

APPENDIX 1.1: MELGARVE CLUSTER: ELECTRICITY ACT (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017: SCREENING OPINION



T: [REDACTED]
E: [REDACTED]

By email only to: [REDACTED]

Date: 20 September 2023

Our Reference: ECU00004850

Dear Teresa,

ELECTRICITY ACT 1989

THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

On 3 July 2023 the Scottish Ministers received a request under regulation 8(1) of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (“the EIA Regulations”) from Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (“the Applicant”) for an EIA screening opinion for a proposed Melgarve Cluster Project - Cloiche and Dell Wind Farm Connections (“the proposed Development”) within Highland Council planning authority area.

Under regulation 9 of the EIA Regulations, the Scottish Ministers are required to adopt a screening opinion for the proposed Development. This letter contains such a screening opinion.

Information Requirements

The EIA Regulations set out (at 8(2)) the information that must accompany any request for a screening opinion. The Applicant submitted a comprehensive description of the infrastructure to be installed and the works to be undertaken; a description of the location, surrounding area and of the area of land on which the proposed Development is proposed, and of environmental sensitivities of such areas; as well as a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be affected. A description of proposed mitigation measures were included in the scoping report and taken into account by the Applicant’s own conclusions regarding the potential for significant environmental effects. A plan was submitted outlining the route plan for the proposed Development, and environmental designations and constraints.

The proposed Development will comprise:

- Approximately 7.0 km of 132 kV Overhead Line (“OHL”) double circuit L7 lattice towers carrying both connections.

Ancillary works comprising:

- Two Cable Sealing End (“CSE”) compounds or two towers with a cable sealing end platform (TBC) to facilitate the transition between OHL and Underground Cables (“UGC”);
- Access tracks to facilitate construction and on-going maintenance where required; and
- Any tree and vegetation clearance (if required).

The proposed development forms part of a wider project that includes:

- Approximately 6.5 km of 132 kV UGC commencing from the proposed Dell Wind Farm on-site substation;
- Approximately 1.5 km of 132 kV UGC commencing from the proposed Cloiche Wind Farm on-site substation; and
- Approximately 0.8 km of two 132 kV UGC running parallel to each other upon final approach into Melgarve substation.

Consultation

Regulation 8(5) of the EIA Regulations sets out that the Scottish Ministers must consult the planning authority as to the planning authority’s views on whether the proposed Development is EIA development, unless the planning authority’s views have already been conveyed to the Scottish Ministers. The Scottish Ministers consulted Highland Council on 4 July 2023. The planning authority responded on 12 September 2023, stating its view that the proposed Development does constitute EIA development.

The planning authority advised in its consultation response that having screened it against the selection criteria outlined in Schedule 3 for impact on the receiving environment (including cumulative impact, pollution, impact on natural resources/the natural environment, environmental quality and the historic environment), it is considered likely to give rise to significant effects. Therefore, the proposed development does constitute 'EIA development' in the opinion of the Highland Council and therefore Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

Highland Council consulted Naturescot who responded on 23 August 2023 to Highland Council stating that they regard the development to have a significant effect on the environment due to:

- The potential for a likely significant effect on the River Spey Special Area of Conservation (“SAC”). Naturescot consider that a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (“HRA”) would be required to consider the potential for direct and indirect impacts to this site and identify mitigation requirements. Any future application may also need to consider other nearby protected areas, as outlined in previous advice for this proposal;
- Its proximity to the Cairngorms National Park. On request Naturescot would be happy to provide more detailed advice on the need or otherwise for a detailed assessment of impacts on the Special Landscape Qualities. To help with this the applicants may wish to provide some sample wirelines from key viewpoints;
- The potential for impacts to priority peatland habitats. The proposal crosses a significant area of blanket bog habitat. Further advice on survey and assessment requirements, as well as mitigation, compensation and enhancement, are available in updated peatland guidance, see: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/advising-peatland-carbon-rich-soils-and-priority-peatland-habitats-development-management>; and
- The potential for impacts to wider countryside birds.

Scottish Ministers' Screening Opinion

EIA development is defined in the EIA Regulations, in respect of an application for consent under the Electricity Act 1989, as Schedule 1 development or Schedule 2 development likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location.

The proposed Development falls under Schedule 2 development.

