

**Report on Consultation:
Coire Glas Grid Connection Project
April 2023**



CONTENTS

GLOSSARY	II
PREFACE	V
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	VI
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview and Purpose of Document	1
1.2 Project Background	1
1.3 Objectives	2
1.4 Document Structure	2
2. PROJECT NEED AND OVERVIEW	3
2.1 Introduction	3
2.2 The Need for the Project	3
2.3 Proposed Development Solution	3
2.4 Forestry Removal	4
3. CONSULTATION PROCESS	5
3.1 Consultation Overview	5
3.2 Methods for Consultation	5
4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES FROM STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY CONSULTEES	8
4.1 Summary of Feedback	8
5. COMMUNITY RESPONSES	43
5.1 Summary of Feedback	43
6. PROJECT RESPONSES TO CONSULTATIONS	55
6.1 Overview	55
6.2 Summary of Key Responses and Progression to the EIA Stage	55
7. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS	58
7.1 Conclusion	58
7.2 Next Steps	58

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site and Route Options

Figure 2: Alignment Options

Figure 3: Preferred Site, Route and Alignment Options

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Alignment	A centre line of an overhead line, along with location of key angle structures.
Alignment (preferred)	An alignment for the overhead line taken forward to stakeholder consultation following a comparative appraisal of alignment options.
Alignment (proposed)	An alignment taken forward to consent application. It comprises a defined centre line for the overhead line and includes an indicative support structure (tower or pole) schedule, also specifying access arrangements and any associated construction facilities.
Alignment Variation	An alternative alignment proposed to avoid localised constraints.
Amenity	The natural environment, cultural heritage, landscape and visual quality. Also includes the impact of SSEN Transmission's works on communities, such as the effects of noise and disturbance from construction activities.
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	A process intended to leave nature in a better state than it started using good practice principles established by the Business and Biodiversity Offset Programme (BBOP) and organisations including CIRIA, CIEEM and IEMA.
Coire Glas Grid Connection Project	The current project being consulted upon.
Coire Glas Hydro Pumped Storage Ltd (CGHPSL)	The developer of the consented Coire Glas Pumped Hydro Storage Scheme.
Consultation	The dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups, based on a genuine exchange of views, normally, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action.
Corridor	A linear area which allows a continuous connection between defined connection points. The corridor may vary in width along its length; in unconstrained areas it may be many kilometres wide.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	A formal process set down in The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 used to systematically identify, predict and assess the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed project or development.
Habitat	Term most accurately meaning the place in which a species lives, but also used to describe plant communities or agglomerations of plant communities.
Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)	Under the Habitats Regulations ¹ , all competent authorities must consider whether any plan or project will have a 'likely significant effect' on a European site. Where such an effect is identified, the competent authority must carry out an 'appropriate assessment'. This is known as Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA).
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	A statutory consultee.
Kilovolt (kV)	One thousand volts.

¹ The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), known as the Habitats Regulations, transpose the legal obligations of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) to identify and protect sites that are internationally important for threatened habitats and protected species,

Term	Definition
Listed Building	Building included on the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest and afforded statutory protection under the 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997' and other planning legislation. Classified categories A – C(s).
Limit of Deviation (LOD)	The area either side of the proposed alignment within which micro-siting of structures may take place in accordance with the conditions of consent.
Micro-siting	The process of positioning individual structures to avoid localised environmental or technical constraints.
Mitigation	Term used to indicate avoidance, remediation or reduction of adverse impacts.
National Vegetation Classification (NVC)	One of the key common standards used to produce a comprehensive classification and description of the plant communities of Britain.
NatureScot	A statutory consultee (previously known as Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH))
Operational Corridor (OC)	Swathe of land of an agreed width to allow the OHL to be operated safely and reliably. Typically cleared of vegetation so that any falling at maximum height will not impact the overhead line.
Overhead Line (OHL)	An electric line installed above ground, usually supported by lattice steel towers or poles.
Plantation Woodland	Woodland of any age that obviously originated from planting.
Route	A linear area of approximately 1 km width (although this may be narrower/wider in specific locations in response to identified pinch points / constraints), which provides a continuous connection between defined connection points.
Route (preferred)	A route for the overhead line taken forward to stakeholder consultation following a comparative appraisal of route options.
Route (proposed)	A route taken forward following stakeholder consultation to the alignment selection stage of the overhead line routeing process.
Routeing	The work undertaken which leads to the selection of a proposed alignment, capable of being taken forward into the consenting process under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.
Scheduled Monument	A monument which has been scheduled by the Scottish Ministers as being of national importance under the terms of the 'Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979'.
Scottish Forestry (SF)	A consultee operation under licence as Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Limited and as a government advisor.
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission)	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission own, operate and develop the high voltage electricity transmission system in the north of Scotland and remote islands
Semi-natural Woodland	Woodland that does not obviously originate from planting. The distribution of species will generally reflect the variations in the site and the soil. Planted trees must account for less than 30% of the canopy composition.
SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency. A statutory consultee.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Areas of national importance. The aim of the SSSI network is to maintain an adequate representation of all natural and semi-natural habitats and native species across Britain.

Term	Definition
Span	The section of overhead line between two supporting structures.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	An area designated under the EC Habitats Directive to ensure that rare, endangered or vulnerable habitats or species of community interest are either maintained at or restored to a favourable conservation status.
Special Protection Area (SPA)	An area designated under the Wild Birds Directive (Directive 74/409/EEC) to protect important bird habitats.
Stakeholders	Organisations and individuals who can affect or are affected by SSEN Transmission works.
The National Grid	The electricity transmission network in Great Britain.
The Highland Council (THC)	The Local authority and a Statutory Consultee for the Proposed Development.
UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)	The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was published in 1994 and was the UK Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which the UK signed up to in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. The CBD called for the development and enforcement of national strategies and associated action plans to identify, conserve and protect existing biological diversity, and to enhance it wherever possible.
UK BAP Species	Species identified as being most threatened and requiring conservation action at a national level under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP).
Underground Cable	An electric cable installed below ground, protected by insulating layers and marked closer to the surface to prevent accidental damage through later earthworks.
Visualisation Location (VL)	The geographic location of a visualisation prepared to inform and support the LVIA (to meet THC (2016) visualisation standards and NatureScot guidance).
Volts	The international unit of electric potential and electromotive force.
Wayleave	A voluntary agreement entered into between SSEN Transmission and a landowner upon whose land an overhead line is to be constructed for the installation and retention of the transmission equipment.
Wild Land Area (WLA)	A series of 42 mapped areas which have been identified by NatureScot as comprising the most extensive areas of high wildness within Scotland, following a process of interpretive mapping and site survey. WLA is not a statutory designation but these areas are considered to be nationally important.

PREFACE

This Report on Consultation has been prepared by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (herein referred to as 'SSEN Transmission'), operating under licence as Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc, to provide a summary of the responses received from stakeholders (including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents) during the formal consultation period between May 2022 and June 2022 in response to the preferred route and alignment of the 400 kV overhead line and the preferred sites of the 400 kV Coire Glas Switching Station and the 400 kV / 132 kV Loch Lundie Substation, all of which comprise the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.

The preferred route, alignment and sites, and the reasons for the design decisions taken during these stages, are set out in a Consultation Document, published in May 2022. The Consultation Document is available online via the project web page at <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/coire-glas-connection-project/>

Public consultation events were held at the following times and locations:

Invergarry Village Hall, Invergarry	Wednesday 4 th May 2022	3pm – 7pm
Fort Augustus Village Hall, Fort Augustus	Thursday 5 th May 2022	3pm – 6:45pm

A virtual consultation event was also held via the project web page on 9th May 2022 between 17.00 – 19.00.

On receipt of the Consultation Document or attendance at a consultation event, comments were sought from stakeholders on the preferred route and alignment of the 400 kV overhead line, and the preferred sites of the 400 kV Coire Glas Switching Station and the 400 kV / 132 kV Loch Lundie Substation, a summary of which is provided in this report.

This Report on Consultation also confirms how SSEN Transmission have responded to comments received by stakeholders and details the actions that will be taken as the project progresses through to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and consenting stage.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (herein referred to as 'SSEN Transmission'), operating under licence as Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (herein referred to as 'SHE Transmission') are proposing to construct and operate a new grid connection for the consented 1,500 megawatts (MW) Coire Glas Pumped Storage Hydro Scheme (PSH), being developed by Coire Glas Hydro Pumped Storage Ltd (CGHPSL). The connection project, referred to as 'the Proposed Development', would also form part of a wider rationalisation exercise to reduce the overall amount of electrical grid infrastructure in the surrounding area. The project being promoted is known as 'The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project'.

The Coire Glas PSH, together with the Proposed Development, will help to meet increased electricity demand and meet net zero carbon targets fixed by the Scottish and UK Governments to achieve net zero by 2045 and 2050 respectively. The policy objective of "net zero" is the reduction of carbon emissions by 100 per cent (%) from 1990 levels by 2050 to avoid the worst impacts of climate change and seeks to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project would consist of the following three core components:

- A new 400 kV switching station for the Coire Glas PSH (hereafter referred to as 'the Coire Glas Switching Station');
- a new 400 kV / 132 kV substation at Loch Lundie, near Invergarry (hereafter referred to as 'the Loch Lundie Substation'). The Loch Lundie Substation would be built with spare capacity to allow the future connection of other renewable generation projects in the surrounding area; and
- a new 400 kV steel lattice overhead line (OHL) between the proposed new Coire Glas Switching Station and the new 400 kV / 132 kV substation and the existing Fort Augustus Substation (via the proposed new Loch Lundie Substation) (hereafter referred to as 'the 400 kV OHL').

In May 2022, a Consultation Document was prepared to set out the project need and describe the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, seeking comments from stakeholders and members of the public on the route, alignment and site option studies undertaken, and the rationale for, and approach to, the selection of the preferred route and alignment of the proposed 400 kV OHL and the preferred site of both the proposed Coire Glas Switching Station and the proposed Loch Lundie Substation (See Figure 1).

This Report on Consultation documents the consultation process which has been undertaken for the project between May 2022 and June 2022. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents in order to invite feedback on the rationale for, and approach to, the selection of the preferred route and alignment of the proposed 400 kV OHL and the preferred site of both the proposed Coire Glas Switching Station and the proposed Loch Lundie Substation.

This report summarises the responses received and provides detail on the actions proposed in response to the issues raised prior to the identification of a proposed alignment and design solution to be taken forward to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and consenting stage.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview and Purpose of Document

1.1.1 Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (SHE Transmission) who, operating and known as Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), own, operate and develop the high voltage electricity transmission system in the north of Scotland and remote islands.

1.1.2 This Report on Consultation reviews comments from both statutory and non-statutory consultees on the proposals by SSEN Transmission to construct a new grid connection for the consented Coire Glas PSH to connect it to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) at the existing Fort Augustus Substation. The project would also form part of a wider rationalisation exercise to reduce the overall amount of electrical grid infrastructure in the surrounding area.

1.2 Project Background

1.2.1 The consented Coire Glas PSH being developed by Coire Glas Hydro Pumped Storage Ltd (CGHPSL) is located to the north of Loch Lochy, with a potential installed capacity of up to 1500 Megawatts (MW). It will be one of the first large-scale pumped storage schemes to be developed in the UK for more than 30 years.

1.2.2 The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project is a separate project being developed by SSEN Transmission that is required to facilitate the connection of the pumped storage hydro scheme. The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project would consist of the following three core components:

- A new 400 kV switching station for the Coire Glas PSH (hereafter referred to as 'the Coire Glas Switching Station');
- a new 400 kV / 132 kV substation at Loch Lundie, near Invergarry (hereafter referred to as 'the Loch Lundie Substation'). The Loch Lundie Substation would be built with spare capacity to allow the future connection of other renewable generation projects in the surrounding area; and
- a new 400 kV steel lattice overhead line (OHL) between the proposed new Coire Glas Switching Station' and the new 400 kV / 132 kV substation and the existing Fort Augustus Substation (via the proposed new Loch Lundie Substation)² (hereafter referred to as 'the 400 kV OHL').

1.2.3 In May 2022, a Consultation Document was prepared to set out the project need and describe the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, seeking comments from stakeholders and members of the public on the route option and site option studies undertaken, and the rationale for, and approach to, the selection of the preferred route and alignment of the proposed 400 kV OHL and the preferred site of both the proposed Coire Glas Switching Station and the proposed Loch Lundie Substation.

1.2.4 This Report on Consultation documents the formal consultation process which has been undertaken for the project between June 2022 and May 2022.

1.2.5 This report summarises the feedback received and provides detail on the actions proposed in response to the issues raised prior to the identification of a proposed route, alignment and sites to be taken forward as the project progresses to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and consenting stage. An application for consent under section 37 (s. 37) of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) ("the 1989 Act") was submitted for the 400 kV OHL in April 2023. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) was prepared to accompany the s. 37 application. Separate consent under the Town and County Planning (Scotland) Act 1997,

²As part of these works, the existing 132 kV Fort Augustus to Fort William OHL and the existing 132 kV Invergarry Tee OHL would be rerouted into the proposed new Loch Lundie Substation as part of a wider rationalisation exercise to reduce the overall amount of grid infrastructure in the surrounding area. Following the construction of the new 400 kV OHL, the existing 132 kV Fort Augustus to Fort William OHL would also be decommissioned and dismantled between the proposed new Loch Lundie Substation and the existing Fort Augustus Substation.

as amended, would be sought by SSEN Transmission for both the Coire Glas Switching Station and the Loch Lundie Substation. It is anticipated these applications will be submitted in Autumn 2023 and would both be accompanied by an EIA Report.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 The objectives of this report are:

- To document the formal consultation process undertaken between May 2022 and June 2022;
- to summarise feedback received from stakeholders;
- to document actions undertaken in response to feedback where relevant; and
- to clearly set out how the decisions that have been made as a result of the consultation.

1.4 Document Structure

The Report on Consultation is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction - providing an overview and background to the project, and setting out the purpose of the Report on Consultation;
- Chapter 2: Project Need and Overview - sets out the project need and provides a description of the key components of the project;
- Chapter 3: The Consultation Process – describes the framework for consultation and methods which have been employed;
- Chapter 4: Consultation Responses from Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultees – summarises the responses from these bodies;
- Chapter 5: Community Responses – summarises the responses received from the local community;
- Chapter 6: Project Responses to Consultations - describes how the comments and issues raised during consultation will be addressed as the project progresses; and
- Chapter 7: Conclusions and Next Steps - provides a summary of the conclusions reached and actions going forward.

2. PROJECT NEED AND OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This chapter provides an overview of the need for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, including a description of existing electricity transmission infrastructure in the area, the proposed development solution and other related work.

2.2 The Need for the Project

2.2.1 CGHPSL have applied to The National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) for a grid connection for the Coire Glas PSH. In accordance with SSEN Transmission's statutory duties, SSEN Transmission are developing the connection arrangement.

2.2.2 The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project is required to facilitate this connection via the existing Fort Augustus Substation. The Coire Glas PSH together with the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will help to meet increased electricity demand and meet net zero carbon targets fixed by the Scottish and UK Governments to achieve net zero by 2045 and 2050 respectively. The policy objective of "net zero" is the reduction of carbon emissions by 100% from 1990 levels in order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change and seeks to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees centigrade. This target applies to all sectors of the economy, including energy.

2.2.3 Feasibility and optioneering studies have been carried out to determine the most efficient solution for the connection. The solution must be compliant with the requirements of the Security Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS) which sets out the criteria and methodology for the planning and operation of the NETS. The optimal solution requires new 400 kV transmission infrastructure between the consented Coire Glas PSH and the nearest point of connection onto the network which can accommodate the additional load. This is Fort Augustus Substation at Auchterawe.

2.2.4 The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will also form part of a wider rationalisation exercise to reduce the overall amount of grid infrastructure in the surrounding area. The existing 132 kV Fort Augustus to Fort William OHL and the existing 132 kV Invergarry Tee OHL would be re-routed to connect into the proposed new Loch Lundie substation. Within the new Loch Lundie substation, the capacity of these circuits would be accommodated within the new 400 kV OHL circuit. The existing steel lattice towers for the 132 kV Fort Augustus to Fort William OHL could be dismantled between the new Loch Lundie Substation location and the existing Fort Augustus Substation at Auchterawe.

2.3 Proposed Development Solution

Proposed Development Solution – 400 kV Grid Connection

2.3.1 Due to the generation capacity of the consented Coire Glas PSH, a 400 kV double circuit connection is required. The proposed engineering solution is a 400 kV double circuit OHL supported by steel lattice structures as this technology would provide a high capacity, low loss transmission circuit. This connection will use the same technology as the 400 kV circuits that currently connect into Fort Augustus Substation from Beaully and Tummel.

