

Planning Application Report and Report of Handling as required by Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 relative to applications for Planning Permission or Planning Permission in Principle

Reference No: 22/02376/PP
Planning Hierarchy: National
Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc
Proposal: To construct and operate a 275 kilovolt (kV) Electricity Substation and associated infrastructure. The works will comprise cut and fill to tie the platform into the existing ground level landscaping, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) basins, new permanent access and upgrades to existing tracks
Site Address: Land Approx 1.6km North West of Minard and Upslope of the existing Crarae Substation, Minard

DECISION ROUTE

- Delegated - Sect 43 (A) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- Committee - Local Government Scotland Act 1973
-

(A) THE APPLICATION

(i) Development Requiring Express Planning Permission

- Construction of substation platform of 1.43ha
- Installation of Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) building, maximum height 22m and single storey control building annex
- 275/33 kV super grid transformer, rated at 120 MVA located in a ventilated building of maximum height 16m
- Two gantries and electrical equipment/down-leads to connect the OHL and proposed substation
- Diesel generator housed in a building
- Borehole for water
- Turning and parking areas
- Use and upgrades to existing 4.7km long forestry track for access
- Construction of new access tracks, 350m long
- Erection of 2.4m high security fence of palisade construction around the substation perimeter
- Erection of deer fencing around new areas of woodland planting
- Landscape planting
- Foul and surface water drainage including Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) pond and outfall pipe.
- Tree felling and compensatory planting

(ii) Other specified operations

- Temporary site laydown of approximately 0.67ha
 - Undergrounding of the 33kV interconnector cable to existing substation
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(B) RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that Members grant planning permission subject to the conditions and reasons attached.

(C) CONSULTATIONS:

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency [SEPA] (17.02.23) Holding Objection

Holding objection requiring more detail in respect of peat management and mitigation measures.

Transport Scotland:(06.02.23) No objection subject to conditions

1. Prior to commencement of the development, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority, after consultation with Transport Scotland. In particular, the CTMP shall identify measures to control the use of any direct access onto the trunk road. Thereafter, all construction traffic associated with the development shall conform to the requirements of the agreed Plan.

2. The proposed route for any abnormal loads on the trunk road network must be approved by Transport Scotland prior to the movement of any abnormal load. Any accommodation measures required including the removal of street furniture, junction widening, traffic management must similarly be approved.

3. Any additional signing or temporary traffic control measures deemed necessary due to the size or length of loads being delivered must be undertaken by a recognised Quality Assured traffic management consultant, to be approved by Transport Scotland before delivery commences

REASON(S) for Conditions (numbered as above):-

1 & 2 To minimise interference with the safety and free flow of the traffic on the trunk road.

2 & 3 To ensure that the transportation of abnormal loads will not have any detrimental effect on the trunk road network.

NatureScot : (20.01.23)- confirm the proposal falls outwith their consultation threshold and have no comments.

Historic Environment Scotland (26.01.23) - no objection.

Strachur and District Community Council;(16.2.23) No comments to make.

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL INTERNAL CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Local Biodiversity Officer: (21.02.23 & 25.04.23) No Objection

I am content with the contents of Peatland Management Plan as it follows accepted practice and fits with NPF4 Policy 5 where the policy states that: 'Development proposals on peatland, carbon[1]rich soils and priority peatland habitat will only be supported for:

- i. Essential infrastructure and there is a specific locational need and no other suitable site;*
- ii. The generation of energy from renewable sources that optimises the contribution of the area to greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets;*

Area Roads Officer: (19.01.23) No objection.

- 1. The site takes direct access from the A83 Tarbet - Campbeltown Trunk Road, Transport Scotland should be notified.*
- 2. The site is remote from the public road.*

Environmental Health Officer: (24.01.23) No objection subject to conditions

Given the proximity of the neighbouring residential properties to the site address, the hours of these proposed works should be restricted to 0800 – 1800 hours Monday to Friday, 0800 – 1300 hours Saturday and not at all on Sunday, Bank or Scottish Public Holidays.

Reason: To minimise the impact of noise, generated by construction activities, on occupiers of residential properties.

I would also wish to see a limit placed on road deliveries to the site, in order to ensure that they do not occur during anti-social hours. This should be included in the Construction Management Plan.

Any identified measures for noise mitigation measures for rock breaking should also be included in the Construction Management Plan.

Other matters referenced in relation to lighting and Private water supplies are subject to conditions to ensure these matters are properly addressed.

West of Scotland Archaeological Service: (03.02.23) No Objection subject to condition.

“No development shall take place within the development site as outlined in red on the approved plan until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, agreed by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, and approved by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the developer shall ensure that the programme of archaeological works is fully implemented and that all recording and recovery of archaeological resources within the development site is undertaken to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in agreement with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.”

Flood Risk Advisor: (19.01.23 & 10.05.23)) No Objection subject to condition

It is recommended that planning conditions to the effect of the following be attached to any consent granted for this application:

1. Watercourse crossings not to reduce the existing capacity of the burns and ideally should be designed to convey the 1:200 year flow with freeboard allowance.

In respect of comment 1c of this response on finished floor levels and asset/equipment protection, additional information provided by the applicant on the permeability of the compound area has addressed these matters as confirmed by response dated 10.05.23.

Core Paths Officer: no response at time of writing.

(D) HISTORY:

Specific to the site:

21/01886/PAN – Proposal of Application Notice for the erection of electricity substation Opinion issued on 17.11.21.

21/01641/SCREEN – Screening opinion for the erection of a 275kV gas insulated switchgear substation. Opinion issued on 21.3.22

Vicinity of Site

23/00543/S37 – Erection of OHL connection between proposed substation and Creag Dhubh to Inveraray transmission line (Construction of two terminal lattice towers and one angle lattice steel tower with five temporary towers).

(E) PUBLICITY:

MREG20- Regulation 20 Major Application Advert – Expired on 17th February 2023.

(F) REPRESENTATIONS:

(i) Representations received from:

At the time of writing, one “Objection/Representation” has been received from the following party:

- Raymond Mundie of the Forest Enterprise (2nd March 2023), confirm they are the landowner at present and share the concerns of SEPA over potential impacts on deep Peat. Confirms they are working with SSEN to identify candidate peatland sites for improvement through peat restoration works to re-use peat displaced through construction activities. Details have yet to be confirmed.

Officer Comment: These matters are addressed in the Officer Report.

Representations are published in full on the planning application file and are available to view via the [Public Access](#) section of the Council's website.

(G) SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Has the application been the subject of:

- (i) **Environmental Impact Assessment Report:** Yes No
- (ii) **An Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994:** Yes No
- (iii) **A Design or Design/Access statement:** Yes No – included within the Environmental Appraisal Report.
- (iv) **A report on the impact of the proposed development eg. Retail impact, transport impact, noise impact, flood risk, drainage impact etc:** Yes No

Environmental Appraisal Report
Planning Statement (Updated
Pre-application Consultation Report

The Environmental Appraisal Report covers the following matters:

1. Introduction and Scope
2. Project Description
3. Landscape and Visual Appraisal
4. Ecology and Ornithology
5. Forestry
6. Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology
7. Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
8. Noise Assessment
9. Traffic and Transport
10. Mitigation Proposals

The supporting Technical Annexes include:

Annex A: General Environmental Management Plans
Annex B: EIA Screening Letter
Annex C: Landscape Assessment Methodology
Annex D: Landscape Character Sensitivity Table
Annex E: Photomontages and Landscape Figures
Annex F: Ornithology Consultation
Annex G: Extended Ecology Phase 1 Habitat Survey
Annex H: Species Protection Plans
Annex I: Forestry
Annex J: Drainage Strategy and Drainage Plans
Annex K: Hydrology Methodology
Annex L: Private Water Supply Risk Assessment
Annex M: Water Construction Management Plan
Annex N: Peat Management Plan

Annex O: Peat Slide Risk Assessment
Annex P: Transformer Delivery Route Report
Annex Q: Cultural Heritage Appraisal and Site Gazetteer
Annex R: Noise and Vibration

(H) PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Is a Section 75 agreement required: Yes No

(I) Has a Direction been issued by Scottish Ministers in terms of Regulation 30, 31 or 32: Yes No

(J) Section 25 of the Act; Development Plan and any other material considerations over and above those listed above which have been taken into account in the assessment of the application

(i) List of all Development Plan Policy considerations taken into account in assessment of the application.

