

**Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to
Peterhead 400 kV Project
Environmental Impact Assessment Report
Volume 5 | Appendices**

**Appendix 12.1.17: Woodland Report Parcel 13140,
Reelig**



APPENDIX 12.1.17: Woodland Report Parcel 13140, Reelig

1	Introduction.....	2
2	Woodland Property.....	2
3	Development Requirements.....	2
3.1	400 kV Overhead Line Infrastructure Requirements	2
3.2	Access Track Route Design.....	3
4	Woodland Characteristics	3
4.1	Woodland Composition and Site Conditions	3
4.2	Photo Record – Operational Corridor Assessment.....	4
5	Windblow Risk.....	5
6	Woodland Management Impact	5
7	Mitigation Opportunities.....	5
7.1	Woodland Mitigation Measures.....	5
7.2	Restructuring	5
7.3	Restocking	5
8	Net Effect / Summary.....	6
9	Compensatory Planting	6

Appendix Figures

Figure 12.1.17a: Parcel 13140 Location Map

Figure 12.1.17b: Parcel 13140 Proposed Felling Requirements

Figure 12.1.17c: Parcel 13140 Proposed Planting Areas

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix presents information relevant to the Beaulay to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV Overhead Line (OHL) Project (the Proposed Development). It should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, specifically **Chapter 12: Forestry**, for full details of the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2 As part of the EIA, it has been identified that construction of the Proposed OHL Alignment and the associated access tracks would cross several woodland areas within private or publicly owned landholdings.
- 1.1.3 This woodland report has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on Woodland, Parcel 13140, Reelig. It includes the requirements for woodland removal and management recommendations to mitigate the impact of the woodland removal. The report provides an overview of the characteristics of the affected woodland, including woodland composition, site conditions, soil conditions, exposure levels and existing felling approvals. The report also provides details of existing infrastructure, and potential constraints related to forestry operations. It aims to inform decision-making by identifying key environmental and logistical considerations associated with the Proposed Development. Additionally, it evaluates the feasibility of timber extraction and access whilst highlighting necessary mitigation measures to minimise disruption to the woodland ecosystem and surrounding landscape.
- 1.1.4 Field surveys of the woodland areas have been undertaken and have been used to determine the various woodland characteristics, to identify the woodland removal required and recommended. This document also sets out the area quantity hectares (ha) to be compensatory planted to ensure no net loss of woodland is achieved.

2 Woodland Property

- 2.1.1 The landholding property boundaries for Woodland Parcel 13140 are identified in **Figure 12.1.17a: Parcel 13140 Location Map**. The woodlands lie on the lower northern slopes of The Aird in the locality of Reelig, approximately 1.6 km southwest of the settlement of Inchmore and are located at grid reference NH 566591 431600.
- 2.1.2 The woodland in parcel 13140 consists of a stand of regenerating native woodland, establishing after a previous coniferous crop was felled in 2008-2009.

3 Development Requirements

3.1 400 kV Overhead Line Infrastructure Requirements

- 3.1.1 The Study Area for this assessment initially focussed on a 100 m width either side of the centreline of the Proposed OHL Alignment and ancillary infrastructure, where relevant, prior to the identification of an Operational Corridor (OC). The Applicant defines the OC as the area in which it has rights to remove woodland for the purposes of the safe construction, resilience, and continued maintenance of OHLs, or protection of electrical plant as required by the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations (ESQCR) 2002¹ and The Electricity Act 1989². The OC is defined based on two different factors as follows:
- The first factor in which the OC is determined is with reference to the distance at which a tree could fall and cause damage to the OHL, resulting in a supply outage. As a result, the OC width would be based on the safety distance required to allow for a mature tree falling towards the OHL at the mid-point on an OHL span between two towers, taking account of topography and tree height at maturity. Standard falling distance for a mature conifer tree is considered to be a minimum of 45 m. Where the OC passes through areas of

¹ UK Gov (2002). The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002. Available at: [The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002](#)

² UK Gov (1989). Electricity Act 1989. Available at: [Electricity Act 1989](#)

broadleaved woodland, it is noted that the width of woodland removal is likely to be reduced, due to the general lower height and characteristics of the tree species present.

