Bonar Bridge. Once in the village of Bonar Bridge, the routes leaves the centre of the village on the narrow Migdale Road that heads northeast past houses, playing fields and Bonar Bridge Primary School. This road climbs steadily upwards towards the site and becomes the single track Loch Buidhe Road, from which the site access would be taken. An additional access route is shown which would be used to transport the very large synchronous condenser from the Port of Nigg to the site. This abnormal load would utilise the B9175 road from Nigg to the A9 at the Tain roundabout and cross the Dornoch Bridge, then taking the A949 west via Spinningdale to arrive at Bonar Bridge, and then connect with the route described above to the site.

7.38 The main site access would be from a new bellmouth junction west of the substation, with a further access approximately 400m further north, serving the detention basin and an OHL tower platform (part of the Spital to Beauly OHL). There would also be an access from the north side of the substation that would link into the tracks serving the adjacent existing Loch Buidhe substation, which has its own existing access onto the Loch Buildhe Road, further to the north. The outline CTMP identifies hazard points for the duration of the journey from the A9 to the site and also sets out estimated number of vehicle trips by type for the duration of the construction phase.

7.39 Contrary to the LVIA cumulative assessment, as a worst case scenario, the CTMP notes that overhead lines towers connecting to the substation could be constructed within the same 60 months period, albeit as part of a separate project. Thereby traffic associated with these related works are considered cumulatively. EIAR Volume 2, Chapter 12 - Traffic and Transport states that the peak month for construction traffic is predicted to be Month 25, when 5,768 vehicle movements have been estimated (4,400 car/LGV movements and 1,368 HGV movements. This translates to 262 two-way trips per day (200 cars/LGVs, 62 HGVs). On the section of the A9 to be used, this would amount to a 5% increase in total traffic and 19% increase in HGVs. On the A949 between the Clashmore junction south of Dornoch and Bonar Bridge there is predicted to be a 27% increase in total traffic and 212% increase in HGV traffic. For the minor

Migdale/Loch Buidhe Road, north of Bonar Bridge, there is no baseline data, however the expected increase in overall and HGV traffic would be significant, presenting risks to non-motorised user, impacts on amenity, likely pedestrian delay, and issues of traffic fear/intimidation, particularly in the centre of Bonar Bridge and where the route passes the school. In addition to car/LDV and HGV traffic, a total of six abnormal load deliveries (estimated to be in month 26 of the construction phase) are predicted.

7.40 Potential cumulative effects may arise from the construction of the related 400KV Spittal – Loch Buidhe – Beauly 400KV line and the proposed Balblair Wind Farm, both of which are currently under consideration and are yet to be determined by the Scottish Government. Whilst the construction phases of these projects may overlap, it is considered unlikely that peak periods would do so. A quantitative cumulative impact assessment has not therefore been undertaken by the applicant. Where the construction phases of these and other major developments are proposed to overlap, the requirement for CTMPs in each case will require to take account of cumulative impacts and required mitigation measures, which could result in protracted constriction periods in the interest of road safety.

7.41 Mitigation measures proposed in relation to this development, and to be set out in a finalised CTMP are:

- Schedule deliveries outside school hours and peak times.
- Temporary speed limits (20 mph near school).
- Avoid convoys; signage; parking controls.
- Road condition surveys and remedial works.
- Passing places and local widening on U3521.
- Escort abnormal loads; advance warning signs.

It is predicted that residual effects after mitigation would all be reduced to minor/not significant. The requirement set out in conditions for a CTMP and road mitigation works in order to enable construction traffic to safely access the site is likely to includes the need for local widening, improved and additional passing places on the U3521 and road safety measures in Bonar Bridge.

7.42 The transportation of the synchronous condensers will comprise abnormal indivisible loads (AILs), of which 6 are anticipated during the construction period, and these are the AILs recorded in the Chapter 12 of the EIAR. The applicant has surveyed the existing road network required for these loads to ensure their capacity to accommodate the required loads, and identify any physical alterations required. None have been identified other that tree trimming and street furniture removal, however, the final details of AIL transport arrangements will be subject to pre-commencement conditions and approval of the Council's Transport Planning Team, Transport Scotland, and in consultation with the Council's Forestry Team.

7.43 Existing road conditions will be surveyed before construction commences, monitored during construction and surveyed again upon completion. Maintenance and repair will be a matter to be agreed with the Council's Transport Planning team. In addition to this a set of measures will be put in place in order to mitigate the impacts of construction traffic on the public and local road network.

7.44 Transport Scotland has advised that they have no objections subject to conditions on construction traffic management, movement on abnormal loads and related traffic management measures.

7.45 In terms of wider public access, the Councils Access Officer has confirmed that there is public recreational use of the existing substation access track and also the recently adopted core path that runs through the site boundary between the Loch Buidhe Road to Achvaich (SU09.19). It is anticipated that the existing substation access track will be closed for periods during construction. The Core Path crosses areas identified for peat restoration and close to the location of the proposed borrow pit. The path should remain open at all times, and details of the borrow pit and peat relocation and associated fencing will need to be confirmed. All of these points will require to be captured in a Recreational Access Management Plan (RAMP), required by conditions. In addition, if public art is provided on site, then there may be a requirement for public parking, and this can be secured by condition.

Operational Impact (including Noise)

7.46 As noted in the Environmental Health response, the developer has identified two noise sensitive premises (Sleasdaraidh – 650m from site boundary and Clashban – 800m from site boundary) which could be affected by the operation of the substation. Background noise levels at these premises has been measured at 21dB during the night and 23/24dB in daytime. Environmental Health have advised that their requirements for operational noise to not exceed 5dB above background or 30dB (whichever is lower), can be achieved but that a further noise impact assessment is required in respect of proposed equipment before installation, to ensure compliance with this standard, and a planning condition would ensure this. In addition, during the operational period of the development, routine maintenance is expected on an infrequent basis to ensure ongoing compliance.

7.47 There are concerns raised through public representations 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.

Natural Heritage (including Ornithology)

7.48 The existing site conditions, being predominantly plantation forestry are considered to be of low ecological value and just under half of the plantation would be removed as part of the proposals. For ornithological species, taking account of existing site conditions and proposed mitigation in the form of forest to bog habitat creation, Chapter 8 of the EIAR identifies no significant residual effects for the majority of sensitive bird receptors and a minor positive effect for hen harrier. In respect of wider ecology, nature

conservation and protected species, Chapter 7 of the EIAR concludes that no significant residual effects are predicted from the development, with the use of embedded mitigation, such as species protection plans and pollution protection measures and additional mitigation, including red squirrel and pine martin artificial shelters and compensatory planting and peatland restoration.

Designations

7.49 The site lies within the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI, which is designated as it is of national and international importance for its population of breeding hen harriers. The commercial forestry across the application site is not suitable foraging habitat for this species, hence why NatureScot do not object to the proposals. A set of mitigation measures are also proposed in order to protect hen harriers. Embedded measures will be deployed during construction in order to minimise interaction with sensitive ornithological receptors. These include, but are not limited to, limiting site working hours, controlling light spill, limiting noise and dust emissions, effective water management and pollution protection measures. Construction will be carried out in accordance with a General Environmental Management Plan (GEMP) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Appendix 3 of this report provides Appropriate Assessments for these designations as required under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, and c.) Regulations 1994.

7.50 The site also lies 1km north of the River Evelix SAC (designated for freshwater pearl mussel). Areas identified for peat restoration lie above the River Evelix and drain towards it. EIAR Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation concludes that no significant impacts are predicted on these sites due to embedded mitigation measures including pollution prevention and buffer zones. Impacts on the River Evelix SAC are addressed further on within this section of this report, and Appendix 3 of this report provides Appropriate Assessments as required under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, and c.) Regulations 1994.

Other Protected Species

7.51 Site surveys confirmed actual or likely presence of red squirrel, water vole, badger and bats. The EIA concluded that there were no predicted significant ecological impacts arising from the development, either on its own or cumulatively with other nearby proposed developments, including the Beauly-Spittal OHL. The applicant is committed to ensuring that construction practices will be in line with best practice guidance. A pre-construction survey of the site will be undertaken by an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), to confirm or update the baseline results presented in the EIAR. Should a new species be identified, the appropriate SPPs would be included within the CEMP and an assessment undertaken to understand the impacts as well as any further mitigation measures which may be required.

Peat

7.52 The application site is mainly characterised by plantation conifer forestry. The EIAR details most of the site as underlain with Class 5 peat, which is not designated as high priority peatland habitat, whilst land on the north and west periphery of the site boundary is classified as Class 1 and Class 2 peat, which are high priority carbon rich

soils of high conservation value. No development is proposed within these higher grades of peatland.

7.53 The peat survey on the site involved 2,245 probes across the study area, including areas impacted by construction and restoration plans. Average peat depths across the site range from 1.25m on the site of the substation platform to 0.28m at the proposed borrow pit. Much of the peat across the site is considered to be degraded due having been subject to commercial forestry planting.

7.54 The proposed development entails excavation of approximately 324,000m3 of peat and peaty soils, mainly to create the substation platform, but also accesses, detention basin and to create the borrow pit. As noted, there has been concern raised by SEPA in respect of the volumes of peat that require to be excavated, with direct and indirect peat losses covering an area of just under 27ha, with 19.8Ha of permanent loss and 7Ha of temporary loss.

7.55 SEPA and NatureScot initially raised objections to the application as submitted proposals involved the re-use of excavated peat, by depositing it in convex mounds up to a depth of 2m on top of existing shallow areas of degraded peat, in a manner that was not considered to be tried and tested and may present peat slide and pollution risks. As a result, the peat restoration plan has been revised to show the re-use of all excavated peat on site in three ways:

- Verge and earthworks reinstatement using peaty soils;
- Peatland restoration via a forest-to-bog technique involving cell bunding and infill up to a maximum of 0.5m depth, designed to restore hydrological function and support peat-forming vegetation; and
- Borrow pit reinstatement, using deep peat placement (2–4m in depth) over a low-permeability base with containment bunds.

7.56 The revised Peatland Restoration Plan, which uses a cell-bunded (honeycomb) approach, is likely to have a higher stability rating than the previously submitted proposal, subject to measures set out in an accompanying Peat Slide Risk Assessment (PSRA Report). That said, because it could still affect internationally important natural heritage interests, consultees would still object unless it is made subject to conditions so that the works are done in accordance with mitigation outlined, including the need for a General Environmental Management Plan (GEMP) and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Species Protection Plan (FPMSPP), use of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), and extra works in peat cell compartments. All of these mitigations would be set out in planning conditions if planning permission is granted.

7.57 The applicant has worked with SEPA, NatureScot and Council officers to develop the revised peatland restoration plan that now mitigates the impact of this peat extraction operation and creates new bog habitat on peatland that was previously degraded by conifer plantation forestry. Both statutory consultees have now withdrawn their initial objections to the application, on the basis of the revised peatland restoration plan and analysis of peat slide risk, which demonstrates that the downstream River Evelix SAC will be safeguarded.

7.58 The revied proposals now also include a borrow-pit in order to provide rock for hardstanding creation. This is calculated to result in the permanent loss of

approximately 5.37 ha of habitat. This loss has been captured in the amount reported above and comprises 4.67 ha of coniferous plantation of low ecological value and 0.7 ha of degraded blanket bog, also considered of low value. These impacts are overall considered to be negligible, and effects would be considered to be non-significant in the EIA.

7.59 The proposed works would also use best practice peat handling and storage measures during construction, including minimising double handling, protecting turves, and ensuring appropriate storage conditions. The applicant proposes to employ a dedicated Peat Clerk of Works (PCoW) to oversee implementation, supported by a detailed auditing and monitoring framework. The restoration works aims to deliver a functioning peatland system capable of carbon sequestration. The proposals are supported by an updated peat slide risk assessment report, which indicates that the risk rating of peat slide may be low to medium without mitigation measures, but would reduce to low or very low with recommended mitigations adopted. Both NatureScot and SEPA, having reviewed the revised peat restoration plan and peat slide risk assessment, withdrew their objections.

7.60 The proposals include plans that will create 193.5Ha of blanket bog habitat and open habitats, enhancing foraging and potential breeding conditions. This will be created principally by a change of land use of commercial conifer plantation to peatland restoration within the Achormlarie forest unit that the site lies within. As part of this, a revised method for the re-use of excavated peat in restoration has been proposed, which involves a network of bunded cells, filled with peat of a depth no greater than 0.5m and creating a total area of peatland restoration of 45.2Ha.

7.61 Overall the impacts on peat, taking account of direct and indirect losses, embedded mitigation and compensatory measures, are predicted to result in a net positive effect for peatland habitats.

Biodiversity

7.62 Due to the climate and biodiversity emergency and the provisions of NPF4 Policy 3, the Council seeks to ensure that developments will deliver a positive effect for biodiversity. As a result, this project is expected to contribute towards the delivery of biodiversity enhancements in the vicinity of the site. The habitats present across the site have been subject to a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report. This has quantified the biodiversity impact of the development, the predicted resultant change of biodiversity value, and provides recommendations for biodiversity enhancement (net gain).

7.63 The applicant has a stated commitment to ensure all its projects result in a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), in line with National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policy 3. In this case, it is proposed that the development will deliver a 27% BNG. Habitat creation measures proposed include peatland restoration, upland heath and moorland mosaic, and native woodland planting, supporting hen harrier conservation within the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA. Monitoring and adaptive management will be required in order to ensure long-term success, leaving the site in a demonstrably better ecological state. Planning conditions are proposed to secure Habitat Management Plan that will deliver BNG.

7.64 In the event that not all of the proposed onsite peat restoration measures are effective or regarded by SEPA to constitute restoration, further off-site peatland restoration may be required. This eventuality can be secured by planning condition. Given the significant number of current and upcoming applications relating to electricity transmission and associated infrastructure in the Highland area, SSEN are in the process of preparing an overarching strategy for the delivery of offsite biodiversity enhancement across the region. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been concluded with the Council which establishes a forum to discuss and seek endorsement for proposed offsite compensatory planting and biodiversity enhancement schemes for strategic scale.

7.65 In reviewing this matter, officers also note the contents of the recent letter from the Chief Planner and Minister Letter (April 2025) which states that ….

> "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".

Based on the advice from the Chief Planner and the conclusion of the MoU with the Council, it is considered that a formal legal agreement securing any off-site compensatory measure is not required but instead can be dealt with by condition.

Forestry

7.66 The proposed substation is within land used as conifer woodland, in a plantation area known as Achormlarie. The proposal involves the felling of standing timber crop and replanting in situ upon completion of the development. The overall net loss of woodland is calculated at 23.52Ha. This total has increased since the introduction of the borrow-pit into the design and is now 28.19Ha. The applicant is committed to providing an equal or greater amount of off-site compensatory planting, with details of the intended location of this yet to be confirmed.

7.67 The Council's Forestry Officer has noted that the development would take place on existing plantation forestry, and that the need to develop a wooded site has not been fully assessed in accordance with Scottish Government policy and that NPF4 Policy 6 only supports woodland removal where the development will achieve significant public benefit in accordance with Scottish Government policy. In this case, the development

forms part of a National Development 3 identified in NPF4, in respect of renewable electricity generation, repowering, and expansion of the electricity grid and therefore the need to develop a commercial forestry is justified, and compensatory planting can be secured via condition with this to take place both on and off site.