Proposed Development Solution – 400 kV Coire Glas Switching Station

2.3.2 The proposed Coire Glas Switching Station would provide the point of connection between the consented Coire Glas PSH and the electricity transmission system. It consists of outdoor 400 kV switchgear and a building which houses associated control panels and equipment. Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) that is compliant with SSEN Transmissions SF₆ reduction policy is not currently available on the market at 400 kV, therefore Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) technology is proposed.

Proposed Development Solution – 400 kV / 132 kV Loch Lundie Substation

- 2.3.3 The proposed Loch Lundie Substation would provide the facility to rationalise the existing 132 kV OHLs from Fort William and Invergarry Power Station. These circuits would be diverted into the 132 kV side of the proposed substation and connected to the new 400 kV OHL to Fort Augustus via two new transformers. The corresponding sections of the existing 132 kV OHLs between the proposed new Loch Lundie Substation and the existing Fort Augustus Substation can then be decommissioned and removed. The proposed new Loch Lundie Substation would consist of outdoor 400 kV switchgear, outdoor 132 kV switchgear, two 400 / 132 kV transformers and a building housing associated control panels and equipment. As described in paragraph 2.3.2, GIS that is compliant with SSEN Transmissions SF₆ reduction policy is not currently available on the market at 400 kV, therefore AIS technology is proposed.

Alternative Design Solutions

- 2.3.4 Other OHL solutions such as wood poles, steel poles and New Suite of Transmission Towers (NeSTS) towers have not been considered as feasible design solutions for the proposed 400 kV OHL, as these structures are not designed for 400 kV construction and accordingly are not suitable to carry the infrastructure required to support a double circuit 400 kV OHL.
- 2.3.5 A 400 kV underground cable connection is also not considered to be a feasible option due to both economic and technical reasons. Cables are more expensive than OHLs and the terrain over which it would need to be installed offers significant challenges. There are also significant challenges post construction associated with undergrounding cables. When there is any maintenance or repairs required on the cable, locating and repairing faults underground can be difficult, with longer timescales for repair work.

2.4 Forestry Removal

- 2.4.1 Construction of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will require the removal of areas of commercial forestry. Felling would be undertaken in consultation with affected landowners. Scottish Forestry (SF) would also be consulted throughout the development of the project and the project would seek to adhere to the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CoWRP).
- 2.4.2 After felling, any timber removed that is commercially viable would likely be sold and the remaining forest material would be dealt with in a way that delivers the best practicable environmental outcome and is compliant with waste regulations. All forestry operations would be managed in-line with The UK Forestry Standard guidance.
- 2.4.3 An operational corridor (OC) would be required to enable the safe operation and maintenance of the OHL. The width of this corridor would vary depending on the type of woodland (based on species present) in proximity to the OHL, and the height of support structures used within each woodland area but is anticipated a 90 m OC (45 m either side of the centre line of the OHL) would be sufficient for a 400 kV OHL through areas of commercial forestry, whilst in areas of native woodland the OC could be reduced (e.g. to 25 m either side of the OHL). This OC will be subject to further assessment as the project progresses. In areas of native woodland, it is usually possible to provide a narrower corridor due to a reduced risk of trees falling on the OHL.

3. CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Consultation Overview

3.1.1 In accordance with SSEN Transmission's guidance³, a process of consultation has been undertaken to seek views on the selection of the preferred route and alignment of the proposed 400 kV OHL and the preferred sites of both the proposed Coire Glas Switching Station and the proposed Loch Lundie Substation, as described in the Consultation Document. The route options and site options that were considered in the Consultation Document⁴ are illustrated on Figure 1 and the alignment options that were considered are illustrated on Figure 2.

3.2 Methods for Consultation

Pre-Application Consultation with The Highland Council

3.2.1 In November 2021, SSEN Transmission held a virtual Pre-Application Meeting with The Highland Council (THC), NatureScot and SEPA to introduce the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, providing SSEN Transmission an opportunity to present the proposals to the Council, and seek advice on the acceptability of the project, and likely requirements and expectations for a future application. Following this meeting, THC provided a formal pre-application response in December 2021, detailing their understanding of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, and setting out relevant planning policy and environmental considerations that would need to be addressed as part of the application supporting documents.

Consultation Document

3.2.2 The 'Consultation Document: Coire Glas Grid Connection Project (May 2022)⁴ was produced detailing the selection of the preferred route and alignment of the proposed 400 kV OHL and the preferred sites of both the proposed Coire Glas Switching Station and the proposed Loch Lundie Substation, taking account of environmental, economic and technical factors. The Consultation Document was distributed to stakeholders for comment and made available for download in May 2022 and is available at <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/coire-glas-connection-project/>.

3.2.3 **Table 3.1** details the stakeholders in receipt of the Consultation Document or otherwise informed of the website details:

Table 3.1: List of Stakeholders

Stakeholders	
Statutory Consultees	
The Highland Council	Historic Environment Scotland
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Nature Scot (previously Scottish Natural Heritage)
Internal Scottish Government Advisors	
Scottish Forestry	Transport Scotland
Non-Statutory Consultees	
British Horse Society	British Telecom (BT)
Civil Aviation Authority	Defence Infrastructure Organisation
Crown Estate Scotland	Lochaber District Salmon Fisheries Board

³ SSEN (September 2020), Procedures for Routing Overhead Lines and Underground Cables of 132 kV and above

⁴ Coire Glas Grid Connection Project: Consultation Document: (May 2022), produced by SSEN Transmission

Stakeholders	
Fisheries Management Scotland	Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd
John Muir Trust	Joint Radio Company
National Air Traffic Services (NATS) Safeguarding	Nuclear Safety Directorate (HSE)
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society
Scottish Water	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Scottish Wild Land Group (SWLG)	Mountaineering Scotland
Visit Scotland	The Woodland Trust Scotland
West of Scotland Archaeology Service	National Grid
Councillors and Politicians	
Various, including Community Councils	
Landowners	
Various within the vicinity of route options.	

3.2.4 Landowners, local Community Councils and councillors were made aware of the Consultation Document by SSEN Transmission, and either emailed a copy or directed to the project webpage where they could download a copy. A feedback form was also made available on the project webpage.

3.2.5 Feedback on the Consultation Document was requested by 20th June 2022, although some stakeholders requested an extension in order to provide feedback, which was accepted by SSEN Transmission.

Public Consultation Events

3.2.6 Public consultation events were held at the following times and locations to seek comments and feedback on the proposals:

Invergarry Village Hall, Invergarry	Wednesday 4 th May 2022	3pm – 7pm
Fort Augustus Village Hall, Fort Augustus	Thursday 5 th May 2022	3pm – 6:45pm

3.2.7 A virtual consultation event was also held via the project web page on 9th May 2022 between 17.00 – 19.00.

3.2.8 The consultation events were advertised using various platforms, including in the Press and Journal, SSEN Transmission's social media channels, Facebook and Twitter and the dedicated project webpage. In addition, a mail-drop was delivered to a total of 646 homes and businesses within the locale advertising the dates, times and locations of the face to face and virtual consultation events. The Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council and the Invergarry Community Council were informed by email of the events and were provided with a poster to promote on their platforms. Ward Councillors from Wards Caol and Mallaig and Aird and Loch Ness were also informed the same way and offered pre-event meetings to provide project information.

3.2.9 There were 9 attendees at Invergarry Hall and 10 attendees at the event held in Fort Augustus Village Hall.

3.2.10 Visitor counts during the virtual consultation event recorded one unique user (individual devices accessing the site) and 170 page views (the number of different pages loaded across the site). One chat was initiated with the project team via the live chat function to raise a query.

3.2.11 An extra public consultation session was held via Microsoft Teams on Monday 13th August 2022 for the Fort Augustus Community Liaison Group (CLG) members. This arose following the consultation events when

members asked for further information due to their concerns mainly around the preferred route and alignment and SSEN Transmission were keen to accommodate this. Despite all CLG members receiving invites there were 3 attendees. Presentations at the event were provided by the PM, Environment Manager and the Engineering Manager. Feedback from the CLG was very positive about the value of the presentations and explanations as to the choices for route, alignment and site locations.

Other Consultation

Further consultation has been undertaken with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and British Telecoms (BT) to address concerns raised in their consultation responses to the Consultation Document, as detailed in Table 4.1.

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES FROM STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY CONSULTEES

4.1 Summary of Feedback

4.1.1 **Table 4.1** sets out a summary of the feedback received by statutory and non-statutory consultees following the formal consultation period (May 2022 to June 2022) for the Consultation Document. A response to the feedback is also provided by SSEN Transmission, together with confirmation of the action to be taken, where relevant.

Table 4.1: Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultee Feedback

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
Statutory Consultees and Government Advisors					
The Highland Council (THC)	No response to the Consultation Document received from THC.	THC previously issued Pre-Application Advice (Ref: 21/04719/PREMAJ) for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project to SSEN Transmission on 1 st December 2021, which advised on the Route Options for the 400 kV OHL and the Site Options for both the Coire Glas Switching Station and the Loch Lundie Substation. THC's pre-application advice will be taken into account during the EIA Stage of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	X	X	X
NatureScot (NS)	NS note that they have previously provided pre-application advice on this proposal through THC's Major Pre-applications advice service and that this advice remains valid.	Noted. The pre-application advice on this proposal provided by NS will be taken into account during the EIA Stage of the Application.	X	X	X
	NS would expect any future application to show how the process leading to the selection of a preferred alignment and design solution has minimised potential impacts to this European site as far as possible.	Noted. This will be addressed in the ' <i>Routeing Process and Alternatives</i> ' Chapter of the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL.			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	NS note that the Appendices to the Consultation Documents provide environmental appraisals for the site selection and route and alignment options. Currently potential constraints related to the SPA appear limited to consideration of water quality issues. NS advise that the corridor, route and alignment selection process for the OHLs is informed by a detailed assessment of impacts including disturbance, displacement and collision risk to SPA common scoters and black-throated divers. As the switching station and substation locations may influence the OHL route and alignment, NS also consider that assessment of all of these issues is also relevant to this site selection process.	The route, alignment and site selection stage of the project has considered ornithological sensitivities in the area. Full consideration of potential impacts on the SPA will be provided in the 'Ornithology' chapter of the EIA Reports for the 400 kV OHL, the new Loch Lundie Substation and the Coire Glas Switching Station. A shadow Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will also be prepared for the 400 kV OHL and the new Loch Lundie substation.	X	X	X
	NS advise that assessments consider the potential for cumulative impacts, in particular with other OHL projects as there is potential for a number of OHLs to be operational in proximity to Loch Garry and Loch Lundie at the same time. This could increase the collision risk to SPA birds. NS advise that the timing of construction and removal of the various OHLs and whether these are underground or overhead connections, will all require careful consideration in relation to the SPA bird interests, collision risk and any additional mitigation requirements. NS recommend opportunities to rationalise OHLs and other infrastructure in this area are considered in relation to the SPA interests.	<p>The EIA Reports for the 400 kV OHL, the new Loch Lundie Substation and the Coire Glas Switching Station will include an assessment of potential cumulative impacts, including cumulative impacts on SPA black-throated divers and common scoters, with other developments, including other consented or proposed OHL Infrastructure surrounding in proximity to Loch Garry and Loch Lundie. The cumulative assessment will also include the other elements of the Coire Glas Grid Connections Project.</p> <p>The Coire Glas Grid Connections Project would also form part of a wider rationalisation exercise to reduce the overall amount of grid infrastructure in the surrounding area. This would comprise re-routeing of the existing 132 kV Fort Augustus to Fort William and 132 kV Invergarry Tee OHLs into the Loch Lundie Substation. Following the construction of the 400 kV OHL, the 132 kV</p>	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		Fort Augustus to Fort William OHL would be decommissioned and dismantled between the Loch Lundie Substation and the Fort Augustus Substation.			
	NS state that Appendix 6.1 of the Consultation Document sets out the Environmental Appraisal undertaken of the various site options for the Loch Lundie Substation. NS advise consideration of the potential for disturbance or displacement to SPA birds within the Review of Environmental Constraints. Location of access routes, construction compounds and laydown areas should also be considered. In addition, the location of the substation may influence the OHL location and any related collision risk, and this should feed into the site selection process.	The route, alignment and site selection stage of the project has considered ornithological sensitivities in the area. Ornithology surveys will help inform the proposals and address potential effects on SPA black-throated divers and common scoters. Full consideration of potential effects on SPA black-throated divers and common scoters from the proposals, will be provided in the ' <i>Ornithology</i> ' chapter of the EIA Report for the new Loch Lundie substation. A shadow Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will also be prepared for the new Loch Lundie Substation.		X	
	NS note that the substation would be built with spare capacity to allow for connection of future projects. Although not part of this proposal, at this stage NS highlight that any future overhead line connections in this area would require careful consideration in relation to the SPA interests.	Noted. No further action required at this stage.		X	
	Appendix 9.1 of the Consultation Document sets out the environmental appraisal of route options between the Loch Lundie Substation Search Area and Fort Augustus Substation. NS advise that there is potential for disturbance to and displacement of breeding black-throated divers. There is also a potential collision risk to SPA black-throated divers and common scoters from the proposed OHL, which may follow a different route and is taller than the existing	Ornithology surveys undertaken between October 2021 ns September 2022 will help inform the final alignment, tower positions and OC width of the 400 kV OHL to avoid and minimise impacts on SPA black-throated divers and common scoters as far as practicable. A full assessment of the potential impacts of the final OHL alignment on SPA black-throated divers and common scoters, including potential for disturbance to			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	infrastructure in this area. NS recommend that the route and alignment selection process is informed by survey and assessment so that any collision risk is minimised, and so that any necessary mitigation can be identified.	and displacement and collision risk, will be provided in the ' <i>Ornithology</i> ' chapter of the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. This assessment would be informed by surveys in line with NS guidance and survey methodologies. A shadow Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will also be prepared for the 400 kV OHL.			
	The Garry Falls SSSI is on the edge of SSEN Transmission's preferred route and is protected for its rich bryophyte assemblage and mixed ash woodland.	Noted. The preferred alignment has been routed to avoid direct impacts on the Garry Falls SSSI.			X
	CG-LL Route Option 3 passes close to the South Laggan Fen SSSI which is protected for its fen habitat. On the basis of available information it is likely that potential impacts could be mitigated through appropriate pollution prevention and silt control measures.	Noted. This route option will not be taken forward.			X
	At this stage NS have not seen any supporting landscape and visual assessment material and therefore do not have anything to add to our previous comments. NS consider that THC are best placed to advise on potential impacts to Special Landscape Areas (SLAs).	Noted. A full landscape and visual assessment, including visualisations to both NatureScot and THC standards, will be included in the ' <i>Landscape and Visual Assessment</i> ' Chapter for the 400 kV OHL, the new Loch Lundie substation and the Coire Glas Switching Station. These LVIA assessment will include an assessment of potential impacts to SLAs.	X	X	X
	The Consultation Document highlights a number of ornithology sensitivities associated with various aspects of the project. At as no detailed bird survey results are available NS cannot advise on the potential impacts of the proposal or any mitigation requirements. Within the appendices, the Ornithology sections note that standard bird surveys will be undertaken to update the baseline and	Noted. A full assessment of ornithological effects informed by detailed bird survey results will be included in the Ornithology Chapters for the 400 kV OHL, the new Loch Lundie Substation and the Coire Glas Switching Station. Consultation has also been undertaken with NS to agree the scope of bird surveys.	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>inform both the route selection and appropriate mitigation measures.</p> <p>NS refer SSEN Transmission to their previous advice on the scope of survey and assessment⁵ and recommend the choice of preferred route (and associated variations), switching station and substation locations are reviewed once all bird survey work is complete and a full assessment of potential impacts to the SPA and wider countryside birds have been carried out, and mitigation options identified.</p>				
	NS note that localised areas of mapped Class 1 peatland and more extensive areas of Class 2 peatland are associated with the various route options.	Peat Mapping and peat probing will inform the proposed alignment and tower positions of the 400 kV OHL. Potential impacts on peat habitats will also be considered in both the 'Geology, Soils and Water' and 'Terrestrial Ecology' chapters of the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL			X
	NS note that the Consultation Document states the potential for areas of ancient woodland to be affected.	Forestry and woodland surveys undertaken at the EIA Stage of the project will inform the final site and design of the Coire Glas Switching Station and the final alignment, tower positions and OC width of the 400 kV OHL (within the LOD) to avoid and minimise impacts on ancient woodland as far as practicable. Potential impacts on ancient woodland will also be considered in both the 'Terrestrial Ecology' and 'Forestry' chapters of the relevant EIA Reports.	X		X
	The Consultation Document states that permanent and temporary access tracks will be required. NS recommend the need for new access tracks is minimised as far as	Noted. Existing access tracks will be used and upgraded where feasible. Potential impacts arising from the construction of new access tracks (temporary and permanent) and upgrading of existing access tracks will	X	X	X

⁵ NatureScot have recently published two guidance documents including Standing Advice for Planning Consultations – Birds at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/standing-advice-planning-consultations-birds> and updated guidance on Disturbance Distances in selected Scottish Bird Species at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/disturbance-distances-selected-scottish-bird-species-naturescot-guidance>.

