

## Technical Appendix 5.1: Scoping Response Matrix

### Abbreviations

|      |  |
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| NS   | NatureScot                             |
| SEPA | Scottish Environment Protection Agency |
| SF   | Scottish Forestry                      |
| SW   | Scottish Water                         |
| TS   | Transport Scotland                     |
| JRC  | Joint Radio Company                    |

**Table 1: Scoping Response Matrix<sup>1</sup>**

| No. | Subject  | Task   | Consultee | EIA Report Reference  | Comments   |
|-----|--|--|-----------|---|--|
| 1   | West Inverness-shire Lochs Special Protection Area (SPA) | <p>"We recommend that the results of survey and assessment are used to inform an alignment and design solution for the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project which seeks to avoid impacts to the West Invernessshire Lochs SPA, and the other sensitivities outlined in Annex 1 and in the scoping report.</p> <p>If avoidance of impacts is not possible, we advise any impacts are minimised through appropriate mitigation, details of which should be provided in the EIA Report (EIAR)."</p> | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology   | A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point survey targeting the SPA qualifying species. Findings have been used to inform site design.   |
| 2   | NPF4   | <p>"The Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) sets out a new requirement for developments to deliver positive effects for biodiversity, primarily under Policy 3. We recommend the requirements of NPF4 are therefore adopted as part of any future application."</p>  | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 8: Terrestrial Ecology  | A BNG Assessment for the Proposed Development will be undertaken in line with the Applicant's Sustainability Strategy where there are targets to positively contribute to the Scottish Government Biodiversity strategies by achieving an overall 'No Net Loss' on new infrastructure projects gaining consent in 2020 onwards and achieving Net Gain on projects gaining consent in 2025 onwards. |
| 3   | Technical Guidance                                       | <p>"All natural heritage and landscape assessments should follow our published guidance at: <a href="https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/planning-and-developmentadvice/planning-">https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/planning-and-developmentadvice/planning-</a></p>  | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual, Volume 1: Chapter 8: Terrestrial Ecology and | All natural heritage and landscape assessments have been undertaken in line with NatureScot Guidance.  |

<sup>1</sup> Due to committed timescales to deliver the connection, the EIA Report and Section 37 application has been submitted prior to a Scoping Opinion being received from Scottish Ministers. Where scoping responses from consultees have been received prior to finalisation of this EIA Report, such responses have been considered within the EIA Report and are referenced accordingly.

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|     |   | and-development-standing-advice-and-guidance-documents.”   |           | Volume 1: Chapter 9: Ornithology.  |  |
| 4   | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA – Habitats Regulations Appraisal   | ”There is potential for a likely significant effect from disturbance, displacement and collision risk, and a Habitats Regulations Appraisal would need to consider all of these issues both for the proposal on its own and in combination with other projects. We maintain our previous advice that the corridor, route and alignment selection process is informed by a detailed assessment of these potential impacts.”   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 9.2 - Habitats Regulations Appraisal for West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA | A shadow HRA has been prepared to assess potential impacts on the integrity of the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA (see Technical Appendix 9.2).  |
| 5   | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA – construction-related disturbance | ”There is potential for disturbance to and displacement of breeding black-throated divers on Loch Lundie, and potential for disturbance to and displacement of breeding black-throated divers and common scoters on Loch Garry. The potential for construction related disturbance should be considered and any necessary mitigation measures be presented in the EIAR. Exclusion buffers may be required around these lochs during the breeding season (up to 750m for black-throated divers), and we recommend these are factored in to all future construction programmes in this area, including access requirements and removal of the decommissioned lines.” | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology  | Mitigation in the form of bird flight diverters in sensitive areas and species-specific protection plans detailing working methods and disturbance buffers are proposed.   |
| 6   | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA – potential collision risks        | ”There is also a potential collision risk to SPA black-throated divers and common scoters from the proposed overhead line, which is taller than the existing infrastructure in this area. We advise that the results of survey and assessment are used to inform the selection of a route and substation location which minimises impacts to SPA birds, particularly from collision risk, and to identify any requirements for mitigation. To minimise collision risk on what looks a potential flight corridor from Loch Lundie   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 9.2 - Habitats Regulations Appraisal for West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA | A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point (VP) survey targeting the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA qualifying species. Findings have been used to inform site design. |

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|     |   | to the Great Glen, we recommend that future proposals around Loch Lundie seek to rationalise the overall amount infrastructure in this area.”  |           |   | A shadow Habitats Regulations Appraisal has been prepared to assess potential impacts on the integrity of the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA (see Technical Appendix 9.2).   |
| 7   | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA - Cumulative impacts with Skye Reinforcement Project | ”The proposals would introduce a new line which is taller than the existing infrastructure around Loch Lundie, and which follows a slightly different route to the east of the loch. Plans also indicate the proposal would run parallel, and at a different height, to the proposed Skye Reinforcement Project line along the south side of Loch Lundie. This has the potential to increase collision risk and we advise the potential for cumulative impacts in this area are considered in the EIAR.” | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology   | Cumulative effects considered within the EIA chapter in paragraph 9.10.29.   |
| 8   | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA – Consideration of Alignment Variation 2             | ”We have previously advised that the suitability of Alignment Variation 2, which would bring the baseline alignment closer to Loch Garry, is considered further and recommend this point is addressed in the EIAR. ”   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 2 - The Routeing Process Alternatives, Volume 1 and Chapter 8 - Terrestrial Ecology | The reasons for Alignment Variation CG-LL 2 be selected as part of the Proposed Alignment are described in Chapter 2 - The Routeing Process Alternatives. However, as described in Section 2.12, during the EIA stage of the project, the consideration of alternatives focused on tower positions and the siting of ancillary infrastructure as a result of more detailed environmental and engineering information, including NVC habitat survey, peat probing and ground investigation results. |