[National Planning Framework 4 \(Adopted 13th February 2023\)](#)

Part 2 – National Planning Policy

NPF4 Policy 1 – Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises
NPF4 Policy 2 – Climate Mitigation and Adaption
NPF4 Policy 3 – Biodiversity
NPF4 Policy 4 – Natural Places
NPF4 Policy 5 – Soils
NPF4 Policy 6 – Forestry, Woodland and Trees
NPF4 Policy 7 – Historic Assets and Places
NPF4 Policy 11 – Energy
NPF4 Policy 14 – Design, Quality and Place
NPF4 Policy 18 – Infrastructure First
NPF4 Policy 22 – Flood Risk and Water Management
NPF4 Policy 23 – Health and Safety
NPF4 Policy 25 – Community Wealth Building

Annex B – National Statements of Need

3. Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure

[‘Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan’ Adopted March 2015](#)

LDP STRAT 1 – Sustainable Development
LDP DM 1 – Development within the Development Management Zones
LDP 3 – Supporting the Protection Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment
LDP 5 – Supporting the Sustainable Growth of our Economy
LDP 8 – Supporting the Strength of our Communities
LDP 9 – Development Setting, Layout and Design
LDP 10 – Maximising our Resources and Reducing our Consumption
LDP 11 – Improving our Connectivity and Infrastructure

Local Development Plan Schedules

'Supplementary Guidance to the Argyll and Bute Local Plan 2015' (Adopted March 2016 & December 2016)

SG LDP ENV 1 – Impact on Habitats, Species and our Biodiversity
SG LDP ENV 6 – Impact on Trees / Woodland
SG LDP ENV 7 – Water Quality and the Environment
SG LDP ENV 13 – Impact on Areas of Panoramic Quality (APQs)
SG LDP ENV 14 – Landscape
SG LDP ENV 16(a) – Impact on Listed Buildings
SG LDP ENV 19 – Impact on Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)
SG LDP ENV 20 – Impact on Sites of Archaeological Importance
SG LDP BAD 1 – Bad Neighbour Development
SG LDP Sustainable – Sustainable Siting and Design Principles
SG LDP SERV 1 – Private Sewage Treatment Plants & Wastewater Systems
SG LDP SERV 2 – Incorporation of Natural Features / SuDS
SG LDP SERV 3 – Drainage Impact Assessment
SG LDP SERV 6 – Private Water Supplies and Water Conservation
SG LDP TRAN 4 – New & Existing, Public Roads & Private Access Regimes
SG LDP TRAN 6 – Vehicle Parking Provision

(ii) List of all other material planning considerations taken into account in the assessment of the application, having due regard to Annex A of Circular 3/2013.

- [ABC Technical Note – Biodiversity \(Feb 2017\)](#)
- [Argyll and Bute proposed Local Development Plan 2 \(November 2019\)](#) - The reporters have written to Argyll and Bute Council regarding the Proposed Local Development Plan 2, which is currently at Examination. Due to the status of the revised draft National Planning Framework 4 the reporters are currently determining what, if any, further processes are required as a consequence. Although PLDP2 remains a material consideration it is now subject to this further assessment **against NPF4 policies**. Therefore, it is considered appropriate **not** to attach significant weight to PLDP2 **policies** during this time, i.e. until the consequences of NPF4 **policies** for the PLDP2 have been assessed by the reporters and the Examination report is issued. **Specific sites in PLDP2 that have not received objections and are not being dealt with at the Examination may continue as strong material considerations, e.g. allocations and potential development areas.**
- Planning Advice Notes & Web based Renewable Guidance
- Renewable energy and climate change framework
- Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019
- The Future of Energy in Scotland: Scottish Energy Strategy, Scottish Government (December, 2017) and position update dated 16.3.21
- The Scottish Government's Policy on 'Control of Woodland Removal' (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2009)
- Views of statutory and other consultees
- Planning history of the site
- Legitimate public concern or support expressed on relevant planning matters

Energy Policy Framework

Statutory and policy requirements at UK and Scottish level to mitigate climate change and increase renewable energy generation are informed by higher level international agreements, primarily the Paris Agreement (2015) which commits United Nations signatory countries to take action to cut carbon emissions and emphasises the aim of restricting temperature rises to below 2°C above preindustrial levels. At the UK level, action to tackle climate change is underpinned by the Climate Change Act 2008 as amended by the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019. A range of policy documents set out the UK Governments binding commitments to cut carbon emissions through the deployment of renewable energy, including the UK Government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (2020), Energy White Paper (2020), Carbon Plan (2011), the UK Renewable Energy Roadmap (2011) (updated 2012 and 2013) and the British Energy Security Strategy.

More recently the publication of Scotland's Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan and the accompanying Ministerial statement (Dated 10.1.23) further reinforces the importance of achieving net zero and addressing the Climate Emergency reinforcing and complimenting the objectives of NPF4 policy 1 in particular.

(K) Is the proposal a Schedule 2 Development not requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment: Yes No

(L) Has the application been the subject of statutory pre-application consultation (PAC): Yes No

The PAC Report submitted with the application confirms the public consultation undertaken in accordance with approved PAN requirements.

(M) Has a Sustainability Checklist been submitted: Yes No

(N) Does the Council have an interest in the site: Yes No

(O) Requirement for a pre-determination hearing: Yes No

The opportunity to attend a pre-determination hearing is required to be offered in relation to applications for planning permission for major developments which are significant departures from the development plan and for all national developments. Their purpose is to allow the views of applicants and those who have made representations to be heard before a planning decision is taken. The Planning Authority has discretion over how hearings will operate in its area. The applicant and consultee(s) have confirmed that they do not wish to be heard, therefore a Hearing will not be required.

(P)(i) Key Constraints/Designations Affected by the Development:

- Peat
- Forestry
- Archaeology

(P)(ii) Soils

Agricultural Land Classification:

Class 6.3

Peatland/Carbon Rich Soils Classification:

- Class 1
- Class 2
- Class 3
- N/A

Class 4 indicated on Council Maps but peat survey information submitted with application CH 6 EA Report which comprises a site specific survey identifying deep peat.

Peat Depth Classification:

N/A – See CH 6 EA Report

Does the development relate to croft land?

Yes No

Would the development restrict access to croft or better quality agricultural land?

Yes No

Would the development result in fragmentation of croft / better quality agricultural land?

Yes No

(P)(iii) Woodland

Will the proposal result in loss of trees/woodland?

Yes

(If yes, detail in summary assessment)

No

Refer CH 5 of EA

Does the proposal include any replacement or compensatory planting?

Yes

No details to be secured by condition

Not applicable

(P)(iv) Land Status / LDP Settlement Strategy

Status of Land within the Application
(tick all relevant boxes)

Brownfield

Brownfield Reclaimed

Greenfield

ABC LDP 2015 Settlement Strategy
LDP DM 1 (tick all relevant boxes)

Main Town Settlement Area

Key Rural Settlement Area

Village/Minor Settlement Area

Rural Opportunity Area

Countryside Zone

Very Sensitive Countryside Zone

Greenbelt

ABC LDP 2015 Allocations/PDAs/AFAs etc:

N/A

(P)(v) Summary assessment and summary of determining issues and material considerations

The proposal is for the erection of a 275kV substation as part of a number of infrastructure proposals to “maintain an efficient, coordinate and economical

electrical transmission system” and is required to allow connection for renewable energy generation in the area across the wider electricity network.

The Proposed Development is identified in NPF4 as a National Development under NAD3 “Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure” which recognises that *“the electricity transmission grid will need substantial reinforcement including the addition of new infrastructure to connect and transmit the output from new on and offshore capacity.”* The designation of classes of development that qualify as ND3 includes *“(b) new and/or replacement upgraded on and offshore high voltage electricity transmission lines, cables and interconnectors of 132 kV or more”.*

The Proposed Development will contribute to security of supply and provide increased and more resilient infrastructure capacity to facilitate renewable energy connections in the wider area – all of which forms vital elements to deliver reinforced network and grid infrastructure required to deliver the Government’s legally binding targets for net zero emissions and renewable energy electricity generation objectives and address the climate change emergency as defined in NPF 4.

The Proposed Development consists of the substation buildings and electrical infrastructure, and associated works required to accommodate construction and access. The development footprint for the proposed substation site once completed, includes the substation platform, cut/fill embankments, access road, associated culverts, Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) and OHL connecting down-leads and towers.

Statutory and other consultees responding to this application are supportive with the exception of SEPA who have maintained a holding objection based upon more detail being required in respect of offsite peat restoration proposals. Officers are of the opinion that these matters can be properly addressed through the use of a condition.

A comprehensive Environmental Assessment has been submitted with proposed mitigation set out in detail at Chapter 10 of this document (Updated on 24.01.23). The approach taken to site identification and the mitigation proposed is considered to be acceptable.

All matters are therefore considered to have been properly addressed. Taking account of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be approved subject to conditions. A full report is included in the appendix of this report.

(Q) Is the proposal consistent with the Development Plan: Yes No

(R) Reasons why Planning Permission or Planning Permission in Principle Should be Granted:

The Scottish Government and the Council each have policies in support of projects which increase the capacity of the grid network to serve the community and in particular the significant level of investment in renewable energy. NPF4 policy 11 justifies the need for such investment highlighting such development as of national importance. The electricity grid infrastructure is identified as essential to transporting renewable energy from point of generation and a vital element of the Scottish Governments goal of achieving net zero,

Argyll and Bute has been successful in attracting inward investment in renewables, enabled in part by a significant level of investment in the improvement of the electricity transmission network. This success has led to the area having a good understanding of this type of development and this Council having appropriate policies and guidance to assist in its assessment, and to effectively manage their implementation on the ground. For example, the use of Construction Environmental Management plan [CEMP], a particular approach to assist with the implementation/management of such large-scale projects with a focus on environmental protection. There are investment benefits too that favour these projects, not just the short term from construction but a continued stream of investment assisting with partnership networks with local companies.