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	possible and that where these are required the lowest impact option is selected.	be considered in the EIA Reports for the 400 kV OHL, the new Loch Lundie Substation and the Coire Glas Switching Station.			
	<p>NS recommend that the route options, design and layout of all elements of the project are informed by survey and assessment, seeking to avoid impacts to sensitive habitats such as blanket bog and other Annex 1 habitats wherever possible.</p> <p>Where impacts cannot be avoided NS recommend that they are mitigated as far as possible and restoration measures are proposed within Peatland and Habitat Management Plans.</p>	<p>All elements of the Coire Glas Grid Connection project will be informed by survey and assessment and will seek to avoid impacts to sensitive habitats such as blanket bog and other Annex 1 habitats wherever possible.</p> <p>Where impacts on sensitive habitats cannot be avoided for any aspect of the project, impacts will be mitigated as far as possible and restoration measures will be proposed within relevant Peatland and Site Restoration Plans.</p>	X	X	X
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No response to the Consultation Document received from SEPA.	SEPA provided input into the Pre-Application Advice (Ref: 21/04719/PREMAJ) issued to SSEN Transmission by THC on 1 st December 2021. SEPA's pre-application advice will be taken into account during the EIA Stage of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	X	X	X
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	<p>HES welcomed the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposals at an early stage and be provided with visualisations. However, based on the information supplied HES consider it likely that the 400 KV OHL would have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the setting of Torr Dhuin, fort, Fort Augustus (SM794).</p> <p>HES note that the visualisations from all three viewpoints provided show that the proposed 400 kV OHL will dominate inward views towards the monument, with the impact being in particular derived from the positioning of one steel lattice tower (Tower 6) on elevated ground to the immediate north-west of the Torr Dhuin, fort. As such, there will likely</p>	<p>SSEN Transmission responded directly to HES via email outlining the reasons why a temporary 132kV diversion would not be feasible due to the sensitivities of the supply provided by the Fort William OHL.</p> <p>SSEN Transmission have held further discussion with HES and have agreed to continue liason with HES as the project progresses.</p>			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>be an adverse impact on the character of the monument's setting, as the tower would significantly diminish and detract from the ability of the fort to dominate the glen and be the most prominently positioned construction in it; the pylon would also act to lessen the apparent scale of the landform that the fort is located on. Given the above, the severity of this impact is such that it raises issues of national importance for HES's interests, to the extent that HES would likely object to this scheme.</p> <p>HES would welcome the exploration of mitigation that looks to relocate the steel lattice tower proposed near the Torr Dhuin SM so that it no longer appears taller than the fort in most inward views of the monument, so that it no longer challenges the dominance of the monument, and so that it no longer impacts on the way that the fort is understood, appreciated, and experienced within its setting.</p> <p>HES's understanding is that the 132 kV OHL will be dismantled as it becomes defunct once the 400 kV OHL is installed. However, minimum spacing requirements mean there needs to be separation distance between the 132kV OHL and 400 kV OHL, and for a short period of time they both need to be in use. Technical requirements mean that only the 132 kV OHL can be undergrounded, and not the 400 kV line. It is the position of the 132 kV OHL that is driving the 400 kV OHL closer to the monument at a greater altitude and causing the significant adverse impact on the setting of the monument. HES therefore suggest whether a solution could involve positioning the pylon so that it is within the corridor that the 132 kV OHL currently occupies, with the 132 kV OHL temporarily undergrounded until such a point as it becomes defunct.</p>				

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	From the information provided HES are content that setting impacts on other heritage assets within their remit within the vicinity of the proposals, such as the Caledonian Canal (SM6496 & SM6497) would not raise issues of national interest.	Noted.	X	X	X
	HES note that guidance about national policy can be found in the 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' series and that technical advice is available through the HES Technical Conservation website.	Noted. This guidance and technical advice will be referenced as necessary in the Cultural Heritage impact assessment included in the EIA Reports that will be prepared for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	X	X	X
Forestry and Land Scotland - North Region (FLS North)	FLS, as landowner, has taken advice from SSEN on the technical challenges in routing the Coire Glas grid connection into the Auchterawe sub-station and balanced that against their own land management objectives. This has been considered in conjunction with existing national grid infrastructure and other projects currently being planned that will also be routed into Auchterawe.	Noted. SSEN will continue to liaise with FLS as the project progresses.			X
	FLS North are satisfied that the rationalisation works proposed in this area will result in a net reduction in the wirescape affecting the community in the Auchterawe and Fort Augustus area.	Noted. SSEN will continue to liaise with FLS as the project progresses.			X
	During discussions with SSEN, FLS North have sought to limit the impact on woodland areas but have also given consideration to likely impacts upon the community and landscape. FLS North have formed the opinion that what is being proposed for the Coire Glas grid connection, when balanced with all known existing and proposed grid connections into Auchterawe, is an acceptable option. However, they would encourage SSEN Transmission to actively engage with the wider community and other	Noted. SSEN will continue to liaise with FLS and other stakeholder as the project progresses.			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	stakeholders who may have differing views and consider any alternative views.				
	FLS North note the feedback from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and acknowledge the visual impact issue around Torr Dhuin. FLS North will take advice from their landscape architect in respect of this issue and are open to further discussion with SSEN Transmission regarding tower location around Torr Dhuin.	Noted - See response to the HES Consultation Response above.			X
	The proposed route impacts on Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and FLS North would expect to agree an approach similar to that of the Skye Trident 132 kV project route where SSEN funded PAWS restoration work to mitigate any loss.	An assessment will be carried out to identify potential effects on forestry and native woodland (including AWI) throughout the route. Any future PAWS restoration projects will be planned in consultation with FLS.			X
	FLS North recommend that SSEN Transmission work with landowners to investigate further opportunities to reduce the impact of timber haulage on the Fort Augustus community as part of the Coire Glas project.	An assessment will be carried out to identify the full impacts of the project, including timber removal on the surrounding infrastructure.			X
Forestry Land Scotland – West Region (FLS (West))	FLS (West) advise that the preferred route for the grid connection impacts on two areas of their managed land – the Caledonian pinewood of Glengarry and the mid rotation upland forest of Drynachan. They note that the mature forest of Inchnacardoch is managed by FLS (North Region) and would be subject of a separate response.	Noted that the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project crosses two FLS regions and that these regions will provide separate consultation responses at this stage of the project.	X	X	X
	FLS (West) advise that Drynachan is managed by FLS not Woodland Trust as stated in the Consultation Document.	Noted that Drynachan Forest is managed by FLS not Woodland Trust. This will be updated in the EIA Reports		X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		and other documentation prepared as part of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project going forward.			
	<p>FLS (West) highlight that it is the impact on the Caledonian Pinewood that is of most concern to FLS, due to the irreplaceable nature and fragility of this habitat. They note that they would expect to see greater effort being made to avoid the Caledonian pinewood area through alternative locations and routes as well as more innovative approaches to construction and design.</p> <p>They add that the Caledonian Pinewood of Glengarry Forest is part of a highly restricted, irreplaceable remnant of the native woodland type (<1% of the original area left in the UK). The Garry Pinewoods themselves are fragments of what was once a much more extensive area along the shore of Loch Garry which has been under restoration for the last 30 years. The area impacted by preferred switching station site and the preferred alignment in this area is one of the earliest and most advanced of these restoration areas comprising old granny pine areas and advanced regeneration, as well as some open area in the earlier stages of regeneration and planted Scots pine.</p> <p>FLS (West) state that the Consultation Document does recognise these woodlands as important but undervalues them relative to other habitats and underestimates the impact of a switching station and a 400 kV OHL in this area. They add that the Consultation Document focuses on the older pine areas, which in turn overlooks the impact of fragmentation of woodland areas and undervalues the different habitat components and age structures that are integral to these woodlands. They also state that the</p>	<p>The importance of the Caledonian Pinewood and the efforts that have been put in to restore the Glengarry Pinewoods is understood by SSEN Transmission. SSEN Transmission also acknowledge that it is not just the presence of older pine areas that are important to the western Caledonian Pinewood at Glengarry and that the impact of woodland fragmentation, the different habitat components associated with the different age structures of the woodland and areas of restoration are all integral.</p> <p>The typical OC required within areas of commercial conifer forestry for a 400 kV OHL is 90 m, (i.e. 45 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). However, where the OC passes through areas of native woodland, it is proposed that the extent of woodland removal is likely to be reduced due to the lower height of the tree species present. The proposed OC for the 400 kV OHL through areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity (i.e. AWI) has been reduced to 50 m (i.e. 25 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). This has been based on the likely height of the woodland at maturity. The location of the Coire Glas Switching Station will also be microsited to minimise impacts on areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity (i.e. AWI) as far as possible.</p> <p>SSEN Transmission will endeavour to further minimise impacts on these habitats throughout the project. Further consultation between SSEN Transmission and FLS (West) will be carried out to progress the designs of both the switching station and OHL in that area.</p>	X		X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>negative effect on the Caledonian Pinewood of building the switching station at the preferred site has not been fully considered.</p> <p>FLS (West) state that the Glengarry Pinewood is fragile due to the fragmentation of the core pinewood remnants. The remnants are also where the specialist flora and fauna associated with the pinewoods are found. These are slow colonisers and need a lack of disturbance and continuity of habitat to allow successful recolonisation. It is vital to reconnect these fragments to secure the future of the woodland through increasing the scale and, therefore, the robustness of the ecosystem. The western pinewoods are slower to restore and to recolonise than their eastern counterpart. The restoration in Glengarry Forest has been ongoing for over the last 30 years through the removal of non-native conifers and the reconnecting of the fragments through natural regeneration. The eastern end is the most advanced and are also the most successful regeneration to date.</p>				
	<p>FLS (West) state that there are misleading statements that are repeated throughout the Consultation Document that Route Option CG-LL1 is almost entirely routed through an area of commercial forestry. This is incorrect, as the Glengarry Forest section is routed through Caledonian Pinewood, restored native woodland, PAWS (due to be restored) and temperate rainforest.</p>	<p>The route and site selection exercise for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project has been informed by a desk-based exercise, supplemented by a walkover to provide a preliminary identification of habitat and woodland types. During this exercise, the woodland areas to the west of the River Garry were mapped as plantation woodland as large areas of this woodland are underplanted with pine around stands of mature Scot's pine (as such the boundaries between plantation woodland and native woodland were not entirely clear). To inform final route, alignment and site selection, habitats within the Glengarry</p>			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		Forest will be mapped to fully recognise the presence of ancient/native woodland fragments and the intention to regenerate and restore Scot's pine woodland within the area. Accordingly, potential impacts on these amended habitats will be assessed within the relevant EIA Reports prepared for the separate elements of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.			
	FLS (West) state that they consider the impact of the Loch Lundie Substation and 400 kV OHL within Drynahan Forest to be manageable in terms of forestry. They note that while the presence of the transmission infrastructure impacts on the ability to manage the forest in this area, this could be accommodated, and compensatory planting will to mitigate against the immediate loss of woodland cover.	SSEN Transmission is committed to making arrangements to plant off-site and on-site where appropriate the equivalent area of woodland removed as a result of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project as Compensatory Planting, meeting the Scottish Government's CoWRP objective of no net loss of woodland.		X	X
	FLS (West) state that they consider the separation of the pump storage consultation from the grid connection consultation is unsatisfactory. They advise that as the land manager, they need to be able to assess the full impact of the construction, as well as the operational stages of both projects. The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project is a treated as a separate project to the pump storage scheme for the purpose of the consultation. This is a recurring issue in renewable energy schemes generally, undermining the value of the consultation process. These are two elements of the same overall projects, clearly linked being dependent on each other. From a land manager's perspective, they have to be treated as one project.	SSEN Transmission acknowledge FLS' frustration but note that the grid connection is progressed separately to renewable energy proposals as standard practise and procedure and that consultation has occurred on both elements such that an opportunity to participate and influence the proposals submitted has been afforded appropriately and in line with best practise and statutory requirements.	X	X	X
	FLS (West) add that in presenting the options, the full-scale of the disturbance and the impact assessed of both projects during the construction, as well as the operational	This will be considered when undertaking the terrestrial ecology impact assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessments for the various elements of the Coire	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	stages needs to be presented. They add that whilst a commitment to restoration of sensitive habitats is welcomed, it will still result in irreparable damage.	Glas Grid Connection Project, particularly for the Coire Glas Switching Station and the section of the proposed 400 kV OHL that passes through Glengarry Forest.			
	FLS (West) suggest that additional visualisations are needed from settlements, roads and recreation routes to allow the impact of the wayleave corridor of the 400 kV OHL to be assessed.	Visualisations from key viewpoints in the surrounding area, as agreed with THC and NatureScot, will be included as part of the LVIA in the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. These visualisations will be prepared to both THC and NatureScot standards and will include the wayleave corridor for the 400 kV OHL.	X	X	X
	FLS (West) state that it has become clear during the consultation process that the tunnel exit is the driver for the selection of the preferred route but that there has been no consultation on the options for this tunnel. With this point determined by GCHPSL as the starting point, it allows little scope for seriously considering other route options in this consultation document. Considering all the switching station options at the same time as the power lines and substation may have meant that a different switching station and route for power line becomes the preferred option.	In response to FLS (West) consultation feedback in June 2022, SSEN Transmission provided a detailed response and are committed to ongoing work with GCHPSL and FLS to reach a design solution for the switching station site. The current PAN for the switching station (Ref: 23/01651/PAN) ⁶ allows for micrositing of the switching station to meet technical requirements.	X		X
	FLS highlight that the scale and design of the elements of infrastructure are not shown in the Consultation Documentation. Nor are alternative technologies and solutions to OHL explored given the significant constraints – landscape, social and ecological – identified on all the route options considered.	The scale and design of the elements of infrastructure are not shown in the Consultation Documentation given the early stage of the project. This level of detail will be provided at the EIA Stage of the project.	X	X	X

⁶ Available at <https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=RSDM2EIH0FN00> [Last Accessed 27/04/2023]