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| 9   | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA – Rationalising overhead line infrastructure | "We welcome proposals to rationalise overhead line infrastructure in this area, but also note that there may be potential for overlap. We advise that the timing of construction of new and removal of decommissioned overhead lines; which lines will be in place when; and whether these are underground or overhead connections, are clarified in the EIAR and considered in relation to the SPA bird interests."                                | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 3.2: General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and Species Protection Plans (SPPs) | The assessment has been undertaken in the knowledge that a Bird Protection Plan (BPP), devised in consultation with NatureScot, would be in place prior to the onset of construction and dismantling activities (see Technical Appendix 3.2).  |
| 10  | West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA – Assessment of collision risk               | "An assessment of the collision risk to SPA birds making regular foraging flights between the SPA lochs and/or other undesignated lochs, and to birds entering and leaving the SPA complex at the start and end of the breeding season will be required."   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology and Volume 4: Appendix 9.2 - Habitats Regulations Appraisal for West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA                           | A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point survey targeting the SPA qualifying species. Findings have been used to inform site design.<br>A shadow Habitats Regulations Appraisal has been prepared to assess potential impacts on the integrity of the West Inverness-shire SPA (see Technical Appendix 9.2). |
| 11  | Surveys for breeding divers and scoters                                     | "Surveys for breeding divers and scoters were proposed. To minimise disturbance and avoid duplication of effort we advised contacting the RSPB for any information they may hold on black-throated diver nest site locations at Loch Lundie and Loch Garry, and to liaise on any survey work. Standard diver survey methods, including focal point surveys if the birds are breeding, will be required in accordance with our Bird Survey Guidance" | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology  | Section 9.5 of Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology confirms that a RSPB data request to RSPB was undertaken to inform the 2021 and 2022 desk studies.<br>A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point survey targeting the West Inverness-   |

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|     |  |  |           |   | shire Lochs SPA qualifying species.   |
| 12  | Common scoter  | <p>"The SPA common scoter population has significantly declined. Again we advised liaison with the RSPB to confirm the distribution of scoter within Loch Garry and over the timing and method of any survey work planned for this species, so as to minimise disturbance. If common scoter flights occur in this area they may not be picked up by standard VP/focal surveys. An assessment of collision risk to common scoter may therefore require desk study and theoretical assessment (as was undertaken for the Skye Reinforcement Project)."</p> | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology   | <p>Section 9.5 of Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology confirms that a RSPB date request to RSPB was undertaken to inform the 2021 and 2022 desk studies. A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point survey targeting the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA qualifying species.</p>   |
| 13  | Garry Falls Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | <p>"The SSSI boundary is on the western edge of the LOD for the Proposed Alignment. It is protected for its rich bryophyte assemblage and mixed ash woodland. We would expect the EIAR to demonstrate that there will be no direct or indirect impacts to the SSSI and include details of any mitigation that may be required. We recommend this includes demarcation of the SSSI boundary so as to avoid the risk of accidental vehicle access or storage of materials during the construction phase."</p>  | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology and Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water | <p>Routeing of the alignment has avoided Garry Falls SSSI as such direct and indirect impacts to this site are considered unlikely, as discussed in Table 8.5 and Section 8.8.4 The site boundary will be demarcated on the ground as described in Section 8.9.5. The ECoW will ensure all site staff are aware of the boundary demarcation and sensitivity of the site through toolbox talks.</p> <p>Potential hydrological impacts to Gary Falls SSSI and West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA are considered in Chapter 10 (Section 10.6, Baseline Conditions and Section 10.8</p> |

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|     |  |  |           |  | Assessment of Potential Likely Significant Effects).   |
| 14  | Landscape and visual impact assessment | "It is assumed that the 1km offset shown on the ZTV is intended to account for the LOD but it would be useful to have this confirmed in the EIAR."   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual   | This ZTV, included in the Scoping Report, was run from the tower positions shown on the plan, not the LOD. It was run for a distance of 5 km from the towers to provide further ZTV information beyond the edge of the 4 km study area.  |
| 15  | Landscape and visual impact assessment | "Given the proposed tower height we would advise that an initial study area radius of 10km be adopted in the first instance and a ZTV produced to this extent – this would also inform selection of viewpoints within the wider area."                     | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual and Volume 2: Figure 7.1a - Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) to 10 km | A ZTV run to 10 km is shown in Figure 7.1a, produced in order to help establish the study area. Following review of the ZTV alongside site verification, and based on site analysis of the perceptibility of similar existing developments in the landscape (including the existing Beaulieu – Denny 400 kV steel lattice OHL), a study area of 4 km was considered appropriate to identify all potential significant effects (see Figure 7.1b - Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and Study Area). |
| 16  | Landscape and visual impact assessment | "Taking the above into consideration we would advise against scoping out LCTs 221: Rolling Uplands – Inverness and LCT 236 – Smooth Moorland Ridges at this stage, until a more thorough understanding of predicted visibility over these LCTs is gained." | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual   | Further review of theoretical visibility and high-level appraisal of potential effects on LCTs 221 and 236 has been undertaken and these areas have been scoped out of the detailed  |