- The second factor that is considered is the maximum distance that the OHL conductors can blow out from the tower under a 1 in 50-year return period wind condition, plus the required electrical clearance distance. This is to ensure that the OHL conductors do not come into contact with, or come close enough to, any object that could result in an electrical clearance infringement. This conductor blowout distance varies between each tower dependent on span length and must therefore be considered on a span-by-span basis.

- 3.1.2 The typical OC required within areas of commercial conifer forestry for a 400 kV OHL is 90 m (i.e. 45 m either side of the centre line). Where the OC passes through areas of broadleaved woodland, it is proposed that the extent of woodland removal is likely to be reduced due to the lower height of the tree species present. The OC for the Proposed OHL Alignment through areas of broadleaved woodland has been reduced to 70 m (i.e. 35 m either side of the centre line of the OHL). This has been based on the likely height of the woodland at maturity. Where any woodland removal within the OC is proposed to be reduced from the 45 m either side of the line, a site-specific assessment must be carried out to confirm that the conductor blowout does not exceed the OC width. If the conductor blowout exceeds the OC, then the width of the OC must be increased to meet the requirements of the blowout assessment as a minimum. This will ensure compliance with ESQCR requirements and that the required safety clearances are maintained.
- 3.1.3 A resilient OC of 70 m in width is required throughout the woodland area within Woodland Parcel 13140 where native woodland is present and taking into account the requirements of the conductor blowout assessment. The OC is illustrated in **Figure 12.1.17b: Parcel 13140 Proposed Felling Requirement**.

3.2 Access Track Route Design

- 3.2.1 A temporary track is proposed within the OC, extending southeast from tower BC5-1 to BC5-2.

4 Woodland Characteristics

4.1 Woodland Composition and Site Conditions

- 4.1.1 The woodland parcel 13140 was surveyed in September 2024. The Proposed OHL Alignment passes through an area of regenerating native woodland on a former plantation site. Between towers BC5-1 and BC5-2 the woodland in this parcel (approximately 15 years old), is densely regenerating with predominantly Downy birch (DBI), with Silver birch (SBI), Rowan (ROW), Scots pine (SP) and Grey Willow (GW).
- 4.1.2 The Ecological Site Classification³ describes the site has a warm, sheltered, and moist climate. The soils have a slightly dry moisture status and very poor nutrient status.
- 4.1.3 The area is sheltered with a maximum Detailed Aspect Method of Scoring (DAMS) score of 9^{3,4}.
- 4.1.4 The National Soil Map of Scotland⁵ indicates the dominant soil type within the site is humus iron podsols soils. However, given the site's historical use as agricultural land, there is a high likelihood that the soil structure has been altered over time.
- 4.1.5 The woodlands do not appear in the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory⁶.

³ Forest Research. Ecological Site Classification, Available at: <http://www.forestdss.org.uk/geoforestdss/>

⁴ The Detailed Aspect Method of Scoring (DAMS) is a system used to assess wind exposure in forestry and land management. It provides a numerical score that quantifies the level of exposure a site experiences based on factors such as elevation, topography, and aspect (the direction a slope faces). The DAMS score helps foresters predict wind risk, which is crucial for understanding tree stability, growth potential, and the likelihood of windthrow (trees being uprooted or broken by wind). The scoring system ranges from 0 to 24, with higher scores indicating more exposure to wind.

⁵ Scottish Government (2024). National soil map of Scotland. Available at: <https://soils.environment.gov.scot/maps/soil-maps/national-soil-map-of-scotland/>

