

Within Section 9, Potential Alignment 9A has been refined slightly at its western end to reduce impacts to veteran broadleaved trees identified through surveys in this area. Potential Alignment 9A has also been widened slightly near Rehiran, to enable potential micro-siting of tower positions to avoid native woodland once we have completed further peat surveys in this area.

In Section 10, Potential Alignment 10B has been refined at its eastern end due to a slight change in an angle tower position following engineering surveys, to increase the distance from a nearby watercourse.

In response to consultation feedback, Potential Alignment 11C has been refined slightly to the east of the River Findhorn, to increase separation distance from residential properties

**Route Section 5
(Alignment Section 12)
– Ferness to south of Forres**

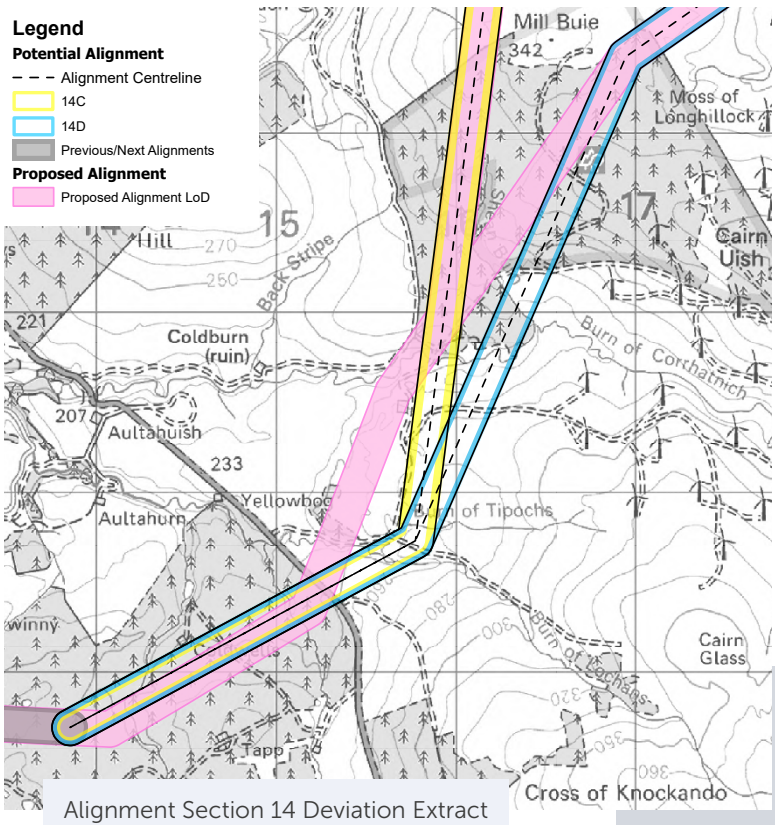
The Potential Alignment 12A will be taken forward as the Proposed Alignment. No changes have been made to the Potential Alignment 12A.

**Route Section 6
(Alignment Sections 13 and 14)
– south of Forres to Kellas**

Following review of consultation feedback, Potential Alignment 13C has been refined slightly to the south of Mill Buie to reduce impacts to future development potential in this area.

Within Section 14, we identified two alignment deviations (Alignment 14F and 14G) in response to consultation feedback received in this area. The deviations move the alignment further from a residential property and an emergency telecommunications mast and reduce the number of crossings of a main wind farm access route. Further assessment concluded that Alignments 14F and 14G are acceptable from an environmental, engineering and cost perspective in comparison to the Potential Alignments 14C and 14D respectively. Further information is provided in the Alignment Deviations Appraisal in Appendix C.

Alignments 14F and 14G will therefore be taken forward as the Proposed Alignment for EIA and detailed design. It should be noted that only one of the alignments would be constructed, and this is dependent on the outcome of the pending Kellas Drum Wind Farm application for consent (ECU Ref: ECU00003441).



**Route Section 7
(Alignment Sections 15 and 16)
– Kellas to Teindland**

Potential Alignments 15B and 16A have been refined slightly due to minor changes in angle tower positions following engineering surveys.

No changes have been made to Potential Alignment 15C.

Alignments 15B and 15C will therefore be taken forward as the Proposed Alignment for EIA and detailed design. Again, it should be noted that only one of the alignments would be constructed, and this is dependent on the outcome of the pending Kellas Drum Wind Farm application for consent (ECU Ref: ECU00003441).

Alignment 16A will be taken forward as the Proposed Alignment for EIA and detailed design.

**Route Section 8
(Alignment Sections 17 and 18)
– Teindland to Keith**

Based on consultation feedback and further assessments, we have made some changes to the Potential Alignment in Sections 17 and 18.

In response to consultation feedback from Scottish Water with concerns about the close proximity of the Potential Alignment (Alignment 17B) to the Dipple water abstractions (public water supply), we identified an alignment deviation (Alignment 17D) to maintain a greater distance from the abstraction points.

Further assessment concluded that, on balance, Alignment 17D is acceptable from an environmental, engineering and cost perspective in comparison to the Potential Alignment 17B, as Alignment 17B would have unacceptable potential impacts to the Scottish Water drinking water abstractions. However, it is recognised that Alignment 17D may have increased landscape and visual impact in comparison to Alignment 17B, therefore we are exploring opportunities for undergrounding one of the existing transmission OHLs in this section. Further information is provided in the Alignment Deviations Appraisal in Appendix C.

Alignment 17D will therefore be taken forward as the Proposed Alignment for EIA and detailed design.