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|     |  |  |           |   | assessment, as detailed in Table 7.6.  |
| 17  | Landscape and visual impact assessment | "We are content that Wild Land Areas (WLA) WLA18 Kinlochhourn - Knoydart – Morar and WLA19 Braeroy - Glenshirra - Creag Meagaidh can be scoped out."   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual  | Noted.   |
| 18  | Landscape and visual impact assessment | "Generally, all ZTV mapping should be accompanied by metadata detailing terrain mapping used, viewer height, etc. which should be displayed on every ZTV figure. This information can be found in NatureScot Visual Representation of Wind Farms Guidance v2.2 February 2017 which is available on our website."   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual (and associated Figures) and Technical Appendix 7.1: Technical Methodologies for Visual Representation | This information is shown on the relevant LVIA figures and included within Technical Appendix 7.1.   |
| 19  | Ornithology surveys                    | "Prior to submission of the EIA Report we advise that the applicants ensure that all survey methods have followed our Bird Survey Guidance. We recommend relevant desk study information is requested from the Raptor Study Group and RSPB. Survey information from other overhead line and renewables projects in this area may also provide useful context." | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology   | A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point survey targeting the Special Protection Area (SPA) qualifying species. Findings have been used to inform site design. |
| 20  | Ornithology surveys                    | "We recommend survey work also covers proposed access routes so as to identify any potential mitigation requirements."   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology   | A full suite of surveys were undertaken between October 2021 and September 2022, including vantage point survey targeting the Special Protection Area (SPA) qualifying species. Findings have been used to inform site design. |
| 21  | Ornithology surveys                    | "Once survey work is complete an assessment of potential impacts through habitat loss/change, disturbance and/or displacement, and collision risk to SPA and wider   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology   | Assessment on potential impacts are detailed in Section 9.10 of Chapter 9.   |



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|     |                         | countryside bird populations will be required, both for the proposal on its own and in combination with other projects”  |           |                                   |   |
| 22  | Mitigation              | “Mitigation options should be considered as part of the assessment process and we recommend these details are included in the EIAR. ”  | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology | Mitigation measures included within Sections 9.7 and 9.11 of Chapter 9.   |
| 23  | Wider countryside birds | “In addition to the SPA species, legally protected birds in the wider countryside such as golden eagle and black grouse could be affected by the proposal, either as an individual scheme or in combination with other developments in the area. We recommend that assessments for wider countryside birds follow our guidance at: <a href="https://www.nature.scot/guidance-assessing-significance-impacts-bird-populations-onshorewind-farms-do-not-affect-protected.">https://www.nature.scot/guidance-assessing-significance-impacts-bird-populations-onshorewind-farms-do-not-affect-protected.</a> ” | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology | Assessment on potential impacts are detailed in Section 9.10 of Chapter 9.  |
| 24  | GET modelling           | “We now advise that in cases where modelling is necessary for the assessment of the impacts to golden eagles, GET (Golden Eagle Topographical) modelling is undertaken”  | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology | On the basis of the field surveys undertaken, the professional judgement of the competent experts and experience on similar infrastructure projects, consideration fo potential effects of the Proposed Development on raptors (including Golden Eagle) were scoped out of the ornitholgy assessment. |
| 25  | Black grouse leks       | “We would expect the EIAR to include information on the importance of the black grouse leks identified in the local context, and to consider the potential for indirect effects due to changes to foraging and roosting habitat. We recommend that a 750m buffer is applied around black grouse lek(s) during construction, where no   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology | Potential impacts on Black Grouse are included in Section 9.10 of Chapter 9.  |

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|     |  | <p>construction activity is allowed within the buffer (including vehicle movements along tracks)</p> <p>before 9am in the months of April and May. This is to avoid causing disturbance to lekking birds during the breeding season.”</p>   |           |   |   |
| 26  | Habitat surveys                                      | <p>“We advise that Annex 1 and UKBAP Priority Habitats are mapped to NVC level, and that surveys cover the whole of the development site plus an appropriate buffer, including any areas where access tracks/track upgrades and borrow pits may be proposed. Target notes should be used to identify the presence of any notable plants including any nationally rare or scarce species. “</p>  | NS        | <p>Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology,<br/>Volume 2: Figure 8.2(a-f): Phase 1 Habitats, Volume 4: Technical Appendix 8.1 - Field Survey Methodology and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 8.2 - Habitat Target Notes.</p> | <p>Field surveys have been undertaken as described in Section 8.5 of Chapter 8 and Technical Appendix 8.1, including NVC survey to identify potential GWDTE habitats. Habitats are mapped according to Phase 1 habitat classification, as displayed on Figure 8.2 a – f, alongside habitat target notes (see Technical Appendix 8.2).</p> |
| 27  | Sensitive habitats                                   | <p>“We recommend that survey results inform the design and layout process, so that the development avoids, where possible, sensitive habitats such as blanket bog (see below). Where this is not possible, suitable restoration and/or compensation measures should be proposed in line with NPF4 requirements. The Scoping Report notes that new and upgraded access tracks will be required. We recommend the need for new access tracks is minimised as far as possible and that where these are required the lowest impact option is selected where possible. ”</p> | NS        | <p>Volume 1: Chapter 2 - The Routeing Process Alternatives and Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology</p>  | <p>Sensitive habitats including Annex 1, UKBAP Priority and GWDTE habitats have been avoided as far as possible by the Proposed Development</p>   |
| 28  | Peatland Management Plan and Habitat Management Plan | <p>“Assessment should consider extent of habitat loss and damage, both direct and indirect, and we advise that the EIAR includes details of reinstatement and habitat restoration measures (including those associated with</p>   | NS        | <p>Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology, Volume 4: Technical Appendix 3.4 - Outline Site</p>   | <p>The Applicant is committed to a Site-specific Restoration Plan, which would set out the standards and procedures to be</p>   |