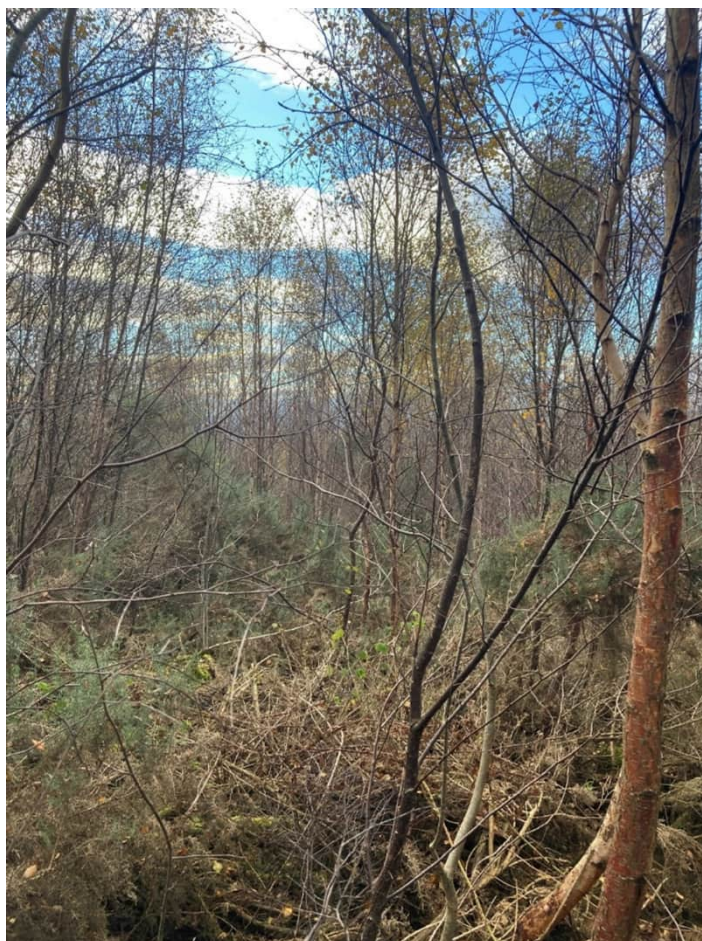
⁶ NatureScot (2023). A guide to understanding the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI). Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/guide-understanding-scottish-ancient-woodland-inventory-awi>

- 4.1.6 The woodlands are not identified in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland⁷.
- 4.1.7 The majority of vegetation in this section of the OC is proposed to be mulched. Larger coniferous and broadleaved trees should be manually felled with tractor extraction. Due to the access restrictions, it is recommended that the proposed temporary access tracks are installed prior to felling to facilitate extraction.
- 4.1.8 The closest public road suitable for haulage of timber within the ownership is the Newton to Kirkhill Road leading to the A862. This is classified as a Consultation Route⁸ by the Timber Transport Forum⁹.

4.2 Photo Record – Operational Corridor Assessment

- 4.2.1 The following photographs provide a visual record of key locations along the OC. Each image illustrates existing vegetation types, land use, and notable landscape features relevant to the planning and management of the OC. Particular attention has been given to areas of mature woodland, natural regeneration, and locations where proposed works may intersect with ecologically or visually sensitive habitats. The photos are intended to support site assessments and inform mitigation strategies.

Photo 1: View at NH 567081 430902 between towers BC5-1 and BC5-2 looking northwest. Showing native woodland of Downy birch, Rowan, and Willow within the OC.



⁷ Native Woodland Survey of Scotland. Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/forests-environment/biodiversity/native-woodlands/native-woodland-survey-of-scotland-nwss>

⁸ Consultation Routes are recognised as being key to timber extraction but are not up to Agreed Route standard. Consultation with the Local Authority is required and it may be necessary to agree limits of timing, allowable tonnage etc. before the route can be used. B roads and minor roads that are not categorised should be assumed to be Consultation Routes unless covered by one of the other classifications (e.g. Severely Restricted Route)

⁹ The Timber Transport Forum. Introduction to Agreed Routes Map. Available at: <https://timbertransportforum.org.uk/agreed-routes-map/introduction-to-agreed-routes-map/>

5 Windblow Risk

- 5.1.1 It is acknowledged that the creation of the OC would result in wider potential indirect effects on the surrounding woodland areas. These areas would be subject to potential increased risk of damage (windblow). Each woodland report identifies further areas of felling to a windfirm edge, defined as 'Management Felling' (categorised as an indirect secondary impact), which is covered in more detail in the **Chapter 12: Forestry** in **Section 12.4**. Management felling would be considered as part of any application for felling permission. This would provide restocking as agreed with Scottish Forestry which would result in balancing the loss of woodland. Any 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 this good practice in terms of redesign of their current Long-Term Forest Plans, which in-turn would aim to follow the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)¹⁰ for the implementation of the works required.
- 5.1.2 There is no risk of windblow being precipitated by the proposed felling within the OC.