In adopting a screening opinion as to whether the proposed Development is EIA development, the Scottish Ministers must in all cases take into account such of the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations as are relevant to the proposed Development, and the available results of any relevant assessment.

The Scottish Ministers have taken into account the selection criteria, all of the information submitted in respect of the request for a screening opinion, and the views of Highland Council and Naturescot and adopt the opinion that **the proposed Development does constitute EIA development and any forthcoming application for consent (under section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989) does require to be accompanied by a full Environmental Impact Assessment report.**

The planning authority's consultation response to the screening consultation is attached to this letter. In accordance with Regulation 7(2), this screening opinion is accompanied by the following written statement with reference to the selection criteria within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations as are relevant to the proposed Development. In accordance with the EIA Regulations, a copy of the screening opinion has been issued to the planning authority.

Written Statement

Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The proposed Development is described above. Having considered the information provided in the screening request, and the information provided by the planning authority and Naturescot, Scottish Ministers do not consider that there are likely to be significant effects with regards to the production of waste, risk of accidents or risk to human health.

In terms of the effect on natural resources then there is a potentially significant impact on blanket bog and class 1 and 2 peat noting that mitigation measures have been proposed by the applicant. The proposed development is part of a larger project including underground cabling and potential cumulative effects are identified both as part of the larger project and the proposed Dell and Cloiche windfarms.

Location of the Proposed Development

The existing land uses around the site are the Stronelairg Windfarm and the Glendoe Hydroelectric scheme. The proposed land uses are the Cloiche and Dell windfarms.

There are a number of protected areas close to the site. The Cairngorms National Park Boundary lies approximately 2.2.km to the South East, The River Spey SAC is approximately 0.3km South. Creag Meagadiah SAC is approximately 1.5km South and the Creag Meagadiah Special protection Area ("SPA") lies approximately 1.3 km South. The Mondalith SAC and Site of Special Scientific Interest ("SSSI") are located approximately 2.3km East. Ness Woods SAC is approximately 5 km West. Loch Knochkie and Lochans SPA is approximately 4 km West.

Designated assets within 3.8 km of the proposed development include two listed buildings Garva bridge and Garvamore Barracks and the Scheduled Monument Corrieyairack Pass is approximately 3.8 km West.

In terms of ornithology there are 11 Schedule 1 species and walkover studies have been conducted with regard to protected species and will be used to form an Ecological Impact Statement.

There are what the applicant describes as small and discrete areas of the proposed development susceptible to flooding. The proposed Development would be subject to a HRA as the River Spey SAC is hydrologically linked.

Characteristics of the Potential Impact

Scottish Ministers do not consider that proposed development will extend over a large area or is unusual given the existing land uses. The impact will be permanent and a number of mitigation measures have provided by the applicant.

There is the potential for a large change in environmental conditions in terms of hydrological changes, landscape and visual changes and the impact on peat, some of which is nationally important in terms of being class 1 or 2 . It is considered the effect may be particularly complex

given the cumulative development with the larger project, existing and proposed land uses and the proximity of the Cairngorms National Park and a number of protected areas.

Naturescot consider that there is the potential for a likely significant effect on the River Spey SAC and any future application may need to consider nearby protected areas. The Highland Council recognise in terms of the nature of the impact that the proposal is close to a number of protected areas. It is also recognised that the proposed site is dominated by blanket bog containing a large amount of class 1 peat within the central and Northern Areas, with a much smaller area of Class 2 peatland to the west of Sherramore Forest to the south of the site.

On the basis of the information submitted, the Scottish Ministers therefore conclude that the effects of the proposed Development are likely to be significant and that an Environmental Impact Assessment report is required.

Proposed Mitigation Measures to Avoid or Prevent Significant Adverse Effects:

- Best practice construction measures;
- General Environmental management plans;
- Species protection plans;
- Construction environment management plan;
- Biodiversity net gain toolkit;
- Design which limits potential landscape and visual effects;
- Landscape and visual impact assessment;
- Prior consideration of potential significant effects on habitats and species;
- Information to inform an appropriate assessment;
- Pre-checks for nesting birds;
- Siting to avoid significant effects on soils geology and the water environment;
- Construction traffic management plan;
- Design of suitable access arrangements;
- Staff sustainable access plan; and
- Ecological Impact Statement.

This screening opinion does not constitute pre-application advice and is provided without prejudice to the assessment of any future application under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.