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>FLS (West) consider that there is a lack of acknowledgement throughout the Consultation Document that much of the forest is managed by FLS working to priorities and policies agreed by the Scottish Government and to performance objectives required to maintain the certification of the estate under UKWAS. These include and are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peatland restoration objectives; • protection of semi natural woodland including Caledonian Pine woodland; and • the restoration of PAWS areas. <p>They state that adequate account has not been taken in the Consultation Document of the land manager's objectives and future plans and how this development will impact on these.</p>	<p>SSEN Transmission will develop Woodland Reports to incorporate the current Forest Design Plans and the impact the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will have on these.</p>	X	X	X
	<p>FLS (West) state that the Consultation Document dismisses the area surrounding the Preferred Site for the Coire Glas Switching Station as plantation woodland. They note that while there is evidence that some of the area was planted several decades ago, this was with Scots pine but there are also some granny pines. They note that its retention is deliberate as part of the restoration process. The woodland has now developed a more natural structure with Scots pine regeneration along with other native tree species. The ground flora is typical of a native Scots pine woodland. There is also an area of wet woodland by the burn. It is treated as integral to the wider Caledonian Pinewood area. FLS (West) also state that it is incorrect to suggest that compensatory planting could mitigate any loss within this area as it is irreplaceable habitat due to it being</p>	<p>This is noted. To inform final route, alignment and site selection, habitats will be mapped to fully recognise the presence of ancient/native woodland fragments and the intention to regenerate and restore Scot's pine woodland within the area.</p> <p>Accordingly, potential impacts on these habitats will be assessed within the relevant sections of the EIA Reports prepared for the Coire Glas Switching Station and the 400 kV OHL.</p>	X		X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	an ancient woodland site and in the context of being surrounded by native woodland.				
	<p>FLS state that the PAWS Woodlands within Glengarry Forest are woodlands where the original native woodland was underplanted or cleared and replanted with conifer in the past (this practice stopped in the late 1980s). They note that it is FLS policy is to protect the remnants of native vegetation and restore these to native woodland and that the Scottish Government supports the restoration and expansion Scotland's native woodlands as a nature-based solution, contributing to addressing the climate emergency and that this will also support the biodiversity crisis.</p> <p>They note that the value of individual PAWS depends on the amount of remnant native woodland features they contain and their landscape context. The Glengarry Forest PAWS lies on the eastern side of the Caledonian Pinewoods and are still to be restored. They are mixed as to their native woodland components, but all are important in relation to their location within or adjacent to the pinewood remnants. Their restoration is helped by the proximity of seed source and the associated flora and fauna and in turn they help to reconnect the smaller fragments and make the whole ecosystem more robust.</p> <p>FLS (West) note that the "natural clearing" that the preferred alignment proposes to utilise is a regeneration area for the PAWS and is not intended to remain open.</p>	<p>See response above.</p> <p>During the design and EIA stage of the project, the habitats within the Glengarry Forest will be mapped to fully acknowledge the presence of ancient/native woodland fragments, including PAWS woodland. Accordingly, potential impacts on these habitats will be assessed within the Terrestrial Ecology impact assessment within the EIA Reports prepared for the Coire Glas itching Station and the 400 kV OHL..</p>	X		X
	FLS (West) note that whilst the siting of the 400 kV OHL through PAWS woodland would be less immediately damaging, as the conifer crop will need to be removed to achieve the restoration to native woodland, the issues	See response above. It is also acknowledged that the issues around fragmentation and disturbance of soil and remnant ground flora in PAWS woodland are the same as for the Caledonian Pinewood areas and that the area of			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	around fragmentation and disturbance of soil and remnant ground flora are the same as for the pinewoods. This is the area that also links the pinewoods to the temperate rainforest and to the SSSI.	PAWS woodland that would be impacted links the pinewoods to the temperate rainforest and to the Gary Falls SSSI. This will be considered in the terrestrial ecology impact assessment for the 400 kV OHL at the EIA Stage of the Project.			
	FLS (West) note that the gradation in Glengarry Forest into temperate rainforest with oak and other species hosting specialist lower plants on both sides the River Garry. Although a narrow remnant here the trees are hosting the characteristic lower plants of the temperate rainforest and provide the expansion area for the SSSI. The SSSI slightly upstream will be strengthened by the planned expansion of native woodland into this area. Further survey work and avoidance of damage to the host trees is essential. Restoration of the temperate rainforest is very high on the Scottish Government's agenda.	Noted. Potential impacts on the Garry Falls SSSI and the temperate rainforest habitat along the River Garry will be assessed as part of the <i>Terrestrial Ecology</i> Chapter in the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. The OHL would be microsituated within the LOD to avoid impacts on oak and other species hosting specialist lower plants on both sides of the River Garry. This would be overseen by the appointed project Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). Where such species can't be avoided, crown reduction would be undertaken where feasible rather than felling.			X
	FLS (West) note that access tracks, even temporary ones, have the potential to cause disturbance to soils which are an integral component of semi natural woodland, including the restoration of PAWS, back to native woodland. Avoiding disturbance of the soil in native woodland areas needs to be the priority for the project.	The existing forestry haul road within the forestry at White Bridge would be used to access the preferred site of the Coire Glas Switching Station, as well as sections of the 400 kV OHL, which will minimise the requirement for new access tracks within Glengarry Forest. Other existing forestry tracks would be used wherever feasible during the construction of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project. Where new permanent or temporary tracks are required, SSEN Transmission will endeavour to avoid the most sensitive areas of woodland.			X
	FLS (West) note that the operational corridor of the preferred alignment for the 400 kV OHL will have a	The typical OC required within areas of commercial conifer forestry for a 400 kV OHL is 90 m, (i.e. 45 m			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	substantial detrimental impact on the integrity of the Caledonian Pinewood at Glengarry Forest and the ongoing work of restoring the woodland through reconnecting the core areas.	either side of the centre line of the OHL). However, within areas of higher sensitivity, it is proposed to reduce the width of the OC to 50 m (i.e. 25 m either side of the centre line of the OHL) and to reduce any required felling to minimise the impact of the 400 kV OHL on the existing woodland habitats as far as possible. Further information will be provided in the <i>Forestry</i> chapter of the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL.			
	<p>FLS (West) note that the Consultation Document makes some assumptions about stability, the ability of the forest to help mitigate the visual impacts of the Loch Lundie Substation at the preferred site and also on peat disturbance which need some further testing.</p> <p>They note that the ability of the forest to help mitigate the visual impacts of the substation may be limited, depending on the scale of felling required, including for future forest resilience, the relatively slow growth of the trees in this area and the size of the substation footprint.</p>	<p>These assumptions are based on the fact that the location of the preferred site for the substation is located within a relatively contained area, due to a combination of topography and forestry screening, and in the knowledge that that the location of the substation and the design of the areas of forestry to be felled, would be carried out by forestry specialists in consultation with Scottish Forestry and FLS, to ensure that a wind firm edge is achieved, in combination with new mitigation earthworks and landscape planting around the substation.</p> <p>Additional peat probing and ground investigation works will be undertaken during the design and EIA stage of the project.</p>		X	X
	<p>FLS (West) note that preferred alignment for 400 kV OHL (at Loch Lundie) and preferred site for the Loch Lundie Substation have been chosen with the opportunity to minimise the felling of the plantation edge but advise that this cannot be assumed.</p> <p>FLS (West) add that leaving trees standing on the far side of the preferred alignment (to the access) will impact on the ability manage these trees in the future. They also note that although the trees here are currently only at moderate risk</p>	<p>SSEN Transmission will submit Woodland Reports that identify additional areas of felling that will be required out with the OC of the 400 kV OHL. These will ensure windfirm boundaries and isolation of management blocks are identified for future management.</p> <p>Any felling undertaken out with the OC would be solely under the control of the relevant landowner (and not SSEN Transmission).</p>		X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	of windblow due to their height, they are still growing and are on soft ground increasing their future vulnerability.				
	<p>FLS note that Site Option CG2 within the existing quarry was ruled out of consideration at an early stage of the project as it was not considered that this area was large enough to accommodate the proposed switching station.</p> <p>FLS (West) note that this site option is next to the existing forest haul road and that they would be willing to discuss how the 1 ha quarry could be enlarged to accommodate the switching station so it could be constructed in an area of ground that has already been disturbed.</p> <p>FLS (West) recommend that the use GIS & GIB rather than AIS would lead to a substantially smaller footprint for the switching station and substation and would permit the switching station to be constructed at Site Option CG2. They add that GIS & GIB will very likely have to be used in the underground electrical infrastructure at the consented Coire Glas PSH so why shouldn't it be adopted in the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project?</p>	<p>SSEN Transmission further assessed Site Option CG2 together with two additional sites which were identified on site during the site visit with FLS West in September 2022, as a response to FLS West's request, with the preferred location of Site Option CG1 as a comparator. This further assessment was developed in conjunction with CGPHS Ltd in order to provide a coordinated approach and account for the Developer's project specific technical requirements. This assessment was then presented and discussed further with FLS (West) in October 2022, with the preference for site CG1 remaining.</p> <p>In order to meet our RIIO-T2 sustainability targets, SSEN Transmission is not introducing any further SF₆ GIS equipment onto the Transmission Network. However, at 400 kV there are no available alternatives approved for use on our Network at present. SSEN Transmission are therefore proposing to use AIS equipment within our works for the Coire Glas Switching Station and Loch Lundie Substation.</p>	X	X	
	<p>FLS (West) agree with statement in the Consultation Document that states that Site Option CG3 would be the preferred option from a forestry and woodland perspective. They also note that their longer-term plans for woodland establishment in this area would help mitigate the visual impact of new infrastructure in this location.</p> <p>They note that in Appendix 5.1 of the Consultation Document, Habitat (disturbance to wet heath) is provided</p>	Noted – SSEN Transmission will continue to work closely with FLS and CGPHSL on rationalisation of access routes.	X		

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	as the reason for the red RAG rating. However, the proposed new access roads for the consented Coire Glas PSH will disturb this habitat to a much greater extent than a switching station at Site Option CG3 would. These items should be considered together in the overall context of both the Coire Glas and the Grid Connection projects. They also note that operational and maintenance access will have to be maintained to Site Option CG3, which would provide access to this site.				
	FLS (West) advise that the statement in Appendix 5.1 (Page 9) of the Consultation Document that 'Site Option CG3 is located within land owned by Aberchader Estate' is incorrect and that this land is in fact part of the public forest estate managed by FLS (West). They therefore note that there are no constraints based on deer shooting or other field sports at this Site Option.	Noted that the land where Site Option CG3 is proposed is managed by FLS (West) and not Aberchader Estate and that there are no constraints based on deer shooting or other field sports at this site. This will be updated in the EIA Reports and other documentation prepared as part of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project going forward. It is not considered likely that would have changed any of the overall conclusions of the Site Options Appraisal for the Coire Glas Grid Switching Station.	X		
	FLS (West) welcomes SHET commitment to BNG but notes that this is based on an English system and does not take account of the value of the Caledonian pine remnants in Scotland as an irreplaceable habitat. They also note that the statement made in the Consultation Document in relation to BNG, that irreplaceable habitats are not present within any of the site options considered is simply not true for Site Option 1.	The toolkit is based on the English system because neither Scottish Government nor Scottish regulators have yet developed an alternative that is relevant to Scotland. Technical Supplement BM 3.1 to the available guidance states - <i>'It is however understood that all woods included in the AWI are irreplaceable (and this includes PAWS). As part of the BNG assessment woodlands are assessed and if they are deemed to be ancient (based on indicator species such as ground flora and relative age of the trees) then they will be classed as irreplaceable whether or not they are listed in the Inventory. Irreplaceable</i>	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		<p><i>habitats are not assessed within the metric but bespoke mitigation measures should be agreed with the relevant regulator. The project will still assess all non-irreplaceable habitats and will design in no net loss for those habitats. Regardless of impacts on irreplaceable habitats the project overall will report on NNL if this has been achieved in the non-irreplaceable habitats.'</i></p> <p>During the design and EIA stage of the project, the habitats within the Glengarry Forest will be mapped to fully acknowledge the presence of ancient/native woodland fragments. Accordingly, potential impacts on these habitats will be assessed within the Terrestrial Ecology impact assessment within the EIA Reports prepared for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, which will also acknowledge where these habitats are deemed 'irreplaceable' habitats.</p>			
	<p>FLS (West) state that the statement in the Consultation Document that 'ornithological constraints are limited by the presence of plantation woodland and existing OHLs too dismissive of the plantation. They advise that there are at least three schedule 1 raptors that are breeding in the plantation forest of Glengarry Forest. They also note that whilst ornithological constraints in Drynachan Forest is lower than Glengarry Forest due to the age of the trees, it is not "limited", as suggested in the Consultation Document.</p>	<p>In order to fully assess the ornithological effects of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, a suite of surveys, including raptor surveys, were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including within Glengarry Forest. The results of these surveys will be reported in the <i>ornithology</i> chapter of the EIA Reports.</p>	X		X
	<p>FLS (West) state that in relation to timber removal, the priority in this area is to leave the felled areas in the best condition for restoration rather than commercial viability being the driver.</p>	<p>Any felling required for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will be managed as per UK Forestry Standards. Any additional restoration works will be agreed in consultation with the relevant landowners.</p>	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	FLS (West) advise that the FLS name for South Laggan is 'Clunes Forest'.	Noted. This will be updated in the EIA Reports and other documentation prepared as part of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project going forward.	X	X	X
	FLS (West) advise that in the overall context of the unavoidable visual impact of the Corie Glas Grid Connection Project it does not agree the mitigation of the visual effect of the switching station at the preferred site, is worth the damage to the Caledonian Pinewood area.	The Consultation Document included a RAG assessment for all environmental, technical and cost considerations, including Forestry and Landscape and Visual. The overall preferred Site Option for the Coire Glas Switching Station was determined on balance of all constraints considered.	X		
Scottish Forestry (SF)	SF note that any woodland removal for development purposes will be subject to Scottish Governments' Policy on Control of Woodland Removal (CoWRP). This policy seeks to avoid the removal of woodland, but where permanent removal is essential for development purposes the area must be replaced elsewhere by compensatory planting.	SSEN Transmission is committed to making arrangements to plant off-site and on-site where appropriate the equivalent area of woodland removed as a result of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project as Compensatory Planting, meeting the Scottish Government's CoWRP objective of no net loss of woodland.	X	X	X
	SF advise that the proposed project will have an impact on woodland and woodland habitats and that significant areas proposed within the project area are part of the Caledonian Pinewood Inventory. Since the 1990s there have been extensive works carried out by FLS to improve the condition of the Glengarry Pinewoods and these areas are now in a good condition. Further areas of woodland are included within the AWI as "Ancient (of semi-natural origin). SF note that the CoWRP states, " <i>there is a strong presumption against removing the following types of woodland: ancient semi-natural woodland: areas supporting priority habitats and species listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)</i> ". The Caledonian Pinewoods are included within the UKBAP as UK BAP	An assessment will be carried out to identify potential effects on forestry and native woodland (including AWI). Within areas of higher sensitivity, it is proposed to reduce the width of the OC and any required felling to minimise the impact of the 400 kV OHL on the existing woodland habitats. The Coire Glas Switching Station will also be micrositied as far as possible to minimise impacts on areas of higher sensitivity within Glengarry Forest.	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	priority habitat (coniferous woodland): Native Pine Woodlands.				
	As the project area includes woodland, SF recommends the EIA Report should include a stand-alone chapter on 'Woodland management and tree felling', which should be prepared by a suitably qualified professional. Site surveys will need to be carried out and information of the woodland presented, including maps. This chapter should include a description of the current woodland type and an assessment of the impacts and mitigation of felling and woodland removal particularly on woodland types with a strong presumption against removal (above).	Baseline surveys and on site assessments will be carried out to inform Woodland Reports and the EIA Reports. These will identify the current woodland management and the impact the project will have, along with any potential mitigation opportunities. The assessment of the potential impacts on forestry and woodland will be included in the Forestry chapter of the EIA Reports prepared for the Coire Glas Switching Station, the Loch Lundie Substation and the 400 kV OHL.	X	X	X
	SF advise that where woodland removal is required and replanting of the same site is not possible, then an alternative site should be identified for compensatory planting. This site should be identified within the 'Woodland management and tree felling' chapter of the EIA Report and should set out the compensatory planting proposals. Information provided as part of the compensatory planting proposals should include the location of the proposal, including a map and details of the proposed planting (i.e., the species to be planted, ground preparation method to be used, future monitoring and how the site will be managed).	SSEN Transmission is committed to making arrangements to plant off-site and on-site where appropriate the equivalent area of woodland removed as a result of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project as Compensatory Planting, meeting the Scottish Government's CoWRP objective of no net loss of woodland.	X	X	X
	SF advise that all proposed felling, restocking and compensatory planting proposals need to be compliant with the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard.	All proposed forestry operations will adhere to UKFS guidelines.	X	X	X
	SF note that any additional felling which is not part of the planning application will require permission from SF under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018	SSEN Transmission will submit Woodland Reports that identify additional areas of felling that will be required out with the OC of the 400 kV OHL or the footprints of the	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	(the Act). For areas covered by an approved Long Term Forest Plan (LTFP), the request for additional felling (and subsequent restocking) areas needs to be presented in form of a LTFP amendment.	Coire Glas Switching Station and Loch Lundie Substation. These will ensure windfirm boundaries and isolation of management blocks are identified for future management. Any felling undertaken out with the OC and/or project footprint would be solely under the control of the relevant landowner (and not SSEN Transmission)			
Non – Statutory Consultees					
Achnacarry Bunarkaig Community Group (ABC)	<p>ABC note that the preferred site for the Coire Glas Switching Station CG1 would be located in an area of ecological importance, as the site is located within the buffer zone of Glengarry Caledonian Pinewood Inventory site. ABC state that for this reason alone, they consider that the proposal is inappropriate and should not go ahead.</p> <p>ABC suggests that they would be able to arrange an in-person meeting with experts in the field to explain the importance of Caledonian Pine Woods to SSEN Transmission.</p>	<p>SSEN Transmission is aware of the importance of the Glengarry Caledonian Pinewood and have recently been provided with a presentation from an ecologist from FLS (West) Region on this matter, including the restoration works that have been undertaken in recent years. The location of the switching station will be microsited to minimise impacts on the Caledonian Pinewood as far as possible.</p> <p>The Consultation Document included a RAG assessment for all environmental, technical and cost considerations associated with the Coire Glas Switching Station Sites considered. Site Option CG1 was identified as the preferred site on balance of all constraints considered. Amongst other considerations, the RAG assessment concluded that the other site options considered for the switching station (alongside the OHL grid connection that would be required for these sites) would have significant landscape and visual effects on the Great Glen and would also be extremely technically challenging to construct.</p>	X		X
	ABC state that it has come to their attention that the reporting of the ecology on the site of CG1 is not accurate	The route and site selection exercise for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project has been informed by a desk-	X		