6 Woodland Management Impact

- 6.1.1 While tree felling within the OC will result in a reduction in the total area of woodland, this loss is marginal and will not significantly affect overall forest management or access at a larger scale.
- 6.1.2 The Proposed OHL Alignment introduces an electrical hazard, but the constraint associated with the electrical hazard will be reduced by regular maintenance of the OC which will avoid the incidences of "Red Zone" trees (reference Forest Industry Safety Accord, FISA 804 "Electricity at Work: Forestry"¹¹).
- 6.1.3 The total loss of Native Broadleaved woodland resulting from the proposed alignment is 0.82 ha.

7 Mitigation Opportunities

7.1 Woodland Mitigation Measures

- 7.1.1 To mitigate the landscape impact of the Proposed OHL Alignment a re-planting strategy for areas at The Aird has been set out in the 'Landscape Replanting Proposals' in the Landscape chapter as shown in **Figure 12.1.17c: Parcel 13140 Proposed Planting Areas**.
- 7.1.2 Some deadwood should be retained where possible. A proportion of cut trees should be left on-site to enhance biodiversity, providing habitat for insects, fungi, and small mammals.

7.2 Restructuring

- 7.2.1 There is no impact on adjacent coupes or future restructuring of this ticket stage native woodland.

7.3 Restocking

- 7.3.1 As set out in the Landscape chapter under the 'Landscape Replanting Proposals' restocking can take place within the OC to mitigate the visual impact of the OC. Restocking within the OC will be carried out by the applicant as shown in **Figure 12.1.17c: Parcel 13140 Proposed Planting Areas**.
- 7.3.2 It is anticipated that native broadleaved regeneration is likely to occur within the OC, as a result of its proximity to existing seed sources.

¹⁰ Scottish Forestry (2024). UK Forestry Standard (UKFS). Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/publications/sustainable-forestry/uk-forestry-standard-ukfs>

¹¹ Forest Industry Safety Accord (2020), FISA 804 Electricity at Work: Forestry. Available at: <https://ukfisa.com/Safety/Safety-Guides/fisa-804>

8 Net Effect / Summary

- 8.1.1 **Tables 8.1 to 8.4** outline the operational requirements for forestry management within the OC between towers to BC5-1A and BC5-2 within this parcel. They detail the areas designated for clear felling, within the OC and forest design considerations.

Table 8.1: Woodland removal for Infrastructure, within OC

Item	Woodland Type	Area (ha)
OC felling	Native Broadleaved Woodland (70 m)	0.82
Total area		0.82

Table 8.2: Compensatory Planting

Item	Woodland Type	Area (ha)
Compensatory Planting Area	Native Broadleaved Woodland	0.82
Total area		0

Table 8.3: Woodland Removal Impact of Infrastructure

Item	Area (ha)
Total Loss of Woodland Area	0.82
Total Compensatory Planting Area	0.82
Total Net Loss of Woodland Area	0

Table 8.4: Woodland removal for Management Felling, outwith OC

Item	Woodland Type	Area (ha)
Management Felling		0.00
Replanting / Restocking Opportunities		0.00
Net Loss of Woodland Area		0.00

9 Compensatory Planting

- 9.1.1 Only areas directly impacted by the OC will be included in the compensatory planting total, in accordance with the Control of Woodland Removal Policy (CoWRP)¹². This policy ensures that woodland loss due to development is mitigated by appropriate replanting or regeneration efforts, but it specifically applies to areas where tree removal is necessary for the Proposed Development. See **Appendix 12.3 Compensatory Planting Management Strategy**.
- 9.1.2 Any additional felling outside the OC, such as areas cleared for windthrow management or forest design improvements, falls under the responsibility of the landowner and is not included in the compensatory planting requirements. Instead, these areas may be replanted under a forest plan revision or felling license at the landowner's discretion. This approach aligns with national forestry guidelines, balancing infrastructure development with sustainable woodland management.
- 9.1.3 The total amount of net felling requiring compensation under the CoWRP is 0.82 ha.