Statutory and other consultees responding to this application are supportive with the exception of SEPA who have maintained a holding objection based upon more detail being required in respect of offsite peat restoration proposals. Officers are of the opinion that these matters can be properly addressed through the use of a condition.

Other impacts during construction can be managed through best practice construction management techniques to ensure surrounding interests, particularly road access and the amenity of local housing is safeguarded from the key impacts of the development; by planning conditions to strengthen and clarify plans and supporting environmental information provided by the applicant. The proposal will also be overseen by an appointed Ecological Clerk of Works, with any permission requiring regular compliance monitoring and ongoing engagement.

The application can be supported in the context of the Council's Development Plan relating to renewable energy grid infrastructure and the underlying support for renewable energy development which is consented in this area. The application falls within the category of National Development under NPF4 which establishes the need for such development and accords with the principles established under Policy 11: Energy of NPF4.

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 Local Development Plan and National Planning Framework 4 and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

(S) Reasoned justification for a departure to the provisions of the Development Plan

N/A

(T) Need for notification to Scottish Ministers or Historic Environment Scotland:

Yes No

Author of Report: David Moore **Date:** 06/06/2023

Reviewing Officer: Sandra Davies **Date:** 07/06/2023

Fergus Murray, Head of Development & Economic Growth

CONDITIONS AND REASONS RELATIVE TO APPLICATION REF. NO. 22/02376/PP

Standard Time Limit Condition (as defined by Regulation)

Additional Conditions

- The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified on the application form dated 23.11.22; the Environmental Appraisal (November 2022), supporting information and, the approved drawings listed in the table below unless the prior written approval of the planning authority is obtained for an amendment to the approved details under Section 64 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Plan Title.	Plan Ref. No.	Version	Date Received
Site Location Plan	A01	A01	23.12.22
Figure 1.1 Red Line Boundary 1:20000	A01	A01	23.12.22
Site Layout Plan	4534c-DR-P-0017	Rev.5	26.05.23
Substation Compound Layout and Electrical Section Locations	4534c-DR-P-0004	Rev.3	23.12.22
Proposed Site Access Profiles	4534c-DR-P-0021		06.12.22
Proposed Site Profiles	4534c-DR-P-0018	Rev.1	06.12.22
Site Access Details	4534c-DR-P-0008	Rev.1	24.11.22
Typical Access Track Sections – Sheet 1	4534c-DR-P-0007	Rev.2	24.11.22
Typical Access Track Sections – Sheet 2	4534c-DR-P-0012	Rev.2	24.11.22
Typical Deer Fence and Gate	4534c-DR-P-0016		24.11.22
2.5m High Security Palisade Fencing Details	CE/34/2015	Rev.E	
Electrical Layout Elevations 01	4534c-DR-P-0011	Rev.1	24.11.22
Generator Building Elevations	4534c-DR-P-0009	Rev.2	24.11.22
Substation Building Elevations	4534c-DR-P-0006	Rev.2	24
Substation Building Layout	4534c-DR-P-0005	Rev.1	24.11.22

Transformer Building Elevations	4534c-DR-P-0019	Rev.1	24.11.22
Transformer Building Layout	4534c-DR-P-0020	Rev.1	24.11.22
Septic Tank and Private Water Supply Location	A01(Dated 16.12.22)	A0!	23.12.22

Reason: For the purpose of clarity, to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

2. No construction works shall be commenced until a Finalised Construction Environmental Management Document [CEMD] has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with SEPA and other consultees, as appropriate. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved CEMD unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The CEMD shall include:
- a) An updated Schedule of Mitigation (SM) highlighting mitigation set out within each chapter of the Environmental Appraisal (EA), and the conditions of this consent;
 - b) Processes to control/ action changes from the agreed SM;
 - c) Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) for the construction phase covering:
 - i) Habitat and species protection, including ECoW Details, surveys and species protection plans;
 - ii) Landscape and Mitigation Restoration Plan including compensatory planting (refer to Condition 9);
 - iii) Pollution prevention and control;
 - iv) Dust management, including construction activity and vehicle movements;
 - v) Construction noise and vibration
 - vi) Temporary site lighting;
 - vii) Watercourse crossings;
 - viii) Site waste management
 - ix) Surface and ground water management, including: drainage and sediment management measures from all construction areas including access tracks, mechanisms to ensure that construction will not take place during periods of high flow or high rainfall; and a programme of water quality monitoring;
 - x) Mapping of borrow pits and associated habitats identified for restoration;
 - xi) Invasive Non-Native Species Management Plan
 - xii) Emergency Response Plans;
 - xiii) Timetable for post construction restoration/ reinstatement of the temporary working areas and construction compound; and
 - xiv) Other relevant environmental management as may be relevant to the development
 - d) A statement of responsibility to 'stop the job/ activity' if a breach or potential breach of mitigation or legislation occurs; and
 - e) Methods of monitoring, auditing, reporting and the communication of environmental management on site and with client, Planning Authority, and other relevant parties.

Reason: To ensure protection of surrounding environmental interests and general amenity.

3. No development shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and Phased Delivery Plan have been prepared and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and Transport Scotland as the trunk roads Authority. The Plan shall include details of:
 - a) Approved access routes,
 - b) Agreed operational practises (including avoidance of convoy movements, specifying conduct in use of passing places, identification of turning areas, information of wheel cleansing facilities, signage to be installed on the A83 warning of construction traffic, signage or temporary traffic control measures to include for larger or abnormal loads, reporting of verge damage);
 - c) The provision of an appropriate Code of Practice to drivers of construction and delivery vehicles.
 - d) Abnormal load route surveys and finalised plan (including any accommodation measures required including the removal of street furniture, junction widening, traffic management).

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the duly approved Traffic Management Plan

Reason: To minimise the interference with the safety and free flow of traffic on the trunk road and to ensure that the transportation of abnormal loads will not have any detrimental effect on the trunk road network.

4. No development or ground breaking works shall commence until a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service. The scheme shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person and shall provide for the recording, recovery and reporting of items of interest or finds within the application site. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the duly approved details with the suitably qualified person being afforded access at all reasonable times during ground disturbance works.

Reason: In order to protect archaeological resources

5. No development shall commence, until a strategy for housing incoming construction workers shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure that any potential adverse impacts on the functioning of the local housing market and tourist accommodation to the detriment of the interests of the local community are identified and mitigated in accordance with the requirements of NPF4, and in particular Policy 11C and Policy 25 Objectives.

6. No development shall commence until an appraisal of the wholesomeness and sufficiency of the intended private water supply and the system required to serve the development has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.

The appraisal shall be carried out by a qualified hydrologist/ hydrogeologist or other suitably competent person and shall include a risk assessment having regard to the requirements of Schedule 4 of the Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006

or Part 3 of the Water Intended for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (as appropriate) which shall inform the design of the system by which a wholesome and sufficient water supply shall be provided and maintained. The appraisal shall also demonstrate that the wholesomeness and sufficiency of any other supply in the vicinity of the development, or any other person utilising the same source or supply, shall not be compromised by the proposed development.

The development shall not be brought into use or occupied until the required water supply system has been installed in accordance with the agreed specification and is operational.

Reason: In the interests of public health and in order to ensure that an adequate private water supply in terms of both wholesomeness and sufficiency can be provided to meet the requirements of the proposed development and without compromising the interests of other users of the same or nearby private water supplies.

7. No development shall commence until a detailed peat management and reinstatement plan has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA.

This shall include details of :

- Methodology and volume of extraction,
- Phasing/timing of any works impacting peat
- Quality/classification of Peat to be extracted
- Details of any onsite peat re-instatement and /or enhancement
- Details of storage and transportation
- Details of the location, area and condition of onsite or offsite peatland to be improved
- Details of peat enhancement measures on this land
- Details of peatland restoration outcomes to be achieved
- Details of ongoing management arrangements of the restored peatland

The restored peatland shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the terms of approved peatland management plan, and retained in perpetuity unless with the written agreement of the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA. The restored area shall not be subject to any works or operations in the future to undermine the objectives of the restoration objectives contained in the approved Peat Management Plan.

The peat improvement works shall also be undertaken in accordance with the objectives of the necessary habitat and management plan set out at condition 08 below.

Reason: In order to minimise disturbance of peat and ensure the appropriate reinstatement, reuse and management of peat in accordance with NPF 4 Policy 5 (c) objectives.

8. No works to excavate any peat on the site shall be undertaken until a Habitat Management and Enhancement Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority in consultation with its biodiversity advisor.

