APPENDIX B FORESTRY COMPENSATION TECHNICAL NOTE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 AECOM was requested by Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (operating and known as SSEN Transmission) ('the Applicant') to undertake a forestry inventory analysis for the Revised Scheme at the Bingally substation, to determine the area of woodland removal resulting from the design. This technical note assesses the effects of the Revised Scheme as detailed in the Additional Information Report (AECOM, 2025).

1.1.2 The analysis contained within this technical note employs National Forestry Inventory (NFI) data to assess woodland removal. Categories of land cover within the NFI include, conifer, broadleaf, felled, assumed woodland and windblow.

1.1.3 Design elements requiring adoption of NFI land are presented in Table 1. This is presented for individual design elements of the Revised Scheme and differentiate between permanent and temporary land take. At the request of the Highland Council (THC)[1], the reporting of the contribution of woodland removal in relation to developments associated with the overhead line (OHL), which forms a relatively minor component of woodland removal, is identified separately.

1.1.4 A Landscape and Habitat Management Plan, where on-site compensation planting will be delivered provides a coordinated approach to mitigation and does not treat the OHL separately. The data in Table 1 is supported by an accompanying Figure 1a-e: Area of NFI Woodland Removal within Design Elements of the Revised Scheme.

1.1.5 The 'assumed woodland' within the NFI dataset was principally in areas adjacent to the access track and earthworks and includes 2.33 ha of upland birchwood. However, AECOM's habitat survey data[2] identified the following non-woodland habitats principally occupying these areas (which will consequently not require to be compensated for):

- Purple moor grass and rush pasture;
- Other acid grassland;
- Blanket bog; and
- Bracken.

[1] THC Forestry Officer comments provided on 10 July 2025 in connection with application 25/00592/FUL.

[2] Habitat mapping derived from field survey data prepared by AECOM's ecologists.

2. METHOD

2.1.1 The Revised Scheme was sub-divided into the following permanent and temporary design elements and assessed where they impact on forestry:

Permanent Works

- Access track
- Access track earthworks
- Borrow pit 4
- Peat cell storage area
- SUDS basin
- Substation platform
- Substation platform earthworks
- External peat cells.

Temporary land use

- Northern Temporary Compound (including earthworks and borrow pit 3**)**
- Northern Temporary Compound access track and associated earthworks
- Temporary Platform Compound 1 and associated earthworks
- Temporary Platform Compound 2 and associated earthworks
- Drainage
- Settlement lagoons

Overhead Line

- Access routes including spurs
- Existing tower working area
- OHL temporary working area
- Temporary tower foundation

3. RESULTS

3.1.1 Results of the analysis are presented within Table 1 and presented in Figure 1a-e: Area of NFI Woodland Removal within Design Elements of the Revised Scheme.

Table 1: Area of woodland removal within design elements of the Revised Scheme

Design element	Assumed woodland (ha)	Broadleaf woodland (ha)	Conifer woodland (ha)	Felled woodland (ha)	Windblown woodland (ha)
Permanent design elements					
Access track	1.41	0.40	0	1.58	0
Access track earthworks	2.83	1.56	0	2.77	0
Borrow pit	0	0	0.08	0.32	<0.01
Peat cell storage area	0	0	0	5.43	0
SUDS basin	0	0	0	1.53	0
Substation platform	0	0	0	9.73	0
Substation platform earthworks	0	0	0	5.65	0
External peat cell	0	0	0	1.44	0
Temporary design elements					
Northern Temporary Compound (including earthworks and borrow pit 3)	0	0	0	2.33	0
Northern Temporary Compound access track including earthworks	0	0	0	0.35	0
Compound 1 including earthworks	0	0	0	0.90	0
Compound 2 including earthworks	0	0	0	0.58	0
Drainage	0	0	0.01	1.39	0
Settlement lagoons	0	0	0	1.19	0
OHL Design elements					
Access routes including spurs	0	0	0	0.10	0
Existing tower working area	0.52	0	0	0.68	0
OHL temporary working area	0	0	0	0.46	0
Temporary tower foundation	0	0	0	0.99	0
TOTAL					
Substation: Permanent	4.24	1.96	0.08	28.45	<0.01