7.68 The Council's Forestry Officer had originally raised an objection regarding the proposed creation of peatland habitat on an area of existing forestry, which may not be considered as counting towards Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) if the East Sutherland Land Management Plan (LMP) identifies this area for peatland restoration rather than replanting. The applicant has submitted information in response to this question to demonstrate that the LMP does in fact identify the area in question for replanting of commercial forestry, and as such the plans to instead create bog habitat on it would contribute to BNG. The Forestry Officer has objected in respect of the applicant's calculation of net permanent woodland loss as being 23.52Ha and would contend that if the area proposed for forest to bog restoration has been identified for replanting in the LMP, then an equivalent area of replanting would need to be found off-site, and also as the method of peatland restoration is experimental, it may not meet the required criteria to be considered as restored peatland.

7.69 The applicant has stated a commitment to provide the required level of compensatory planting off-site in accordance with Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, i.e. compensatory planting off-site equal to the area of planting that is permanently lost to the development. Taking account of this, and the fact, as set out in paragraph 7.10, the development will contribute to carbon reduction in electricity generation, it is considered to achieve a significant and clearly defined additional public benefit and is not considered to be contrary to Policy 6(c) of NPF4. A Memorandum of Understanding has been concluded between the applicant and The Highland Council that covers the requirements for off-site compensatory planting to meet the total area of woodland removed. Therefore, whilst the Council's Forestry Officer has objected and on-site woodland loss is regrettable, this loss has been justified and a robust long-term compensatory planting scheme can be secured by condition, in accordance with the Forestry Officer's advised condition. Planning conditions are also proposed to address tree loss or tree works to accommodate abnormal load transportation on the road network associated with the development, in accordance with the Forestry Officer's advice.

Water, Flood Risk, and Drainage

7.70 The site is largely located in the catchment of the River Fleet and is connected to this river via the Abhainn an t-Stratha Charnaig burn that flows from Loch Buidhe, just north of the site. The small watercourse within and adjacent to the site flow north towards Loch Buidhe. There is evidence of alterations to watercourses on the site from the construction of the adjacent Loch Buidhe Substation. The site's surface water run-off is proposed to be drained to a new on-site detention basin. The applicant considers that with the use of good construction practice measures, potential impacts on watercourses are negligible.

7.71 A Flood Risk Statement has been prepared in support of the application. It notes that the site is not in an area of risk from fluvial (river flooding) but that much of the site is shown to be at risk from surface water (pluvial) flood risk. Neither the Council's Flood Risk Management Team, nor SEPA have objection in respect of flood risk grounds,

however the proposals contain measures to manage pluvial flood risk. These largely entail removing the topsoil layer to allow water to permeate more easily into the permeable granular layers below. Upstream drainage measures are also proposed to divert surface water away from the substation platform, with detailed design informed by hydraulic modelling in order to manage any downstream risk.

7.72 SEPA had initially objected on the lack of information on the proposed diversion of an existing natural watercourse (Alltan Dubh) on the site. SEPA were concerned that forming a drainage ditch as the diverted course of this natural upland watercourse would constitute an unnatural design that may not be able to achieve Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations (EASR) (formerly Controlled Activities Regulations- CAR) consent. SEPA required more details on a proposed watercourse diversion on the site, to demonstrate the diversion could be undertaken in a manner that achieved their standards and protected the wider water environment. Subsequently, the applicant submitted indicative drawings of the proposed diverted watercourse that SEPA confirmed took on board many of their comments. As such they were able to withdraw their objection to this part of the scheme, and confirm that these elements were potentially consentable under their regulatory framework: Environmental Authorisation (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (EASR). This would still be subject to a number of conditions on the final design and implementation of the diversion.

7.73 The EIA has identified three private water supplies (PWS) within the study area but none with 250m of the site. Given this distance of the nearest PWS potential for effects are deemed to be negligible. There are also no objections from SEPA nor the Council's Environmental Health Service in respect of any potential impacts on PWS. Scottish Water have advised that there are no Scottish Water drinking water catchments or water abstraction sources, which are designated as Drinking Water Protected Areas under the Water Framework Directive, in the area that may be affected by the proposed activity.

Built and Cultural Heritage

7.74 The Cultural Heritage chapter of the EIA evaluated the potential impacts of the development on cultural heritage assets, including designated and non-designated archaeological and historical features. It also outlined the legislative context, assessment methodology, baseline conditions, and proposed mitigation measures. The assessment considered a 5km radius for the site for designated assets and 250m radius for non-designated assets and considered direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.

7.75 One heritage asset (LB-001) is B-Listed Building; Lydsurach Crofthouse, 4.5km southwest of the site and categorised as having High sensitivity. The development would have indirect temporary effects on its setting during construction and indirect permanent effects once operational, but these are considered to be negligible given the setting of the building and its distance from/relationship with the proposed development.

7.76 In terms of non-designated assets, Meall Mhor (LOB-034) is a non-designated Mediaeval sheiling site considered to be of High sensitivity and within the wider application boundary. The predicted impacts on it would be direct and derive from

proposed BNG proposals in the form of peatland restoration. Another is asset LOB-019, a dyke that lies within the footprint of the proposed substation which would experience direct impacts from the construction. In both cases, an archaeological watching brief would be implemented. Avoidance should be implemented for three other assets within the forestry land to the south of the proposed development: (LOB_009, 012, and 013) which may by impacted by the peat management plan area. Should avoidance not possible, an archaeological watching brief is required. Mitigation works would require to be set out in the CEMP, to ensure avoidance of direct impacts on these assets wherever possible. Watching briefs would be part of this and also allow for identification of potential unknown archaeological assets. This approach is proposed by the Council's Archaeologist and HES have advised that they have no objections to the application.

Other Material Considerations

7.77 The proposed substation is part of a larger electricity grid project that requires planning permission. Other elements require planning permission or consent through the Electricity Act 1989. The Council has no control over the consenting regimes required for the various elements of the Spittal - Loch Buidhe - Beauly OHL but must treat each application on its own individual merits. This application has been subject to EIA, and as such, the cumulative impacts of the proposed development have been considered along with the effects of other parts of the wider project, and other nearby major developments, such as windfarms. Table 4.2 Cumulative Developments in Chapter 4 – EIA Process and Methodology of the EIAR lists those developments whose cumulative impacts have been assessed alongside the proposed development. The two aspects of cumulative effects are defined as "in-combination effects" and "effects interaction".

7.78 Notwithstanding the stages that other parts of the Spittal - Loch Buidhe - Beauly OHL are at, the Council as Planning Authority is able to determine this application based on the assessment set out in this report, and in doing so would be in compliance with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

7.79 Light pollution significantly affects the rural countryside, from disturbing the way animals and plants perceive daytime and night-time. The EIA reports that the temporary construction compound is likely to be equipped with lighting installations for use during low light conditions and passive infra-red sensor-controlled security lighting, and as such any effect would be temporary and not expected to be significant. Once operational, the site will be unmanned and as such no light sources have been identified during normal operation of the proposed development.

7.80 The development may use a limited amount of SF6 gas for insulation purposes within circuit breakers and switchgear. Whilst amounts may be small, this is a potent greenhouse gas, and it is considered that the applicant takes steps to find alternatives to its use, which are less harmful to the environment. To that end, a planning condition is proposed that seeks to restrict the use of SF6 gas, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Such approval would only be forthcoming, if it were adequately demonstrated that no less harmful alternatives were available.

7.81 The applicant is seeking planning permission in perpetuity for the development, however, in the event of decommissioning, the EIAR states that it would be carried out in line within with the best practice processes and methods at that time and managed through a Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan. Given that grid

infrastructure decommissioning and restoration is an established requirement under the network operator's licence, this is not required to be secured by condition.

7.82 Owing to the complexity of major developments, and to assist in discharge of conditions, the Planning Authority usually seeks that the developer employs a Planning Monitoring Officer (PMO). The role of the PMO, amongst other things, would include the monitoring of, and enforcement of compliance with, all conditions, agreements and obligations related to this permission (or any superseding or related permissions) and shall include the provision of a bi-monthly compliance report to the Planning Authority.

Non-Material Considerations

7.83 Non-material considerations raised in representations relate to the speculative, profiteering and lack of need for the development, in addition, matters regarding the perceived oversupply of renewable energy generation in the north of Scotland and reference to constraint payments. Such matters are not material to the determination of this application, with the Scottish Government having declared a climate and nature crisis, with there being an urgent need to reduced emissions. Transmission infrastructure to support this is identified as a national development and as such receives in principle support. Similarly, in relation to community benefit, whilst this can aid the just transition towards net zero, this is currently a voluntary arrangement and not a material planning consideration as previously explained in the socio-economic section of this report.

8. Matters to be secured by Legal Agreement

8.1 On other applications, a section 75 legal agreement has been used to secure off-site compensatory / enhancement measures. However, based on the latest advice from the Chief Planner and Minister (April 2025) outlined previously, there is a clear indication that the use of suspensive conditions to secure such matters can be appropriate. Given this advice, and the applicant's Memorandum of Understanding with the Council, officers are content that off-site compensatory planting / biodiversity enhance can be delivered through a planning condition, rather than through legal agreement.

8.2 A wear and tear legal agreement will also be required under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act. This would include the provision of a Road Bond or similar security. The agreement would take account of any neighbouring developments that might progress concurrently with the works proposed and would make provision for a mechanism for apportionment of costs between respective developers.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Scottish Government and the Council each have policies offering support to projects which increase the capacity of the grid network, particularly for strategically important infrastructure which enables significant levels of investment in renewable energy. NPF4 identifies such developments as nationally important.

9.2 The proposal aligns with NPF4 Policy 11 and HwLDP Policy 69, supporting renewable energy and transmission infrastructure. This application is considered one of the most strategically significant for Highland's transmission network to date and forms part of a

wider suite of projects critical to the UK's transition to net zero. Its strategic importance must carry substantial weight in the Council's planning decision.

9.3 The design of the development facilitates grid transmission across both land and sea of a scale not experienced in Highland to date. This is in the wider UK interest to maximise energy generation where there is adequate wind resource and move that power south to areas of highest demand. This comes with considerable renewable and energy security benefits, but equally landscape, visual and wider environmental cost and challenges, with Council officers appraising each element of this suite of transmission projects on their own merit.

9.4 Whilst the site lies within an SPA and SSSI, the site selection process has been informed by principles of seeking to minimise the effects of the development on the natural habitat. Significant additional work has been undertaken to ensure the development, and the peat management plans in particular, protect and where possible enhance the habitats in and around the site. A substantial amount of peat, albeit largely low grade, will be extracted in order to form the substation platform. The applicant has worked with SEPA, NatureScot and Council officers to ensure a peat restoration plan that, as far as possible, mitigates the impacts of this extraction, using a bunded cell technique designed to both restore degraded peatland in a viable manner and protects sensitive nearby habitats, including the River Evelix SAC from pollution risk.

9.5 While construction impacts are anticipated, the location and design of the site avoids any significant landscape and visual effects and avoids Highland's most valued landscapes and settlements while providing a logical location for this substation on the 400kV OHL between Spittal and Beauly. The impacts of traffic on the road network serving the site, and in particular through the settlement of Bonar Bridge, demands careful planning, monitoring and project management to safeguard the local community.

9.6 The mitigation measures set out within the application are comprehensive, with monitoring provision through an appointed environmental Clerk of Works, Peat Clerk of Works and Planning Monitoring Officer. Conditions will secure compliance and safeguard community interests. Although an objection remains from the forestry team, the environmental effects of this development are acceptable and can be addressed through finalisation of compensatory planting and peatland management plans.

9.7 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: If the committee determine that the application should be refused, the application may be subject to an appeal prior to determination by Scottish Ministers.

10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable

10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: The application allows for the connection of renewable energy to the grid therefore helping to deliver a contribution toward climate change targets.

10.5 Risk: Not applicable

10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued None

It is recommended to **GRANT** the application subject to the following conditions and reasons, with Members granting delegated authority to the Area Planning Manager-North to agree the finished condition wording, with any substantive amendments to be subject to prior consultation with the Chair of the North Planning Applications Committee:

CONDITIONS AND REASONS

1. **Time Limit for the Implementation of Planning Permission**

In accordance with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), 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. **Accordance with the Provisions of the Application**

The development shall be constructed and operated in accordance with the provisions of the Application and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) except in so far as amended by the terms of this consent. The operational land associated with this substation shall be as per the red line boundary, as identified on Drawing Number CAA14-LT470-JMS-ZZ-XX-PLN-C-0004this being the extent to which the statutory undertaker's permitted development rights apply under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, Class 40, Part (1)(d), (e) and (f).

Reason: To identify the extent and terms of the development consent.

3. **Schedule of Mitigation**

No development shall commence until a 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 EIA Report, 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.

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 EIA Report is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

4. **Biodiversity Enhancement and Compensatory Planting**

(1) Within 18 months of the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) for the written approval of the Planning Authority in consultation with NatureScot. The BEP must include:

(2) Details of compensation and enhancement measures, to ensure the development results in at least 10% biodiversity net gain and for peatland restoration achieves at least a 1:10 ratio of loss to offsetting;

(3) Details and timing of habitat and peatland enhancement delivery, including plans confirming the location, size and type of compensatory tree planting, defining tree numbers, species mix, ground preparation, plant size, plant spacing and protection measures along with management, maintenance and monitoring strategies of the compensation and enhancement measures, that ensure longevity of the proposals. The area of compensatory planting shall be no less than the total area of woodland removed, including any areas converted to non-woodland habitats and areas of peat bunding with infill. Compensatory planting shall consist primarily of productive species and be located within the Highlands.

(4) GIS Shapefiles of the biodiversity loss, compensation and enhancement areas; and

(5) Should any of the BEP cover land outwith the application site, in the event that the applicant has not entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Council, secure the details of the agreed scheme as a planning obligation registered in the Land Register of Scotland or recorded in the General Register of Sasines against the title of the relevant landholding pursuant to Section 75 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

Prior to the date of first commissioning of the development, the approved scheme shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: To secure biodiversity enhancement and allow the compensation and enhancement areas to be mapped to ensure no development occurs on these sites for a minimum of 30 years.

5. **Construction and Reinstatement Phasing Plan**

No development shall commence until a detailed Construction Phasing Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall:

a) Include phasing drawings for each aspect of the site enabling works, platform construction, building and above ground infrastructure, and progressive site reinstatement and landscaping works, with associated timescales;

b) cut and fill calculations which demonstrate the anticipated material extraction and placement from each element of the required groundworks; and

Thereafter the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in appropriate phases in accordance with the range and scale of impacts assessed and measured in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

6. **Landscaping**

(1) No development shall commence until details of a scheme of hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Details of the scheme shall include:

a) All earthworks and existing and finished ground levels in relation to an identified fixed datum point;
b) A plan showing existing landscaping features and vegetation to be retained;
c) The location and design, including materials, of any existing or proposed walls, fences and gates;
d) All soft landscaping and planting works, including plans and schedules showing the location, species and size of each individual tree and/or shrub and planting densities; and
e) A programme for preparation, completion and subsequent on-going maintenance and protection of all landscaping works.

(2) Thereafter, landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme, with all planting, seeding or turfing as may be comprised to be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the commencement of development, unless otherwise stated in the approved scheme.

Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, for whatever reason are removed or damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of the same size and species.

Reason: In order to ensure that the approved landscaping works are properly undertaken on site.