Reason: To ensure that works result in habitat enhancement works being undertaken in accordance with NPF 4 and LDP Objectives.

- 9 No development shall commence until a detailed Compensatory Planting Plan (CPP) and Long Term Forestry Management Plan (LTFMP) are submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with Scottish Forestry. The approved CPP and LTFMP shall be implemented in full and in accordance with the approved timing, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To enable appropriate woodland removal to proceed, without incurring a net loss in woodland related public benefit, in accordance with the Scottish Government's policy on the Control of Woodland Removal.

10. No development shall commence until a revised Landscape Planting Plan and Maintenance Plan in accordance with BS EN ISO 11091:1999 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The revised plans must include:
- a) A plan showing numbers and locations of each tree and shrub species;
 - b) Planting schedule to show for each species, the total number, type and size at planting;
 - c) Specification for planting to include ground preparation, planting operations and protection from herbivores;
 - d) Compensatory planting scheme for tree loss
 - e) Schedule of implementation and phasing;

The approved Landscape Planting Plan and Maintenance Plan shall thereafter be implemented in full in accordance with the implementation schedule and maintained in accordance with the approved details. Any plant losses within the first five years will be replaced at the next planting season.

Reason: To ensure the development conserves and enhances the landscape character and biodiversity interests of the area.

11. Any watercourse crossings, hereby permitted, shall be designed to at least the capacity of the existing channel and to the 1 in 200 year plus climate change flow and an allowance for freeboard, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that new watercourse crossings do not affect the existing flows in the interests of flood risk.

12. No external lighting shall be installed on the site other than with the prior written approval of the planning authority. In that event the location, type and luminance of the lighting units to be installed shall be specified, and any duly approved lighting shall be installed in a manner which minimises illumination and glare outwith the boundary of the application site. The completed site shall not be illuminated other than in the event of staff being present on site.

Reason: In order to avoid unnecessary visual intrusion in the interests of the visual amenity of an area otherwise unaffected by the presence of light sources.

- 13 No development/works shall take place outside the following hours;

0800 – 1800 hours Monday to Friday,

0800 – 1300 hours Saturday

Not at all on Sunday, Bank or Scottish Public Holidays.

Reason: To minimise the impact of noise, generated by construction activities, on occupiers of residential properties.

13. No development shall commence until a noise management strategy and plan has been submitted to the Planning Authority for its approval in consultation with its Environmental Protection advisors. This shall set out the hours of associated with proposed vehicular movements which could potentially disturb residential occupiers. Such details as may be approved shall thereafter be adhered to unless with the written authority of Environmental Health Officers.

Reason: To safeguard residential amenity

NOTE TO APPLICANT

- Guidance on the submission of a request for a Non Material Amendment [NMA] is available online: [Guidance Note](#)
- Details of regulatory requirements and good practice advice can be found on the [regulations](#) section of our website. Any works within the water environment will require authorisation under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (As Amended) (CAR) and contact should be made with the SEPA Water Permitting Team at waterpermitting@sepa.org.uk.
- Regulatory requirements for private water supplies should be discussed with the Council's Environmental Health Officers in the first instance.
- A Road Opening Permit under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 must be obtained from the Council's Roads Engineers prior to the formation/ alteration of a junction with the public road.
- The access shall be constructed and drained to ensure that no surface water is discharged onto the public road.

COMMITTEE REPORT	
APPENDIX A – RELATIVE TO APPLICATION NUMBER:	22/02376/PP
PLANNING LAND USE AND POLICY ASSESSMENT	

1. Settlement Strategy

- 1.1. The Development Plan comprises National Planning Framework 4 [NPF4] and the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015 [LDP], for Argyll and Bute development management purposes. By way of background, in the event of any incompatibility between a provision of NPF4 and a provision of the LDP, NPF4 will take precedence.
- 1.2. The proposal is for the erection of a 275kV substation. The proposal is part of a number of infrastructure proposals to “*maintain an efficient, coordinate and economical electrical transmission system*” and is required to allow connection for renewable energy generation in the area across the wider electricity network. The Applicant has a statutory duty under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain an efficient co-ordinated and economical electrical transmission system in its licence area.
- 1.3. NPF4 includes plans for infrastructural investment including a high voltage electricity transmission network deemed vital for meeting national targets for electricity generation, statutory climate change targets and security of energy supplies. The current application falls into the category of National Development, as detailed within NPF4 as forming part of National Grid Infrastructure associated with the transmission of electricity. Whilst this establishes a need for the project, all necessary assessments and consents are still required for such development. Appropriate levels of mitigation would still be expected to help avoid and if necessary reduce environmental effects.
- 1.4. Policy 11 of NPF4 provides an overriding support for enabling works, including grid transmission and distribution infrastructure, where the development maximises net economic impact, together with ensuring the development does not have an unacceptable significant impact on the environment, local communities, historic environment, landscape character, and visual amenity. The proposal must therefore be assessed against the other NPF4 and LDP policies referenced in this report.
- 1.5. It is recognised by the Council that an important infrastructure related issue is renewable energy, where Argyll and Bute’s considerable potential to contribute to national targets is currently being constrained by insufficient grid capacity. The principle of development is therefore consistent with the broad principles of NPF4 Policy 11 having regard to its strategic significance in transmitting electricity from areas of generation to areas of consumption by aiding to the improved grid network.
- 1.6. In terms of the Local Development Plan Settlement Strategy, the application lies within the ‘Countryside’ and “Very Sensitive Countryside” development management zones, as defined by Policy LDP DM1 of the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015. Policy LDP DM1 supports the development of renewable energy related development within the ‘Countryside’ development management zone, providing they are consistent with other Local Development Plan policies. As a required infrastructure project, to meet the demands required by renewable energy developments within the wider area, the principle of development is considered acceptable under the terms of policies LDP DM1 (Development Within the Development Management Zones) of the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015; and Policy 11 (Energy) of NPF4.

2. Background to the Proposal

- 2.1. This application forms part of Scottish & Southern Electric Networks 'Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy'. The project looks to upgrade the original transmission network within Argyll and Bute which was constructed over 60 years ago and designed to transmit electricity to consumers in rural areas of low-density population, to a transmission network which meets modern transmission demands, predominantly from renewable generation. Requests from renewable generation developers to connect to the network in this area exceed current capacity of the existing transmission network, meaning a new transmission circuit is required to meet demand from energy developers and ensure security of supply. SSEN therefore look to increase the network capability in Argyll and Kintyre to enable connection of further renewable generation and to export to the wider GB network. The 275kV Strategy consists of 3 projects as outlined below:
- 2.1.1. Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Substations – Existing connected substations to the south of Inveraray require upgrading to 275kV capability, and as a result SSEN are proposing a new project involving the construction and operation of new 275kV substations in the vicinity of the existing An Suidhe, Crarae and Crossaig substations, and in the vicinity of Craig Murrail, north of Lochgilphead.
 - 2.1.2. Creg Dhubh – Dalmally 275kV Connection – This project involves establishing a new substation (permitted under permission 22/00782/PP) and a new switching gear station at Glen Lochy, connected by approximately 14km of new overhead line. (This proposal is currently subject to a PLI and is with the DPEA for determination)
 - 2.1.3. Creg Dhubh – Inveraray 275kV Overhead Line - This project involves 8-12km of new overhead 275kV line constructed between the permitted new substation at Creg Dhubh and a connection point on the Inveraray to Crossaig overhead line. It will initially operate at 132kV, but will be capable of 275kV operation, once associated transmission network connected substations to the south have been upgraded to 275kV capacity. The existing 132kV overhead line between Inveraray and the Creg Dhubh substation will be removed.
- 2.2. The key drivers for the project are the connection of the Earraghail Windfarm and Tangy IV Windfarm, both due to connect in April 2027. The substation will also connect into the recently completed overhead line between Inveraray and Crossaig which is capable of operation at 275kV but at present is routed into the existing substation, so the overhead line requires to be realigned to connect into the new substation. The project will support the export of renewable energy from the Argyll area
- 2.3. The proposed substation is located approximately 1.6 km north west of Minard and upslope of the existing Crarae substation. The Project is located wholly within the ABC Local Authority and would be accessed from the A83 using existing tracks to the current Crarae substation. The Project, including the entire extent of the substation, is located within an area of mature coniferous plantation with a small area of marshy grassland in the west. There is open moorland further up the slope to the north. The Project is also surrounded by mountainous landscapes. The river 'Abhainn Bheag and Tunns' is adjacent to the north and west of the Project with many minor rivers that meander off the main river. Crarae Burn is also located approximately 175 m from the red line boundary.
- 2.4. Ancient woodland is located to the south and the east of the site boundary and there are no other statutory or non-statutory ecology, heritage or landscape designations within the Project. The Project is located 1.6 km west of a locally designated landscape, West Loch Fyne (Coast) Area of Panoramic Quality (APQ) and 4 km west of the East Loch Fyne

(Coast) APQ. There are no ecological sites within 5 km designated for habitat, although Craignure mine SSSI is located approximately 4.2 km to the northeast of the Project. The nearest Listed Building and Scheduled Monument is located approximately 3 km south and 1.4 km south west respectively. The Crarae Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape is also located 1 km to the east of the Project.