¹² Forestry Commission Scotland (2009). Control of Woodland Removal Policy. Available at: <https://www.forestry.gov.scot/publications/285-the-scottish-government-s-policy-on-control-of-woodland-removal/viewdocument/285>

- 9.1.4 In order to provide a greater balance limiting long-term impacts on forestry interests it is proposed that the majority of this woodland loss is compensated via off-site compensatory planting within the same local authority area. It is proposed that full details of the areas subject to this off-site compensatory planting is notified to Scottish Forestry prior to energising the OHL.



Legend

- Proposed Tower - 400 kV
- Proposed OHL Alignment - 400 kV
- ▭ Landownership Boundary/Parcel

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO.
Crown copyright and database right 2025 all rights reserved.
Ordnance Survey Licence number 0100022432.
SSEN Transmission take no responsibility for the release or accuracy of latest version Basemaps from Ordnance Survey

Project:
Beauly to Blackhilllock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV
OHL Project

Title:
Figure 12.1.17a Parcel 13140 Location Map

Drawn by: LA

255000

256000

257000

258000

844000

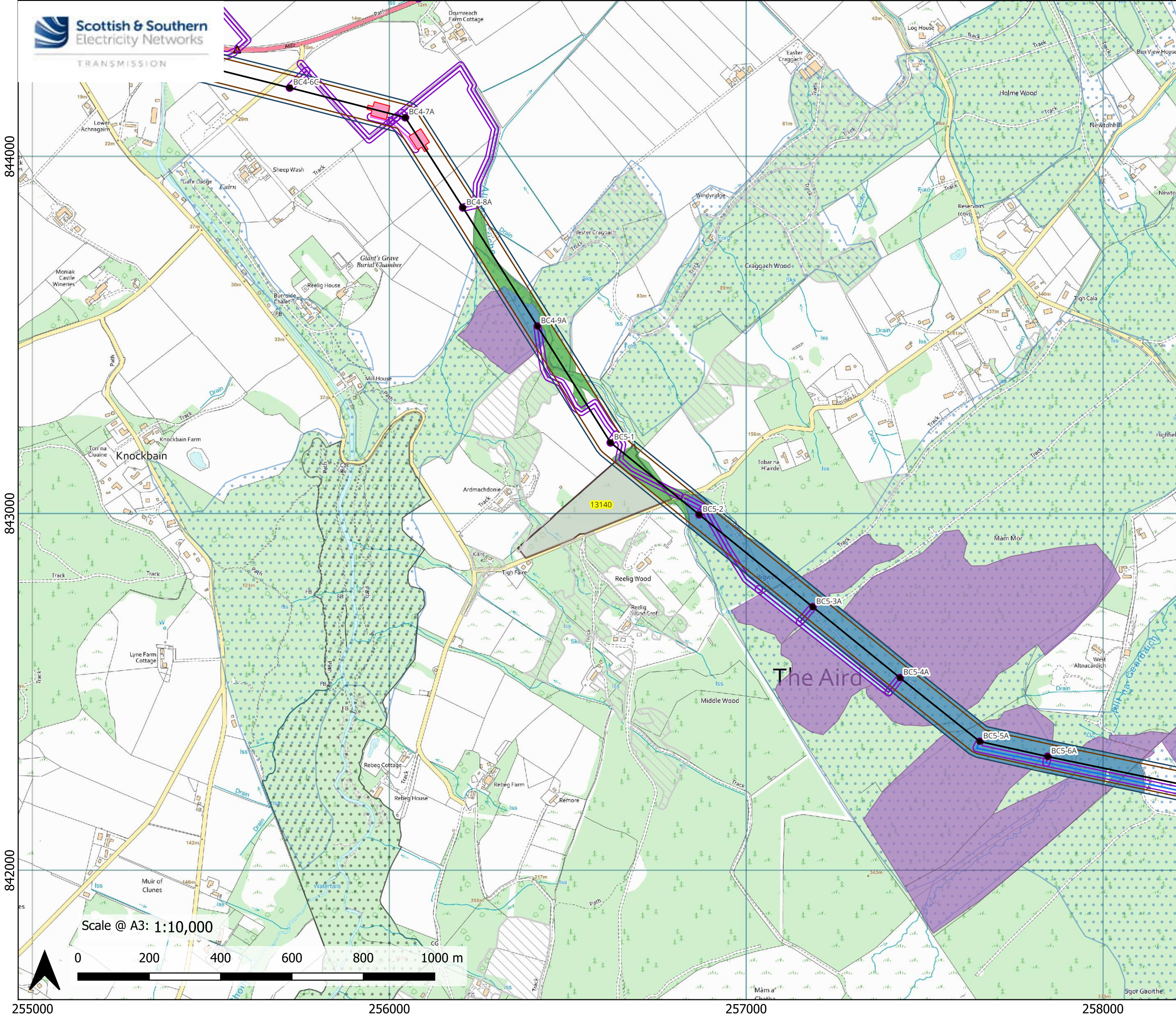
843000

842000

844000

843000

842000



Legend

- Proposed Tower - 400 kV
- Proposed OHL Alignment - 400 kV
- Proposed Conductor Pulling Area (EPZ)
- 70m Operational Corridor - Broadleaved Woodland
- 90m Operational Corridor - Commercial Woodland
- Access Track 20m Buffer

Proposed Bellmouth

- Proposed Bellmouth - Upgrade

Proposed Access Tracks

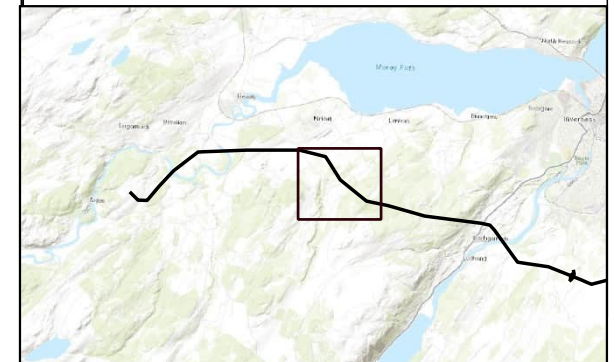
- Proposed Access - ATV or Temporary Trackway
- Proposed Access - Permanent
- Proposed Access - Temporary

Proposed Felling Requirements

- Native Woodland Operational Corridor Felling
- Mixed Conifer Operational Corridor Felling
- Mixed Conifer Management Felling
- Mixed Conifer Access Track Felling
- Native Woodland Crown Reduction
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Native Woodland Survey Scotland (NWSS)