7. **External Materials and Site Levels**

No development shall commence until elevation, and cross section drawings of the proposed above ground infrastructure, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. These details shall include:

a) The external materials, colours and finishes of all external buildings and structures. The details shall include the use of a non-reflective finish;
b) all boundary treatments and internal fencing and any other enclosures,
c) parking areas and EV charging units;
d) any raised areas of hardstanding to support all onsite infrastructure; and

e) no element of the development shall have any text, sign or logo displayed on any external surface of the facility, save those required by the applicant's safety systems and law under other legislation.

Thereafter, the development shall be built out in accordance with these approved details and, with reference to part (a) above, the site shall be maintained in the approved colour, free from rust, staining or discolouration until such time as the development is decommissioned.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

8. **External 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 Planning Authority. Such details shall include

a) full details of the location, type, angle of direction and wattage of each light which shall be so positioned and angled to prevent any direct illumination, glare or light spillage outwith the site boundary.
b) This shall also include the provision of bat friendly lighting.

The lighting shall thereafter be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, to minimise light pollution and to ensure the development does not have an adverse impact on bats.

9. **Construction Noise**

Unless otherwise authorised in writing by the Planning Authority, construction activities associated with this development (including deliveries, the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles, plant, or other equipment) for which noise is audible at the curtilage of any noise sensitive property, shall not take place outside the following hours:

- Monday to Friday: 08:00 – 19:00 hrs
- Saturday: 08:00 – 19:00 hrs
- At no time on Sunday

Prior to the commencement of any construction works, a Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan (CNVMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The CNVMP shall be prepared in accordance with BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 and shall include:

a) Details of the mitigation measures to be implemented to minimise noise and vibration from construction activities, including those recommended in the SEI.
b) Proposals for monitoring noise and vibration throughout the construction period.
c) Details of the community liaison for engaging with affected residents, including communication of potential impacts and complaint procedures.

Thereafter, the development shall proceed in accordance with the approved CNVMP, and all mitigation measures shall be in place prior to the commencement of construction, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of safeguarding residential amenity.

10. **Construction Dust**

Prior to construction commencing, the applicant shall submit, for the written approval of the planning authority, a scheme for the mitigation of construction dust which demonstrates how the applicant/contractor will ensure the best practicable measures are implemented in order to reduce the impact of construction dust.

The development shall progress in accordance with the approved Construction Dust Mitigation Scheme and all approved mitigation measures shall be in place prior to construction commencing or as otherwise may be agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of safeguarding residential amenity.

11. **Operational Noise**

The noise Rating Level (as defined in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019) from the operation of the Development shall not exceed 5 dB above the background sound levels or 30dB whichever is lowest, as measured or calculated at the nearest occupied residential Noise Sensitive Receptors (as existing or consented at the time of this consent).

Prior to first operation, a revised Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) shall be submitted to the LPA for approval. The NIA report shall include details of the specified plant to be installed and any required noise control measures to ensure that operational noise levels from the Development will be below the noise level limits stated above.

Reason: In the interest of safeguarding residential amenity.

12. **Compliance Monitoring**

(1) Compliance Monitoring 1 - Within 21 days from receipt of a written request of the Planning Authority, following a complaint to it 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. If the noise level exceeds the prescribed noise limits, the assessment report shall include a scheme of mitigation to be enacted, including timescales for implementation, to ensure compliance with consented noise limits. Details of the proposed compliance monitoring must be agreed in writing beforehand with the Council's Environmental Health Service.

Compliance Monitoring 2 - Within 21 days from receipt of the development becoming fully operational 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 the development becoming fully operational. If the noise level exceeds the prescribed noise limits, the assessment report shall include a scheme of mitigation to be enacted, including timescales for implementation, to ensure compliance with consented noise limits. Details of the proposed compliance monitoring must be agreed in writing beforehand with the Council's Environmental Health Service.

Reason: In the interest of safeguarding residential amenity.

13. **Blasting**

No development shall commence until a blasting method statement, prepared by a suitably qualified and competent person in accordance with PAN 50 Annex D: The Control of Blasting at Surface Mineral Workings, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The method statement should include but is not limited to the following:

a) The best practicable measures to be taken to reduce the impact of air overpressure and vibration at sensitive properties;
b) The approximate number of blasts on a weekly or annual basis and the periods of the day when blasting will be carried out; and
c) The methods for providing the public with advance warning of blasting.

Ground vibrations as a result of the blasting operations shall not exceed a peak particle velocity of 6mms-1 in 95% of all blasts within any 6 month period. No individual blast shall exceed a peak particle velocity of 12mms-1 as measured at noise sensitive properties. The measurement shall be the maximum of three mutually perpendicular directions taken at ground surface at any vibration sensitive building.

Thereafter to the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties and occupants.

14. **Drainage**

No development shall commence until a finalised master Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This shall include:

a) finalised drainage information, including all calculations and simulations; and
b) if necessary, finalised DIA(s) for any significant area of the site not detailed in the master DIA, these shall be provided before their respective construction to ensure complete, finalised information.
c) There shall be no drainage connections to the trunk road drainage system.

Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that surface water drainage principles of SUDS; in order to protect the water environment and to reduce the risk of flooding occurring both within and outwith the application site.

15. **Riparian Buffer Zones**

For the avoidance of doubt a 10 metre riparian buffer zone shall be maintained from the top of the bank for all un-diverted watercourses within the site boundary.

Reason: To ensure that development does not encroach onto riparian buffer strips in the interests of flood risk.

16. **Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP)**

1) No later than three months prior to the Commencement of the Development, 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, in consultation with SEPA, NatureScot, Environmental Health and other consultees as appropriate. The CEMP shall be informed by the site and ground investigation works and best practice guidance. The CEMP shall include (but is not limited to) details of:

   a) An updated Schedule of Mitigation (SM) as it relates to construction highlighting mitigation set out within each chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), within the EIAR Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI), and the conditions of this consent;
   b) Processes to control / action changes from the agreed SM
   c) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction-type activities on the environment;
   d) Soil Management, with details of soil placement and measures to utilise the soils' existing seed base in the finalised landscaping plan;
   e) Habitat and Species Protection, mitigation to protect the ecological resources on site, including biodiversity protection zones, location and timing of works;
   f) A Pollution Prevention Plan including drainage management strategy and mitigation measures, demonstrating how all surface water run-off and wastewater arising during and after development is to be managed and prevented from polluting any watercourses or sources. This must also include arrangements for the storage and management of oil and fuel on the site;
   g) Water quality monitoring regime;
   h) Details of all pollution prevention and mitigation measures, which shall maintain hydrological connectivity of Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems;
   i) Details of foul and contaminated site drainage arrangements;
   j) Details of soil storage and management;
   k) A surface water and groundwater management and treatment plan, including details of the separation of clean and dirty water drains, the location of settlement lagoons for silt laden water, detention basins, drainage by SUDS to accommodate the 1 in 200 plus an allowance for climate change; mechanisms to ensure that construction will not take place during periods of high flow or high rainfall; and a programme of water quality monitoring;

l) A drainage management strategy, demonstrating how all surface and waste water arising during and after development is to be managed and prevented from polluting any watercourses or sources;
m) Dust Management, covering demolition and construction activity, including vehicle movements;
n) Site Waste Management;
o) Public and Private Water Supply Protection Measures, including a programme of water quality monitoring
p) Details of the formation of the construction compound, welfare facilities, any areas of hardstanding, turning areas, internal access tracks, car parking, material stockpiles, oil storage, lighting columns, and any construction compound boundary fencing;
q) The maximum height and location of all stockpiles of aggregate;
r) Construction Noise and Vibration;
s) Habitat Management Plan;
t) Details of temporary site lighting;
u) Emergency Response Plans;
v) Phasing plans for the construction;
w) Timetable for post construction restoration/reinstatement of the temporary working areas, construction access and construction compound; and
x) Other relevant environmental management as may be relevant to the development.

2) A statement of responsibility to 'stop the job/activity' if a breach or potential breach of mitigation or legislation occurs; and
3) Methods for monitoring, auditing, reporting, and the communication of environmental management on site and with client, Planning Authority and other relevant parties.

The approved CEMP shall be implemented throughout the construction, post construction site reinstatement phases in full unless otherwise approved in advance in writing by the Planning Authority.

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 Impact Assessment Report which accompanied the application, or as otherwise agreed, are fully implemented.

17. **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)**

No later than three months prior to commencement of the development, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to manage all construction traffic with the exception of abnormal indivisible loads, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with Transport Scotland, affected Community Councils and the Local Roads Authority. The CTMP shall be carried out as approved in accordance with the timetable specified within the approved CTMP. The CTMP shall include but is not limited to:

a) Confirmation of quarries and suppliers for bulk materials;
b) The identification of all Highland Council roads that serve the bulk suppliers;
c) Updated construction traffic forecast with details of the number and type of construction vehicles including staff, HGVs delivering supplies and components and abnormal loads;

d) Identification of all structures on construction traffic routes and an assessment of the structures' load-bearing capacity considering the projected volume of HGVs. The assessment should include a detailed protocol outlining preventative and corrective works throughout the construction period to prevent damage and ensure the safety of the public;
e) A risk assessment for transportation during daylight hours and hours of darkness;
f) Proposed traffic management and mitigation measures within settlements along the access routes as required. Measures such as temporary speed limits, suitable temporary signage, road markings and the use of speed activated signs should be considered, especially within local communities. During the delivery period of construction materials, any additional signing or temporary traffic control measures deemed necessary due to the size or length of any load being delivered or removed must be undertaken by a recognised Quality Assured traffic management consultant;
g) Avoidance of construction traffic routing past schools during their opening and closing times, whilst also promoting appropriate traffic speeds through communities located on along construction traffic routes;
h) Scheduling and timing of movements, respecting any large public event taking place in the local area which would be unduly affected or disrupted by construction vehicles using the public road network;
i) Non convoying of HGV or site staff vehicles;
j) Agreed construction traffic routes to be used by site staff, contractor, sub-contractors and deliveries;
k) Steps to be taken for deterring/preventing construction traffic using non-designated construction traffic routes to and from the site;
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) Identification of a nominated person to whom any road safety issues can be referred and measures for keeping the Community Council and Community Liaison Group informed and dealing with queries and any complaints regarding construction traffic;
o) Providers of products and materials to this development (such as aggregate, concrete, staff minibuses) should mark their vehicles with a unique number identifier on the front, sides and rear of vehicles and a Carnaig Substation identifier. This is to enable easy identification in the event of problems arising, such as speeding or discourteous driving;
p) Monthly traffic count reports submitted to the Transport Planning Team and Local Area Roads Team detailing the number of HGVs using construction traffic routes on Highland Council roads. The locations for traffic counts must be agreed before any work commences on site;
q) Provisions for emergency vehicle access;
r) The provision of a wear and tear agreement under Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 under which the developer will be responsible for the repair of any damage to the local road network attributable to construction related traffic. As part of the agreement, pre-start and post construction road condition surveys must be carried out by the developer to the satisfaction of the Roads Authority. It will also require the submission of an appropriate financial bond

acceptable to the Council in respect of the risk of any road reconstruction works; and

s) A timetable for the implementation of the measures detailed in the CTMP.

Reason: To mitigate the adverse impact of construction traffic on the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road and wider local road networks. Also to ensure adequate road safety measures are in place including measures to minimise conflict with routes to schools, cyclists and local events.

18. **Abnormal Loads**

No delivery of abnormal indivisible load (AIL) shall be made to site until an Abnormal Indivisible Load Construction Traffic Management Plan (AIL-CTMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with Transport Scotland, affected Community Councils, Police Scotland, the local Roads Authority and the Council's Forestry team. The AIL-CTMP shall provide a detailed protocol for the delivery of AILs, including details of their proposed routing on the local and trunk road network, with any accommodation measures required. The details shall include but is not limited to:

a) A review of maximum axle loading on structures along the access route;
b) A review of overhead services along the access route;
c) A review in summer conditions of roadside vegetation along the access route and clearance of any vegetation that may interfere with construction traffic;
d) A review of road works or road closures that could affect the movement of construction traffic;
e) Full details of all road improvements and mitigation measures needed to facilitate abnormal load movements shall be agreed with Transport Scotland and the Local Roads Authority. The said measures shall be fully implemented to the satisfaction of Transport Scotland and the Local Roads Authority. Such measures may include: the removal of street furniture, modifications to bridges and culverts, junction and carriageway widening and/or edge strengthening, road safety improvements and traffic management. These measures are to be undertaken by a recognised Quality Assured traffic management consultant;
f) A detailed protocol for the delivery of abnormal loads prepared in consultation and agreement with interested parties. The protocol shall identify any requirement for convoy working/and or escorting of vehicles and include arrangement to provide advance notice of demountable signs or similar approved, when required to alert road users and local residents of expected abnormal load movements. All such movements on Council maintained roads shall take place outwith peak times on the network including school travel times and shall avoid community events;
g) A detailed assessment of structures along the routes of any Highland Council Road shall be carried out in consultation with and the satisfaction of the Council's Structures Section;
h) 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. It shall include measures to deal with any haulage incidents that may result in public roads becoming temporarily closed or restricted; and
i) A detailed delivery programme for abnormal load movements which shall be made available to Highland Council and community representatives;

j) A detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and any proposed tree surgery or felling clearly identified for the consideration and prior written approval of the planning authority. This report must be prepared by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant and in accordance with BS5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction).

k) If considered appropriate by the Planning Authority, where roadside trees or hedging are adversely affected, details of an alternative route (which may include the construction of a temporary road) which avoids such works and/or replacement roadside tree planting to compensate for any such loss.

The AIL-CTMP shall be prepared in consultation with all interested parties and thereafter be carried out as approved.

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

19. **Site Access and Visibility Splays**

Prior to construction of any part of the development, the site access and visibility splays, generally as illustrated on the Approved Junction Layouts Drawing Ref: CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ROAD-XX-LAY-H-0127 REV P07, received on 04/12/2024 shall be constructed and implemented to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, in consultation with Transport Scotland.

Reason: To ensure that the standard of access layout complies with the current standards and that the safety of the traffic on the trunk road is not diminished. It will also ensure that drivers of vehicles leaving the site are enabled to see and be seen by vehicles on the trunk road carriageway and join the traffic stream safely.

20. **Road Mitigation Schedule of Works**

No later than three months prior to commencement of the development, a Road Mitigation Schedule of Works shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority, in consultation with the Local Roads Authority. The works must include, but are not limited to:

a) Schedule deliveries outside school hours and peak times.

b) Road safety measures within Bonar Bridge

c) Temporary speed limits (20 mph near school).

d) Avoid convoys; signage; parking controls.

e) Road condition surveys and remedial works.

f) Passing places and local widening on U3521.

g) Escort abnormal loads; advance warning signs

Thereafter, prior to the commencement of development, the measures set out in the Road Mitigation Schedule of Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. Permission to

carry out these works will be required from the Council as Roads Authority and may be carried out under Section 21 or 56 of the Roads (Scotland) Act.

Reason: To ensure the local road network is enhanced and thereafter maintained to safely accommodate the increased traffic arising from the construction traffic associated with this development and existing road users.

21. **Private Water Supplies**

A private water supply risk assessment which identifies any supply, including pipework, which may be adversely affected by the development shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. A report which includes details of the measures proposed to prevent contamination or physical disruption shall thereafter be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The report shall include details of any monitoring prior to, during and following construction and proposals for contingency measures in the event of an incident. Highland Council has some information on known supplies which can be provided on request however, it is not definitive. An on-site survey will be required.