- 2.5. The Proposal comprises the creation of a substation platform in the region of 1.3ha to accommodate the Gas-Insulated Switchgear [GIS]. This would be created using cut and fill to create a level platform at 174 AOD. One side of the substation will comprise 275kV GIS, housed in a single storey building with an attached single storey control building annex (approximately 53m x 26m x 22m). The 275/33kV super grid transformer is proposed to be located within a second building (measuring approximately 35m x 30m x 16m). Two gantries and electrical equipment/ down-leads are proposed to be installed to connect the adjacent overhead line to the proposed substation. A further building will house a diesel generator (6m x 2.4m x 3m). All buildings are proposed to be painted in a recessive colour of Olive brown Ral: 8008. The 275/33kV super grid transformer is rated at 120 MVA. Security fencing and landscaping are proposed together with the construction of 295 metres of access track (3.5m wide).
- 2.6. The wider surrounding area is sparsely populated with the nearest residential receptor being Strone Farm, located approximately 450 m south east of the Project. Access to the Project would be via the A83, approximately 2.1 km south west of Minard coming onto an unnamed road, leading to the existing Crarae substation. This existing substation will be retained for operational reasons and will be linked to the new substation by a short cable run.
- 2.7. Buildings will comprise steel portal frames with metal cladding and roof. There would be some un-housed electrical switchgear and plant located within the platform area. The substation would not be illuminated at night during normal operational activities. Conditions will be imposed to ensure that appropriate materials and colouring are used in respect of these buildings and other infrastructure. Flood lights would be installed but would only be used in the event of a fault during the hours of darkness; or during the over-run of planning works; or when sensor activated as security lighting for night-time access. Details of any proposed floodlighting are subject to a condition.
- 2.8. The use of GIS instead of Air-Insulated switchgear [AIS] is a welcomed design approach as GIS requires a smaller footprint than AIS, and the majority of its electrical infrastructure is housed within a building which aids mitigation of visual and noise impacts arising from the proposal.
- 2.9. The main noise source within the substation during operation would be the single 120 MVA grid transformer. A noise assessment has been carried out to estimate the noise levels emitted from the Proposed Development and to understand the future operational impacts at noise sensitive receptors (NSRs). Environmental Protection Officers are content with the information submitted and raise no objection.
- 2.10. A private water supply will be provided by a borehole and foul and surface water drainage is provided by a SUDs pond, outfall pipe and septic tank. These are required to serve the development with toilet and wash facilities for maintenance staff. Regarding lighting, the proposal will use sensor activated security lighting for night time access.
- 2.11. It is considered that the setting and design of the development would be sensitive to the site and would accord with the principles set out in the Council's Sustainable Siting and Design Principles contained within the LDP Supplementary Guidance. No widespread views of the site will be available, and although the overall site extent and

structures would be of considerable scale, officers are of the opinion that both the landscape setting and the localised characteristics and screening would allow the proposals to successfully integrate into the landscape in accordance with Policy LDP ENV 14 and NPF 4 Policy 4 Objectives.

3. Natural Environment

- 3.1. The intention of NPF4 Policy 4, is to protect, restore and enhance natural assets, making the best use of natural-based solutions. Policy 4(a) which sets out that development which by virtue of type, location or scale will have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment, will not be supported. Policy 3 of NPF4 seeks to ensure that biodiversity is enhanced through the creation of strengthened nature networks. Policy 11(E-ix) of NPF4 requires developments to demonstrate how any impacts on biodiversity, including impacts on birds are mitigated. At LDP level, Policy LDP 3 requires the protection, conservation and enhancement of our environment. Supplementary guidance policy LDP ENV1 provides additional detail in relation to development impact on habitats, species and our biodiversity.
- 3.2. No sites designated for their nature conservation importance lie within site identified for the Project. Eleven sites lie within 10 km of the Project. The nearest designated sites to the Project are Moine Mhor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which at their nearest point are located 5 km west of the western end of the main access road.
- 3.3. Habitats within the Project and much of the immediate surrounds are dominated by continuous and scattered sections of bracken and different forms of grassland as well as dense commercial conifer plantations of varying ages. No invasive non-native flora species were recorded within the Survey Area. Full details of the habitats found within the survey area associated with the application are set out at chapter 4 of the EA and associated Annex G.
- 3.4. The only field signs of protected species recorded within the phase 1 Survey Area were suspected pine marten scats identified within the plantation woodland ride which is located approximately 100 m from the Project access track. The findings of the EP1HS mirror the findings from the Inveraray to Crossaig 275 kV OHL Reinforcement Project 2018 EIA which also found no evidence of protected species within their area of survey with the exception of pine marten.
- 3.5. No field signs of protected species were identified within the habitat to be lost under the footprint of the Project, however, the coniferous plantation to be lost due to the Project has the potential to support pine marten, red squirrel, badgers and possibly wildcat. Additionally, oak trees to the east of the project area neighbouring the access track entering the Crarae Survey Area from the Craig Murrail Project were deemed potentially suitable to support suitable roosting features for bats. Moreover, although not clearly identifiable, potential otter footprints were observed under a bridge to the west of the area along the access track towards the location of the proposed Craig Murrail substation. Full details of the protected species findings from the EP1HS are provided in Annex G.
- 3.6. The EA at paragraph 4.4.1 concludes that:

The Proposed Development

No sites designated for their nature conservation importance, or woodlands listed on the Ancient Woodland inventory will be affected by the proposals. The nearest site is Moine Mhor SAC/SSSI that lies approximately 5 km west of the eastern end of the main access road. One Ancient Woodland lies adjacent to the existing main access

track; however, this woodland is Long-Established (of plantation origin) (LEPO). LEPO woodlands are not considered to be irreplaceable habitat as per the SSEN Transmission's Biodiversity Net Gain metric guidance. The access track is also likely to remain in its existing form with no long term change in use by vehicular traffic. The Proposed Development will not result in any impact on designated sites. Construction best practice measures will be implemented (these will be included with the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and General Environmental Management Plan (GEMP)) to prevent indirect/accidental damage and this embedded mitigation will result in no significant effects.

The Associated Development

No sites designated for their nature conservation importance, or woodlands listed on the ancient woodland inventory will be affected by the Associated Development. The nearest designated site is Moine Mhor SAC/SSSI, which at its nearest point is located 5 km east of the eastern end of the Project area and approximately 6 km east of the closest area of habitat to be lost for the Associated Development. The Associated Development will not result in any impact on designated sites, therefore, no significant effects on designated sites are predicted.

- 3.7. Officers are in agreement with this conclusion. Importantly the Council's biodiversity advisor has raised no objection to the proposals and considers that the proposed mitigation set out in Chapter 10 of the EA, and through the use of conditions biodiversity and nature interests can be properly safeguarded.
- 3.8. Having due regard to the above it is concluded that the proposal will not have any adverse impacts on the natural heritage including birds and is therefore consistent with the provisions of SG LDP ENV 1 – Development Impact on Habitats, Species and Our Biodiversity (i.e. biological diversity) and LDP 3 – Supporting the Protection, Conservation and Enhancement of our Environment of the Argyll & Bute Local Development Plan; and Policy 3- Biodiversity of NPF4.

4. Historic Environment

- 4.1. Policy 11 (E-vii) of NPF4 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they have mitigated against potential impacts on the historic environment and Local Development Plan Policies LDP 3 and SG LDP ENV 16 accord with this provision seeking developments to be assessed against any impact they may have on the historic environment, including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and their settings.
- 4.2. There are no World Heritage Sites, Inventoried Historic Battlefields, or Conservation Areas located within 2 km of the Proposed Development. Details of other heritage assets and their relationship to the substation site and associated development is set out in detail at Chapter 7 of the EA. Figure 7.1 maps out the location of these identified assets.
- 4.3. The EA acknowledges that Standing stone (CE_019) will be directly impacted by track construction of the permanent access track. With the implementation of the proposed mitigation key direct impacts listed in Section 7.5, the magnitude of direct impacts is predicted to be low and that there is low potential for impacts to Feorlin: Sheiling (CE_005), Feorlin: Farmstead (CE_011), A'Churach: Dyke (CE_015), and A'Churach: Dyke (CE_016) due to the Proposed Development.
- 4.4. The applicants propose that for the standing stone (CE_019) which lies within the permanent access tracks, it is recommended that a buffer zone of 10 m is demarcated around the asset if works are to be carried out in the vicinity. It is also recommended

that an archaeological watching brief is deployed during all ground-breaking works. This is considered acceptable and should ensure no damage to this heritage asset. This can be incorporated into the necessary CEMP as a specific and required mitigation approach.