Yours sincerely

Ian Black

**Energy Consents Unit
(A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers)**

Scottish Government
Per Ian Black
Energy Consents Unit

Please ask for / Foighnich airson: Harry Goacher

Direct Dial / Àireamh fòn: [REDACTED]

Email / Post-d: [REDACTED]

Our Ref / Ur n-àireamh-iùil:
Your Ref.

23/03221/SCRE

Date / Ceann-là:

12 September 2023

By e-mail to: [REDACTED]

cc: [REDACTED]

**ELECTRICITY ACT 1989.
THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2017**

Dear Ian

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL PLANNING REFERENCE: 23/03221/SCRE
PROPOSAL: MELGARVE CLUSTER PROJECT – APPROXIMATELY 7KM OF 132KV OHL AND
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO CONNECT THE PROPOSED CLOICHE AND DELL WIND
FARMS TO THE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION NETWORK AT MELGARVE SUBSTATION.
LOCATION: LAND 10KM NW OF COUL FARM HOUSE, LAGGAN.**

Thank you for consulting The Highland Council (THC) for our Screening Opinion on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Request for the above project under Regulation 8 of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (hereafter referred to as 'the 2017 Regulations'), which we received on 4 July 2023.

Screening Opinion

It is considered that **Environmental Impact Assessment IS required** for the development described in the letter and information accompanying your screening request.

The rationale behind this screening opinion is as follows:

1. The proposal does not constitute Schedule 1 development under the Regulations; and,
2. The proposal does fall within the definition of 'Schedule 2 development' for the construction and operation of a 7km 132kV overhead line and associated infrastructure to connect the proposed Cloiche and Dell wind farms to the electricity transmission network at Meglarve substation. Having screened it against the selection criteria outlined in Schedule 3 for impact on the receiving environment (including cumulative impact, pollution, impact on natural

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resources/the natural environment, environmental quality and the historic environment), it is considered likely to give rise to significant effects. Therefore, the proposed development does constitute 'EIA development' in the opinion of the Highland Council and therefore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required.

Our assessment against the criteria of Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations accompanies this letter for your reference.

We would therefore request that the applicant is requested to consider the potential impacts on the following criteria:

- Landscape and Visual Impacts
- Impacts on peat
- Landscaping
- Reinstatement and restoration
- Environmental management during construction including pollution protection measures and mitigation of impacts from vibration, lighting, and noise
- Ecology and ornithology, including impacts on nearby designated sites and protected species
- Habitat and biodiversity enhancement
- Roads and transport impacts
- The historic environment – archaeology
- Flood risk and drainage impacts
- Impacts on the water environment

Alterations to the Development as Proposed

If the scale, character, location and/or impact potential of the proposed development changes at any point in future, a reassessment of the need for EIA may be required. You are therefore advised to contact us to discuss any alterations to the proposal at an early stage and prior to the submission of a planning application.

Additional Guidance and Considerations

You may also wish to read our own advice and guidance on renewable energy developments, copies of which are available via: [http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/198/planning - long term and area policies/152/renewable energy/2](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/198/planning_-_long_term_and_area_policies/152/renewable_energy/2)

Should you require any further information or clarification on any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Yours sincerely,

Harry Goacher

Graduate Planner – Strategic Projects Team

Please Note: This screening opinion does not constitute pre-application planning advice. The merits of the proposed development have not been assessed, nor has its acceptability in terms of material planning considerations and development plan policy.

EIA SCREENING CHECKLIST

Land 10km NW of Coul Farm House
Laggan

Decision: EIA required

Section 1: Project Information

Please Describe	
Address or location of proposed development	Land 10kn NW of Coul Farm House Laggan
Site area	Unknown
Brief description of the proposed development	Approximately 7km of 132kV OHL and associated infrastructure to connect the proposed Cloiche and Dell Wind Farms to the electricity transmission network at Malgarve substation.
Type of Application (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Application for planning permission
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application for planning permission in principle
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application for the approval of matters specified in conditions
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other permissions – please state: EIA Screening Request Section 37 Consent Road Authority Consents



Section 2a: Single Stage Consent Application

Yes/No – Please Describe	
Is the proposed development of a type listed Schedule 2?	Yes – Section 2(a) an electric line installed above ground – with a voltage of 132 kilovotls or more.
Is the proposed development to be located within a 'sensitive area' listed under Schedule 2(b)?	No.