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|     |  | removal of the existing lines) within a Peatland Management Plan and Habitat Management Plan.”  |           | Restoration Plan and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peatland Management Plan.  | employed to minimise impacts to habitats and vegetation. An outline Site Restoration Plan is included in Technical Appendix 3.4. A Peatland Management Plan is included in Technical Appendix 10.1.  |
| 29  | Peat, peatland habitats and carbon rich soil | “As noted in the scoping report, the proposed development site includes localised areas of mapped Class 1 peatland and more extensive areas of Class 2 peatland. The Carbon and Peatland 2016 mapping is indicative, and site specific surveys will be required to confirm the quality and distribution of peatland across the proposed development site plus an appropriate buffer, including any areas where new/upgraded access tracks or borrow pits may be proposed. Our approach to assessing impacts on peatland habitats is detailed in our staff guidance note “Advising on carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat in development management”” | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 8 - Terrestrial Ecology, Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water, Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peat Management Plan and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment. | A detailed programme of peat depth probing and condition surveys have been completed and have informed the design of the Proposed Development, see Chapter 8 and peat management plan and peat landslide hazard risk assessment which are presented as Technical Appendices 10.1 and 10.2. |
| 30  | Peat, peatland habitats and carbon rich soil | “We recommend that the alignment, layout and design is informed by habitat survey, hydrological assessment and peat probing results, so that it avoids direct and indirect impacts to priority peatland habitats. Where impacts cannot be avoided, they should be minimised, and direct and indirect impacts quantified. The EIAR should identify opportunities for mitigation and restoration within Peatland and Habitat Management Plans, in line with NPF4 requirements.”   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 8 - Terrestrial Ecology, Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water, Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peat Management Plan and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment. | A detailed programme of peat depth probing and condition surveys have been completed and have informed the design of the Proposed Development..  |

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| 31  | Forestry and woodland | "We advise that the implications of felling and changes to forestry and woodland during construction and operation are considered in relation to the ornithology and protected species assessments."   | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 8 - Terrestrial Ecology, Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology and Volume 1: Chapter 14 - Forestry | <p>Potential impacts of the Proposed Development on forestry and woodland, including from woodland management and felling are addressed in Chapter 14 - Forestry. This Chapter (and the associated Technical Appendix and Annexes) includes a description of the current woodland type and an assessment of the impacts and mitigation of felling and woodland removal.</p> <p>Potential impacts of felling and changes to forestry and woodland during construction and operation on terrestrial ecology are considered in Section 8.8 of Volume 1: Chapter 8 - Terrestrial Ecology.</p> <p>Potential impacts of felling and changes to forestry and woodland during construction and operation on avian species are considered in Section 9.10 of Volume 1: Chapter 9 - Ornithology.</p> |
| 32  | Protected species     | "The scoping report notes the potential presence of protected species. We recommend that surveys for all protected species follow the methods published on our website at: <a href="https://www.nature.scot/professionaladvice/planning-and-development/planning-and-development-advice/planning-">https://www.nature.scot/professionaladvice/planning-and-development/planning-and-development-advice/planning-</a> | NS        | Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology and Volume 2: Technical Appendix 8.1 - Field Survey Methodology        | Field surveys for protected species have been undertaken as described in Section 8.5 of this chapter and Technical Appendix 8.1, in line with current guidance. Species Protection   |

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|     |                         | and-developmentprotected-species. This link contains detailed advice on survey methods (including timing of surveys, survey area and shelf-life), Species Protection Plans, mitigation and licence applications. If protected species could be affected mitigation details/Species Protection Plans should also be included in the EIAR.”  |           |   | Plans (which are included in Technical Appendix 3.2 General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and Species Protection Plans (SPPs)).   |
| 33  | Key hydrological issues | “We consider that the following key issues must be addressed (a) Minimising impacts on peat and peatland (b) Avoiding good quality or rare GWDTE habitats and minimising impacts on other GWDTE habitats, and (c) Avoiding impacts on watercourses and other water features by ensuring suitable buffers, and using best practice design crossings.”   | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology and Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Impacts on peat and peatland, GWDTE habitats and watercourses are considered in Chapter 10: Geology, Soils and Water.  |
| 34  | Peat                    | “We very much welcome the inclusion of peat probing at this early stage. We note that peat is generally relatively shallow across the site but there are relatively small areas of deeper peat; the finalised layout should show how the location of the towers avoids these areas and any good quality habitat. The application should include clear information on supporting infrastructure such as tracks including whether they are temporary or permanent and method of construction. They should be shown to minimise peat disturbance. We welcome the proposal to submit an outlined Peat Management Plan. It should clearly demonstrate how all disturbed peat will be used in site reinstatement or peatland restoration. If there is the proposal to reuse disturbed peat in peatland restoration then the submission should include information on the location of the areas to be restored and a justification for the need for the works.” | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology, Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan. | The distribution and quality of peat is considered in Chapter 8: and application of the mitigation hierarchy in the peat management plan presented as Technical Appendix 10.1. This also considers compliance with Policy 5 of NPF4 for all elements of the Proposed Development. The results of the NVC and potential impacts on wetland habitats are considered in Chapter 8:. |
| 35  | Peatland habitat        | “We also welcome the submission of habitat survey work at this early stage. This shows that the development will   | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology,  | The distribution and quality of peat is considered in Chapter 8:   |