Substation: Temporary	0	0	0.01	6.74	0
OHL	0.52	0	0	2.23	0
GRAND TOTAL	4.76	1.96	0.09	37.42	<0.01

3.1.2 The total area of NFI land for all design elements is 44.24 ha, of which 2.75 ha is associated with works on the OHL. Felled woodland accounts for 85 per cent of the NFI land required for the Revised Scheme. Of the assumed woodland, only 2.33 ha had tree cover, identified by ground truthing (based on AECOM's habitat survey data[3]); all was semi-natural birch woodland. Project-wide compensation will be based on the grand total minus that assumed woodland without tree cover (2.43ha) – namely 41.81ha. Within this 39.06 ha is attributable to the Revised Scheme and 2.75 ha for the OHL works. A separate Compensatory Planting Strategy is submitted in the Additional Information Report (Appendix C).

3.1.3 It is not possible to attribute the NFI data between commercial and non-commercial forestry, because they exclude the necessary detail, within some of the categories. However, all the broadleaf woodland is non-commercial, and reasonably all conifer woodland may be considered commercial. It is likely that the previous forest cover of the 'felled woodland' category was commercial forestry.

3.1.4 The woodland removal for all elements is presented in Figure 1a-e, with Figure 1e presenting information in relation to the OHL.

[3] Habitat mapping derived from field survey data prepared by AECOM's ecologists.

Figure 1 Area of NFI Woodland Removal within Design Elements of the Revised Scheme

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34 35

32 31

Scale @ A3: 1:7,500
N
0 50 100 200 300 400 500 m

Legend

National Forestry Inventory - Forestry Habitat Type

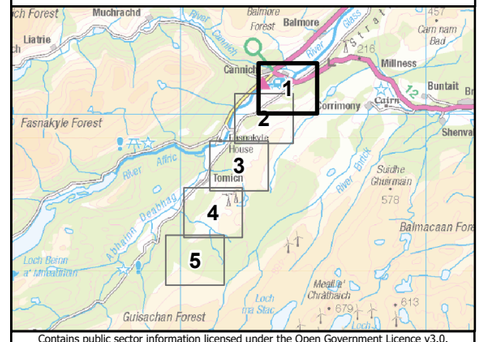
- Assumed woodland
- Broadleaved
- Felled

Permanent Layout

- Access Track
- Access Track Earthworks
- Borrow Pit

Temporary Layout

- Northern Temporary Compound
- Northern Temporary Compound Access Track



Project No: LT000521

Project: Bingally 400kV Substation Upgrade

Title:
Area of NFI Woodland Removal within Design Elements of the Revised Scheme
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Drawn by: JBARR Date: 28/10/2025