Section 2b: Multi Stage Consents (complete where relevant)

Where the proposed development is of a type listed in Column 1 of Schedule 2 and either:
- is located wholly or in part within a sensitive area; or
- meets any of the relevant thresholds and / or criteria in Column 2 of Schedule 2
it will be necessary to consider whether the proposed development is likely to have significant environmental effects. In determining whether a proposed development is likely to have such effects, account must be taken of the selection criteria in Section 3 of this checklist.

Section 3: Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development

There are two stages to this section of the checklist:

- First, identifying the potential impacts of the proposed development based upon the characteristics of the development and its location.
- Secondly, considering whether significant environmental effects are likely based upon the characteristics of the potential impacts.

Selection Criteria	Yes/No	Briefly describe potential impact	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Please explain
1. Characteristics of the Development			
(a) Size and design of the development			
Will the proposed development be out of scale with the existing environment?	No	The proposal will be minimal in scale when compared to the existing landscape and environment.	The proposed development will not be out of scale within the existing environment due to the site being located within a rural landscape and positioned south of the proposed Cloiche Wind Farm turbines and the constructed Stronelaig Wind Farm turbines. The Landscape Character Type is considered to have capacity to accommodate this infrastructure.
(b) Cumulation with other existing and/or approved development			
Will the proposed development lead to further consequential development or works?	Yes	The addition of sections of underground cable to complete the connections.	The underground cable has been proposed within considerable areas of Class 1 peatland. Significant.

Selection Criteria	Yes/No	Briefly describe potential impact	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Please explain
<p>Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development, approved developments or developments the subject of valid applications?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Landscape and visual impacts, additional impacts on peatland, the water environment, habitats and protected species, and access tracks for construction.</p>	<p>There is potential to cause a cumulative landscape and visual impact when seen in combination with the existing Beaully to Denny line.</p> <p>The environmental impact of the proposal are considered likely to be within acceptable limits with embedded mitigation, with a Construction Environment Management Document (CEMD) and additional environmental information likely to be required and secured by condition.</p> <p>Access to the site may be a cause for concern due to no existing roads, tracks or alternative access routes being outlined by the developer.</p> <p>Potentially significant.</p>
<p>Should the application for the proposed development be regarded as an integral part of a more substantial project? If so, can related developments which are subject to separate applications proceed independently?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This proposal is to be part of the overall development, within the remaining development to be underground cabling.</p>	<p>This proposal will be directly connected to underground cabling which will complete the overall project development.</p> <p>Potentially significant.</p>
<p>(c) Use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity</p>			

Selection Criteria	Yes/No	Briefly describe potential impact	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Please explain
Will the proposed development use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or are in short supply?	Yes	Land take and raw materials.	Priority peatland (Class 1 and 2) are located within the proposed development site which are proposed to be developed over. The site covers considerable areas of blanket bog habitats and priority peatland habitats Highly significant.
(d) Production of waste			
Will the construction, operation or decommissioning of the proposed development produce wastes?	Yes	Construction and decommissioning phases have potential to generate surplus materials.	Construction management practices to follow legislation and guidance, a CEMD would be required to ensure environmental impacts are within acceptable limits. Recommend that surplus materials to be reused, recycled, or disposed to an authorised site TBC. Not significant.
(e) Pollution and nuisances			
Will the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the proposed development release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to the air?	Yes	Construction and decommissioning emissions.	Vehicle emissions can be managed through onsite practices as agreed through a CEMD. Impact is not considered to reach the threshold of EIA. Following construction, there will be very limited traffic movements to the site for maintenance purposes; there will be limited emissions to the air. Not significant.

Selection Criteria	Yes/No	Briefly describe potential impact	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Please explain
Will the construction, operation or decommissioning of the proposed development lead to risk of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants?	Yes	Potential for waste during construction and decommissioning phases, as well as risk of water contamination from potential run-off to the River Spey Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).	There is potential for a likely significant effect on the River Spey SSSI and SAC due to the close proximity from the proposed site. A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) would be required to consider the potential for direct and indirect impacts to the River Spey SSSI and SAC. Pollution risks and events should be managed through onsite practices as agreed through a Construction Environment Management Document (CEMD). Potentially significant.
Will the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the proposed development cause noise, vibration or the release of light?	Yes	Potential for vibration during construction, and operational phases. Potential for noise pollution during all phases, and light pollution during the construction phase.	Vibrations, noise, and light pollution should be managed through onsite practices as agreed through a CEMD and limited by conditions. Not significant.
(f) Risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge			
Will there be any risk of accidents during construction, operation or decommissioning of the proposed development which could affect the environment or human health?	Yes	Transmission of electricity. No additional environmental impacts.	Fire risk to be mitigated by design. Not significant.
(g) Risk to human health			