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|     |                                       | have an impact on areas of peatland habitat. As proposed NVC survey should be carried out of all wetland habitats identified. We acknowledge that it will likely not be possible to avoid impacts on wet heath, but impacts should be minimised as much as possible and good quality habitat avoided. The layout submitted at the application stage should demonstrate that it has avoided any mapped acid flushes or other highly groundwater dependant habitats.”  |           | Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan.  | and application of the mitigation hierarchy in the peat management plan presented as Technical Appendix 10.1. This also considers compliance with Policy 5 of NPF4 for all elements of the Proposed Development. The results of the NVC and potential impacts on wetland habitats are considered in Chapter 8. |
| 36  |                                       | ”In relation to the drawings to be provided then please ensure they are at a scale and include relevant information to allow us to easily understand how the proposal will impact on aspects of the environment in which we have an interest. For example showing buffers to watercourse and individual peat probes.”  | SEPA      | Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan (See Figures 1.1.1(a-d) and 1.1.2(a-d)).  | Figures showing individual peat probes are included in Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan (See Figures 1.1.1(a-d) and 1.1.2(a-d)).  |
| 37  | Site layout                           | All maps must be based on an adequate scale with which to assess the information. This could range from OS 1:10,000 to a more detailed scale in more sensitive locations. Each of the maps below must detail all proposed upgraded, temporary and permanent site infrastructure. Existing built infrastructure must be re-used or upgraded wherever possible.<br><br>The layout should be designed to minimise the extent of new works on previously undisturbed ground. A comparison of the environmental effects of alternative locations of infrastructure elements, such as tracks, may be required. | SEPA      | Volume 2: Figure 3.1(a-c) - Site Layout and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan (See Figures 1.1.1(a-d) and 1.1.2(a-d)) | Volume 2: Figure 3.1(a-c) - Site Layout illustrates all proposed upgraded, temporary and permanent site infrastructure. This Figure also demonstrated that existing access tracks would be re-used or upgraded wherever possible.  |
| 38  | Engineering activities which may have | The site layout must be designed to avoid impacts upon the water environment. Where activities such as watercourse crossings, watercourse diversions or other  | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Section 10.7 of Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water describes how the site has   |

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|     | adverse effects on the water environment                                       | <p>engineering activities in or impacting on the water environment cannot be avoided then the submission must include justification of this and a map showing:</p> <p>a) All proposed temporary or permanent infrastructure overlain with all lochs and watercourses.</p> <p>b) A minimum buffer of 50m around each loch or watercourse. If this minimum buffer cannot be achieved each breach must be numbered on a plan with an associated photograph of the location, dimensions of the loch or watercourse and drawings of what is proposed in terms of engineering works.</p> <p>c) Detailed layout of all proposed mitigation including all cut off drains, location, number and size of settlement ponds.</p> |           | Volume 2: Figure 10.1(a-d) - Local Hydrology and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.4 - Schedule of Permanent Watercourse Crossings. | been designed to avoid impacts upon the water environment, including watercourse crossings. Watercourse crossings discussed in paragraph 10.6.33. Buffer areas around watercourses and other water features are described in paragraph 10.7.18. The site layout, including temporary and permanent watercourse crossings are shown on Volume 2: Figure 10.1(a-d) - Local Hydrology. Also refer to Technical Appendix 10.4 - Schedule of Permanent Watercourse Crossings. |
| 39  | Engineering activities which may have adverse effects on the water environment | If water abstractions or dewatering are proposed, a table of volumes and timings of groundwater abstractions and related mitigation measures must be provided.   | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Abstraction of water for construction activities is not anticipated.   |
| 40  | Engineering activities which may have adverse effects on the water environment | Refer to our flood risk Standing Advice for advice on flood risk. Watercourse crossings must be designed to accommodate the 0.5% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flows, or information provided to justify smaller structures. If it is thought that the development could result in an increased risk of flooding to a nearby receptor then a Flood Risk Assessment must be submitted in support of the planning application. Our Technical flood risk guidance for stakeholders outlines the information we require to be submitted as part of a Flood Risk Assessment. Please also refer to Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) Flood Risk  | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Flood risk discussed in paragraphs 10.6.34 – 10.6.35 and Table 10.6. A Detailed Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment has been scoped out of the assessment.   |