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	and is not in line with what is actually on the ground there. ABC note that they hope this mischaracterisation is a mistake and not an attempt to mislead authorities and local communities.	based exercise, supplemented by a walkover to provide a preliminary identification of habitat and woodland types. During this routeing exercise, the woodland areas to the west of the River Garry were mapped as plantation woodland as large areas of this woodland are underplanted with pine around stands of mature Scot's pine (as such the boundaries between plantation woodland and native woodland were not entirely clear). To inform final route, alignment and site selection, habitats within the Glengarry Forest will be mapped to fully recognise the presence of ancient/native woodland fragments and the intention to regenerate and restore Scot's pine woodland within the area. Accordingly, potential impacts on these amended habitats will be assessed within the relevant sections of the EIA Reports prepared for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.			
	ABC request an in-person consultation on the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project and formally invite SSEN Transmission to meet their Board and Advisors at Achnacarry Village Hall.	SSEN Transmission acknowledged the invitation to meet with ABC however work will be focused with FLS (West) as the landowner in terms of finalising a site for the switching station.	X	X	X
Akraig Community Forest	Akraig Community Forest have concerns about the location of the proposed new Coire Glas Switching Station at the Preferred Site CG1. They note that Site Option CG1 is located within the Glengarry Caledonian Pinewood Bufferzone and that this site is of special ecological importance and has many designations to highlight this. Akraig Community Forest request that SSEN Transmission reconsider the Preferred Site of the Coire Glas Switching Station and move this development to a location that is of much less significance.	SSEN Transmission is aware of the importance the woodland designations in this area, including woodlands listed on the AWI and areas of the Glengarry Caledonian Pinewood. These designations were considered alongside other environmental and technical constraints, such as the potential landscape and visual effects on the Great Glen and the proximity to residential areas, in the site and route options appraisals for the project, as detailed in the Consultation Document. The location of the Coire Glas Switching Station will also be microsited to	X		X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		minimise impacts on areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity as far as possible. The final location will be informed by Phase 1 Habitat Survey and/or NVC surveys and forest walkover and mapping surveys.			
BT	BT note that there could potentially be a problem with proposed positions of the preferred site for the new Loch Lundie Substation (LL5) as well as Site Option LL6, as a BT link exists from point A 227030/801308 to point B 236100/804998. BT will require full details of heights and co-ordinates for all structures for the new Loch Lundie Substation, in order to assess the true impact on this Radio Link and provide an accurate decision.	Further information was provided to BT by SSEN Transmission. Subsequently, BT confirmed in March 2023 that sufficient clearance distances could be achieved, and they have no objection to the project.		X	X
Cill Chuimein Heritage Group	<p>Cill Chuimein Heritage Group consider that Route Option LL -FA1, being the most northerly option, is far preferable to the other two route options, as it is furthest away from homes and the vitrified fort of Torr Dhuin, which is viewed from many points along the Great Glen. Cill Chuimein Heritage Group note that Route Options LL -FA2 and LL -FA3 pass close to Torr Dhuin and consider that large towers and cables within these routes would have a high impact on this cultural heritage site.</p> <p>If either Route Options LL -FA2 and LL -FA3 are chosen, Cill Chuimein Heritage Group are concerned that towers and cables will dominate the Glen and overshadow walkers and users of the Caledonian Canal. They note that visitors come to the Highlands for its timeless character and appreciate the tranquil beauty of Kytra Lock, thought to be the most scenic part of the Caledonian Canal, and itself a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Cill Chuimein Heritage Group state that if either Route Options LL -FA2 and LL -</p>	<p>The Consultation Document confirms that LL-FA1 was considered the least preferred route option in relation to technical constraints, as a steep section of new access track would be required to construct an OHL within this route, possibly with the need for some substantial cut and fill works. In addition, Route Option LL-FA1 is at a higher elevation along the approach to Auchterawe and the Fort Augustus Substation.</p> <p>In addition, the new 400 kV OHL would need to connect to the southwestern corner of the of the Fort Augustus Substation. Both Route Options LL-FA2 and LL-FA3 approach the substation from the correct direction, however, Route Option LL-FA1 approaches the substation from the north and would be constrained by other grid infrastructure, both existing OHLs and underground cables, nearby properties and consented and recently implemented landscape plans around the substation. From the information provided to date HES</p>			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>FA3 are chosen, the Proposed Development would spoil its visual appeal and sense of timelessness, whereas if Route Option LL-FA1 is chosen, towers and cables would be less visible to canal users, walkers and tourists and would have the least damaging visual impact on the historic environment of Torr Dhuin's vitrified fort and the view from it down the Glen.</p>	<p>are content that setting impacts on the Caledonian Canal (SM6496 & SM6497) and other cultural heritage assets within their remit within the vicinity of the preferred alignment (within Route Option LL-FA2), would not raise issues of national interest, with the exception of the Torr Dhuin, fort. Refer to HES response.</p> <p>A cultural heritage impact assessment will be included in the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. This assessment will assess both direct and settings impacts on designated cultural heritage sites/assets within the vicinity of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, including the Torr Dhuin Scheduled Monument and the Caledonian Canal (SM6496 & SM6497). The Cultural Heritage assessment will also include visualisations of the Torr Dhuin Scheduled Monument from viewpoints agreed with HES.</p>			
	<p>Cill Chuimein Heritage Group note that Route Option LL - FA1 would have virtually no housing beneath the OHL until it approaches Auchterawe.</p>	<p>This is correct, however a 400 kV OHL within the preferred route (Route Option LL -FA2) would also only come into contact with housing at Auchterawe but this option provides better opportunities to avoid housing, as the 400 kV OHL could be diverted away from Auchterawe Road and through the FLS forestry and recreational area to the east of Auchterawe, as illustrated by the preferred alignment. In contrast, a 400 kV OHL within the Route Option LL -FA1 would need to cross Auchterawe Road to connect into the southwestern corner of the existing Fort Augustus Substation and would also potentially interfere with the consented and recently implemented landscape plans around the substation, which is for the benefit of the residents.</p>			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		A preliminary noise report conducted by SSEN Transmission suggests that the 400 kV OHL would need to be routed at least 170 m away from the nearest resident properties to avoid potential noise issues. This would be difficult to achieve within Route Option LL -FA1, where the route would cross Auchterawe Road which is lined with properties.			
	Cill Chuimein Heritage Group note that Route Option LL -FA1 would also spare Auchterawe Sanatorium. The site is of cultural importance, particularly to local residents who have childhood memories of the Sanatorium and of family members who were treated there. They note that Auchterawe Sanatorium, also known as Inverness-shire Sanatorium, Invergarry, was included in the History of Highland Hospitals Project and features in James Leslie's book, 'The Hospitals of Lochaber'.	The remains of the Auchterawe Sanatorium (MHG30740) lie 500 m south west of the preferred alignment for the 400 kV OHL, near the Invervigar Burn, and is not located within the LOD for the preferred alignment. The Auchterawe Sanatorium would therefore not be disturbed by the construction or operation of the preferred alignment for the 400 kV OHL, even if micrositing within the LOD is undertaken. A cultural heritage impact assessment will be included in EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. This assessment will assess direct impacts on non-designated cultural heritage assets within the vicinity of the Coire Glas Grid Connection.			X
	Cill Chuimein Heritage Group state that the Auchterawe Sanatorium, Torr Dhuin, Kytra Lock and the Caledonian Canal are just some of the historical features that would be adversely affected by a new 400 kV OHL within either Route Options LL -FA2 and LL -FA3. Cill Chuimein Heritage Group strongly urge SSE to choose Route Option LL-FA1, as the least damaging route for its grid connection from Loch Lundie to Fort Augustus.	As noted above, Route Option LL -FA is not considered a feasible option due to technical constraints associated with construction of a 400 kV OHL within the route and connecting the OHL to the southwestern corner of the Fort Augustus Substation. A cultural heritage impact assessment will be included in EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. This assessment will assess direct and settings impacts on designated cultural heritage sites/assets, as well as direct impacts on non-designated cultural heritage sites/assets, within the			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		vicinity of the Coire Glas Grid Connection. Potential impacts on the Auchterawe Sanatorium, Torr Dhuin SM, Kytra Lock and the Caledonian Canal will be addressed in the Cultural Heritage chapter of the EIA Report.			
Crown Estate	Crown Estate confirmed that their assets would not be affected by the proposed Coire Glas Grid Connection Project and therefore have no comments to make on the project.	Noted. No further action required.			
Defence Infrastructure Organisation - Ministry of Defence (MoD)	Confirm that this application relates to a site outside of MoD safeguarding areas and that the MoD has no safeguarding objections to this proposal.	Noted. No further action required.	X	X	X
HIAL Safeguarding	HIAL Safeguarding noted that they did not think the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project as proposed would impact any HIAL Aerodromes, but to be certain requested either CAD drawings of the pdf maps or shape files / KMLs to compare these against HIALs Instrument flight procedures, obstacle limitation surfaces and radar declared operational ranges.	SSEN Transmission provided HIAL Safeguarding for the shapefiles for the preferred alignment for the Coire Glas Connection Project.	X	X	X
	Following this provision of the shapefiles for the preferred alignment for the Coire Glas Connection Project, HIAL Safeguarding confirmed that they are of the opinion that this proposal would not impact the safeguarding criteria for Inverness Airport. However, HIAL Safeguarding requested that the planned height of the 400 kV OHL towers could be confirmed. HIAL Safeguarding noted that if the 400 kV OHL towers are of the magnitude of ~20 m AGL and the	SSEN Transmission has responded to HIAL Safeguarding to confirm that the towers will be taller than 20m AGL and highlighted that the average height of the proposed 400 kV towers is noted within the Consultation Document is 58.2 m. SSEN Transmission has requested HIAL Safeguarding to confirm whether this would change position on the project.			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	proposal does not substantially change, when they receive the consultation from the ECU or THC, they would respond with a no objection.				
Lochaber District Salmon Fisheries Board (DSFB)	The Lochaber DSFB confirmed that it has no direct interest in this part of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project but requested that SSEN Transmission keeps them informed with all future consultation elements of the project going forward.	Noted. SSEN Transmission will include Lochaber DSFB in all future consultation relating to the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project going forward, unless requested otherwise.	X	X	X
Mountaineering Scotland	In this proposal, the focus of Mountaineering Scotland interests lies with Ben Tee and Sròn a Choire Ghairbh, and the routes to and from the summits.	Potential landscape and visual impact on recreational users of the area surrounding the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, including users of the main footpaths to Ben Tee and Sròn a Choire Ghairbh, will be considered in the LVIA of the EIA Reports for the project (where relevant).	X	X	X
	Mountaineering Scotland endorses the assessment of Site Option CG1 as the preferred site option for the proposed new Coire Glas Switching Station and do not consider Site Option CG3 to be a suitable option, as there would be a substantial adverse visual impact on the landscape for walkers taking access to Ben Tee.	Noted.	X		
	Mountaineering Scotland also endorse Route Option CG-LL1 as the preferred route option as this route indicates minimal visual impact of the proposed 400 kV towers from walkers accessing Ben Tee and Sròn a Choire	Noted.	X	X	X
	RSPB state that while there appears to be a commitment to underground significant lengths of this cable for landscape reasons, they are concerned the biodiversity/ornithological	No underground cables are proposed as part of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.			X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
RSPB Scotland (RSPB) ⁷	considerations have not been fully addressed, and thus requires further work to inform the project.				
	RSPB note that the study corridor for the project overlaps the edge of the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA at the Garry Dam and fully incorporates Loch Lundie a component SPA loch. The preferred route and the preferred alignment for the proposed 400 kV OHL between the new Coire Glas Switching Station and the new Loch Lundie Substation are also located in close proximity to the SPA boundary.	Loch Lundie is included in the Study Corridor for the project as the area to the east of Loch Lundie forms a connection point between the consented Coire Glas Pump Storage Scheme and the existing Fort Augustus Substation. However, the Route Options developed within the Study Corridor avoided Loch Lundie, as well as Loch Garry which also forms part of the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA. The SPA was also considered in the RAG assessments for the preferred route and the preferred alignment for the proposed 400 kV OHL between the new Coire Glas Switching Station and the new Loch Lundie Substation. Potential impacts of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project on the SPA will be considered in the ornithology assessments of the EIA Reports prepared for the different elements of the project. A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) will be undertaken to assess any impacts of both the new 400 kV OHL and the Loch Lundie Substation on the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA.		X	X
	RSPB understand that ornithological surveys for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project commenced in October 2021, however, they note that it is not clear what these surveys entailed and there doesn't appear to have been consideration of flight lines for the SPA qualifying species – common scoter and black-throated diver – in relation to the	Flight lines for SPA species - black throated diver and common scoter - have been considered and are part of the survey process through ongoing vantage point (VP) surveys. These have included surveys during dawn and dusk. Consultation has been undertaken with NatureScot to agree the scope of the bird surveys for the project.		X	X

⁷ RSPB were not able to review the Consultation Document in full during the consultation period but they did provide some initial comments.

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	new 400 kV OHL. RSPB note that the critical areas are likely to be where the new 400 kV OHL crosses the gorge below the Garry dam and around Loch Lundie, where the new 400 kV OHL would connect to the new Loch Lundie Substation, as these areas are likely to include the main flight lines for divers and scoters on migration and in transit and therefore the OHL may present an unacceptable collision risk. The route selection should be informed by the data collected.				
	RSPB note that the construction and operation of the new Loch Lundie Substation and the new 400 kV OHL (at Loch Lundie) have the potential to disturb SPA black-throated diver, and other Schedule 1 species such as greenshank.	Black-throated diver, greenshank and other Schedule 1 species have been accounted for in the survey suite being undertaken for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, and potential effects will be considered and reported on in the project EIA Reports.		X	X
	RSPB note that they would welcome further information regarding the 'green rating' that has been given to ornithology (as per the appendices) despite this area being an important breeding area for SPA black-throated diver.	The rating was informed by data collected during surveys since October 2021, which suggested a Green RAG Rating was applicable.	X	X	X
	RSPB note that the Loch Lundie area is already constrained with constructed OHLs (Skye T, the current OHL to Quoich) and those about to be constructed (such as the proposed Skye Reinforcement Project OHL). RSPB acknowledge that some of these OHL are due to be removed in time but note that it is not clear on the timeframes for these decommission works and whether all of the OHLs will be present for a period of time, and what cumulative impacts on the SPA and ornithology this would have. They state that other OHLs must be considered alongside the proposed Coire Glas Connection Project in	A cumulative assessment will be included in the ornithological impact assessment in the EIA Report for each element the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.		X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	the EIAs, within an ornithological cumulative impact assessment.				
	RSPB note that other key species in the area should be considered in the EIAs and included in surveys, for example Slavonian grebes, black grouse and upland waders such as golden plover and greenshank.	Slavonian grebes, black grouse, golden plover, greenshank and other key species have been accounted for in the survey suite being undertaken for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	X	X	X
	RSPB note that they undertake annual monitoring of common scoter at the West-Inverness-shire Lochs SPA and recommend this data is requested in order to help inform any assessment for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	Noted. This consultation with RSPB will be undertaken ahead of the EIA stage of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	X	X	X
	RSPB recommend contacting the Highland Raptor Study Group for up-to-date breeding raptor records for the area, including golden eagle and white-tailed eagle.	Noted.- SSEN Transmission's ornithology consultant have existing knowledge of where the Golden Eagle nest sites, as well as other Schedule 1 raptor species such as Osprey, are in this area. In addition, SSEN have data on these species from other proposed developments in the vicinity. However, SSEN and their consultants will be contacting HRSG to help inform the project as it develops.	X	X	X
Transport Scotland (TS)	Having reviewed the preferred alignment, TS note that the section of OHL from Coire Glas to Loch Lundie will cross the A87 trunk road near the recreational area at White Bridge. In addition, TS note that it is anticipated that traffic for the construction, maintenance and subsequent operation of the various elements of the project would access the site via the A87(T) or the A82(T). TS would state that any proposed changes to the trunk road network or any crossings of the trunk road network	Technical approval is not considered necessary at this stage (in principal approval is considered more appropriate). However, SSEN Transmission will engage with the Area Manager for the A87(T) ahead of the EIA stage of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.	X	X	X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	must be discussed and approved (via a technical approval process) by the appropriate Area Manager.				
	TS will require an assessment of the potential environmental impacts associated with increased traffic levels on the trunk road network. This assessment should be prepared in accordance with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic, and potential trunk road related environmental impacts such as driver delay, pedestrian amenity, severance, safety etc will require to be considered and assessed where appropriate (i.e., where IEMA Guidelines for further assessment are breached).	Noted. An assessment of the potential environmental impacts associated with increased traffic levels on the trunk road network will be included in the traffic and transport impact assessment in the EIA Report for each element the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, where the IEMA thresholds are exceeded.	X	X	X
	TS note that the Consultation Document does not mention of any requirement for the use of abnormal load deliveries. Should such loads be necessary during the construction phase, TS will require a full Abnormal Loads Assessment report to be provided with the EIA Report that identifies key pinch points on the trunk road network. Swept path analysis should be undertaken and details provided with regard to any required changes to street furniture or structures along the route.	These details will be provided in the EIA Report for each element the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, if it is confirmed or considered likely that abnormal load deliveries will be required.	X	X	X
Woodland Trust	The Woodland Trust has serious concerns about the proposed construction of the proposed new 400 kV OHL and the siting of the proposed Coire Glas Switching Station on the grounds of potential significant impact to ancient woodland. They note that at least five ancient woodlands will be within the path of the preferred route CG-LL1, which	Due to the extent of ancient woodland in Glengarry Forest between the start and end point of the grid connection required between the consented Coire Glas Pump Storage Scheme and the existing Fort Augustus Substation, it will not be possible to avoid ancient woodland altogether. The typical operational corridor (OC) required within areas of commercial conifer forestry for a 400 kV OHL is 90 m, (i.e. 45 m either side of the	X		X