Selection Criteria	Yes/No	Briefly describe potential impact	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Please explain
Will the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the proposed development involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health?	Yes	Transmission of electricity.	Stringent statutory Health and Safety measures will be implemented during the construction / operation / decommissioning phases of the development by a statutory undertaker. Not significant.

Schedule 3 Selection Criteria	Yes/No	Briefly describe potential impact	Is effect likely to result in a significant effect? Please explain
2. Location of the Development			
(a) Existing and approved land use			
Are there existing and/ or approved land uses in the locality of the proposed development site which could be affected by the proposed development?	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloiche Wind Farm – Proposed • Dell Wind Farm – Proposed • Stronelairst Wind Farm – Constructed 	The most northern towers will be within the proposed Cloiche Wind Farm boundary. Thereafter, the underground cable will run between the three wind farms. Not significant.
(b) Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground			
Are there any areas on or around the location of the proposed development and its underground which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by	Yes	Class 1 and Class 2 peatlands and blanket bog habitat.	The submitted peat probing map indicates that the development will not be constructed on peat greater than 3m deep, however, the proposed development does cross a significant amount of Class 1 and 2 peatlands and blanket bog habitat.

<p>the proposed development?</p>			<p>Class 1 is listed as nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat. Areas are likely to be of high conservation value.</p> <p>Class 2 is considered to be nationally important carbon-rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland. Areas of potentially high conservation value and restoration potential.</p> <p>Highly significant.</p>
<p>(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment</p>			
<p>Are there any areas on or around the application site that are protected under international or national legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural heritage or other value which could be affected by the construction, operation or decommissioning of the proposed development?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cairngorms National Park is approximately 2.6km E of the proposed development. • Scheduled Monument Corrieyairack Pass (SM6129) approximately 3.8km W; • Category A Listed Garva Bridge (LB6900) approximately 2.1km E; • Category A Listed Garvamore "barracks" (LB6899) approximately 2.9km E; 	<p>The proposal has the potential to give rise to significant adverse landscape and visual impacts within the adjacent Cairngorm National Park.</p> <p>The development is outwith natural heritage designations but may significantly impact the qualifying interests of those in the vicinity, especially regarding landscape and visual effects and potential risk of contamination to the River Spey SAC.</p> <p>Ecological surveys will be required and NatureScot will be consulted at the application stage. Construction impacts can be mitigated by proper implementation of a CEMD. Further impacts can be mitigated through design, consultation with appropriate agencies, and managed through conditions.</p> <p>The Council's archaeologist will be consulted on any archaeology potential.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category B Listed Melgarve, Corrieyairack Pass (LB12373) approximately 3.3km W; • Category B Listed Corrieyairack Pass (LB6895) approximately 3.8km W; • River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) approximately 0.3km S; • Creag Meagaidh SSSI and National Nature Reserve (NNR) approximately 1.5km S; • Monadhliath SAC and SSSI approximately 2.3 E (within the Cairngorms National Park); • Ness Woods SAC approximately 5km W; 	Potentially significant.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glen Tariff SSSI approximately 5km W; and • Glendoe Lochans SSSI and Loch Knockie and nearby Lochs SPA approximately 4.7km NW; 	
<p>Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology which could be affected by the proposed development? Particular attention should be paid to the following areas:</p> <p>wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</p> <p>(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;</p> <p>(iii) mountain and forest areas;</p> <p>(iv) nature reserves and parks.</p>	Yes	<p>Loch Knochie and nearby Lochs Special Protection Area (SPA) approximately 3.8km W of the proposed development.</p> <p>Due to the amount of watercourses nearby, the development may impact the water environment which during the construction phase.</p>	<p>A flood risk and drainage impact assessment, a drainage strategy, as well as a pollution prevention strategy and habitat management plan should accompany the application with any impacts on the water environment fully assessed and mitigated against through the proper implementation of the CEMD.</p> <p>Any works in relation to the water environment will require a CAR Licence from SEPA, who will be consulted on the application.</p> <p>Potentially significant.</p>
<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora which could be affected by the proposed development?</p>	No	No additional sensitive sites to those listed above.	N/A

Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources which could be affected by the proposed development?	No	N/A	N/A
Are there any areas on or around the location of the proposed development where environmental quality standards are already exceeded which could be affected by the proposed development?	No	N/A	N/A
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated which could be affected by the proposed development?	No	No	The nearest densely populated settlement of Fort Augustus is approximately 13km NE from the closest overhead line tower. Not significant.
Is the proposed development in a location where it is likely to be visible to many people?	No	The proposed development is not close to major roads. However it is approximately 2.6km W of the Cairngorms National Park and is close to walking routes, including the Corrieack Pass.	The closest core path (BS08.01) to the proposed development is approximately 7.2km SW from the closest overhead line tower. General Wade's Military Road is approximately 0.1km S of the closest overhead line tower. From the indicative zone of theoretical visibility drawing that has been submitted with this screening application, approximately 4.7km of the 7km overhead line running north from the Melgarve substation will be considerably visible from the east. However the theoretical visibility drawing does not provide an adequate study area to determine visibility from elsewhere within the Cairngorms National Park. This information would need to be provided to demonstrate a realistic impression of what the landscape and visual

			impacts of this proposed development would be. Potentially significant.
Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the proposed development?	No	As above.	General Wade's Military Road is used as an access road. Potentially significant.
Are there any areas of local landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the proposed development?	Yes	The Cairngorms National Park.	The Cairngorms National Park is approximately 2.6km E of the proposed development at the closest point. Potentially significant.
Are there any areas of features of historic, cultural or archaeological value on or around the location which could be affected by the proposed development?	Yes	Four listed buildings and one Scheduled Monument along General Wade's Military Road.	Scheduled Monument: Corrieyairack Pass, military road, Melgarve to Allt Ruadh (SM6129) and Category B Listed Corrieyairack Pass, Melgarve, Drummin Bridge Over Caoehan Riabhaeh Burn (LB6895) approximately 3.8km W of Malgarve Substation; Category B Listed Melgarve, Corrieyairack Pass, Bridge Over Allt Feith A Mhoraire (LB12373) approximately 3.3km W of Malgarve Substation; Category A Listed Garvamore, Garva Bridge Over River Spey (st George's Bridge) (LB6900) approximately 2.1km E of Malgarve Substation; and Category A Listed Garvamore "barracks" (LB6899) approximately 2.9km E of Malgarve Substation. Unlikely to be significant.

Is the proposed development location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions?	No	N/A	N/A
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Schedule 3 Selection Criteria

3. Characteristics of the Potential Impact

(a) Magnitude and special extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)

Will the effect extend over a large geographical area, affecting many people and resulting in social changes, e.g. in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?

No

(b) Nature of impact

Is the development located within or close to any other areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which would be significantly affected by the development?

Yes – Cairngorms National Park (CNPA) ; Monadhliath SSSI, SAC and Wild Land Area (WLA); River Spey SSSI and SAC; Ben Alder, Laggan and Glen Canchor (within CNPA) Special Landscape Area (SLA); Loch Knockie and nearby Lochs Special Protection Area (SPA).

(c) Transboundary nature of the impact

Will there be any potential for transboundary impact?

No

(d) Intensity and complexity of the impact

Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?

No

(e) Probability of the impact

Is there a high or low probability of a potentially highly significant effect?

High

(f) Expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact

Will the effect be permanent, continuous or irreversible?

The site is proposed to be permanent and continuous.

(g) Culmination of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development

Will the Project have cumulative effects, due to its proximity to other existing or planned Projects with similar effects?

Yes but not considered significant.

(h) Possibility of effectively reducing the impact

Will there be any significant adverse effects on any aspect of the environment during the construction and operational phases of the development, has the developer included mitigation measures to avoid, prevent, repair or reduce the potential impact?

Yes – impact on priority peatland and blanket bog habitats. The developer has outlined several mitigation measures that will be adhered to including, but not limited to a Habitat Management Plan, Habitat Regulations Appraisal; General Environmental Management Plan, Construction Environmental Management Plan, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, and Ecological Impact Assessment. Specific mitigation measures are yet to be provided.