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|     |  | Standing Advice for Engineering, Discharge and Impoundment Activities.  |           |   |  |
| 41  | Disturbance and re-use of excavated peat and other carbon rich soils | The planning submission must a) demonstrate how the layout has been designed to minimise disturbance of peat and consequential release of CO <sub>2</sub> and b) outline the preventative/mitigation measures to avoid significant drying or oxidation of peat through, for example, the construction of access tracks, drainage channels, cable trenches, or the storage and re-use of excavated peat. There is often less environmental impact from localised temporary storage and reuse rather than movement to large central peat storage areas.   | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water, Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment | A detailed programme of peat depth probing has been undertaken and informed the design of the Proposed Development.<br><br>A peat management plan and peat landslide hazard risk assessment are presented as Technical Appendices 10.1 and 10.2.   |
| 42  | Disturbance and re-use of excavated peat and other carbon rich soils | The submission must include:<br>a) A detailed map of peat depths (this must be to full depth and follow the survey requirement of the Scottish Government’s Guidance on Developments on Peatland - Peatland Survey (2017)) with all the built elements (including peat storage areas) overlain to demonstrate how the development avoids areas of deep peat and other sensitive receptors such as Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems.<br>b) A table which details the quantities of acrotelmic, catotelmic and amorphous peat which will be excavated for each element and where it will be re-used during reinstatement. Details of the proposed widths and depths of peat to be re-used and how it will be kept wet permanently must be included. | SEPA      | Volume 2, Figure 8.3(a-e): Priority and Sensitive Habitats and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan.   | Sensitive habitat mapping including identification of locations of GWDTE habitats of high sensitivity are shown in Volume 2, Figure 8.3(a-e): Priority and Sensitive Habitats.<br><br>Figures showing peat depth are included in Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan (See Figures 1.1.1(a-d) and 1.1.2(a-d)). This Appendix also includes a table (Table 5.1) which details the quantities of acrotelmic, catotelmic and amorphous peat that will be excavated and where it will be re-used during reinstatement |



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|     | Disturbance and re-use of excavated peat and other carbon rich soils | To avoid delay and potential objection proposals must be in accordance with Guidance on the Assessment of Peat Volumes, Reuse of Excavated Peat and Minimisation of Waste and our Developments on Peat and Off-Site uses of Waste Peat.  | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan.               | Relevant legislation and guidance documents have been reviewed and considered as part of this assessment, listed in section 10.4 of Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water. Also refer to Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peat Management Plan.   |
| 43  | Disturbance and re-use of excavated peat and other carbon rich soils | Dependent upon the volumes of peat likely to be encountered and the scale of the development, applicants must consider whether a full Peat Management Plan (as detailed in the above guidance) is required or whether the above information would be best submitted as part of the schedule of mitigation.   | SEPA      | Volume 4: Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Management Plan and Technical Appendix 4.1 - Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment | A Stage 1 Peat Management Plan and a Stage 1 Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment are presented as Technical Appendices 10.1 and 10.2 of the EIA Report.  |
| 44  | GWDTE  | <p>GWDTE are protected under the Water Framework Directive and therefore the layout and design of the development must avoid impact on such areas. The following information must be included in the submission:</p> <p>a) A map demonstrating that all GWDTE are outwith a 100m radius of all excavations shallower than 1m and outwith 250m of all excavations deeper than 1m and proposed groundwater abstractions. If micro-siting is to be considered as a mitigation measure the distance of survey needs to be extended by the proposed maximum extent of micro-siting.</p> <p>The survey needs to extend beyond the site boundary where the distances require it.</p> <p>b) If the minimum buffers above cannot be achieved, a detailed site specific qualitative and/or quantitative risk assessment will be required. We are likely to seek conditions securing appropriate mitigation for all GWDTE affected.</p> | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology and in Volume 2, Figure 8.3(a-e): Priority and Sensitive Habitats.               | Sensitive habitat mapping including identification of locations of GWDTE habitats of high sensitivity are shown in Figure 8.3(a-e): Priority and Sensitive Habitats. The Proposed Development has sought to avoid all areas of high sensitivity GWDTE. Measures specific to the avoidance of impacts to GWDTE habitats are included in Section 8.9 of Chapter 8 – Terrestrial Ecology. |

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| 45  | Existing groundwater abstractions | <p>Excavations and other construction works can disrupt groundwater flow and impact on existing groundwater abstractions. The submission must include:</p> <p>a) A map demonstrating that all existing groundwater abstractions are outwith a 100m radius of all excavations shallower than 1m and outwith 250m of all excavations deeper than 1m and proposed groundwater abstractions. If micro-siting is to be considered as a mitigation measure the distance of survey needs to be extended by the proposed maximum extent of micro-siting. The survey needs to extend beyond the site boundary where the distances require it.</p> <p>b) If the minimum buffers above cannot be achieved, a detailed site specific qualitative and/or quantitative risk assessment will be required. We are likely to seek conditions securing appropriate mitigation for all existing groundwater abstractions affected.</p> | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water | This is discussed in Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water and accompanying figures and appendices.   |
| 46  | Forest removal and forest waste   | Proposals for felled forest material must be shown to comply with our Use of Trees Cleared to Facilitate Development on Afforested Land – Joint Guidance from SEPA, SNH and FCS.  | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry                  | <p>Any commercially viable timber will be removed from site.</p> <p>In areas of poor access and uneconomic felling, trees will be mulched. All excess waste created during felling works will be managed under UKFS guidance.</p> |
| 47  | Borrow Pits                       | <p>If borrow pits are proposed the following information should also be submitted:</p> <p>a) A map showing the location, size, depths and dimensions of each pit.</p> <p>b) Justification for the proposed location of each borrow pit and evidence of the suitability of the material to be</p>  | SEPA      | Volume 1: Chapter 3: Project Description.       | Borrow pits and quarries would be required to source stone for the construction of access tracks. Separate planning applications for these works would be sought by the Principal Contractor.                                     |