Reason: To ensure that an adequate water supply can be provided to meet the requirements of the proposed development and, where relevant, without compromising the interests of other users of the same or nearby private water supplies.

22. **Access Management Plan**

No development shall commence until an Access Management Plan (AMP) has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority. The plan shall include:

a) Details of the maintenance of public access during construction of the development, as far as it is practicable and safe to do so;
b) Details of management of public access on the existing substation access track during construction;
c) c) Details of the enhancement of public access during the operation of the development, with the exclusion of the main substation compound;
d) Details showing Core Paths remaining open for public recreation use at all times during construction and operation of the substation;
e) Details of peat relocation and restoration areas and all associated fencing in close proximity to core paths.

The plan as agreed shall be implemented in full, unless otherwise approved in writing with the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of maintain public access rights.

23. **Public Art**

No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the inclusion of public art either on or off site, including types and locations of artworks, public parking (if applicable) and the management and maintenance thereof, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be

implemented prior to first commissioning of the development and thereafter maintained in perpetuity, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and creation of place.

24. **Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW) and Peat Clerk of Works (PCoW)**

No development shall commence unless and until the terms of appointment of an independent Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW) and Peat Clerk of Works (PCoW) by the Company have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. This must include a EnvCoW & PCoW schedule, detailing when the EnvCoW & PCoW shall be present on site. For the avoidance of doubt, the EnvCoW & PCoW shall be appointed as a minimum for the period from the commencement of development to the final commissioning of the development and their remit shall, in addition to any functions approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

The terms of appointment shall include (but not be limited to):

a) Impose a duty to monitor compliance with the environmental commitments provided in the EIA Report as well as the following (the EnvCoW works):
    i. the Pre-Construction Ecological Survey under Condition 27;
    ii. the Construction Environmental Management Plan under Condition 16;
    iii. the Peat Management Plan under Condition 29;
    iv. the Habitat Management Plan under Condition 28;
    v. Biodiversity Enhancement and Planting under Condition 4;
    vi. Species and Bird Protection Plans under Conditions 25 &26;
    vii. the landscape and planting plans under Condition 6.
b) providing training to the developer and contractors on their responsibilities to ensure that work is carried out in strict accordance with environmental protection requirements;
c) Require the EnvCoW & PCoW to report to the nominated construction project manager, developer and Planning Authority any incidences of noncompliance with the EnvCoW & PCoW works at the earliest practical opportunity;
d) Undertake a pre-construction survey not more than 3 months prior to commencement of construction and as required throughout the duration of the project to protect the ecological resources within the site;
e) maintains a Register of all inspections and audits, to include an inventory of all measures on the site, their effectiveness, as well as any advice provided; and
f) Require the EnvCoW & PCoW to submit a monthly report to the construction project manager, developer and Planning Authority summarising works undertaken on site.

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.

25. **Species Protection Plans (SPPs)**

No development shall commence until Species Protection Plans (SPPs) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The SPPs shall be

informed by pre-commencement bird surveys and proposed mitigation and should include the following;

a) Bats (including pre-construction tree checks, prior to tree felling, and proposed mitigation, should any roosts be identified);
b) Badger, Beaver and Otter (with inclusion of pre-construction works and mitigation);
c) Water vole (with inclusion of pre-construction works in suitable habitat 50m up and downstream from proposed works, and standard mitigation);
d) Pine marten and red squirrel (with inclusion of pre-construction works in suitable habitat within a 250m buffer from proposed works, and standard mitigation);
e) Fresh water pearl mussels (with inclusion of pre-construction works and mitigation);
f) Wildcat (with inclusion of pre-construction works and mitigation);
g) Wood ant (with inclusion of pre-construction works and mitigation);

Thereafter, the approved Species Protection Plans shall be implemented in full within the timescales set out in the approved SPPs.

Reason: To ensure that all construction and operation of the proposed development has a limited impact on the aforementioned protected species, and to ensure that the mitigation measures contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report which accompanied the application, or as otherwise agreed, are fully implemented.

26. **Bird Protection Plan (BPP)**

No development shall commence until a Bird Protection Plan (BPP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The BPP shall be informed by pre-commencement bird surveys and proposed mitigation and should include the following;

a) Pre-construction surveys, prior to blasting, to ascertain the absence of nest sites of sensitive species (hen harrier, merlin, short-eared owl) in the vicinity of project site, and to limit disturbance to wintering birds (geese and swans);
b) Nesting checks prior to any earthworks to protect ground nesting species (such as curlew, lapwing, skylark, or meadow pipit); and
c) Vegetation clearance of the woodland to the west (inside the site boundary) is required to consider the presence of a common buzzard nest there.

Thereafter, the approved BPP shall be implemented in full within the timescales set out in the approved BPP.

Reason: To ensure that all construction and operation of the proposed development has a limited impact on the aforementioned protected species, and to ensure that the mitigation measures contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report which accompanied the application, or as otherwise agreed, are fully implemented.

27. **Pre-Construction Ecological Survey**

A pre-construction survey is required to been undertaken not more than 3 months prior to works commencing and a report of the survey has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. The survey shall cover both the application site

and an appropriate buffer from the boundary of application site and the report of survey shall include mitigation measures where any impact, or potential impact, on protected species or their habitat has been identified. Development and work shall progress in accordance with any mitigation measures contained within the approved report of survey and the timescales contain therein.

Reason: To ensure that the site and its environs are surveyed and the development does not have an adverse impact on protected species or habitat.

28. **Habitat Management Plan (HMP)**

1) There shall be no commencement of development until an updated Outline Habitat Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with NatureScot. This shall quantify and map the extent and quality of habitat and peat losses, direct and indirect areas of disturbance, and biodiversity impact associated with the finalised development proposals. This shall also account for any additional intended storage areas, laydown areas, and all other temporary construction areas, identifying existing habitat features and vegetation to be retained.
2) Within 18 months of the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit a finalised Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority. The finalised HMP shall set out proposed habitat management of the site including all mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures, during the period of construction and operation, and shall detail the long-term management regimes of the compensation and enhancement measures required of the site. All planting, seeding or turfing as may be comprised in the approved details shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the commencement of development, unless otherwise stated in the approved scheme.
3) The HMP shall include provision for regular monitoring and review to be undertaken against the HMP objectives and measures for securing amendments or additions to the HMP in the event that the HMP objectives are not being met. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, for whatever reason are removed or damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of the same size and species.

Unless and until otherwise agreed in advance in writing with the Planning Authority, the approved HMP (as amended from time to time with written approval of the Planning Authority) shall be implemented in full.

Reason: In the interests of protecting ecological features and to ensure that the development secures positive effects for biodiversity.

29. **Peat Management Plan**

No development shall commence until a works specific finalised Peat Management and Restoration Plan (PMRP) and Peat Slide Risk Assessment (PSRA) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. These shall draw upon the findings and recommendations of the PMRP and PSLRA submitted as Supplementary Environmental Information on 19/09/2025, and consider the findings of any additional ground investigations carried out prior to development commencing and

include a management / reinstatement scheme for all peat areas within the application site. Mitigation measures shall include:

a) Increasing the width of all peat cell bund walls;
b) Installing semi-permeable membrane with bund trenches prior to back-filling, and;
c) Reducing cell size abutting external walls (reducing active force).

The PMRP shall details and plans for all peat and soil stripping and excavation and the storage and proposed use and replacement of peat, topsoil and subsoil. It shall include a method statement setting out the measures to protect peat during excavation, storage, handling and reuse.

Thereafter, the plan shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: In the interests of the protection of the habitats identified in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and EIA Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI).

30. **Programme of Archaeological Works**

No works in connection with the development hereby approved shall commence unless an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority and a programme of archaeological works has been carried out in accordance with the approved WSI. The WSI shall include details of how the recording and recovery of archaeological resources found within the application site shall be undertaken, and how any updates, if required, to the written scheme of investigation will be provided throughout the implementation of the programme of archaeological works. Should the archaeological works reveal the need for post excavation analysis the development hereby approved shall not be [occupied/brought into use] unless a Post-Excavation Research Design (PERD) for the analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. The PERD shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details.

Reason. In order to protect the archaeological and historic interest of the site.

31. **Local Employment Scheme**

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 Report (EIAR) (December 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.

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 community. To make provision for publicity and details relating to any local employment opportunities.

32. **Planning Monitoring Officer**

No development shall commence until the Planning Authority has approved in writing the terms of appointment by the applicant of a suitably qualified environmental specialist to assist the Planning Authority in monitoring compliance with the planning permission and conditions attached to this consent. The terms of Planning Monitoring Officer (PMO) appointment shall:

a) Impose a duty to monitor compliance with the planning permission and conditions attached to this consent;
b) Require the PMO to submit a report at least every three months to the Planning Authority, or monthly at the further written request of the Planning Authority, summarising works undertaken on site; and
c) Require the PMO to report to the Planning Authority any incidences of non-compliance with the planning permission and conditions attached to this consent at the earliest practical opportunity.

The PMO shall be appointed on the approved terms throughout the period from the commencement of development to completion of post construction restoration works.

Reason: To enable the development to be suitably monitored to ensure compliance with the consent issued.

33. **Community Liaison Group**

No development shall commence until a community liaison group is established by the applicant, in collaboration with the Planning Authority and affected local Community Councils in consultation with local NPAC Ward Members.

The group shall act as a forum for the community to be kept informed of project progress and, in particular, should allow advanced dialogue on the provision of all transport

related mitigation measures and to keep under review the timing of the delivery of abnormal loads and performance of the Construction Traffic Management Plan.

This should also ensure that local events and tourist seasons are considered and appropriate measures to co-ordinate deliveries and work with these and any other major projects in the area to ensure no conflict between construction traffic and the increased traffic generated by such events / seasons / developments.

The liaison group, or element of any combined liaison group relating to this development, shall be maintained until the construction of the development and all site infrastructure becomes fully operational.

Reason: To assist project implementation, ensuring community dialogue and the delivery of appropriate mitigation measures for example to minimise potential hazards to road users, including pedestrians, travelling on the road networks.

34. **Operational Management Plan**

Prior to the energisation of the development, a site Operational Management Plan shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This plan shall detail:

a) An updated Schedule of Mitigation (SM) as it relates to the operational phase of the development highlighting mitigation set out within each chapter of the Environmental Appraisal (EA) and supplementary environmental information, as well as the conditions of this consent;
b) Processes to control / action changes from the agreed SM;
c) A scheme outlining the notification and approval process of the planning authority in consultation with the respective roads authorities and community representatives as required, for any abnormal load movement required during the operation of the approved development, or prior to any decommissioning of the development.

Thereafter, the OEMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details from first commissioning of the development until the cessation of the use of the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of environmental amenity, pollution prevention, maintaining water quality, and provision of adequate parking and charging facilities.

35. **SF6 Gas**

The on-site infrastructure shall utilise Sulphur Hexafluride (SF6) free technology with an environmentally friendly alternative to be introduced, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority following receipt of further justification for any limited use of this by the developer, including details of associated mitigation measures to restrict, monitor and report ay gas leakages during the operational lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the environment and minimising pollution.

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.

REASONED CONCLUSION
The Council is in agreement with the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report that the Carnaig substation development is unlikely to give rise to any new or other significant adverse impact on the environment. The Council is satisfied that all environmental effects of this development can be addressed by way of mitigation. The Council has incorporated the requirement for a schedule of mitigation within the conditions of this permission. Monitoring of operational compliance has been secured through the above conditions of this permission.

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 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

You are 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 take place outwith the hours of 08:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays or at any time on a 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. 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:	Dafydd Jones
Designation:	Area Planning Manager – North
Author:	Grant Baxter
Background Papers:	Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans:	Plan 1 - Location Plan CAA14-LT470-JMS-ZZ-XX-PLN-C-0004
	Plan 2 - Amended Proposed Site Layout Plan CAA14-LT470-JMS-ZZ-XX-PLN-C-0001 Rev P07
	Plan 3 - Amended Site Layout Plan – Temporary Works CAAA14-LT470-JMS-ZZ-ZZ-GA-C 0012 Rev P06
	Plan 4 - Amended Site Layout Plan – Permanent Works CAAA14-LT470-JMS-ZZ-ZZ-GA-C 0010 Rev P09
	Plan 5 - Amended Drainage Layout Plan – Operational Phase CAA14-LT470-JMS-DRAI-XX-LAY-C0110 Rev P09
	Plan 6 - Elevations Substation Control Building CAAA14-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-ELE-A-0046 Rev P03
	Plan 7 - Section Plan Substation Control Building CAAA14-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-ELE-A-0047 Rev P03
	Plan 8 - Floor Plan Substation Control Building CAAA14-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-LAY-A-0044 Rev P03
	Plan 9 - Roof Plan Substation Control Building CAAA14-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-LAY-A-0045 Rev P03
	Plan 10 - Elevations Synchronous Condenser CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-SCND-ELE-A-0066 Rev P04
	Plan 11 - Elevations Synchronous Condenser CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-SCND-ELE-A-0067 Rev P04
	Plan 12 - FLOOR PLAN - SYCHRONOUS CONDENSER CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-SCND-LAY-A-0064 Rev P04
	Plan 13 - ROOF PLAN - SYNCHRONOUS CONDENSER CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-SCND-LAY-A-0065 Rev P04

Plan 14 - FLOOR PLAN - SUBSTATION PLATFORM CAAI4-LY470-JMS-ROAD-XX-LAY-H-0140 Rev P03

Plan 15 - SECTION PLAN - PERMANENT WORKS CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ZZ-ZZ-GA-C-0011 Rev P07

Plan 16 - ELEVATIONS - FENCING AND GATES - SITE WIDE CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FENC-XX-DET-C-0102 Rev P003

Plan 17 - ELEVATIONS - FENCING AND GATES CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FENC-XX-DET-C-0101 Rev P03

Plan 18 - Junction Layouts Drawing CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ROAD-XX-LAY-H-0127 REV P07

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Development Plan and Other Material Policy Considerations
- Appendix 2 - Compliance with the Development Plan / Other Material Policy Considerations.
- Appendix 3 - Appropriate Assessment
- Appendix 4 - Letters of Representation

Appendix 1 – Development Plan and Other Material Policy Considerations

National Planning Framework 4

A1.1 National Development 3 - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure
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

Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (2018) (CaSPlan)

A1.3 No specific policies apply. The plan does however confirm the boundaries of the regionally significant Special Landscape Areas.

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

A.2.1 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) forms part of the Development Plan and was adopted in February 2023. NPF4 comprises three distinct parts. Part 1 sets out an overarching spatial strategy for Scotland in the future. Outlining that Scotland is facing unprecedented challenges and that we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and embrace and deliver radical change so we can tackle and adapt to climate change, restore biodiversity loss, improve health and wellbeing, and build a wellbeing economy while striving to create great places. Therefore, NPF4 sets out that choices need to be made about how we can make sustainable use of our natural assets in a way that benefits communities.

A.2.2 NPF4 outlines 18 national developments that support the plan's spatial strategy. National developments will be a focus for delivery, as well as exemplars of the Place Principle, placemaking and a Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach to economic development. Six of the national developments support the delivery of sustainable places. Among these is national development number 3 - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure, which "supports electricity generation and associated grid infrastructure throughout Scotland, providing employment and opportunities for community benefit, helping to reduce emissions and improve security of supply." National development 3 accords national development status to electricity transmission that includes c) New and/or upgraded Infrastructure directly supporting on and offshore high voltage electricity lines, cables and interconnectors including converter stations, switching stations and substations. This proposal aligns with part c) and therefore, is classed as a national development, and as such received in principle support.