- 4.5. It is also acknowledged at Paras 7.4 and 7.5 of the EA that there is potential for unknown buried Archaeology. This is reinforced by the views of WOSAS which require further investigative works to be undertaken prior to works commencing through the use of a suspensive condition. Officers are in agreement that this is necessary and the EA also fairly acknowledges this is a requirement of any permission.
- 4.6. In respect of *Crarae - GDL00118 (CE_001)*. This Garden and Designed Landscape lies c.1.3 km east of the Proposed Development. It comprises 126 acres of designed woodland gardens and meadows laid out in the 20th century around the existing 19th century designed landscape of Crarae Lodge. It is considered that there is both sufficient separation (distance and topography) to ensure no significant adverse impacts upon this asset will occur.
- 4.7. An appraisal of potential impacts is set out at table 7.1 of the EA. Officers are in general agreement with this evaluation and its conclusions.
- 4.8. Having due regard to the above and subject to the condition recommended by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, it is concluded that the proposal will not have any adverse impacts on the historic environment, including listed buildings and their settings, and is therefore consistent with the provisions of Policy 11 of NPF4, together with LDP Policies LDP 3 and SG LDP ENV 16.

5. Hydrology, Flood Risk, Drainage

- 5.1. Policy 11 (E-viii) and Policy 5 of NPF4 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they have mitigated against potential impacts on hydrology, the water environment and flood risk. In respect of potential impacts upon peat. These matters are addressed at Chapter 6 of the EA (and also at Annexes, K, L, M & N) of the submissions.
- 5.2. As the potential impact upon peat and the requirement for detailed management and mitigation details to be provided by SEPA, this has been given its own section within this report although clearly flooding/hydrology/Drainage all have potential interactions with peat on and surrounding the site. Further detailed evaluation of potential impacts on peat are set out at Section 6 of this report.
- 5.3. Chapter 6 of the EA relates to surveys and evaluations of surface water features have been undertaken to assess the potential effects of the proposed development on water quality within burns and rivers, water abstractions (drinking water) and habitats dependent on the groundwater at the site to ensure no unacceptable impacts occur due to the development.
- 5.4. A private water supply risk assessment (PWSRA) was carried out for the EIA for Inveraray to Crossaig overhead line (OHL) project published in July 2018, which was reviewed in order to inform the assessment. No additional PWS were identified as part of the PWSRA surrounding the Proposed Development. This PWSRA did confirm a PWS to be present at Garvachy Farm.

5.5. The EA at 6.5 confirms that :

*The Project has been designed to reduce potential impacts as far as reasonably practicable. This includes mitigation that is embedded into the design of the project in accordance with industry standard methods and procedures, which will reduce impacts from construction and operation. The following mitigation measures relating to the hydrological environment are embedded into the design and construction of the Proposed Development:....A Water Construction Environmental Management Plan (WCEMP) accompanies this EA Report (**Annex N**) and will form part of the embedded development design. Relevant sections of the SSEN General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) will inform a CEMP to be implemented by the Project's selected contractor post submission. GEMPS are included as **Annex A** to this report and relevant GEMPS include the following.*

- *Private water supplies;*
- *Working in or near Water;*
- *Soil Management;*
- *Contaminated Land;*
- *Oil Storage and Refuelling;*
- *Bad Weather; and*
- *Working with concrete.*

As consultation with Scottish Water confirms there are assets at the existing access track entrance, precautionary mitigation will be embedded. This includes fencing off the hydrant at the side of the road to prevent potential slippage of machinery.

5.6. To protect the water environment from potential construction pollution, the application includes mitigation measures including 50m watercourse buffers for construction works with the exception of watercourse crossings; and the implementation of a Water Construction Environmental Management Plan.

5.7. In summary, the applicants have confirmed that all surface water drainage will be designed to ensure that there are no adverse effects on water quality, or the rate and volume of surface runoff. Based on the proposed design and the standard good practice construction stage mitigation, no significant adverse effects are predicted for the water environment.

5.8. Neither the Council's Environmental Protection Officer or Flooding and drainage advisor raises objection to the proposals subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions in respect of flooding, drainage and private water supply matters.

5.9. Having due regard to the above it is concluded that effects on hydrology, the water environment and flood risk have been considered and subject to the inclusion of the planning conditions, the proposal is therefore consistent with the provisions Policy 5 and Policy 11 of NPF4.

6. Impact on Peat

6.1 Policy 5 of NPF4 confirms that developments that would potentially have a significant adverse effect on soil resources and functions or peat structure and function in terms of disturbance, degradation or erosion would not be supported unless it is demonstrated that such adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of community wide importance arising from the development proposal; and a soil or peatland management plan is submitted and demonstrates the mitigation measures to limit impact.

6.2. Members will note that this has proved to be one of the main considerations in respect of the current proposals where SEPA in their initial response raised a holding objection to the proposals, requiring that additional information in respect of the proposed management of extracted peat and details of the areas of land where peat enhancement work would be undertaken to compensate for impacts caused by construction activities be provided. This is notwithstanding the information submitted at time of application including the proposed peat management plan set out at Appendix O of the EA.

6.3. In response to the holding objection the applicant provided updated information in respect of the proposed extraction and management of peat on 16.5.23 to SEPA. This was forwarded to the Planning Authority on 05.06.23. No further response has been received from SEPA and therefore their holding objection remains the position at time of writing.

6.4. The need for this additional information stems from the requirement of NPF 4 for such matter to be addressed as a material planning issue in balancing whether permission can be granted.

6.5. The applicants and SEPA have been in discussions with respect to providing additional information on the extraction of peat, its management and storage, and its transportation off site to an area of degraded peatland which will be improved as a consequence of these works. It has not, at time of writing, proved possible to agree all details with SEPA to allow them to formally withdraw their holding objection. Progress is actively being made and Officers are reassured through current endeavours and discussions between SEPA and the applicant that SSEN will provide the details required to properly address this matter.

6.6. SEPA have clarified to Officers that they have evaluated the proposal against NPF Policy 5 (c) in respect of potential impact on peat, but not against the wider policy objectives set out in NPF4. The Planning Authority is however required to consider the proposal against NPF 4 as a whole, not any single policy, and come to a balanced judgement in forming a recommendation and in making a determination.

6.7. In this instance substantial progress has been made by the applicants to seek to satisfy the detailed requirements of SEPA and secure the removal of the holding objection, and although constructive discussions are ongoing, and the applicants are in agreement with providing the detail, it has not proved possible to agree all matters at time of writing.

6.8. Officers consider that in coming to a decision in respect of impact on peat in this instance that the following matters are material considerations:

- The proposals relate to essential grid infrastructure of national importance as set out (NPF 4 National Priorities Appendix B Part 3)
- The Proposal supports the delivery of the Regional Spatial Strategy for The North and West coast and the Islands as set out at Part 1: P24 of NPF 4 to provide Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure for the area.
- The proposal is supported by Policy 1 which seeks to “*encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis*”.

- The proposal is supported by Policy 11 (Energy) relating to the delivery of essential grid infrastructure improvements related to renewable energy transmission
- The proposals meet the requirements of Policy 5 (c)(i) to be regarded as essential infrastructure

6.9. Officers are of the opinion in this instance permission can be granted subject to a suspensive condition which will fully address the concerns of SEPA, address the matters required under policy 5 (c) of NPF4, yet not delay the determination of this Nationally important and essential grid improvement where timescales for delivery are important.

6.10. In respect of timescales Officers note that it has been clarified by SSEN that;

Last year we submitted our Initial Needs Case (INC) to Ofgem, and this was approved in December 2022. The initial Needs Case was around the need for robust proposals to reinforce the Argyll transmission network from 132kV to 275kV operation. At an estimated cost of around £400m, this investment is being taken forward as part of the SSE Group's Net Zero Acceleration Programme, which will see £12.5bn invested in the five years to 2026, or £7m every day. SSEN Transmission alone expects to invest around £4bn over this period as it delivers a network for net zero emissions. On the back of the INC being approved in December 2022, we submitted our Final Needs Case to Ofgem in May 2023. The Argyll 275kV strategy is required to support the connection of several new renewable electricity generation schemes across Argyll and to transport that power to areas of demand across Scotland and beyond. It will support the connection of at least 560MW of new renewable electricity generation, enough to power more than 500,000 homes.

.... In terms of the need to get the projects (that is Craig Murrail, Crarae and Crossaig North substations) to June PPSL, this comes down to the need to secure the substation consents enabling Ofgem to finalise, approve and issue their Final Needs Case decision in August. Any delay to the issuing of the Final Needs Case will have a knock-on effect to SSENT internal governance to release funding which will delay the start on site in late 2023 which is critical in ensuring we are able to meet our obligations to provide connected generation.

6.11. Officers consider that timescales associated with achieving NPF 4 Policy 1 Climate change objectives can also be considered a material consideration in determining the current proposals.