Ancient Woodland Inventory

- Long-Established (of plantation origin)
- Landownership Boundary/Parcel

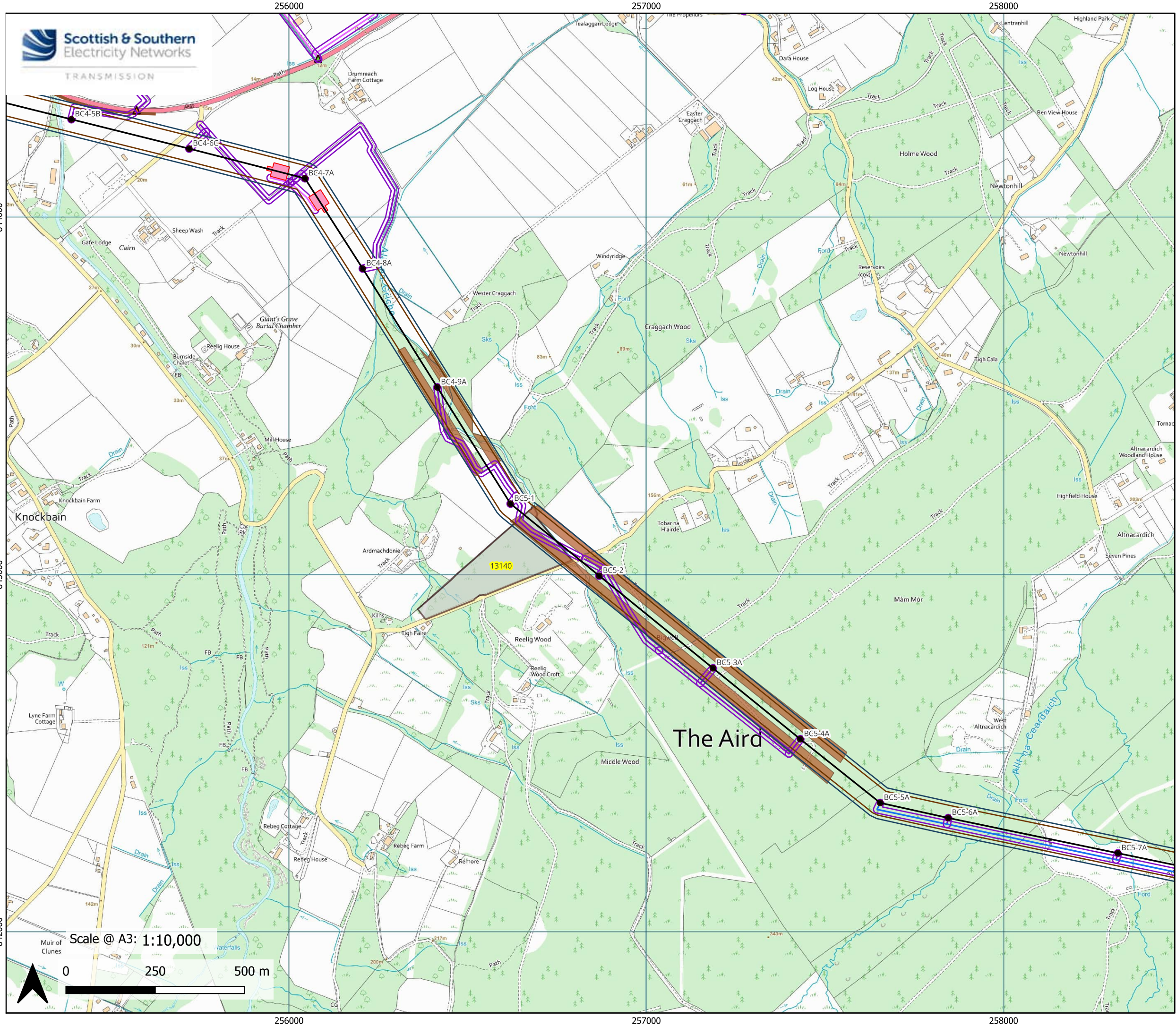


Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO.
Crown copyright and database right 2025 all rights reserved.
Ordnance Survey Licence number 0100022432.
SSEN Transmission take no responsibility for the release or accuracy of latest version Basemaps from Ordnance Survey

Project:
Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV
OHL Project

Title: **Figure 12.1.17b** Parcel 13140 Proposed
Felling Requirements

Drawn by: LA



Legend

- Proposed Tower - 400 kV
- Proposed OHL Alignment - 400 kV
- Proposed Conductor Pulling Area (EPZ)
- 70m Operational Corridor - Broadleaved Woodland
- 90m Operational Corridor - Commercial Woodland
- Access Track 20m Buffer

Proposed Bellmouth

- ▲ Proposed Bellmouth - Access Only/ ATV
- ▲ Proposed Bellmouth - Upgrade

Proposed Access Tracks

- Proposed Access – ATV or Temporary Trackway
- Proposed Access – Permanent
- Proposed Access – Temporary
- Landownership Boundary/Parcel
- Forest Edge Planting Locations
- Roadside Mitigation Planting Locations

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO.
Crown copyright and database right 2025 all rights reserved.
Ordnance Survey Licence number 0100022432.
SSEN Transmission take no responsibility for the release or accuracy of latest version Basemaps from Ordnance Survey

Project:
Beauly to Blackhilllock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV OHL Project

Title:
Figure 12.1.17c Parcel 13140 Proposed Planting Areas

Drawn by: LA