A.2.3 The spatial strategy reflects existing legislation by setting out that decision making requires to reflect the long-term public interest. However, in doing so, it is clear that the decision maker must make the right choices about where development should be located, ensuring clarity is provided over the types of infrastructure that need to be provided and the assets that should be protected to ensure they continue to benefit future generations. To that end, the Spatial Priorities support the planning and delivery of sustainable places, which will reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity; create liveable places, where residents can live better, healthier lives; and create productive places, with a greener, fairer, and more inclusive wellbeing economy.

A.2.4 Part 2 of NFP4 sets out the National Planning Policy which cover three themes: Sustainable Places, Liveable Places, and Productive Places; within which there are a total of 33 policies and many of these consist of distinct sub-policies. These 33 national planning policies form part of the development plan and will be assessed along with the Council's LDP policies for development management decisions. The most relevant policies are outlined below.

A.2.5 Part 3 provides a series of annexes that provide the rationale for the strategies and policies of NPF4, which outline how the document should be used, and set out how the Scottish Government will implement the strategies and policies contained in the document. With Annex A: 'How to use this document' noting that the policies within Part 2 should be read as a whole and '…it is for the decision maker to determine what weight to attach to policies on a case-by-case basis….' It goes on to state that '…where a policy states that development will be supported, it is in principle, and it is for the decision maker to take into account all other relevant policies….'.

A.2.6 Many of NPF4's policies are relevant to consideration of this proposal, but attention is particularly drawn here to the following key policies. Policy 1 - Tackling the climate and nature crises aims to encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis. It requires 'significant weight' to be given to those crises in decision making.

A.2.7 Policy 3 - Biodiversity aims to protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects and strengthen nature networks. Every development proposal has to maintain or improve biodiversity. Biodiversity measures can be secured through several conditions including the landscaping strategy, the Habitat Management Plan and the requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain.

A.2.8 Policy 4 - Natural Places aims to protect, restore and enhance natural assets making best use of nature-based solutions. Policy 4 section e) requires project design and mitigation to demonstrate how the following various impacts on communities and individual dwellings, including, residential amenity, visual impact, and noise, landscape, visual and cumulative impacts, public access, traffic and roads, historic environment, hydrology, water environment and flood risk, trees, biodiversity, decommissioning and site restoration are all addressed. These matters are all addressed in the report above and subject to conditions are considered to be acceptable.

A.2.9 Policy 11 - Energy aims to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore. This includes energy generation, storage, new and replacement transmission and distribution infrastructure. Section a) notes development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported, including (ii.) enabling works, such as grid transmission and distribution infrastructure. Section c) confirms development proposals will 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. Section d) requires development proposals that impact on international or national designations to be assessed in relation to Policy 4. In considering these impacts, significant weight will be placed on the contribution of the proposal to renewable energy generation targets and on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

A.2.10 Policy 25 - Community wealth building aims to encourage, promote and facilitate a new strategic approach to economic development that also provides a practical model for building a wellbeing economy at local, regional and national levels. While NPF4 considers national developments as a focus for delivery, they should also be exemplars of the community wealth building approach to economic development. A socio-economic condition can be secured. Further measures outwith the planning application can be developed through the Councils Social Charter.

Highland wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP)

A.2.11 The principal HwLDP policy against which the application requires to be determined is the Policy 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure. This policy offers support for electricity transmission infrastructure, having regard to their level of strategic significance in transmitting electricity from areas of generation to areas of consumption. Such support is subject to the proposals not having an unacceptable significant impact on the environment.

A.2.12 As the development would provide additional grid capacity for the transmission network and would help to facilitate an increasing proportion of electricity generation from renewable sources, the principle of the development receives support under HwLDP Policy 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure, subject to site selection, design and overcoming any unacceptable significant environmental effects.

A.2.13 In this regard, the site does not benefit from specific policy designations. The HwLDP does confirm the boundaries of Special Landscape Areas. Policies 28, 57, 61 and 69 seek to safeguard these regionally important landscapes. The impact of this development on landscape is primarily assessed in the Landscape and Visual Impact section of this report. HwLDP Policy 36 Development in the Wider Countryside applies and sets out that all development in the countryside will be determined on the basis of a number of criteria. Pertinent matters to this proposal include siting and design, being compatible with the existing pattern of development, landscape character and capacity, as well as drainage and servicing implications. The site also does not form part of any natural heritage or, built heritage designation

Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (2018) (CaSPlan)

A.2.14 The site is not covered by any specific development allocation or safeguarding notion. The CaSPlan does confirm the boundaries (including any refinements) of the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) within the plan area.

Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement (2022), Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023), and Onshore Wind Sector Deal for Scotland (2023)

A.2.15 The Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement supersedes the previously adopted Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement which was published in 2017. The document sets out a clear ambition for onshore wind in Scotland and for the first time sets a national target for a minimum level of installed capacity for onshore wind energy being 20 Gigawatts (GW). This is set against a currently installed capacity of 9.4 GW (June 2023). Therefore, a further 10.6 GW of onshore wind requires to be installed to meet the target. It is however acknowledged that targets are not caps. In delivering such a target Scotland would play a significant role in meeting the requirement of 25-30 GW of installed capacity across the UK identified by the Climate Change Committee.

A.2.16 Like the previous iteration of the Onshore Wind Energy Policy Statement, the document recognises that balance is required and that no one technology can allow Scotland to reach its net zero targets. The document is clear that in achieving a balance, environmental and economic benefits to Scotland must be maximised. In taking this approach, this echoes Scotland's Third Land Use Strategy. Benefits to rural areas, such as provision of jobs and opportunities to restore and protect natural habitats, are also highlighted in the document.

A.2.17 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.

A.2.18 To deliver the ambition for onshore wind, the Onshore Wind Sector Deal for Scotland was introduced in September 2023. The document focuses on necessary high level actions by Government and the Sector to support onshore wind delivery. Jointly, Government and the Sector are committed to working together to ensure a balance is struck between onshore wind and the impacts on land use and the environment. The document looks to expediate decision making and consent implementation to achieve 20 GW of installation by 2030, meaning we should be seeing faster decisions on applications that are already in the system, with more consents being build out.

Appendix 3 – Appropriate Assessments

Application under Regulation 62 of The Conservation (Natural Habitats, and c.) Regulations 1994 for Carnaig Substation - Construction and operation of a 400kV substation and associated infrastructure, site access, and landscaping - Land 2430M SW Of Loch Buidhe, Bonar Bridge – 24/05062/FUL

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS AFFECTING EUROPEAN SITES

1. River Evelix Special Area of Conservation

The status of River Evelix Special Area of Conservation (SAC) means that the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, and c.) Regulations 1994 as amended (the 'Habitats Regulations') or, for reserved matters the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended apply.

This means that where the conclusion reached by the Council on a development proposal unconnected with the nature conservation management of Natura 2000 sites is that it is likely to have a significant effect on those sites, it must undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the conservation interests for which the areas have been designated. The need for Appropriate Assessment extends to plans or projects outwith the boundary of the sites in order to determine their implications for the interests protected within the sites.

This means that the Council, as competent authority, has a duty to:

- Determine whether the proposal is directly connected with or necessary to site management for conservation; and, if not,
- Determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site either individually or in combination with other plans or projects; and, if so, then
- Make an Appropriate Assessment of the implications (of the proposal) for the site in view of its conservation objectives.

The competent authority can only agree to the proposal after having ascertained that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site. If this is not the case and there are not alternative solutions, the proposal can only be allowed to proceed if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, which in this case can include those of a social or economic nature.

Screening in Likely Significant Effects

It is evident that the proposal is not partly connected with or necessary to site management for conservation, hence further consideration is required.

The proposed development has the potential to have a likely significant effect on fresh water pearl mussel within the SAC. The Council is therefore required to undertake an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal on the SAC site.

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

While the responsibility to carry out the Appropriate Assessment rests with the Council, advice contained within Circular 6/1995 (as amended June 2000) is that the assessment can be based on the information submitted from other agencies. In this case, the Appropriate Assessment is informed by information supplied by NatureScot.

Appraisal Summary

The proposal site boundary lies less than 1m from the River Evelix Special Area of Conservation (SAC) protected for its fresh water pearl mussels population. It is hydrologically connected to the River Evelix by several watercourses that flow into Loch an Lagain, which is the source of the River Evelix.

NatureScot has advised that the proposal could affect natural heritage interests of international importance on the site, specifically that it could have a likely significant effect on the fresh water pearl mussels of the SAC. NatureScot advise that if the proposed development is carried out in accordance with the following mitigation measures, which are considered to be feasible, then it is concluded that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC site:

- General Environmental Management Plans and Freshwater Pearl Mussel Species Protection Plans (including freshwater buffer zones, oil and fuel management, pollution prevention, bad weather planning, etc.) and focussed use of an ECoW, should be implemented in full, as per the applicant's mitigation measures.
- Extra work should be carried out on cell-bunding of compartment B (in accordance with the Peat Slide Risk Assessment (PSRA) recommendations) to enhance its stability further, aiding a reduction in risk factor towards 'very low', adding extra confidence to the Factor of Safety, including:
  - Increasing the width of all bund walls;
  - Install semi-permeable membrane with bund trenches prior to backfilling, and:
  - Reduce cell size abutting external walls (reducing active force)
  - All other recommendations and mitigations to be implemented as presented within the applicant's updated Peat Slide Risk Assessment (PSRA) submitted on 19th September 2025.

HIGHLAND COUNCIL APPRAISAL OF THE PROPOSAL

• Parts of the proposal are not connected with or necessary for site management for conservation;
• The proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site either individually or in combination with other plans or projects; therefore;
• An appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal in views of the site's conservation objectives is provided below
• The impacts on the River Evelix SAC during construction and operation have been considered.

The proposed substation site and in particular the area identified for peatland restoration via a system of excavated peat deposited in bunded cells, is hydrologically connected to the River Evelix and likely to have a significant effect on fresh water pearl mussels of the SAC. As the proposed mitigation measures set out above are considered to be feasible and would be implemented, then it is concluded that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC site. The application is connected to the River Evelix SAC, and therefore Conditions 25 and 29 have been attached that cover the above mitigation measures.

Overall, it can be therefore concluded that while likely significant effects have been identified, there will not be an adverse effect on site integrity of the River Thurso SAC providing the mitigation set out within this appropriate assessment are applied.

2. Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI

The status of Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI means that the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, and c.) Regulations 1994 as amended (the 'Habitats Regulations') or, for reserved matters the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended apply.

This means that where the conclusion reached by the Council on a development proposal unconnected with the nature conservation management of Natura 2000 sites is that it is likely to have a significant effect on those sites, it must undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the conservation interests for which the areas have been

designated. The need for Appropriate Assessment extends to plans or projects outwith the boundary of the sites in order to determine their implications for the interests protected within the sites.
This means that the Council, as competent authority, has a duty to:

- Determine whether the proposal is directly connected with or necessary to site management for conservation; and, if not,
- Determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site either individually or in combination with other plans or projects; and, if so, then
- Make an Appropriate Assessment of the implications (of the proposal) for the site in view of its conservation objectives.

The competent authority can only agree to the proposal after having ascertained that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site. If this is not the case and there are not alternative solutions, the proposal can only be allowed to proceed if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, which in this case can include those of a social or economic nature.

Screening in Likely Significant Effects

It is evident that the proposal is not partly connected with or necessary to site management for conservation, hence further consideration is required.
The proposed development has the potential to have a likely significant effect on hen harrier within the SPA/SSSI. The Council is therefore required to undertake an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal on the SPA/SSSI site.

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

While the responsibility to carry out the Appropriate Assessment rests with the Council, advice contained within Circular 6/1995 (as amended June 2000) is that the assessment can be based on the information submitted from other agencies. In this case, the Appropriate Assessment is informed by information supplied by NatureScot.

Appraisal Summary

The proposal lies within Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) which is protected for its hen harrier population.
NatureScot has advised that the proposal could affect natural heritage interests of international importance on the site, specifically that it could have a likely significant effect on the hen harriers of the SPA. Nature Scot advise that if the proposed development is carried out in accordance with the following mitigation measures, which are considered to be feasible, then it is concluded that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA site:

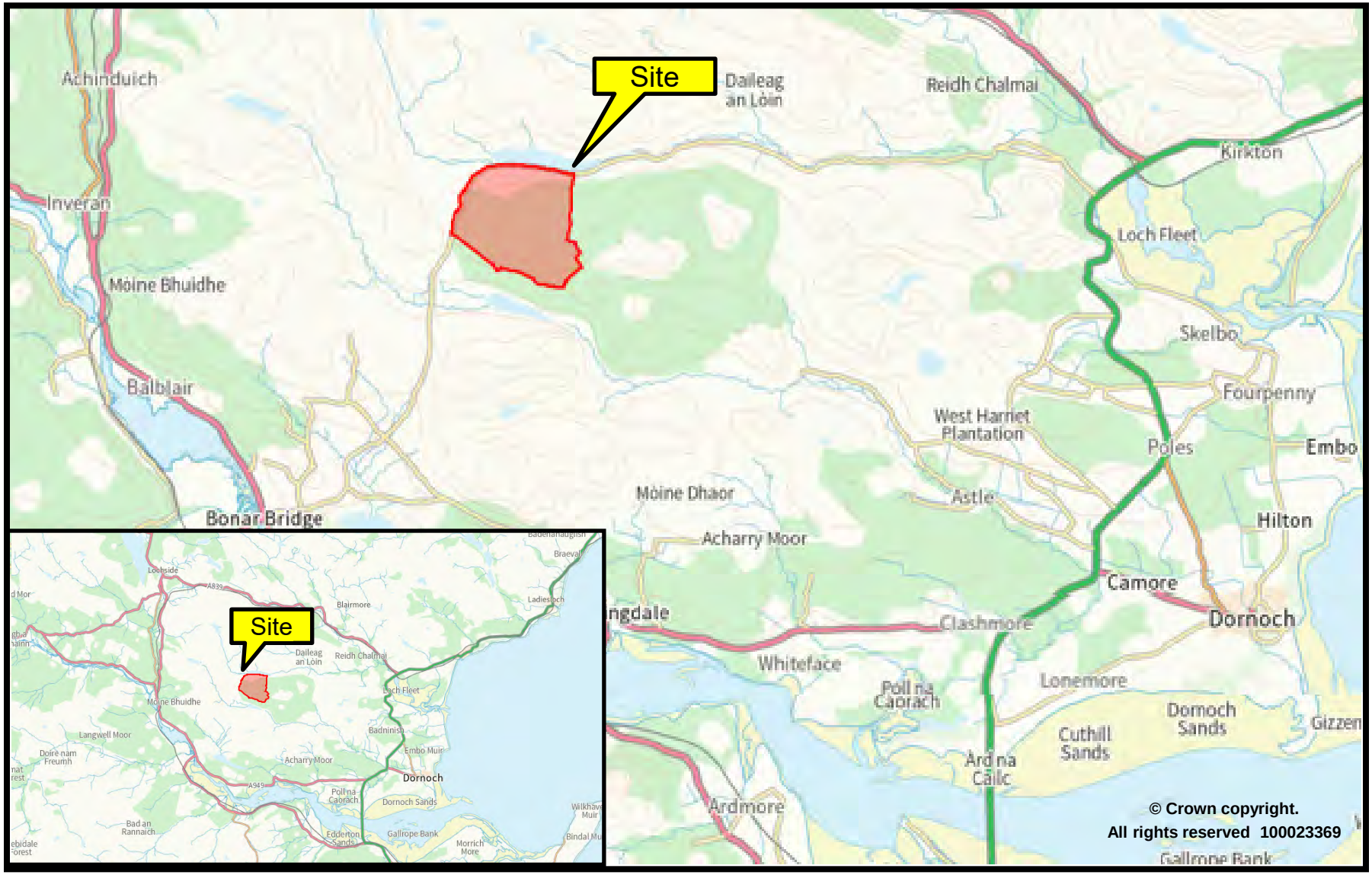
- The Breeding Bird Protection Plan should be made subject to planning conditions, to be approved by Highland Council and NatureScot.