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>is likely to lead to direct loss and removal of these irreplaceable habitats.</p> <p>The Woodland Trust are also concerned that all potential route options considered in the Consultation Document would lead to the loss of ancient woodland.</p>	<p>centre line of the OHL). However, where the OC passes through areas of native woodland, it is proposed that the extent of woodland removal is likely to be reduced due to the lower height of the tree species present. The proposed OC for the 400 kV OHL through areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity (i.e. AWI) will be reduced to 50 m (i.e. 25 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). This has been based on the likely height of the woodland at maturity. The location of the Coire Glas Switching Station will also be micrositied to minimise impacts on areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity (i.e. AWI) as far as possible.</p> <p>The potential impacts of the Coire Glas Switching Station and 400 kV OHL on woodlands designated on the AWI will be detailed in the <i>Forestry</i> Chapter of their respective EIA Reports.</p>			

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>The Woodland Trust consider that the preferred route must avoid all areas of woodland designated on the AWI. Where existing infrastructure is located within ancient woodland, the Woodland Trust request that existing pathways are followed wherever possible to reduce the need for additional ancient woodland removal to facilitate the project.</p> <p>Where the proposed new 400 kV OHL is in close proximity to ancient woodland, a buffer zone of at least 30 m should be maintained between all areas of ancient woodland and the Proposed Development to help avoid root damage to boundary trees and to allow for the effect of dust, light and noise pollution during construction and operation of the Proposed Development</p> <p>The Woodland Trust strongly oppose the proposed preferred route option for the new 400 kV OHL on the basis of potential damage to and loss of a number of woodlands designated on the AWI, including areas of Glengarry Pinewood, which is listed on the Caledonian Pinewood Inventory.</p>	<p>The typical OC required within areas of commercial conifer forestry for a 400 kV OHL is 90 m, (i.e. 45 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). However, where the OC passes through areas of native woodland, it is proposed that the extent of woodland removal is likely to be reduced due to the lower height of the tree species present. The proposed OC for the 400 kV OHL through areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity (i.e. AWI) has been reduced to 50 m (i.e. 25 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). This has been based on the likely height of the woodland at maturity.</p> <p>The location of the Coire Glas Switching Station will also be microsited to minimise impacts on areas of native woodlands of high sensitivity (i.e. AWI) as far as possible.</p>	X		X

5. COMMUNITY RESPONSES

5.1 Summary of Feedback

5.1.1 Table 5.1 sets out the feedback received by the local community, landowners, general public and community groups following the formal consultation period for the Consultation Document (May 2022 to June 2022), including comments received during the consultation events. Responses by SSEN Transmission are also included, setting out the action to be taken where relevant.

Table 5.1: Public and Local Community Consultation Comments

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
1	Two written responses ⁸ received stated that the community considered the consultation undertaken to date, including the information provided at the public exhibitions, had been poor. One of the responders raised that SSEN Transmission changed a project team face to face meeting to a Teams video call, which they could not dial into due to connectivity issues and that many of the Auchterawe residents were likely in a similar position. They also advised that multiple properties within immediate vicinity of the substation did not receive an invitation to this meeting.	SSEN Transmission responded by providing additional opportunity to discuss the project at the Fort Augustus CLG Meeting. Details of this meeting are provided within Section 3.2 of this Report. SSEN Transmission hosted an additional meeting to the consultation events following requests from the Auchterawe Community / CLG. This was intended to be an in-person meeting. Invites were circulated to residents and through the CLG – with just 2 confirmed attendees. Therefore the meeting was switched to a Teams meeting which included comprehensive presentations followed by Q&A were provided by the PM, Environment and Engineering teams. The attendees expressed their satisfaction and gratitude on the level of detail of the information provided.	X	X	X
2	At least five written responses ⁸ received raised concerns about impacts of the 400 KV OHL on the FLS forestry and recreational area near Torr Dhuin, including impacts on habitats and wildlife, impacts on local tourism and recreational users of this area (particularly locals). One response notes that there has recently	The EIA Report prepared for the 400 kV OHL will include an assessment on land use and recreation, terrestrial ecology, ornithology and forestry, which will include the area of FLS (North) forestry at Torr Dhuin.			X

⁸ Note one of these written responses included a community response which was signed by approximately 20 residents / households from Auchterawe.

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>been a £100,000 path and bridge upgrade near the FLS car park and picnic areas to improve recreational facilities in the area.</p> <p>One of the responders also noted that they have observed endangered species in this woodland area, including wildcats, pine marten, and red squirrels, as well as deer, bird, moss and lichen species. They raise concern about the short timescale of ecological surveys that will be undertaken for the project will not identify the presence of more elusive creatures, such as wildcats.</p>	<p>As part of the terrestrial ecology assessment, walkover surveys focussing on otter, pine marten, red squirrel, badger, water vole and potential roost features for bats would be undertaken in accordance with best practice methodologies. In addition to surveys for the aforementioned species, any incidental records or signs of any other protected species (e.g. wildcat, reptiles, or newts) where they may be present will be recorded, or any features of particular importance (i.e. potential hibernacula or potential dens).</p> <p>A Phase 1 Habitat and NVC survey would also be undertaken as part of the terrestrial ecology assessment, to identify habitats and vegetation communities within the survey area. The survey area would be defined as 250 m from all new infrastructure (i.e. towers, new access tracks, temporary access tracks, forestry tracks to be upgraded). Habitat surveys would be undertaken following the NVC scheme⁹ using standard methods¹⁰ and incorporating Phase 1 Habitat Survey Characterisation¹¹.</p>			
3	<p>At least four written responses⁸ raised concern about the impact of the proposed new 400 kV OHL on the Torr Dhuin Fort Scheduled Monument. One of these responses also raised concern about the impact of the 400 kV OHL on other cultural heritage sites/assets, including Kytra Lock, the Caledonian Canal and the Auchterawe Sanatorium</p>	<p>A full cultural heritage impact assessment will be included in EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. The Cultural Heritage assessment will also include updated visualisations of the proposals in relation to the Torr Dhuin Scheduled Monument.</p>			X

⁹ Rodwell, J.S. (Ed) et al. (1991 – 2000) British Plant Communities (5 volumes). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

¹⁰ Rodwell, J.S. (2006) NVC Users' Handbook. ISBN 978 1 86107 574 1.

¹¹ Joint Nature Conservancy Council (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
4	<p>A number of written responses specifically request that Route Option LL-FA1 is taken forward as the preferred route for the 400 kV OHL, due to concerns about impacts on the community at Auchterawe, the Torr Dhuine SM (and other cultural heritage sites) and on the FLS woodland and recreational area. In addition, during the virtual public consultation event, two attendees asked why Route Option LL-FA2 is preferred to Route Options LL-FA1 or LL-FA3.</p> <p>One further response opposes all three route options considered between the proposed new Loch Lundie Substation and the existing Fort Augustus Substation on this basis and suggests that the 400 kV OHL should instead follow the temporary Skye T OHL.</p>	<p>Route Option LL-FA2 is deemed the preferred route option as it would replace, rather than be in addition to, the existing Fort Augustus to Fort William OHL. This leads to reduced potential constraints in relation to cultural heritage, proximity to dwellings, visual receptors, landscape character, forestry and woodland and recreation.</p> <p>Technically LL-FA1 is the least preferred route option of those considered, as a steeper section of new access track would be required to construct an OHL within this route, possibly with the need for some substantial cut and fill works. In addition, Route Option LL-FA1 is at a higher elevation along the approach to Auchterawe and the Fort Augustus Substation.</p> <p>The 400 kV OHL would need to connect to the southwestern corner of the Fort Augustus Substation, so a 400 kV OHL approaching from the southwest and terminating in this area allows the most straight-forward connections to be constructed within the substation. Both Route Options LL-FA2 and LL-FA3 approach the substation from the correct direction, however, Route Option LL-FA1 approaches the substation from the north and would be constrained by other grid infrastructure, both existing OHLs and underground cables, nearby properties and consented and recently implemented landscape plans. This would also apply to a 400 kV OHL that would follow the alignment of the 132 kV Skye Tee OHL.</p> <p>Regardless of the alignment taken forward, the EIA Report prepared for the 400 kV OHL will include an assessment on the impacts of the development on land use and recreation, cultural heritage, terrestrial ecology, ornithology, and forestry.</p>			X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
5	Two responders ⁸ were concerned about the proximity of the 400 kV OHL to residential properties due to safety concerns and potential interference with telecommunications (e.g., tv and radio signal) due to the 400 kV OHL blocking signals.	Interference is not an issue that has arisen in SSEN Transmission's experience. Should any interference occur however, SSEN Transmission would expect it would potentially be through direct interruption of lines of sight between transmitting and receiving antennae. Should there be direct interruption of line of sight, SSEN Transmission would seek to provide mitigation as part of their works. SSEN Transmission design to ENAT technical standards that take account of all respects of health and safety			X
6	One written response stated that to suggest that a 58.5 m towers would cause 'notably' increased visual effects to residential properties is a massive understatement.	When describing potential landscape and visual effects we use terminology to try to distinguish between the different potential effects. We use terms such as 'notably' to indicate a potentially greater effect than, say 'noticeably'. This is an early stage in the process and a landscape and visual assessment has not yet been undertaken for the project so at present we are trying to avoid using the terminology that will 'be used at' the later EIA stage, such as 'significant' or 'not significant' so that we are not prejudging the potential effects. The key thing for the RAG assessment is that the effects have been identified as red rather than amber or green for the route being considered here.			X
7	One written response asks why a new access track would be needed for Route Option LL-FA1, as there is an existing access track running the entire length of this route created for the Skye Reinforcement Project.	A new track would be required for the 400 kV OHL to safely access each new tower location with the plant and equipment required.			X
8	One written response considers that the loss of internationally important and unique temperate rainforest as a result of the 400 kV OHL would be unacceptable.	Potential impacts of the 400 kV OHL on the temperate rainforest habitat along the River Garry will be assessed as part of the <i>Terrestrial Ecology</i> Chapter in the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL.			X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		The OHL would be microsituated within the LOD to avoid impacts to oak and other species hosting specialist lower plants on both sides of the River Garry. This would be overseen by the appointed project ECoW. Where such species can't be avoided, where feasible, crown reduction would be undertaken rather than felling.			
9	<p>At least five written responses were received raising concern about the impact of the Preferred Site for the Coire Glas Switching Station and the and the 400 kV OHL on the Caledonian Pinewoods within the buffer zone of Glengarry Caledonian Pinewood Inventory site, as this is a unique habitat of ecological and cultural importance.</p> <p>One response highlights the restoration work that has been undertaken in this area between 2009 to 2020 and the public commitment and costs that have been invested to restoring this area to ancient forest. This response also advises that the Preferred Site for the Coire Glas Switching Station would cause fragmentation of the Caledonian Pinewood and reduced resilience to climate change, and that the Consultation Document does not clarify why the less ecologically damaging options are not preferred in the face of the biodiversity and a climate emergency.</p> <p>One further written response notes that whilst the need for the project is explained at concept level, there is no justification given for exacerbating the biodiversity emergency through development on such important and fragile habitat within Glengarry Forest.</p> <p>One written response states that the removal of forest cover, particularly to create linear features of reduced forest cover, would be damaging for forest connectivity and resilience. The</p>	<p>SSEN Transmission is aware of the importance the woodland designations in this area, including the Glengarry Caledonian Pinewood and have been provided with a presentation from an ecologist from FLS (West) Region on this matter, including the restoration works that have been undertaken in recent years. The Landscape and Visual RAG Assessment for the switching station (see Appendix 5.1 of the Consultation Document) also identified the Caledonian Pine woodland within this area is an important feature of the landscape.</p> <p>The Consultation Document included a RAG assessment for all environmental, technical and cost considerations associated with the Coire Glas Switching Station site options and 400 kV route and alignment options considered. The preferred options were identified on balance of all constraints considered. Amongst other considerations, the RAG assessment concluded that the other site options considered for the switching station (alongside the OHL grid connection that would be required for these sites) would have significant landscape and visual effects on the Great Glen and would also be extremely technically challenging to construct.</p> <p>The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project is required to facilitate the connection of the Coire Glas PSH to the National Grid, which will help to meet net zero carbon targets fixed by</p>	X		X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	<p>movement of forest dwelling species in response to climate change is crucial to reduce extinctions. Other species such as the resident red squirrels and black grouse require habitat connectivity to maintain existing populations with large minimum ranges.</p> <p>The responder adds that Glengarry Native Pinewood supports several thousand species of wildlife, many of which are at threat due to the rarity of this habitat. Areas of non-native plantation are still being removed from the pinewood. These areas constitute some of the most fragile parts of the wider habitat and are crucial for full restoration to maximise the resilience of the whole forest. They add that the impact to the red squirrel population needs to be considered for any reduction in forest canopy cover, as the population may no longer be viable following reduced forest cover.</p>	<p>the Scottish and UK Governments to achieve net zero by 2045 and 2050 respectively.</p> <p>The EIA Reports prepared for each element of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will include an assessment of terrestrial ecology and ornithology. As part of the terrestrial ecology assessment, walkover surveys focussing on otter, pine marten, red squirrel, badger, water vole and potential roost features for bats would be undertaken in accordance with best practice methodologies and will consider habitat connectivity and fragmentation.</p>			
10	<p>At least two written response state that the reporting of the habitats and ecology at Site Option CG1 is not accurate in line with what is actually on the ground there. One of these responses also notes that there are peat soils present at this site that are not mapped.</p>	<p>The route and site selection exercise for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project has been informed by a desk-based exercise, supplemented by a walkover to provide a preliminary identification of habitat and woodland types.</p> <p>During this exercise, the woodland areas to the west of the River Garry were mapped as plantation woodland as large areas of this woodland are underplanted with pine around stands of mature Scot's pine (as such the boundaries between plantation woodland and native woodland were not entirely clear). To inform final route, alignment and site selection, habitats within the Glengarry Forest will be mapped to fully recognise the presence of ancient/native woodland fragments and the intention to regenerate and restore Scot's pine woodland within the area. Accordingly, potential impacts on these habitats will be assessed within the relevant</p>	X		X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		sections of the EIA Reports prepared for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project.			
11	One written response states that it is not clearly explained in the Consultation Document what weighting has been given to each part of the assessment (e.g. cultural heritage, land use etc) to identify the preferred options.	No specific weighting is applied through SSEN Transmission's routeing guidance. Environmental designations are naturally weighted by their nature of being International, National or Regional / Local in nature. Professional judgement from engineers and environmental specialists is applied during review of the RAG ratings.	X	X	X
12	<p>One responder wrote that as a tourism accommodation business reliant on guests visiting the Invergarry area for outdoor activities, they cannot easily see how the impact on people using the land for recreation factors into each appraisal. This is also relevant to local residents.</p> <p>The response adds that they are concerned that Invergarry may be perceived as a less desirable place to visit and stay once these projects are underway, particularly if outdoor access is restricted. They state that whilst they understand that there may need to be segregated walking alongside construction traffic routes and/or re-routeing of recreational routes that there should be a presumption to maintain access, as has been stated for the CGHPSL Coire Glas project.</p>	<p>Recreational constraints were appraised during the route and site selection process, as detailed in the Consultation Document (see the Land Use sections of Appendices 5.1, 6.1, 6.1, 8.1, 9.1, 12.1 and 13.1). Further consideration of the potential effects of the project on tourism and recreational assets will be included in the project EIA Reports.</p> <p>An outdoor access plan would be prepared as part of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project and signage would be erected at suitable locations to warn recreational users of construction traffic. A draft outdoor access plan will be included in each EIA Report.</p>	X	X	X
13	One written response states that it is not evident if the preferred option for each element of the project has been selected independently of the others, particularly given the preferred option for each element fits the others. Please explain the location of which element drives the location of the others.	The route/site options for each element of the project were initially assessed independently of each other. Chapter 10 of the Consultation Document details an additional exercise that was undertaken to assess the impacts of connecting the preferred route options (as identified in Chapters 8 and 9) to the preferred sites (as identified in Chapters 5 and 6).	X	X	X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
14	<p>One responder notes the presence of breeding raptors, red squirrels, badgers, pine marten, and ancient woodland ground flora and ancient/veteran trees in Glengarry Forest in the area of the preferred site for the Coire Glas Switching Station. A different responder noted Juniper is present at the site and also noted that Wood Ants may be present.</p> <p>A further written response states that the legally protected green shield moss is present in the forest and will require detailed survey ahead of developing any proposals that include works within the forest environment.</p>	<p>The EIA Reports prepared for each element of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will include an assessment of terrestrial ecology, ornithology and forestry.</p> <p>As part of the terrestrial ecology assessment, walkover surveys focussing on otter, pine marten, red squirrel, badger, water vole and potential roost features for bats would be undertaken in accordance with best practice methodologies. In addition to surveys for the aforementioned species, any incidental records or signs of any other protected species (e.g., wildcat, reptiles, or newts) where they may be present will be recorded, or any features of particular importance (i.e. potential hibernacula or potential dens).</p> <p>Pre-construction surveys will include searches for the Nationally Scarce Green Shield-moss in suitable habitat within woodland habitats by a suitably experienced bryophyte specialist within 30 m of any temporary or permanent infrastructure. If the moss is identified during surveys, appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented and monitored by the ECoW, in consultation with a suitably experienced bryophyte specialist as required.</p> <p>A Phase 1 Habitat and NVC survey would also be undertaken as part of the terrestrial ecology assessment, to identify habitats and vegetation communities within the survey area. The survey area would be defined as 250 m from all new infrastructure (i.e. towers, new access tracks, temporary access tracks, forestry tracks to be upgraded). Habitat surveys would be undertaken following the NVC scheme¹²</p>			