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|     |   | excavated for the proposed use, including any risk of pollution caused by degradation of the rock.<br>c) A map showing any stocks of rock, overburden, soils and temporary and permanent infrastructure including tracks, buildings, oil storage, pipes and drainage, overlain with all lochs and watercourses to a distance of 250 metres. You need to demonstrate that a site specific proportionate buffer can be achieved. On this map, a site-specific buffer must be drawn around each loch or watercourse proportionate to the depth of excavations and at least 10m from access tracks. If this minimum buffer cannot be achieved each breach must be numbered on a plan with an associated photograph of the location, dimensions of the loch or watercourse, drawings of what is proposed in terms of engineering works. |           |   |   |
| 48  | Pollution prevention and environmental management | A schedule of mitigation supported by the above site specific maps and plans must be submitted. These must include reference to best practice pollution prevention and construction techniques (for example, limiting the maximum area to be stripped of soils at any one time) and regulatory requirements. They should set out the daily responsibilities of ECOWs, how site inspections will be recorded and acted upon and proposals for a planning monitoring enforcement officer.  | SEPA      | Volume 4: Technical Appendix 3.3: Schedule of Mitigation.   | A Schedule of Mitigation is included in the EIA Report as Technical Appendix 3.3.   |
| 49  | Drinking Water Protected Areas                    | "The Aldernaig Burn Catchment supplies Invergarry Water Treatment Works (WTW) and Loch Ness supplies Invermorriston Water Treatment Works (WTW), it is essential that water quality and water quantity in the area are protected."   | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water and Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.3 - Drinking Water Protected Area and Private Water Supply Risk Assessment. | An assessment of potential effects on Drinking Water Protection Areas has been completed and is presented as Technical Appendix 10.3. |

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| 50  | Drinking Water Protected Areas | “The normal list of precautions should be followed for the required mitigations. In the event of an incident occurring that could affect Scottish Water we should be notified immediately using the Customer Helpline number 0800 0778 778.” | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Noted. A commitment to adhere to Scottish Water (SW) best practice guidance for construction and land management practices in DWPA’s and to include SW best practice guidance in the CEMP is made in Section 10.7 of Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water. |
| 51  | Drinking Water Protected Areas | “We would welcome consideration of the precautions specific to protecting drinking water in peatland areas and any opportunities for peat restoration.”  | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water, Volume 4: Technical Appendix 10.1 - Peat Management Plan and Technical Appendix 10.3 - Drinking Water Protected Area and Private Water Supply Risk Assessment. | A Stage 1 Peat Management Plan and a Drinking Water Protected Area and Private Water Supply Risk Assessment are presented as Technical Appendices 10.1 and 10.3 of the EIA Report.  |
| 52  | Drinking Water Protected Areas | “Catchment boundaries derived at this map scale can be subject to uncertainty and groundtruthing may be required to confirm whether borderline infrastructure is within or outside the catchment.”   | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Noted.  |
| 53  | Drinking Water Protected Areas | “The fact that this area is located within a drinking water catchment should be noted in future documentation. Also anyone working on site should be made aware of this during site inductions.”   | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water<br>Volume 4: Technical Appendix 3.6: Outline CEMP.  | Noted. This request will be included in the Final CEMP.   |
| 54  | Drinking Water Protected Areas | “We would request further involvement at the more detailed design stages, to determine the most appropriate proposals and mitigation within the catchment to protect water quality and quantity.”  | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water   | Noted. This request will be included in the Final CEMP.   |

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|     |                                |   |           | Volume 4: Technical Appendix 3.6: Outline CEMP.  |  |
| 55  | Drinking Water Protected Areas | "We would also like to take the opportunity, to request that 3 months in advance of any works commencing on site, Scottish Water is notified at protectdwsources@scottishwater.co.uk."  | SW        | Volume 1: Chapter 10 – Geology, Soils and Water<br>Volume 4: Technical Appendix 3.6: Outline CEMP. | Noted. This request will be included in the Final CEMP.                                  |
| 56  | Base traffic data              | "We note that it is proposed that base traffic data will be obtained from the UK Department of Transport (DfT) website and from the Traffic Scotland database. The source of the data is acknowledged but we would warn against the use of any estimated data from the DfT database."   | TS        | Volume 1: Chapter 12 – Traffic, Access and Transport   | Noted  |
| 57  | Assessment methodology         | "Transport Scotland is satisfied with the proposed methodology and would add that where significant changes in traffic are not noted for any link, no further assessment needs to be undertaken."   | TS        | Volume 1: Chapter 12 – Traffic, Access and Transport   | Noted.   |
| 58  | Trunk road network             | "Transport Scotland would state that any proposed changes to the trunk road network must be discussed and approved (via a technical approval process) by the appropriate Area Manager. We would advise that contact be made with David Devine who is the Area Manager for the A82(T) and the A87(T) as soon as practicable to discuss any trunk road amendments and to discuss the arrangements for the line crossing the A87(T). David can be contacted at david.devine@transport.gov.scot." | TS        | Volume 1: Chapter 12 – Traffic, Access and Transport   | Noted. The Applicant will engage with TS through the technical approval process.         |
| 59  | Upgrades to trunk road network | "For the application, 1:500 scale drawings of any upgrade works affecting the trunk road network should be submitted along with details of proposed traffic management measures and details of  | TS        | Volume 1: Chapter 12 – Traffic, Access and Transport   | Drawings of the proposed access junctions and trunk road crossings will be provided post |