HIGHLAND COUNCIL APPRAISAL OF THE PROPOSAL

• Parts of the proposal are not connected with or necessary for site management for conservation;
• The proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site either individually or in combination with other plans or projects; therefore;
• An appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal in views of the site's conservation objectives is provided below
• The impacts on the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI during construction and operation have been considered.
The proposed substation site is located within the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors and likely to have a significant effect on hen harrier of the SSSI/SPA . As the proposed mitigation measures set out above are considered to be feasible and would be implemented, then it is concluded that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SSSI/SPA

site. The application lies within the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI, and therefore Conditions 25. 26 & 29 have been attached that cover the above mitigation measures.
Overall, it can be therefore concluded that while likely significant effects have been identified, there will not be an adverse effect on site integrity of the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA/SSSI providing the mitigation set out within this appropriate assessment are applied.

The Highland Council
21 November 2025



The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Planning, Infrastructure
Environment & Economy

24/05062/FUL

Carnaig Substation - Construction and operation of a 400kV substation and associated infrastructure, site access, and landscaping at land 2430M SW of Loch Buidhe, Bonar Bridge

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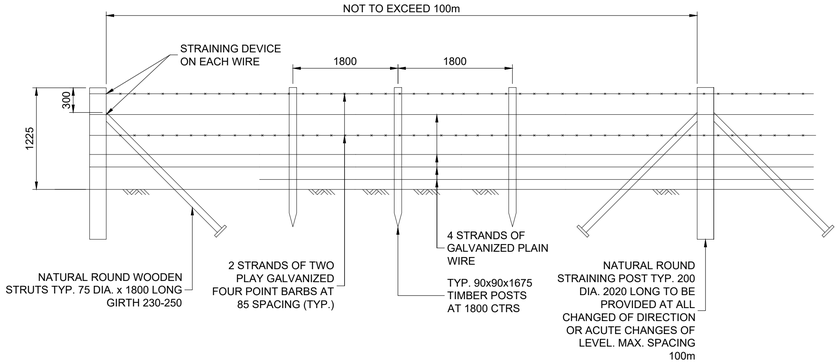
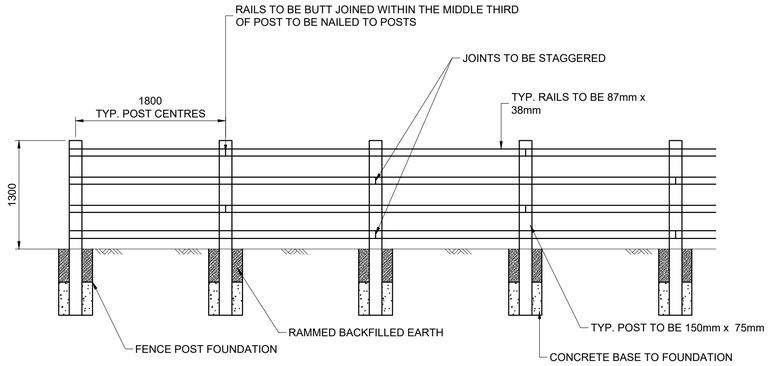


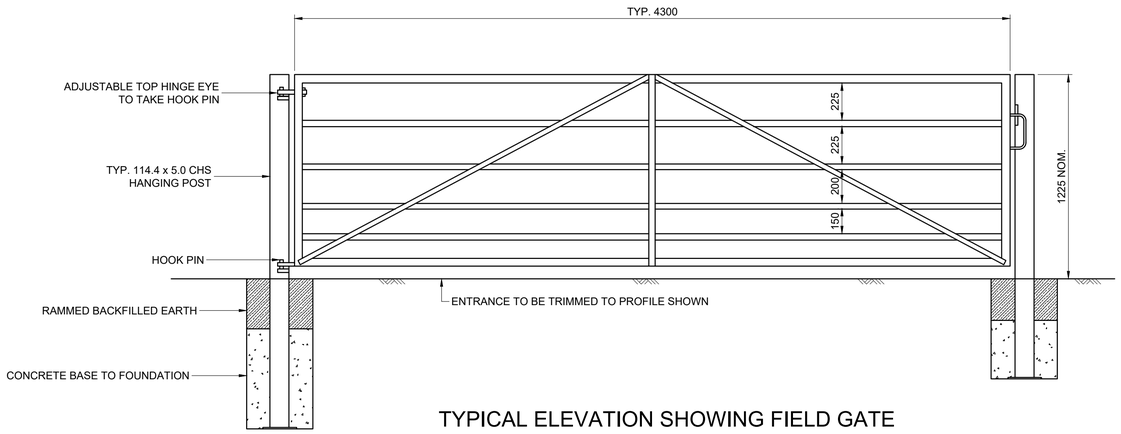
TYPICAL ELEVATION SHOWING POST & WIRE FENCE

SCALE 1:50



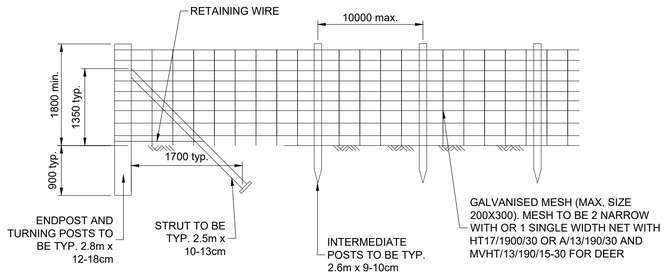
TYPICAL ELEVATION SHOWING POST & RAIL FENCE

SCALE 1:50



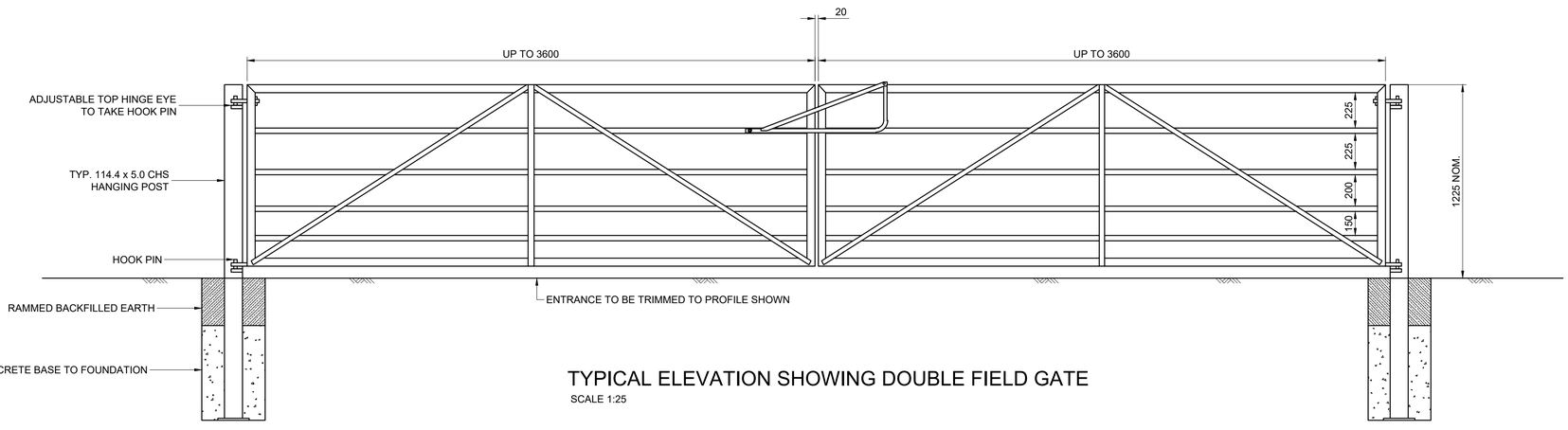
TYPICAL ELEVATION SHOWING FIELD GATE

SCALE 1:25



TYPICAL ELEVATION SHOWING DEER FENCING

NOT TO SCALE

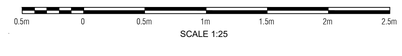


TYPICAL ELEVATION SHOWING DOUBLE FIELD GATE

SCALE 1:25

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETERS, DO NOT SCALE.
2. THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH DRAWING CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FENC-XX-LAY-C-0100
3. FENCING AND GATES TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SSEN FENCING SPECIFICATION (SP-NET-CIV-505)
4. DEER FENCING TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES INCLUDED IN THE FOREST FENCING TECHNICAL GUIDE PRODUCED BY FORESTRY COMMISSION FOREST RESEARCH FCTG-02. FENCING ASSUMED TO BE FOR RED/FALLOW DEER.
5. DEER FENCING RETENTION / REPLACEMENT WITH STOCK PROOF TO BE 10 YEARS. TO BE CONFIRMED BY CEM.



SCALE 1:25

SCALE 1:50

REV	DRAWN	CHECKED	APPROVED	DATE
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ISSUED FOR PLANNING				
P03	RH	AC	RP	21/08/24
UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P02	AGF	AGF	TCC	14/05/24
FOR PHASE 2B PLANNING				
P01	OJ	AHC	TCC	10/04/24

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WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE
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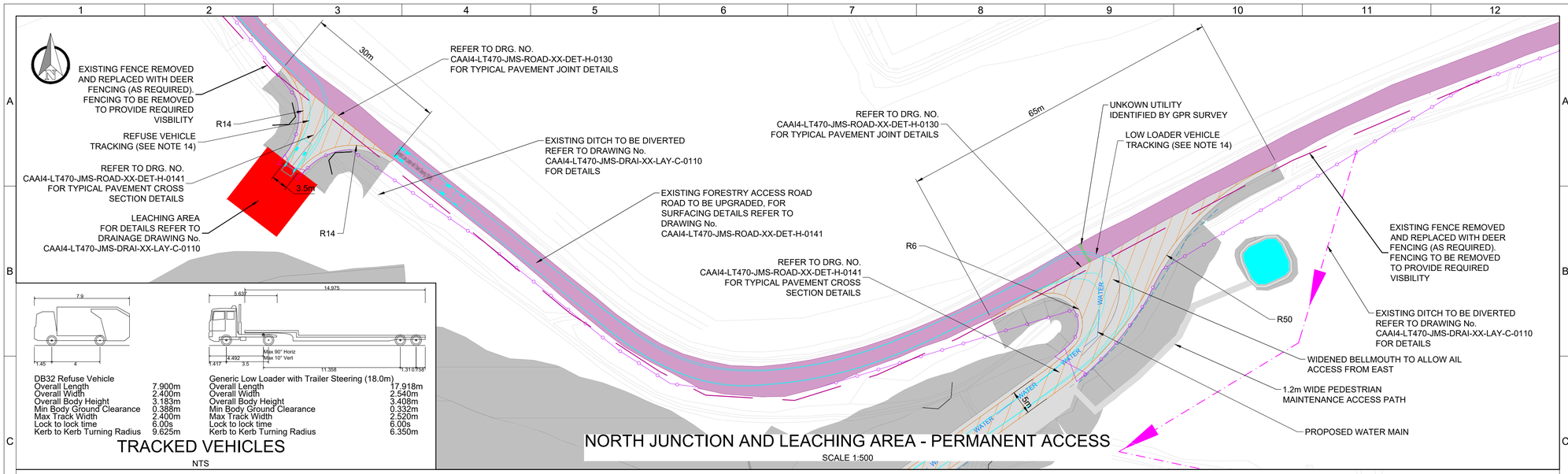
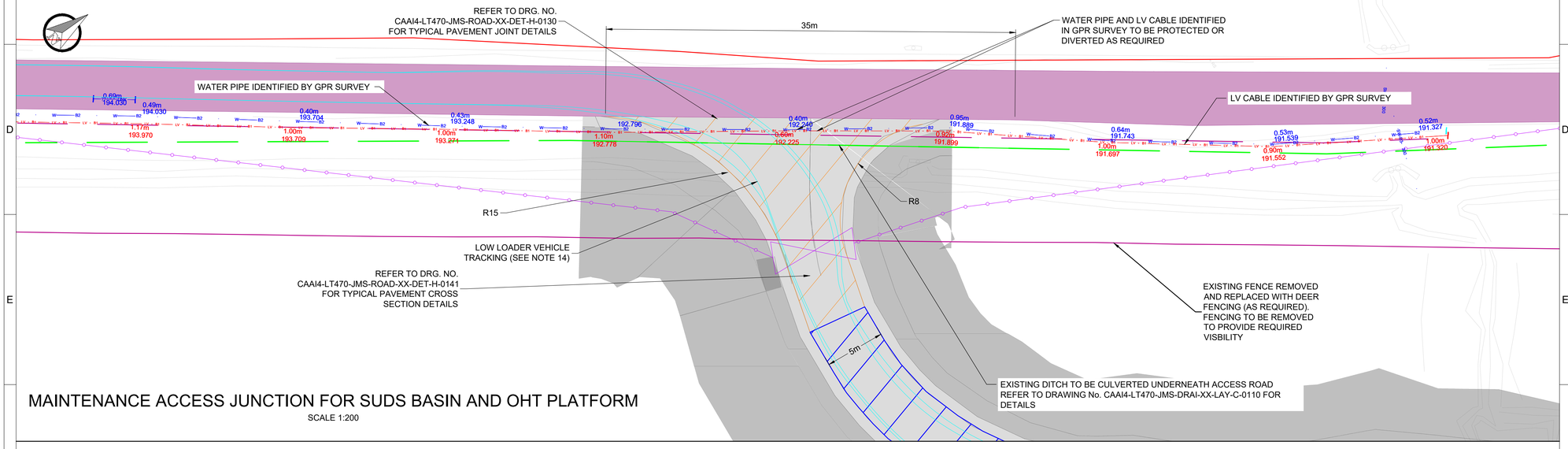
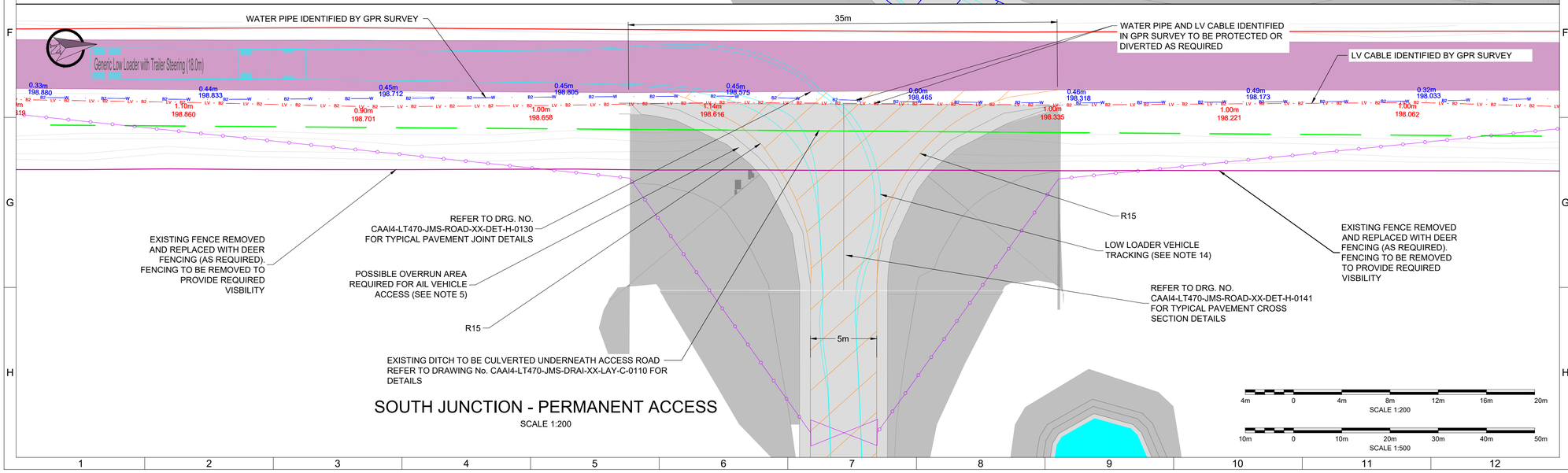
Tony Gee
TONY GEE AND PARTNERS LLP
4TH FLOOR, ARTHUR HOUSE, MANCHESTER M1 3FH
Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks
SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORK
1 WATERLOO ST, GLASGOW G2 6AY