¹² Rodwell, J.S. (Ed) et al. (1991 – 2000) British Plant Communities (5 volumes). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		using standard methods ¹³ and incorporating Phase 1 Habitat Survey Characterisation ¹⁴ .			
15	One written response notes that they would like to thank SSEN for the open and communicative manner in which they have discussed the engineering needs of this project with the community and notes that whilst we acknowledge that any engineering project on this scale will inevitably create some disruption to the local environment, they think that proposal balances the various needs in an appropriate manner.	Acknowledged and we thank the respondent for the comment.	X	X	X
16	<p>One written response suggests that CG-LL Alignment Variation 2 is the more suitable than the preferred alignment, for the following reasons:</p> <p>The responded is actively managing the woodland associated with Faichem Wood House to increase biodiversity. CC-LLAV2 increases the distance from the boundary of this woodland to the proposed alignment, providing the maximum opportunity for the associated wildlife. They note that the woodland on the north eastern boundary of the property is comparatively well established older broadleaf woodland with a vibrant ecosystem.</p> <p>To further increase the distance from the properties at Faichem, including Faichem Wood House, to reduce potential noise and visual amenity effect for these properties. CC-LL Alignment Variation 2 also increases the distance from the Faichem Caravan and Camping Site, protecting an important local business.</p>	SSEN Transmission intends to take CG-LL Alignment Variation 2 forward to the EIA Phase as the proposed alignment. The points are noted and will be considered in the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL, where relevant.			X

¹³ Rodwell, J.S. (2006) NVC Users' Handbook. ISBN 978 1 86107 574 1.

¹⁴ Joint Nature Conservancy Council (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a technique for environmental audit. JNCC, Peterborough

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	Various species protected under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, including pine martens and red squirrels, are regularly sighted in the woodland associated with Faichem Wood House.				
17	One written response states that OHL pose a risk of injury through collision to the fragile black grouse population in the forest and surrounding area.	The EIA Reports prepared for each element of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project will include an assessment of the impact of the development on ornithological interests, including black grouse (where relevant). The ornithology assessment will also consider the potential effects of the developments on birds from habitat loss, disturbance (visual and noise), displacement; and indirect effects (e.g., disruption to habitat function, effects on prey). The ornithology assessment for the 400 kV OHL will also consider the potential effects of the developments on birds from collision risk.			X
18	During the virtual public consultation event, one attendee asked if there would be a further meeting with the residents of Auchterawe at a Community Liaison Group Meeting.	SSEN Transmission provided additional opportunity to discuss the project at the Fort Augustus CLG Meeting, please refer to Section 3.2 for details of this meeting.			X
19	During the virtual public consultation event, one attendee asked if SSEN Transmission could advise what the height of the 400 kV towers would be and provide a map that clearly shows how many and where they will be sited on the preferred route LL-FA2 Alignment Variation 5?	The typical tower height ranges of the 400 KV towers would typically be between 46 m and 59 m. Spans between each tower would typically be around 350 m. SSEN Transmission will be developing a tower schedule and map to illustrate the anticipated design, heights and tower locations specific to the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project as part of our next phase of works.			X
20	During the virtual public consultation event, one attendee asked if SSEN Transmission could provide visualisations from more than the single viewpoint at Auchterawe. They requested that the additional visualisation depict scaled in towers and the entire	The EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL would include cultural heritage visualisations showing the Torr Dhuin Scheduled Monument from multiple viewpoints, including Auchterawe Road and from the monument itself. The Landscape and			X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
	route from the top of Torr Dhuin fort to the Fort Augustus Substation.	Visual Assessment for the 400 kV OHL would also include at least one visualisation from Auchterawe Road.			
21	During the virtual public consultation event, one attendee raised concern about noise due to the proximity of the preferred alignment of the 400 kV OHL to their property and queried the suitability of the proposed 170 m buffer distance for both wet and dry noise. The responder asked if SSEN Transmission could confirm the British standard of methodology used to determine whether noise would be a concern.	A full noise assessment will be included in the <i>noise</i> chapter of the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL, in accordance with recognised standards and guidance.			X
22	During the virtual public consultation event, one attendee asked how many square acres of trees would be destroyed as the 400 kV OHL passes over Torr Dhuin into the Fort Augustus Substation?	Our OHL design must comply with the Security and Quality of Supply Standards (SQSS) in order to provide a safe and secure network. As such, for voltages of 400 kV we require to create an Operational Corridor, ideally up to 90 m (45 m either side of the centre line of the OHL) to provide safe access for maintenance, resilience from falling objects such as trees and maintain electrical safety clearances. Felling values will be provided in the forestry chapter of the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL. Part of SSEN Transmission's obligations is to provide compensatory planting to address tree loss.			X
23	During the virtual public consultation event, one attendee asked when the existing 132 kV OHL running through the field at Auchterawe would be taken down, as well as the now disused wooden poles OHL.	The section of the existing 132 kV OHL running from Fort Augustus to Fort William would be decommissioned once the new 400 kV OHL from Loch Lundie is completed and energised in December 2027. Demolition of the 132 kV OHL would then be undertaken. There may be a seasonal aspect to the demolition given that the existing OHL would be decommissioned mid-winter and demolition may then be delayed until spring 2028. However, these works would ultimately be determined by the Principal Contractor's programme. It is worth noting that any temporary works to be			X

Ref	Feedback Comments	Response by SSEN Transmission	Relevant to		
			Coire Glas Switching Station	Loch Lundie Substation	400 kV OHL
		removed upon completion of the main works may approached on a similar basis.			
24	One written response suggests consideration should be given to undergrounding the cables, where it approaches the substation. They noted that the Skye Reinforcement Project has agreed to underground cable for a distance of 7 kilometres back from the Fort Augustus Substation.	Noted. The Skye Reinforcement Project is a 132 kV overhead line, which is why undergrounding a section of this connection is considered feasible. Installing an underground cable for a 400 kV grid connection is not considered a feasible option due to both economic and technical reasons. Cables are significantly more expensive than OHLs and the terrain over which a cable would need to be installed would be technically challenging. There are also significant challenges post construction associated with undergrounding cables. When there is any maintenance or repairs required on the cable, locating and repairing faults underground can be difficult, with longer timescales for repair works.			X

6. PROJECT RESPONSES TO CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 This part of the Report on Consultation documents how the project team has considered the formal consultation responses received between May 2022 and June 2022 following publication of the Consultation Document in May 2022 and during consultation events.

6.2 Summary of Key Responses and Progression to the EIA Stage

Coire Glas Switching Station

- 6.2.1 Several responses received from statutory consultees, non-statutory consultees and the community raised concerns about the impact of the Coire Glas Switching Station on woodland, and sensitive habitats and species in this area of the Glengarry Forest, particularly in relation to woodland listed on the AWI and on the Caledonian Pinewood Inventory. The FLS (West) consultation response, amongst others, clearly sets out the importance of the Caledonian Pinewood in Glengarry Forest, stating that the Garry Pinewoods are fragments of what was once a much more extensive area of Caledonian Pinewood along the shore of Loch Garry. The Glengarry pinewood is fragile due to the fragmentation and has been under restoration for the last 30 years. FLS (West) note the area that would be impacted by Preferred Site for the Coire Glas Switching Station is one of the earliest and most advanced areas of restoration, comprising old granny pine areas and advanced regeneration as well as some open area in the earlier stages of regeneration and planted Scots pine which has developed native woodland characteristics. For this reason, FLS (West) and several other of the consultees do not consider the Preferred Site identified for the Coire Glas Switching Station to be suitable.
- 6.2.2 Since the submission of the Consultation Document, further consultation has been undertaken with FLS (West) in conjunction with CGHPSL, due to the unique interface between the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project and the consented Coire Glas PSH. This consultation has focused on developing a solution that is both technically feasible to construct for both SSEN Transmission and CGHPSL, whilst also trying to minimise the potential effects of these developments on sensitive woodland habitat, including the Caledonian Pine Forest and woodland listed on the AWI within Glengarry Forest.
- 6.2.3 Following further consideration of site options in October 2022, Site Option CG1 remains the project's preferred location for the switching station and SSEN Transmission propose that, on balance, the preferred site is taken forward to the EIA Stage of the project as the 'proposed site' for the new Coire Glas Switching Station. However, wherever feasible, the switching station will be microsited to avoid the woodland areas of highest sensitivity.

Loch Lundie Substation

- 6.2.4 FLS (West) state that they consider the preferred site for the Loch Lundie Substation to be manageable in forestry terms. They highlight that whilst the presence of the transmission infrastructure would impact on the ability to manage the forest in this area, this could be accommodated for, and compensatory planting could be undertaken to mitigate against the immediate loss of woodland cover.
- 6.2.5 Both NatureScot and RSPB consultation responses state that the construction and operation of the new substation at Loch Lundie has the potential to disturb SPA black-throated diver, and other Schedule 1 species. To address this concern, SSEN Transmission will undertake a HRA to assess any impacts of the new Loch Lundie Substation on the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA. Potential impacts on SPA black-throated diver, and other Schedule 1 species will also be assessed as part of the ornithological impacts assessment prepared as part of the EIA Report. This assessment will be informed by a suite of bird surveys undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022. Consultation was undertaken with NatureScot to agree the scope of the ornithology surveys required for the project. It is considered that the issues raised in relation to the preferred site of the Loch Lundie Substation can be addressed at the EIA Stage of the project. As such, and subject to

further review and assessment through the EIA stage of the project, including the preparation of a HRA, SSEN Transmission propose that, on balance, the preferred site is taken forward to the EIA Stage of the project as the 'proposed site' for the new Loch Lundie Substation.

400 kV OHL

- 6.2.6 Several of the responses received from statutory consultees, non-statutory consultees and the community raise similar concerns about the impact of the section of the new 400 kV OHL which passes through Glengarry, as were raised for the preferred site of the Coire Glas Switching Station (see Paragraph 6.2.1). In addition, FLS (West) advise that the OC of the preferred alignment would have a substantial detrimental impact on the integrity of the Caledonian Pinewood, and the ongoing work of restoring the woodland through reconnecting the core areas.
- 6.2.7 FLS (West) also draw attention to their policy to protect the remnants of native vegetation within PAWS woodlands and restoration of these to native woodland. They advise that the PAWS woodland within Glengarry Forest lies on the eastern side of the Caledonian pinewoods and are still to be restored. FLS (West) advises that whilst the siting of a 400 kV OHL through this PAWS area is less immediately damaging than the Caledonian pinewood area, the issues around fragmentation and disturbance of soil and remnant ground flora remain the same. In addition, they note that this PAWS area provides important links between the Caledonian pinewoods and the temperate rainforest surrounding the River Garry, as well as to the Garry Falls SSSI.
- 6.2.8 FLS (West) and other consultees also note the importance of the narrow remnant of temperate rainforest habitat on both sides of the River Garry, as restoration of the temperate rainforest is very high on the Scottish Government's agenda. In response to this, SSEN Transmission propose to undertake further surveys where required to identify host trees and trees of ecological interest within the vicinity of the River Garry within the LOD of the 400 kV OHL, so that the OHL can be microsited to avoid these trees as far as possible.
- 6.2.9 Similar to the Coire Glas Switching Station, SSEN Transmission will need to undertake further consultation with FLS (West) to resolve the issues noted above in relation to the potential impacts of the 400 kV OHL on the sensitive woodland habitats and classifications within Glengarry Forestry and to identify an appropriate alignment for the 400 kV OHL. For the 400 kV OHL, potential solutions to reduce impacts on sensitive woodland habitats would involve micrositing the OHL within the LOD and, where feasible, further reducing the OC in areas of high sensitivity.
- 6.2.10 At the preferred site for the Loch Lundie Substation, FLS (West) state that they consider the preferred alignment of the 400 kV OHL to be manageable in forestry terms. They highlight that whilst the presence of the transmission infrastructure in this area would impact on the ability to manage the forest in this area, this could be accommodated for, and compensatory planting could be undertaken to mitigate against the immediate loss of woodland cover. They note that whilst the preferred alignment of the OHL has been chosen with the opportunity to minimise the felling of the plantation edge, that this cannot be assumed and leaving trees standing on the far side of the alignment will impact on the ability manage them in the future. Additional felling out with the OC will be identified to ensure wind firm boundaries and management block isolation is reduced.
- 6.2.11 Both NS and RSPB Scotland consultation responses state that the construction and operation of a new 400 kV OHL at Loch Lundie has the potential to disturb SPA black-throated diver, and other Schedule 1 species. These responses also highlight that the Loch Lundie area is already constrained with constructed and planned OHLs and raise concerns in relation to cumulative impacts on the qualifying features of the SPA. To address this concern, SSEN Transmission will commit to undertaking a HRA to assess any impacts of the new the 400 kV OHL on the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA. Potential impacts, including cumulative impacts, on SPA black-throated diver, and other Schedule 1 species will also be assessed as part of the ornithological impacts assessment prepared as part of the EIA Report for the new 400 kV OHL. This assessment will be informed by a suite of bird surveys undertaken between between October 2021 and September 2022. Consultation was undertaken with NatureScot to agree the scope of the ornithology surveys required for the project.

- 6.2.12 The consultation response received from HES, as well as several other non-statutory consultees, raised concerns about the impacts of the preferred alignment on the Torr Dhuin fort SM. HES stated the preferred alignment of the 400 kV OHL would likely dominate inward views towards the Torr Dhuin SM, with the impact being in particular derived from the positioning of one steel lattice tower (Tower 6) on elevated ground to the immediate northwest of the fort. On this basis HES would likely object to the proposed 400 kV OHL but would welcome the exploration of mitigation that looks to relocate this tower. The consultation response received from FLS North advises that they consider the preferred 400 kV OHL alignment to be acceptable from a forestry and woodland perspective but they are aware of the feedback from HES and will take advice from their landscape architect in respect of this issue. In response, SSEN Transmission will endeavour to microsite Tower 6 within the LOD for the 400 kV OHL to reduce the setting impacts on the Torr Dhuin fort SM. Consultation with HES will continue throughout the EIA Stage.
- 6.2.13 HES confirmed that they are content that setting impacts on other heritage assets within their remit within the vicinity of the proposals, such as the Caledonian Canal (SM6496 & SM6497) would not raise issues of national interest.
- 6.2.14 A few community responses raised concern about the potential impacts of the 400 kV OHL and associated works on tourism and recreation in the Invergarry area. In response to this, SSEN will include a full land use and recreation assessment in the EIA Report for the 400 kV OHL and will prepare an Outdoor Access Plan for each element of the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project, to ensure access to local recreational routes is maintained throughout the construction period.
- 6.2.15 Community responses were received regarding the section of the 400 kV OHL that is routed through Auchterawe on a variety of grounds, including safety, noise and telecommunications (interference), wildlife, cultural heritage, local tourism and recreation. Some of the responses suggested a preference for Route Option LL-FA1 for the new 400 kV OHL. Others suggest that the new OHL should follow the route of the temporary Skye T OHL or should be undergrounded on the approach to the Fort Augustus Substation, similar to the approach that has been adopted for the Skye Reinforcement Project in this area. As noted above, the consultation response received from FLS North advises that they consider the preferred 400 kV OHL alignment to be acceptable but would encourage SSEN Transmission to actively engage with the wider community and other stakeholders (such as HES) who may have differing views and consider any alternative views.
- 6.2.16 It is considered that the issues raised in relation to the section of the preferred alignment between Glengarry Forest (near where the preferred alignment would cross the A87) and Torr Dhuin, including the section at Loch Lundie can largely be addressed at EIA Stage of the project. Subject to further review and assessment through the EIA stage of the project, including the preparation of a HRA, SSEN Transmission propose that, on balance, this section of the preferred alignment for the 400 kV OHL is taken forward as 'the proposed alignment'. Further consultation with FLS (West) will be required to microsite the 400 kV OHL within the LOD and, where feasible, reduce the OC further to minimise impacts on sensitive woodland habitats in Glengarry Forest. Further consultation with HES will also be required to reduce setting impacts on the Torr Dhuin Scheduled Monument by microsite towers within the LOD for this section of the 400 kV OHL.