7. Impact on Woodland

7.1. Policy 11 (e-x) of NPF4 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they have mitigated against potential impacts on the trees, wood and forests. Policy 6 of NPF4 and Argyll and Bute's Supplementary Guidance LDP ENV 6 (Development Impact on Trees/Woodlands) confirms that developments likely to have an adverse impact on trees will be resisted. Where it is demonstrated that tree removal is required, the guidance requires planting of new woodland/ trees, including compensatory planting and management agreements. The Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy (2009) confirms that woodland removal should be allowed only where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits and a proposal for compensatory planting may form part of this balance. Policy 6(d) of NPF4 states that development proposals on site which include an area of existing woodland or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation will only be supported where the enhancement and improvement of woodlands and the planting of new trees on the site are integrated into the design.

7.2. The submission clarifies that the proposed development is located within a commercial conifer plantation with a red line boundary (RLB) area of 18.75 ha of mainly conifer thicket and recent restock with integrated open ground. The EA provides detailed commentary in respect of Felling and forestry matters at Chapter 5 and updated Appendix J submitted on 12.12.22 (the original submission of 24.11.22 being superseded).

7.3. In total, 8.03 ha of the 18.75 ha of the RLB is classified as woodland, which requires clear-felling to facilitate the construction of the Proposed and Associated Development. The applicants confirm that:

In-line with the Applicant's commitment to achieve no net loss of woodland for new Development Projects, the total area of woodland removal being 8.03 ha for the Project will be replanted through the application of this Woodland Planting Management Strategy.

7.4. The felling areas and compensatory planting to be provided through a conditioned Woodland Planting Management Scheme achieved through condition are considered to adequately mitigate the potential impacts of woodland removal by achieving a no net loss of woodland area. The compensatory planting to be undertaken would replace the total area quantity of woodland removed for the development. This accords with the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, to achieve no net loss of woodland.

7.5. The compensatory planting would include native planting in place of non-native species in accordance with NPF4 Policy 6(d). NPF4 Policy 6 maintains a strong presumption in favour of protecting woodland resources. The creation of the substation will however give rise to clear public benefits as the proposal is to facilitate the long term security of energy supplies as well as enable more renewable energy connections. Regarding existing trees adjacent to the development area, it is confirmed within the GEMP that tree protection measures will be installed for those trees which do not require to be felled to undertake construction work.

7.6. Subject to the inclusion of planning conditions to ensure that the compensatory planting scheme is implemented together, the proposal is considered to accord with NPF4 Policies 6 and 11, together with Local Development Plan SG LDP ENV 6 – Development Impact on Trees /Woodland; and The Scottish Government's Policy on 'Control of Woodland Removal' (Forestry Commission Scotland 2009).

8. Impact on Access to the Countryside

8.1. Policy 11(E-iii) of NPF4 requires developments for renewable energy related developments to be assessed against any impact they may have on public access, including impact on long distance walking, cycling routes and scenic routes. It is understood that the Development area is not well used for recreational activity. (The distance from such assets is clarified at Paragraph 3.5.2 of the EA and Figure E.3)..

8.2. Officers consider that that the proposal will not have any adverse physical impacts on public access, including impact on long distance walking and cycling routes and those scenic routes identified in the NPF and is therefore consistent with the provisions of Policy 11 of NPF4.

9. Landscape and Visual Impact

- 9.1. Policy 11(E-ii) of NPF4 requires development proposals to demonstrate how the development has mitigated against any significant landscape and visual impacts, arising from the proposal. Where impacts are localised and appropriate design mitigation has been applied, the Policy confirms that development will generally be considered acceptable. Policy SG LDP ENV 14 in respect of Landscape and Policy LDP 3 of the adopted Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015 comprise the principal policies of relevance to landscape and visual evaluation of the Proposed Development. The aim of this policy is to protect, conserve and where possible enhance the built, human, and natural environment. Policy LDP 3 also notes that a development proposal would not be supported where adverse effects, including cumulative effects on the integrity or special qualities of international or nationally designated sites; or, significant adverse effects, on the special qualities or integrity of locally designated natural and built environment sites, would occur.
- 9.2. In addition, Policy LDP 9 concerns the design and setting of development, requiring development to be sited and positioned to pay regard to the context, and be compatible with the surroundings, particularly within sensitive locations including National Scenic Areas, Areas of Panoramic Quality or Gardens and Designed Landscapes. (Members are requested to note that an evaluation of the potential impact on Crarae - Garden and Designed Landscape which lies c.1.3 km east of the proposed development been evaluated previously at Section 4 of this report with reference to the corresponding policies and evaluation submitted in the EA on Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage matters).
- 9.3. The Environmental Appraisal at Chapter 3 of the EA and Annex E (Parts 1 & 2) considers both landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development with photomontages provided from a range of viewpoints.
- 9.4. The LVIA assessment is focused on a study area of 5km. The applicants confirm that this has been informed by analysis of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) maps and an early appraisal of potential effects for a development of this scale. It is accepted that any notable landscape or visual effects would be confined within this geographical area owing to the reduction in relative scale and visibility of the proposal with distance within its landscape context.
- 9.5. Figure E.2 clarifies that the substation itself and the vast majority of the access track are contained within Landscape character area LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest. This character area is generally accepted as being capable of accommodating larger infrastructure. Figure E.3 clarifies that the substation itself is not located within an APQ but the lower part of the access track is located within West Loch Fine APQ. Annex E Part 2 provides photomontages of the appearance of the proposal within its landscape context.
- 9.6. The local landscape consists of a patchwork of commercial forestry, pastoral farmland and open moorland. The commercial plantation forms part of the wider Kilmichael Forest, which covers extensive areas of the surrounding landscape. These include Beinn Ghlas (420 m AOD) to the north east, A'Cruach (254 m AOD), Cnoc Buidhe (270 m AOD) and Creag Chaise (303 m AOD) to the south west, and Fiargall (272 m AOD) to the south. The Proposed Development Site is located at an elevation of 170 – 200 m AOD.
- 9.7. The surrounding landscape is very sparsely settled, particularly across more elevated areas to the north where there are no built forms or settlements. The closest residential receptors include the isolated farmsteads of Strone and Garvachy, which are located approximately 500 m to the south east of the Project Site. Settlements found within the

wider context include Minard, 1.8 km to the southeast, Crarae, 2.2 km to the east, and Tullichgorm, 2.3 km to the south.

9.8. The EA confirms that:

The location of the Project has been chosen to avoid any notable ridgelines or visually prominent sections of skyline. The Project Site is located within an area of commercial forestry, with limited receptors in the immediate vicinity. The surrounding areas of forestry, in combination with undulations in the local landform would notably restrict views of the Project across wider parts of the Study Area....Furthermore, the Proposed Development Site and Associated Development are located in close proximity to existing electricity infrastructure, comprising the existing Crarae Substation to the east, and nearby overhead lines (OHLs) to the east and north. As such, the Project would exert its primary influence over a local landscape already partially characterised by existing development, and avoids the spread of infrastructure into wider parts of the surrounding landscape.

9.9. In terms of design, the proposals seek to incorporate a comprehensive mitigation strategy to effectively integrate the Project into the surrounding landscape. This involves consideration of the most appropriate methods of lessening its potential influence on landscape and visual amenity. To this end, the EA confirms that the project has been designed to achieve the following landscape objectives embedded design mitigation:

- *Land clearance and occupation would be limited to necessary areas only to minimise the geographic spread of the infrastructure and limit the potential impact on the local landscape fabric.*
- *The Proposed Development and Associated Development access tracks would utilise existing forestry tracks to minimise effects associated with peripheral parts of the Project;*
- *The number of new permanent towers comprising the Associated Development has been limited as far as possible (three towers in total) to minimise the effects resulting from this component of the Project;*
- *Temporary tracks and temporary OHL diversions (for construction purposes) would be reinstated at the end of the construction phase, thereby further limiting the geographic extent of potential residual effects;*
- *In terms of colour and materials, the AIS building would be painted with a recessive colour (dark-brown, such as RAL 8014: Sepia Brown or similar approved) to assist blending in with the surrounding landscape context comprising plantation forestry; and*
- *Proposed landscape works would focus on the reinstatement of ground cover within the Site to native bog / mire habitat (see Figure E.4). This approach reflects the local ground conditions, ensures a natural context to the proposed built form, and also provides additional habitat type within the locality.*

9.10. The visual effects of the activities during the construction phase would be temporary and limited to localised areas in the vicinity of the project due to the containing effect of the underlying landform and surrounding tree cover, in combination with the low-lying nature of activities associated with site clearance / excavation. As such, views would be predominantly limited to hill walkers on non-promoted sections of forestry tracks in the surrounding area.