Project:	CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Scheme:	
Site:	LT470 CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Circuit:	COMMON
Revision: P03	Dwg Title: FENCING AND GATES SITE WIDE TYPICAL DETAILS
Suitability: S5	
Scale @ A1: AS SHOWN	Dwg No: CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FENC-XX-DET-C-0102
Sheets: 1 OF 1	Purpose of Issue: ISSUED FOR PLANNING
Internal Proj.Ref: M123015	Client Dwg Number: -







GENERAL NOTES:

1. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN METERS. DO NOT SCALE.
2. THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH DRG. NO. CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ZZ-ZZ-GA-C-0010, CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ROAD-XX-ELE-H-0120-122, CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ROAD-XX-LAY-H-0124.
3. PRELIMINARY ALIGNMENT AND JUNCTION DESIGN IS BASED ON AVAILABLE LIDAR AND TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY.
4. ALL ROADS AND JUNCTIONS ARE TO CONFORM TO SSEN PAVEMENTS AND ROADWAYS SPECIFICATION (SP-NET-CIV-503).
5. JUNCTION RADII AND CURVE WIDENING TO BE REVIEWED FOLLOWING SWEPT PATH ANALYSIS BY AIL SUPPLIER AND OHL CONTRACTOR AT NEXT DESIGN PHASE.
6. FOR BELLMOUTH CONSTRUCTION DETAILS REFER TO DRG. NO. CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ROAD-XX-DET-H-0130
7. BELLMOUTH DESIGNS CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY. DETAILED JUNCTION DESIGN REVIEWS WILL BE REQIORED WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS AT DETAILED DESIGN STAGE.
8. LIMITED EARTHWORKS ARE ANTICIPATED AT ALL PROPOSED BELLMOUTH ARRANGEMENTS. THIS IS TO BE CONFIRMED AT DETAILED DESIGN.
9. LOCATION OF EXISTING FENCING IS INDICATIVE. ADDITIONAL AS BUILT SURVEY OF THE FENCE IS REQUIRED. THE EXISTING FENCE WILL NEED TO BE REMOVED AROUND THE PROPOSED ACCESS LOCATIONS.
10. LOCATION OF EXISTING DRAINAGE (INC. DITCHES) IS BASED UPON TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY INFO. EXISTING DRAINAGE WITHIN EXTENTS OF JUNCTION WORKS TO BE ACCOMMODATED/PROTECTED AS REQUIRED.
11. FOR DRAINAGE DESIGN REFER TO DRG. NO. CAAI4-LT470-JMS-DRAI-XX-LAY-C-0110
12. FOR FENCING AND GATE LAYOUTS AND DETAILS REFER TO DRG. NO. CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FENC-XX-LAY-C-0100 & CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FENC-XX-DET-C-0101 AND 102
13. REFER TO DRG. NO. CAAI4-LT470-JMS-SERV-XX-PLN-C-0005 FOR UTILITIES. UTILITIES WITHIN EXTENTS OF JUNCTION WORKS TO BE PROTECTED OR DIVERTED AS REQUIRED.
14. VEHICLE TRACKING SHOWN HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN AT A SPEED OF 10KM/H. REFUSE VEHICLE TRACKED FOR LEACHING AREA ACCESS, LOW LOADER TRACKED FOR ALL OTHER ACCESSES. AIL SWEPT PATHS ARE TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY OTHERS.

LEGEND:

- FIELD GATE
- FENCING (SEE NOTE 12)
- EXISTING DRAINAGE (SEE NOTE 11)
- PROPOSED CULVERT (SEE NOTE 11)
- ASPHALT PAVEMENT
- UNBOUND PAVEMENT
- LOCH BUIDHE ROAD / FORESTRY ACCESS ROAD
- PROPOSED WATER MAIN
- PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD
- PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD EARTHWORKS
- EXISTING LV CABLE
- EXISTING WATER MAIN
- UNIDENTIFIED UTILITY
- RED LINE BOUNDARY

UPDATED FOR PLANNING				
P07	TS	AGF	TCC	02/10/24
UPDATED FOR PLANNING				
P06	JS	AGF	TCC	19/09/24
UPDATED FOR PLANNING				
P05	JS	AGF	RP	29/08/24
UPDATED FOR PLANNING				
P04	JS	AGF	RP	23/08/24
ISSUED FOR PLANNING				
P03	JS	AGF	RP	16/08/24
UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P02	OJ	AGF	TCC	15/05/24
ISSUED FOR PHASE 2B PLANNING				
P01	OJ	AGF	TCC	05/04/24
REV	DRAWN	CHECKED	APPROVED	DATE

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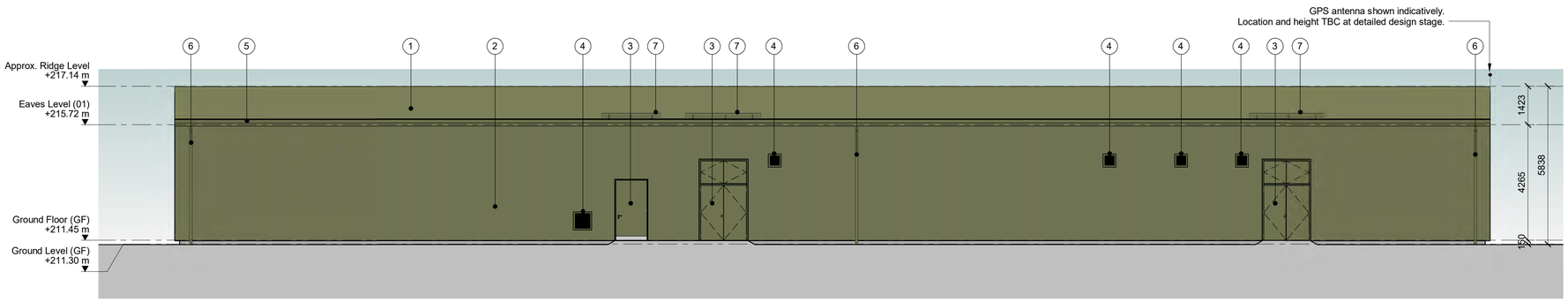
TONY GEE AND PARTNERS LLP
4TH FLOOR, ARTHUR HOUSE, MANCHESTER M1 3FH

SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORK
1 WATERLOO ST, GLASGOW G2 6AY

Project:	CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Scheme:	
Site:	LT470 CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Circuit:	COMMON
Revision: P07	Dwg Title: JUNCTION LAYOUTS
Suitability: S5	
Scale @ A1: 1:200	Dwg No: CAAI4-LT470-JMS-ROAD-XX-LAY-H-0127
Sheets: 1 OF 1	Purpose of Issue: ISSUED FOR PLANNING
Internal Proj.Ref: -	Client Dwg Number: -



Control Building - Elevation 1

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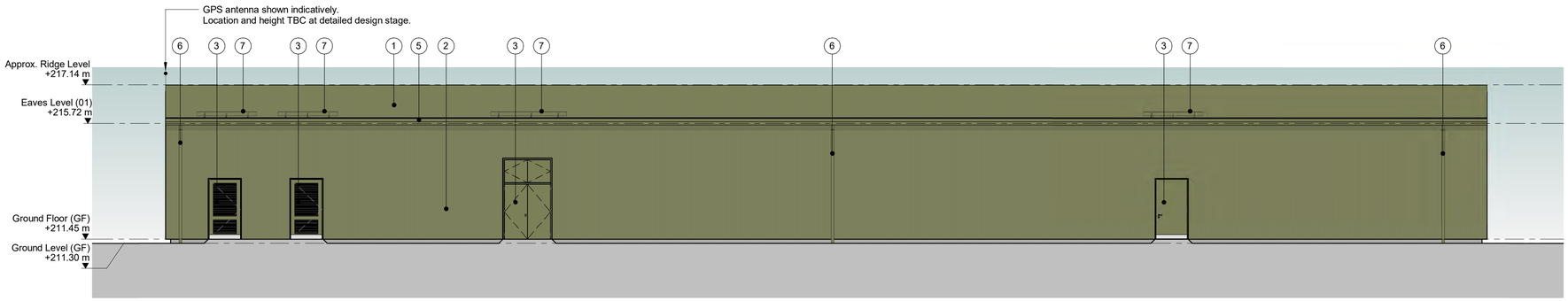

Control Building - Elevation 2

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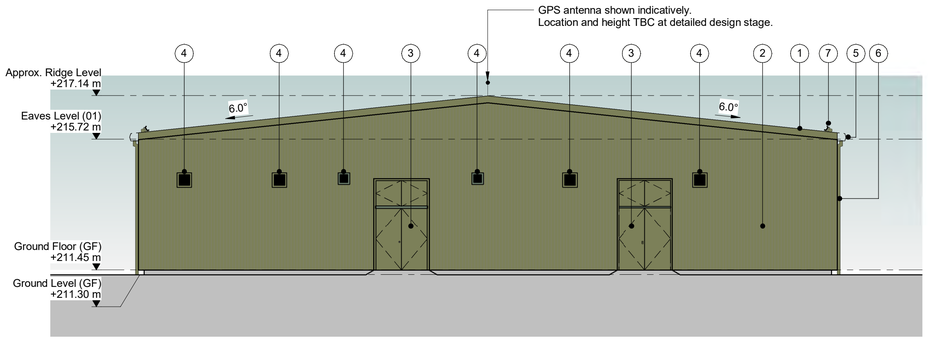
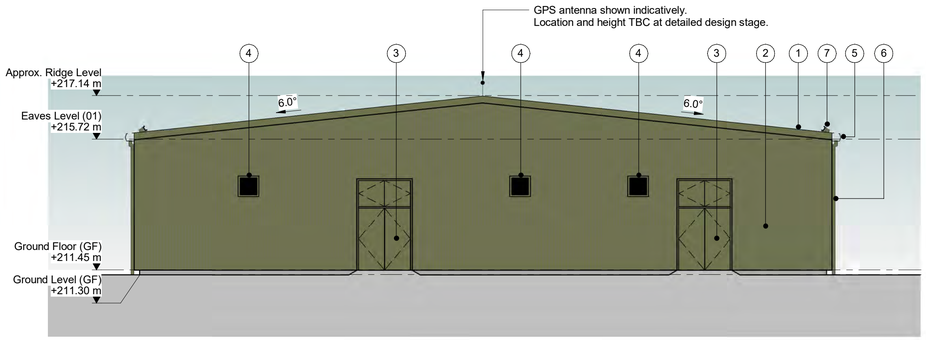


Control Building - Elevation 3

1 : 100



Control Building - Elevation 4

1 : 100

GENERAL NOTES

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1. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.
2. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
3. REFER TO DRAWING CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FOUN-CNT-GA-G-0043 FOR GENERAL NOTES.
4. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METERS AND RELATE TO AOD.
5. ANY DRAWING ERRORS OR DISCREPANCIES SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF MOTT MACDONALD.
6. THE DESIGNS SHOWN ARE SUBJECT TO DETAILED SITE SURVEY, INVESTIGATIONS, THE CDM REGULATIONS AND THE COMMENTS AND/ OR APPROVAL OF VARIOUS RELEVANT LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICERS, STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS, ETC.
7. ANY AREAS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE ONLY AND HAVE BEEN MEASURED OFF PRELIMINARY DRAWINGS AS THE LIKELY MEASURED AREAS OF THE CURRENT DESIGN. THESE MAY BE AFFECTED BY FUTURE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION TOLERANCES.
8. THIS DRAWING IS TO BE USED FOR THE PURPOSES OF ASSISTING WITH DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION.
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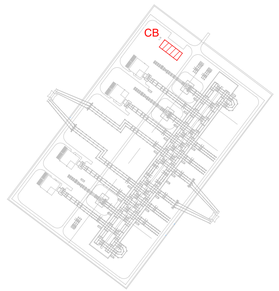
NOTE: MATERIALS WILL BE AS DESCRIBED BELOW. VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF MATERIALS MAY DIFFER SLIGHTLY ON PDF AND PRINT COPIES OF DRAWINGS.

Elevation Key

1. Insulated Metal Roof Cladding Panel - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.
2. Vertically Installed Insulated Metal Wall Cladding Panel - Olive Green RAL 6003.
3. Metal Door - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.
4. Metal Louvre - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.
5. Aluminium PPC Coated Box Section Gutter - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.
6. Aluminium PPC Coated Rainwater Pipe with anti climb feature - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.
7. Aluminium PPC Coated Snow Guards - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.