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

7.1 Conclusion

7.1.1 This Report on Consultation documents the consultation process which has been undertaken for the project between May 2022 and June 2022 for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents in order to invite feedback on the rationale for and approach to, the selection of the preferred route and alignment and design solution for the proposed 400 kV OHL and the preferred sites and design solutions for the proposed Coire Coire Glas Switching Station and proposed Loch Lundie Substation.

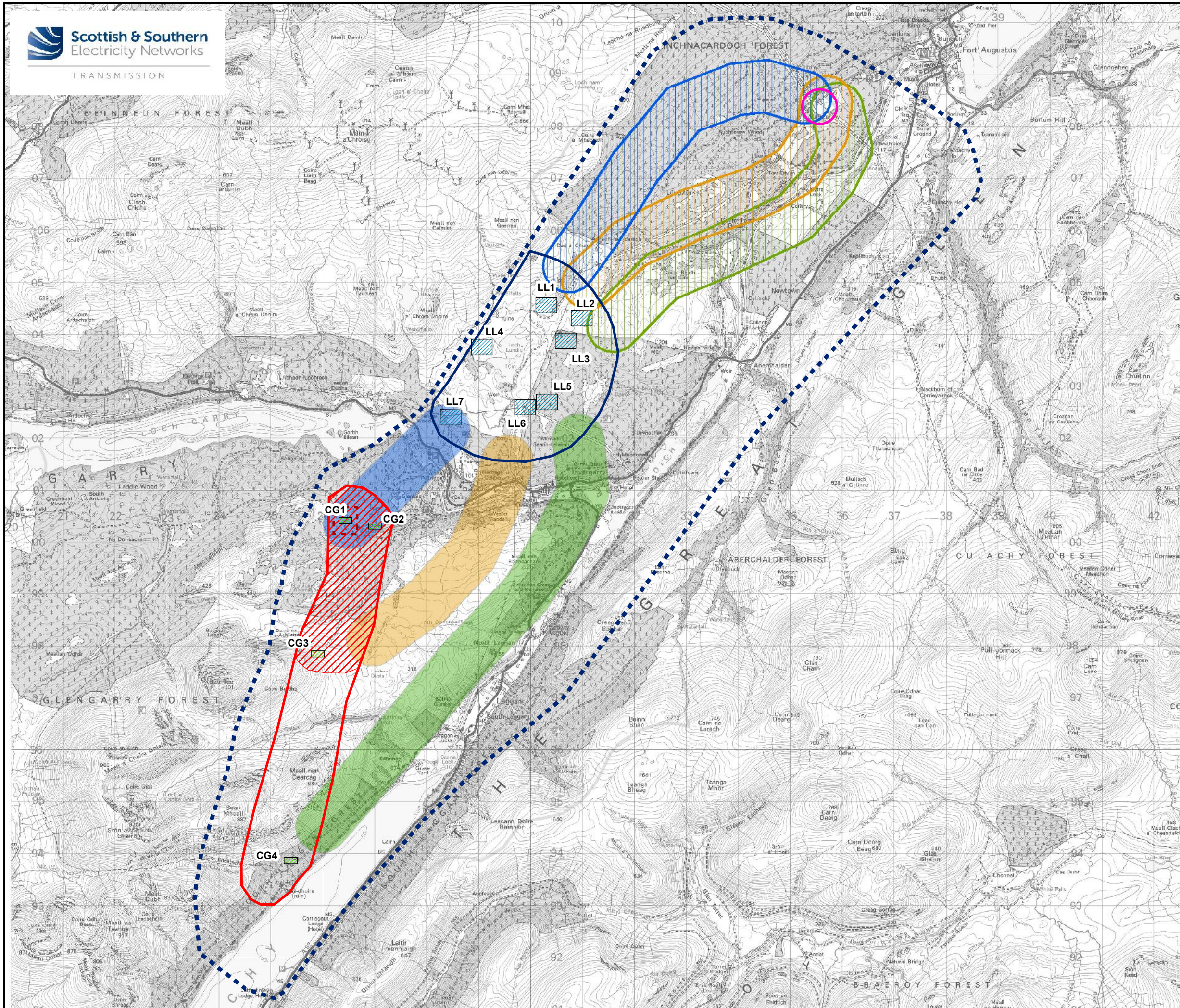
7.1.2 This report has described the key responses received and provides detail on the actions proposed in response to the issues raised. The consultation process has confirmed the preferred alignment for the 400 kV OHL and preferred sites for both the Coire Glas Switching Station and the Loch Lundie Substation within the Consultation Document shared with stakeholders in May 2022 (and illustrated in Figure 3) should in general be taken forward as the proposed alignment and proposed sites into Stage 4: EIA and Consenting.

7.2 Next Steps

7.2.1 The Coire Glas Grid Connection Project has now been taken into Stage 4 (EIA and consenting). Should further site and desk-based analysis at the EIA and consenting stage identify a particular constraint, a further review of the proposed site and/or proposed route and alignment may be required.

7.2.2 . An application for consent under section 37 (s. 37) of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) ("the 1989 Act") was submitted for the 400 kV OHL in April 2023. An EIA Report was prepared to accompany the s. 37 application. Separate consent under the Town and County Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, would be sought by SSEN Transmission for both the Coire Glas Switching Station and the Loch Lundie Substation. It is anticipated these applications will be submitted in late Autumn 2023 and would both be accompanied by an EIA Report.

FIGURES



Legend

- Study Corridor
- 400 kV Coire Glas Switching Station Search Area
- Preferred 400kV Coire Glas Switching Station Search Area
- 400kV Coire Glas Switching Station Option - Micrositing Area
- 400 kV/132kV Loch Lundie Substation Search Area
- Existing Fort Augustus Substation

Route Options

- Coire Glas Switching Station (CG) - Loch Lundie Substation (LL) Route Option 1 (CG-LL1)
- CG - LL Route Option 2 (CG-LL2)
- CG - LL Route Option 3 (CG-LL3)
- LL - Fort Augustus Substation (FA) Route Option 1 (LL-FA1)
- LL - FA Route Option 2 (LL-FA2)
- LL - FA Route Option 3 (LL-FA3)

Coire Glas Switching Station Site Options*

- 400kV Coire Glas Switching Station Options

Loch Lundie Substation Site Options*

- 400 kV/132 kV Loch Lundie Substation Options

** Note Site Options CG2 and LL4 were ruled out of consideration at an early stage of the site selection process and were not included in the RAG assessments.*

Scale - 1:70,000



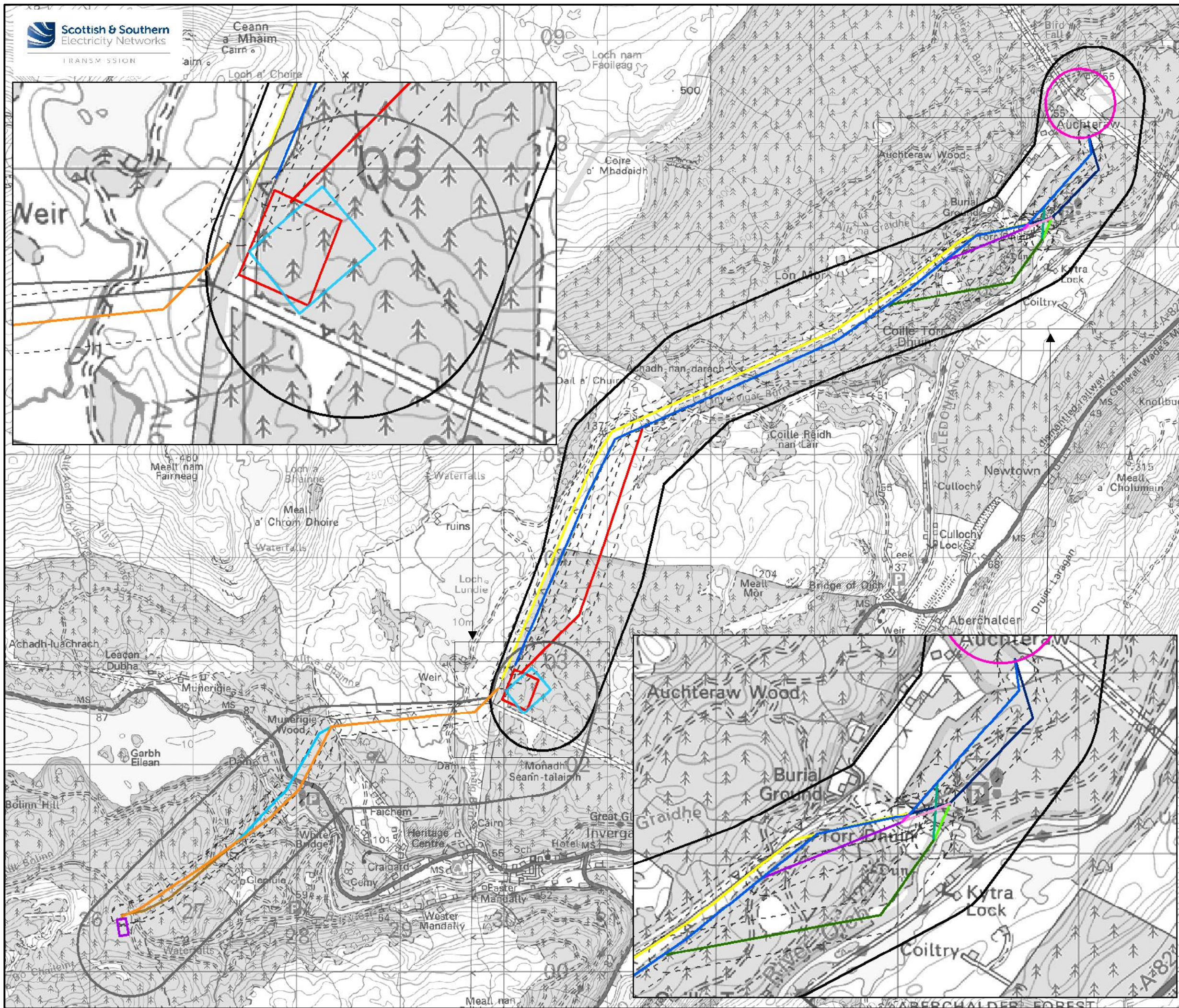
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Project: Coire Glas Grid Connection Project

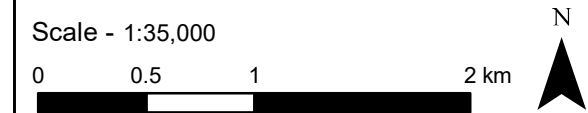
Title: Figure 1 - Site and Route Options

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- ### Legend
- Preferred Route - Coire Glas to Loch Lundie
 - Preferred Route - Loch Lundie to Fort Augustus
 - Existing Fort Augustus Substation
 - Preferred Site - 400 kV Coire Glas Switching Station
 - Preferred Site - 400 kV / 132 kV Loch Lundie Substation Option 1
 - Loch Lundie 400kV/132kV Substation Option 2
 - Baseline Alignment Coire Glas (CG) – Loch Lundie (LL)
 - Baseline Alignment LL - Fort Augustus
 - CG-LL Alignment Variation 1
 - CG-LL Alignment Variation 2
 - LL- FA Alignment Variation 1
 - LL-FA Alignment Variation 2
 - LL- FA Alignment Variation 3
 - LL- FA Alignment Variation 3a
 - LL- FA Alignment Variation 3b
 - LL-FA Alignment Variation 4
 - LL-FA Alignment Variation 4a
 - LL-FA Alignment Variation 4b
 - LL-FA Alignment Variation 5
 - 100m Limits of Deviations (LoDs)



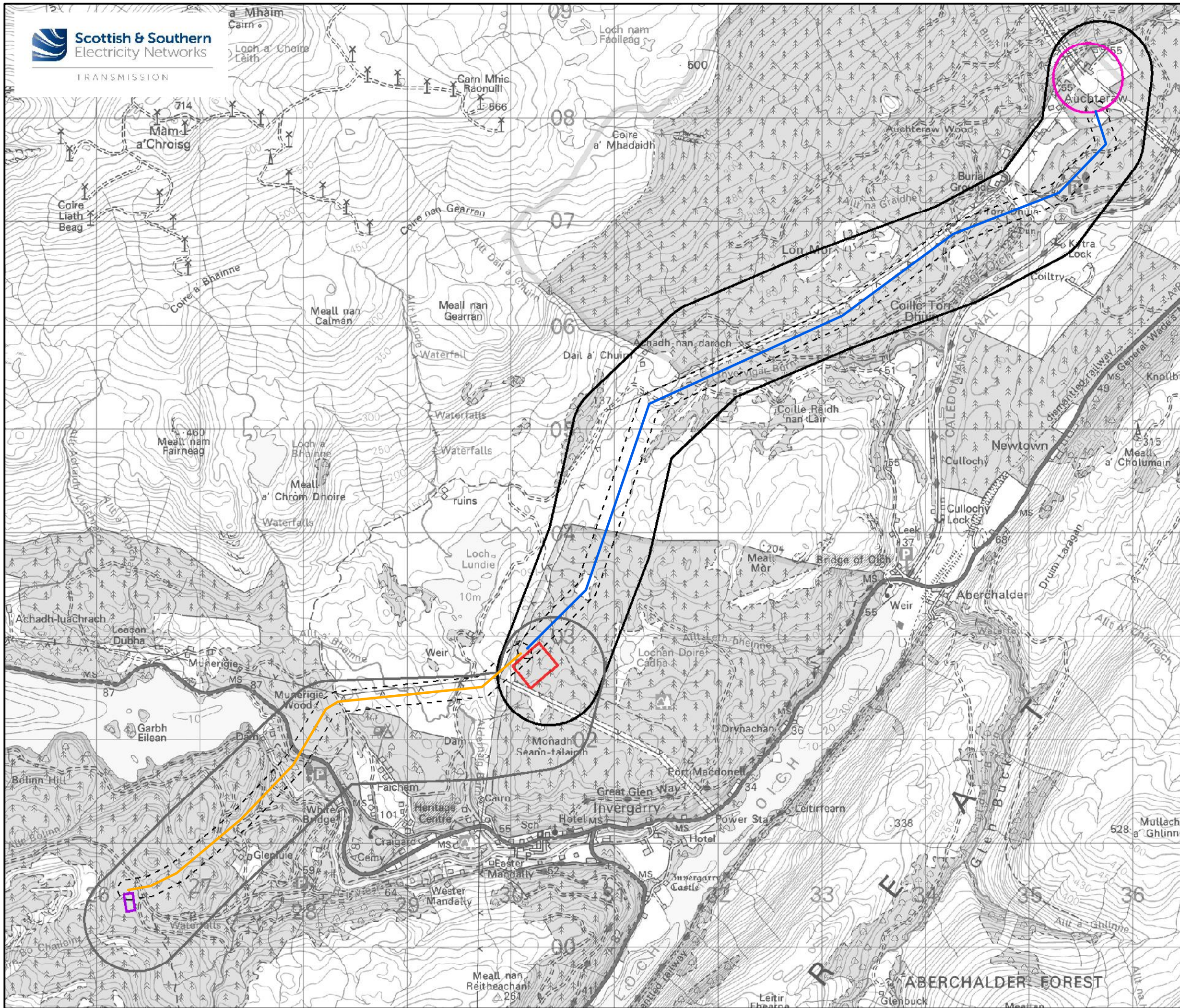
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Title: Figure 2 - Alignment Options

Drawn by: KM 31/03/2023

Drawing: 121012-ROC-D2-1.0.0



Legend

-  Preferred Route - Coire Glas to Loch Lundie
-  Preferred Route - Loch Lundie to Fort Augustus
-  Existing Fort Augustus Substation
-  Preferred Site - 400 kV/132 kV Loch Lundie Substation
-  Preferred Site - 400 kV Coire Glas Switching Station
-  Preferred Alignment Coire Glas to Loch Lundie
-  Preferred Alignment Loch Lundie to Fort Augustus
-  100m Limits of Deviations (LoDs)

Scale - 1:35,000



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Project: Coire Glas Grid Connection Project

Title: Figure 3 - Preferred Site, Route and Alignment Options

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