9.11. The Proposed Development would result in the permanent loss of a small area of forestry and rough grassland and its replacement with the proposed AIS building, site services and control equipment, electrical switchgear and associated infrastructure. The Associated Development would also result in localised loss of ground cover along the permanent access tracks and the introduction of the proposed towers. In both cases, the proposed infrastructure would account for a relatively small parcel of land within an

expansive area of surrounding forestry. Officers agree with the summary evaluation within the EA that:

Visual effects would also be extremely restricted based on the geographic location of the Project, which exhibits a high degree of visual enclosure due to the surrounding forestry and the undulating nature of the local topography, and is spatially separate from any major settlements, recreational attractions or transport routes. As such, the Proposed Development and Associated Development would be fully screened from the vast majority of receptors, and represent very minor elements within more open vantage points. On balance, there would be no notable effects on the views experienced by residents, recreational receptors or road users.

9.12. It is evidenced and accepted by officers that the proposed development will result in some localised adverse visual impacts in the immediate vicinity of the site, and that due to the overall proportions of the development at close range the magnitude of change will be large/perceptible. It has however been evidenced from the Environmental Appraisal that the landscape and visual effects have been carefully considered, and despite the site selection resulting in the loss of a relatively small area of existing commercial forestry there will be an acceptable visual integration of this development and medium and long range views are extremely limited. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy 11 of NPF4, and Policy SG LDP ENV 14 in respect of Landscape and Policy LDP 3 of the adopted Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015.

10. Road Network, Parking and Associated Transport Matters.

10.1. Policy 11 (E-vi) of NPF4 requires developments to demonstrate how they've mitigated against any impacts on road traffic and on adjacent trunk roads, including during construction.

10.2. Details of the anticipated volume and type of construction traffic are provided within Chapter 9: Transport Appraisal. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed by SSEN Transmission, which will require to be agreed with the Area Roads Engineer in advance of construction, as part of the CEMP.

10.3. The CEMP will require to include traffic management measures to ensure that the project will not have an unacceptable impact on the public road network or nearby road users. Details of potential abnormal load routing has been provided at Annex Q of the submissions.

10.4. The Council's Area Roads Officer and Transport Scotland have no objections to the proposal on transport and road safety grounds. Subject to the inclusion of the planning conditions, the transport related impacts of the proposal are deemed to be acceptable and can be appropriately managed. As such, the proposal has been found to be in accordance with Policy 11 of NPF4.

11. Noise and Construction Impacts

11.1. Policy 11 (E-i) of NPF4 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they've mitigated against any impacts on communities and individual dwellings, including residential amenity, visual impact and noise arising from the development.

11.2. The applicant recognises that noise nuisance can arise from operational substations and the need to ensure that this is limited in respect of existing noise sensitive properties. In view of this Chapter 8 of the Environmental Appraisal provides a Noise Impact Assessment [NIA]. The nearest residential premises are approximately 450 m to the

southeast of the site. Other properties are located at further distance to the east (approximately 800 m from the site), southeast (dwellings in Minard), and east (dwellings in Crarae). A site location plan, the locations of NSR are provided in Annex S of the EA.

- 11.3. The development of a project of this scale will have considerable temporary impacts including for example, construction traffic but also construction noise, dust, waste etc. Such impacts are expected intermittently through the 30 months of construction, It is for these reasons that the applicant has a commitment towards a project specific Construction Environmental Management Plan approach, the finalised details of which, following appointment of a project contractor, would require approval of the Planning Authority in consultation with relevant consultees. Developers must also comply with reasonable operational practices with regard to construction noise so as not to cause a 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, amongst other factors, which is enforceable via Environmental Health.
- 11.4. To assist in evaluating whether Construction noise would create nuisance a baseline noise survey was undertaken at the nearest NSR to the Project. Full data and analysis of the baseline noise surveys are included at Appendix A of the submitted noise report. In respect of construction noise the report concludes at sections 8.8.3 & 8.8.4 that;
- 11.5. *...no noise mitigation is required for the construction activities. However, in any case, any mitigation required for noise generated by rock breaking will be agreed with ABC, for inclusion in the Construction Noise Management Plan.... No construction works are proposed to take place during the night-time period without prior written agreement from ABC in exceptional circumstances.*
- 11.6. In respect of operational noise characteristics (day and night) the report evaluated these in some detail. Concluding that:
- 8.9.2 An assessment of construction noise and vibration from the Project has been undertaken. The results show that as the worst-case construction noise level is below the lower threshold of 65 dB day and 55 dB evening, the potential impact to the nearest NSR is negligible during these periods. Given the long distance from the Project to the nearest NSR, construction vibration activities will not be perceptible (negligible adverse impact).*
- 8.9.3 An assessment of noise emissions from the proposed substation has been undertaken based on specification and assumed library noise emission data and a computer-based noise model. The results of this modelling exercise were compared against the existing noise environment on the site in accordance with BS 4142, BS8233 and against the requirements of ABC. The assessment indicates that the proposed substation would not cause an adverse impact at nearby receptors....*
- 8.9.4... In light of the findings of the assessment, it is considered that no specific mitigation measures are required above those which are embedded within the proposed development. However, it is recommended the impact is reassessed by acoustic consultants as manufacturers' data become available.*
- 11.7. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection on the grounds of noise impacts arising from the proposal subject to the imposition of an appropriate condition on hours of construction activity and that the CEMP address potential hours of HGV movements associated with construction. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the provisions of Policy 11 of NPF4 subject to the imposition of recommended conditions.

11.8. Timing of deliveries (HGVs and abnormal loads) shall also be agreed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) with construction traffic using the A83 and existing forestry site access connecting to the site. Other controls include dust management plans, pollution prevention plans, waste management plans which would also be expected within a project specific Construction Environmental Management Plan. Due to the scale of the development, SEPA will control pollution prevention measures relating to surface water run-off via a Controlled Activities Regulations Construction Site Licence.

12. Net Economic Impact, Including Local and Community Socio-Economic Benefits such as Employment, Associated Business and Supply Chain Opportunities

12.1. Policy 11(c) of NPF4 states that 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.

12.2. The development of grid infrastructure has been identified as a national priority together within investment in renewable energy. The development of substation projects as presented within this application are not only beneficial in strengthening the robustness of the country's grid network, but also result in further job and investment opportunities through the development of associated supply chains. The development is required to facilitate the connection of wind farms/ renewable schemes to the national grid, which will allow the export of electricity generated to consumers. The relationship of the development to the economic and social benefits of renewable energy developments is therefore relevant, in a positive way.

12.3. Argyll and Bute is experiencing significant construction activity in the transmission network. The approval of the current application will have a short term positive construction economic impact, although significantly less impact at the operational stage with the design having a permanent design life. The construction of the development is predicted to have a peak number of workers in comparison to the operation of the facility which would not require any staff to be permanently based onsite.

12.4. The design, landscaping and limited visual impact of the development, means the impacts of the development are not anticipated to have adverse impact on the local economy, particularly tourism. Its impact, at a more local level, equally is not anticipated to significantly impact on existing businesses or recreational interests.

12.5. NPF4 calls for national developments to be exemplars of a Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach to economic development under Policy 25 of NPF4. CWB is defined as "A people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people". Based on this, it is recommended that the development should seek to agree a housing strategy to ensure that the temporary workers associated with the proposals do not have an unacceptable and adverse impact on the functioning of the local housing market area to the detriment of the community and other businesses. A planning condition is therefore recommended to secure the housing delivery programme strategy.

12.6. Having due regard to the above the proposals net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities has been assessed and it is concluded that the proposal is consistent with the provisions of Policies 11 and 25 of NPF4.

13. The Need for Conditions Relating to the Decommissioning of Developments, Including Ancillary Infrastructure, and Site Restoration (Including Cumulative Impacts)

- 13.1. Policy 11(f) of NPF4 confirms that consents for development proposals may be time-limited. The Proposed Development will have a design life of 45 years or more, after which the need for re-powering or decommissioning will be considered at that time. The Proposed Development is therefore treated as permanent in the submitted Environmental Appraisal, and repowering and decommissioning are therefore not considered.
- 13.2. On a project with this projected lifespan, where the substantive new build elements are judged by officers not to be causing substantive harm in terms of landscape or localised impacts, this is considered by officers to be a reasonable approach. Having due regard to the above it is concluded that the need for conditions relating to the decommissioning of developments, including ancillary infrastructure, and site restoration has been considered and due to the nature of the development being to support the ongoing transmission of electricity to the wider area, the proposal is considered to be acceptable without any time limitation imposed. Any subsequent upgrade to equipment, where required, in the future would be reviewed through future applications.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1. The Council is supportive of delivering this renewable energy related infrastructure upgrade within its Renewable Energy Action Plan and the proposals represent important National Infrastructure supported in NPF4. Although localised landscape effects will take place as identified in the EA, these are considered largely unavoidable with an infrastructure project of this scale.
- 14.2. Officers consider that overall the landscape, ecological, historic environment, transportation and other potential effects have been appropriately addressed and mitigated in defining the proposed development site and design. Appropriate mitigation can be secured through the imposition of conditions in line with the proposals set out within the EA, and those included within consultation responses. In conclusion, it is therefore recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.