KEY PLAN



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P03	FF	VC	AF	19/09/2024
- UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P02	TD	DR	AF	23/08/2024
- UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P01	ST	DR	AF	17/05/2024

1:100 0 5m 10m

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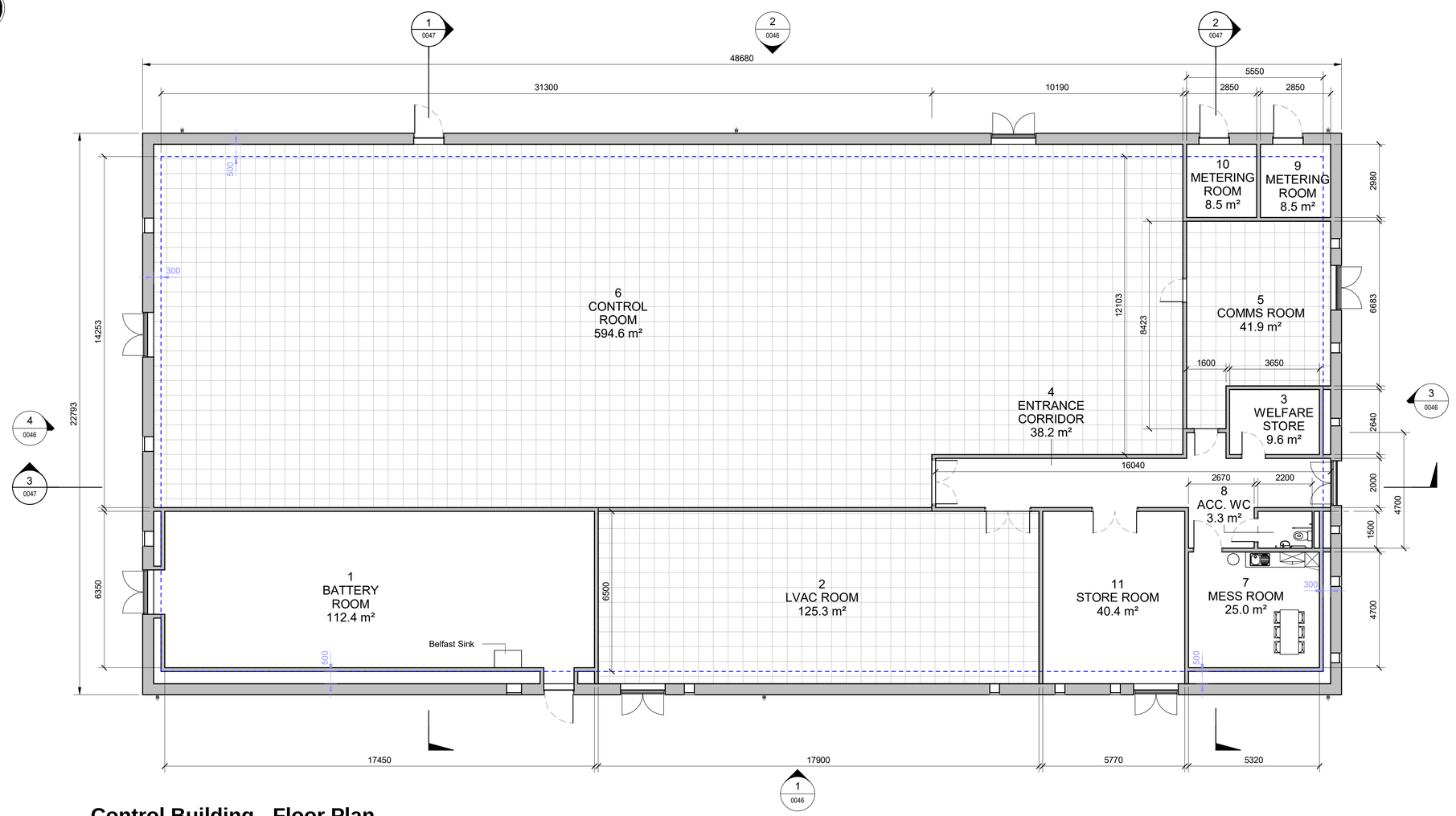
Tony Gee
TONY GEE AND PARTNERS LLP
4TH FLOOR, ARTHUR HOUSE, MANCHESTER M1 3FH

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks
SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORK
1 WATERLOO ST, GLASGOW G2 6AY

Project:	CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Scheme:	
Site:	LT470 CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Circuit:	COMMON
Revision:	P03
Dwg Title:	SUBSTATION CONTROL BUILDING ELEVATIONS ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS
Suitability:	S5
Scale @ A1:	1 : 100
Dwg No:	CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-ELE-A-0046
Sheets:	1 OF 1
Purpose of Issue:	ISSUED FOR PLANNING
Internal Proj.Ref:	M123015
Client Dwg Number:	-



Control Building - Floor Plan

1 : 100

GENERAL NOTES

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1. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.
2. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
3. REFER TO DRAWING CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FOUN-CNT-GA-G-0043 FOR GENERAL NOTES.
4. ALL LEVELS ARE IN METERS AND RELATE TO AOD.
5. ANY DRAWING ERRORS OR DISCREPANCIES SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF MOTT MACDONALD.
6. THE DESIGNS SHOWN ARE SUBJECT TO DETAILED SITE SURVEY, INVESTIGATIONS, THE CDM REGULATIONS AND THE COMMENTS AND/ OR APPROVAL OF VARIOUS RELEVANT LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICERS, STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS, ETC.
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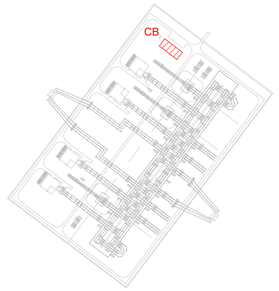
10. NO UNAUTHORISED USE, DISCLOSURE, STORAGE OR COPYING.

GA PLAN SPATIAL ZONE LEGEND

DIM — DEPTH OF STRUCTURAL ZONE

RAISED ACCESS FLOOR

KEY PLAN



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P02	TD	DR	AF	23/08/2024
-	UPDATED FOR COMMENTS			
P01	ST	DR	AF	17/05/2024

1:100 0 5m 10m

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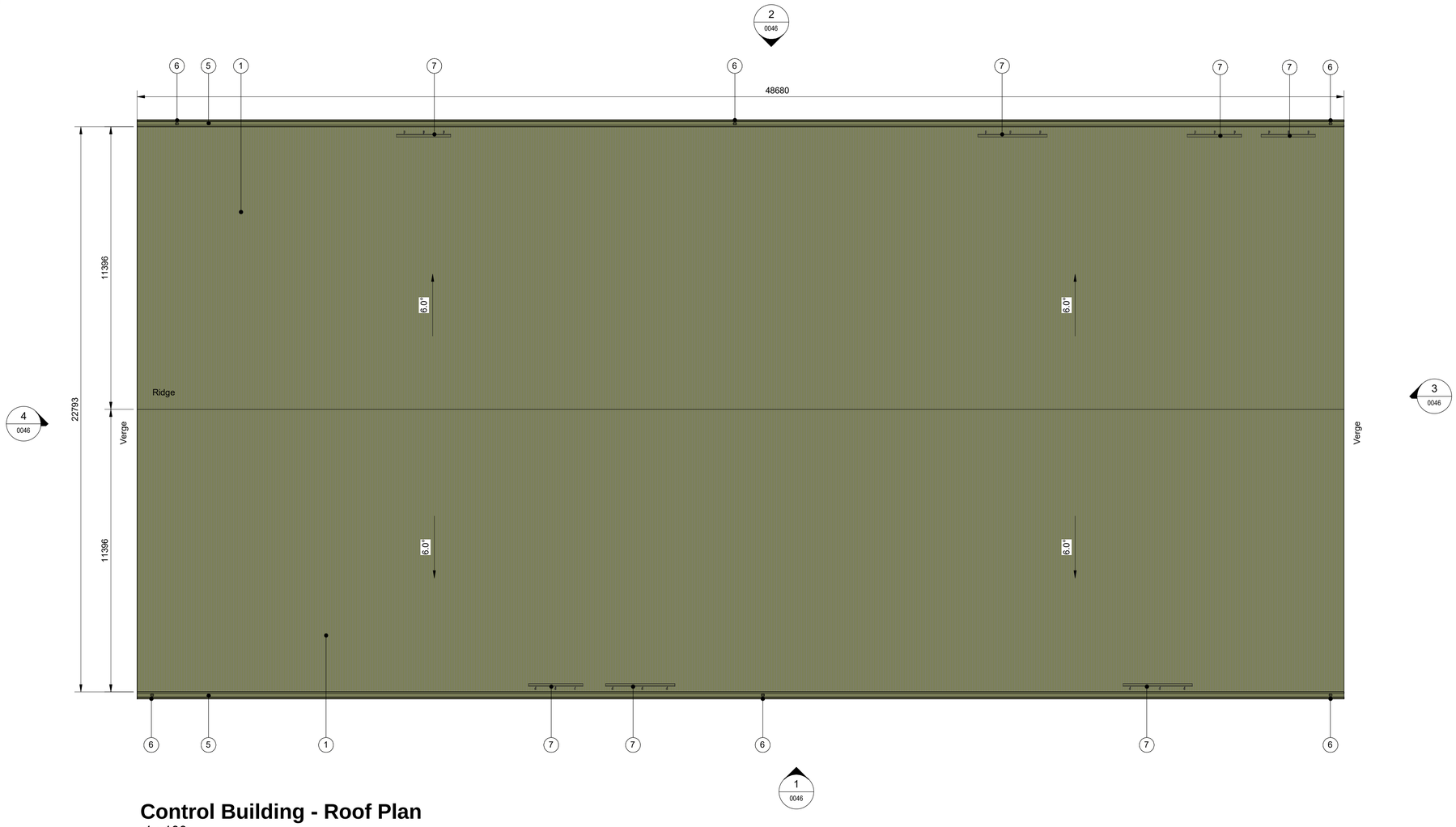
Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks
SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORK
1 WATERLOO ST, GLASGOW G2 6AY

Project:	CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Scheme:	
Site:	LT470 CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Circuit:	COMMON
Revision: P03	Dwg Title: SUBSTATION CONTROL BUILDING FLOOR PLAN ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS
Suitability: S5	
Scale @ A1: 1 : 100	Dwg No: CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-LAY-A-0044
Sheets: 1 OF 1	Purpose of Issue: ISSUED FOR PLANNING
Internal Proj.Ref: M123015	Client Dwg Number: -



Control Building - Roof Plan

1 : 100

GENERAL NOTES

THIS DRAWING HAS BEEN PRODUCED BY MOTT MACDONALD, WORKING AS A SUBCONTRACTOR TO TONY GEE.

1. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.
2. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
3. REFER TO DRAWING CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FOUN-CNT-GA-G-0043 FOR GENERAL NOTES.
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Elevation Key

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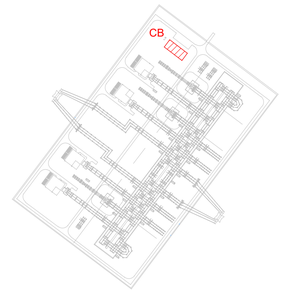
7. Aluminium PPC Coated Snow Guards - Colour: Olive Green RAL 6003.

KEY PLAN



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- UPDATED FOR PLANNING				
P03	FF	VC	AF	19/09/2024
- UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P02	TD	DR	AF	23/08/2024
- UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P01	ST	DR	AF	17/05/2024

1:100 0 5m 10m

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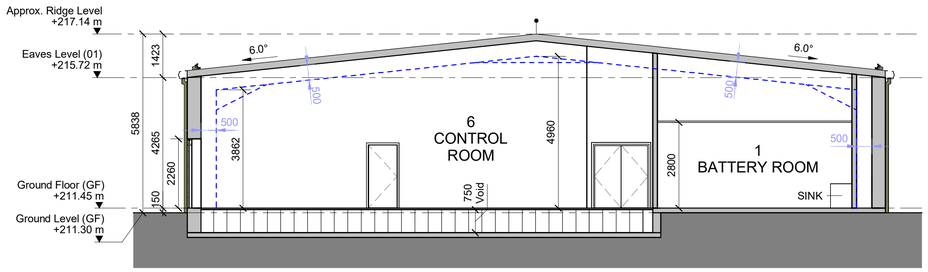
4TH FLOOR, ARTHUR HOUSE, MANCHESTER M1 3FH

SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORK
1 WATERLOO ST, GLASGOW G2 6AY

Project:	CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Scheme:	
Site:	LT470 CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Circuit:	COMMON
Revision: P03	Dwg Title: SUBSTATION CONTROL BUILDING ROOF PLAN ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS
Suitability: S5	
Scale @ A1: 1 : 100	Dwg No: CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-LAY-A-0045
Sheets: 1 OF 1	Purpose of Issue: ISSUED FOR PLANNING
Internal Proj.Ref: M123015	Client Dwg Number: -



Section 1
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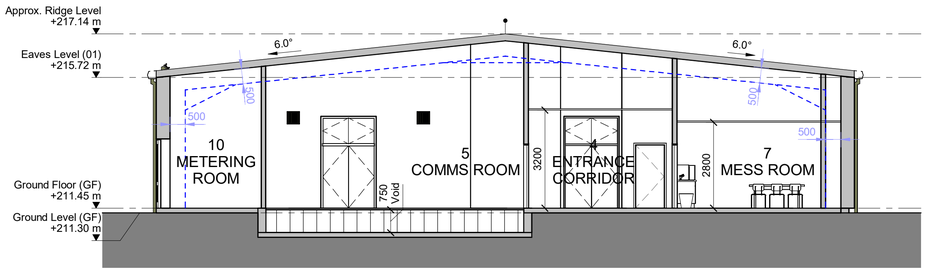

Section 2
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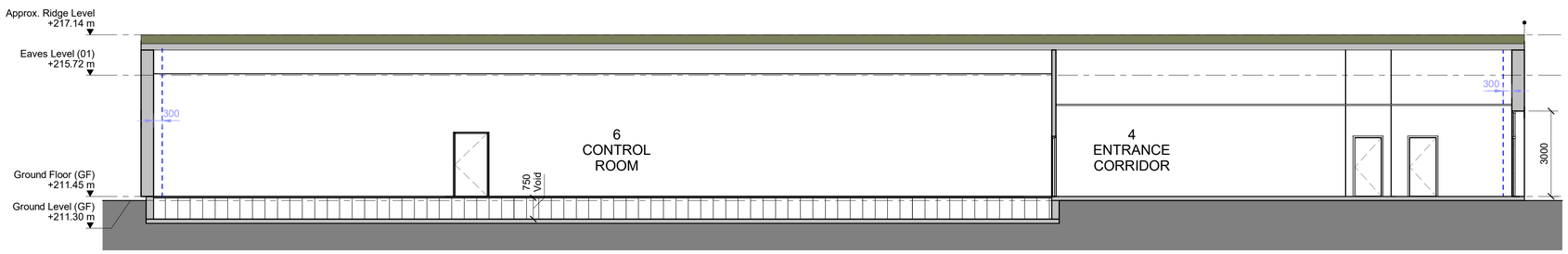

Section 3
1 : 100

GENERAL NOTES

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2. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
3. REFER TO DRAWING CAAI4-LT470-JMS-FOUN-CNT-GA-G-0043 FOR GENERAL NOTES.
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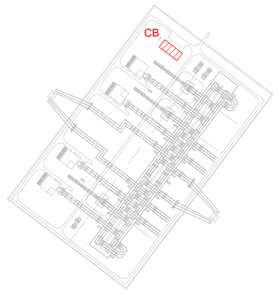
GA PLAN SPATIAL ZONE LEGEND

DIM — DEPTH OF STRUCTURAL ZONE

KEY PLAN



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- UPDATED FOR PLANNING				
P03	FF	VC	AF	19/09/2024
- UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P02	TD	DR	AF	23/08/2024
- UPDATED FOR COMMENTS				
P01	ST	DR	AF	17/05/2024

1:100 0 5m 10m

J. MURPHY & SONS LTD
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SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY NETWORK
1 WATERLOO ST, GLASGOW G2 6AY

Project:	CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Scheme:	
Site:	LT470 CARNAIG 400kV SUBSTATION
Circuit:	COMMON
Revision: P03	Dwg Title: SUBSTATION CONTROL BUILDING SECTIONS ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS
Suitability: S5	
Scale @ A1: 1 : 100	Dwg No: CAAI4-LT470-JMS-BLDG-CNT-ELE-A- 0047
Sheets: 1 OF 1	Purpose of Issue: ISSUED FOR PLANNING
Internal Proj.Ref: M123015	Client Dwg Number: -