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|     |                            | how the line will cross the A87(T)."   |           |  | determination through the technical approval process.  |
| 60  | Abnormal Indivisible Loads | "The SR indicates that no Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) are associated with development infrastructure, however, should any plant required for the construction be categorised as an AIL, an appropriate assessment should be undertaken. It should be noted that in the event such loads are necessary, Transport Scotland will require to be satisfied that the size of loads proposed can negotiate the selected route and that their transportation will not have any detrimental effect on structures within the trunk road route path." | TS        | Volume 1: Chapter 12 – Traffic, Access and Transport | No AIL traffic is required for the construction phase of the <i>Proposed Development</i> .   |
| 61  | Woodland removal           | "The first consideration for all woodland removal decisions should be whether the underlying purpose of the proposals can reasonably be met without resorting to woodland removal."  | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry                       | The reasoning behind the selection of the proposed alignment of the 400 kV OHL is described in Chapter 2: Routeing Process and Alternatives.   |
| 62  | Woodland removal           | "In line with Scottish Government's wider objective to protect and expand Scotland's woodland cover, applicants are expected to develop their proposal with minimal woodland removal. Woodland removal should be allowed only where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits."  | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry                       | An assessment has been carried out to identify potential effects on forestry and native woodland (including AWI) throughout the route. The supporting Technical Appendix and Annexes to this Chapter also confirm compensatory measures where woodland loss is anticipated.<br><br>Baseline surveys have been carried out to identify high sensitivity areas. Mitigation measures have been applied to minimise the short and long-term impacts. |

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| 63  | Woodland removal | <p>"The following criteria for determining the acceptability of woodland removal should be considered relevant to this application –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodlands with a strong presumption against removal - only in exceptional circumstances should the strong presumption against woodland removal be overridden. Proposals to remove these types of woodland should be judged on their individual merits and such cases will require a high level of supporting evidence. Where woodland removal is justified, the Compensatory Planting (CP) area must exceed the area of woodland removed to compensate for the loss of environmental value.</li> <li>• Woodland removal with a need for compensatory planting - Design approaches that reduce the scale of felling required and/or converting the type of woodland to another type (such as from tall conifer plantation to low-height, slow growing woodland), must be considered from the earliest stages, rather than removing the woodland completely. The purpose of any required CP is to secure, through new woodland on site (replanting) or off site (on appropriate sites elsewhere), at least the equivalent woodland-related net public benefit embodied in the woodland to be removed.</li> </ul> | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry | <p>An assessment has been carried out to identify potential effects on forestry and native woodland (including AWI) throughout the route. The supporting Technical Appendix and Annexes to this Chapter also confirm compensatory measures where woodland loss is anticipated.</p> <p>Baseline surveys have been carried out to identify high sensitivity areas. Mitigation measures have been applied to minimise the short and long-term impacts.</p> |
| 64  |                  | Adopted and published by Scottish Ministers on Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2023, National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) - Policy 6 Forestry, Woodlands and trees identifies several themes that should be considered relevant to this application.  | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry | The NPF4 will be adhered to throughout the assessment.  |
| 65  |                  | SF strongly advises the developers to ensure that any proposed changes to woodland address the requirements  | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry | Compensatory planting requirements and potential windthrow effects form part of the forestry assessment and   |

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|     |                    | of the Control of Woodland Removal Policy and other relevant guidance.   |           |                                    | associated Technical Appendix and Annexes.   |
| 66  | Woodland removal   | " Scottish Forestry acknowledges the developer's commitment to include detailed information on the types and areas of forestry to be felled and restocked as a result of the proposed development. Detailed information on any compensatory planting proposals should also be provided. All felling, restocking and compensatory planting proposals must be compliant with the UK Forestry Standard. <a href="https://forestry.gov.scot/sustainable-forestry/ukfs-scotland">https://forestry.gov.scot/sustainable-forestry/ukfs-scotland</a> "   | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry     | Any additional felling undertaken out with the OC would be solely under the control of the relevant landowner (and not the Applicant). It is the intention of the Applicant to encourage the landowners to follow good practice in terms of redesign of their current LTTPs which in-turn would aim to follow UKFS for the implementation of the works required. |
| 67  | Woodland removal   | "The applicant should note that any compensatory planting required as a result of the proposed development, may also need to be considered under The Forestry (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. ( <a href="https://forestry.gov.scot/supportregulations/environmental-impact-assessment">https://forestry.gov.scot/supportregulations/environmental-impact-assessment</a> ) and should follow the process for preparing a woodland creation proposal, as set out in our guidance booklet: Woodland Creation Application Guidance ( <a href="https://forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/woodland-creation">https://forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/woodland-creation</a> )" | SF        | Volume 1: Chapter 14: Forestry     | A separate application will be submitted to SF for a formal opinion on whether consent is required to undertake Compensatory Planting.   |
| 68  | Telecommunications | "Having conducted analysis on the Coire Glas Grid Connection Project steel lattice towers, we have no significant objections other than to advise that SSE themselves have the link 0929346/1 serving Fort Augustus Substation which could be impacted by the first tower  | JRC       | Chapter 5: Scope and Consultation. | Noted. This will be mitigated through detailed design and micro-siting.  |



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|     |         | specifically (see screen grab) so care should be taken to protect the link during and after construction of this new tower.” |           |                      |          |