Drawing: Figure 1a

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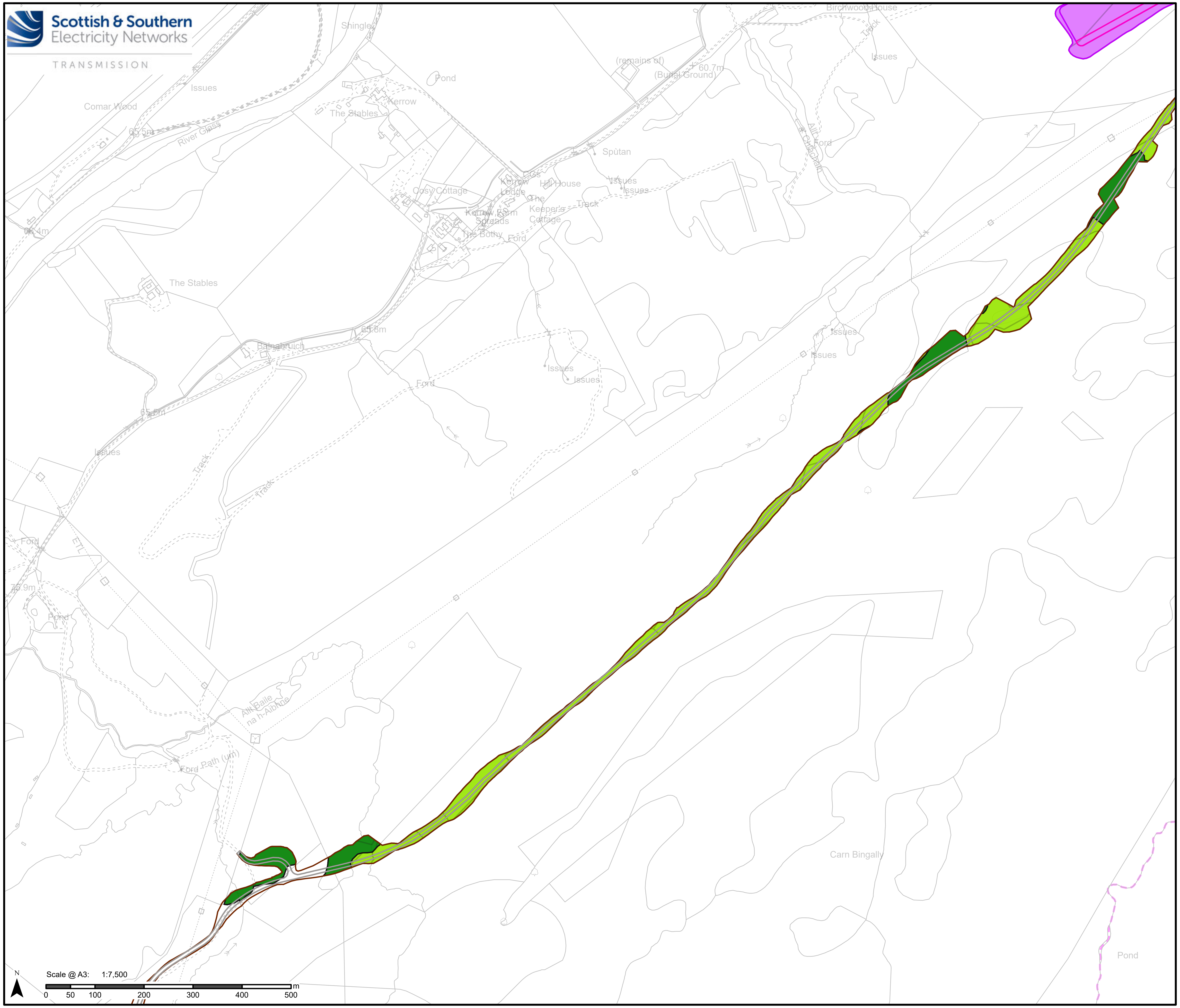
TRANSMISSION



Legend

National Forestry Inventory - Forestry Habitat Type

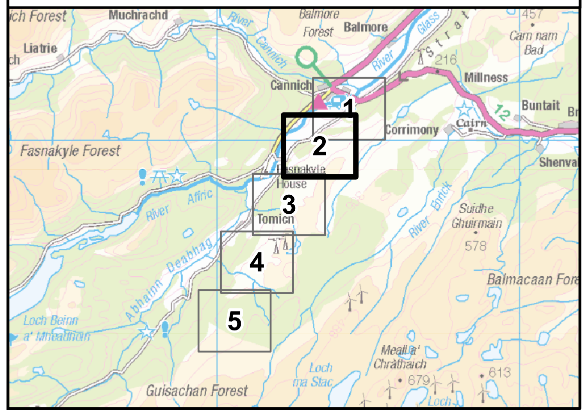
- Assumed woodland
- Broadleaved
- Felled

Permanent Layout

- Access Track
- Access Track Earthworks
- Borrow Pit

Temporary Layout

- Northern Temporary Compound



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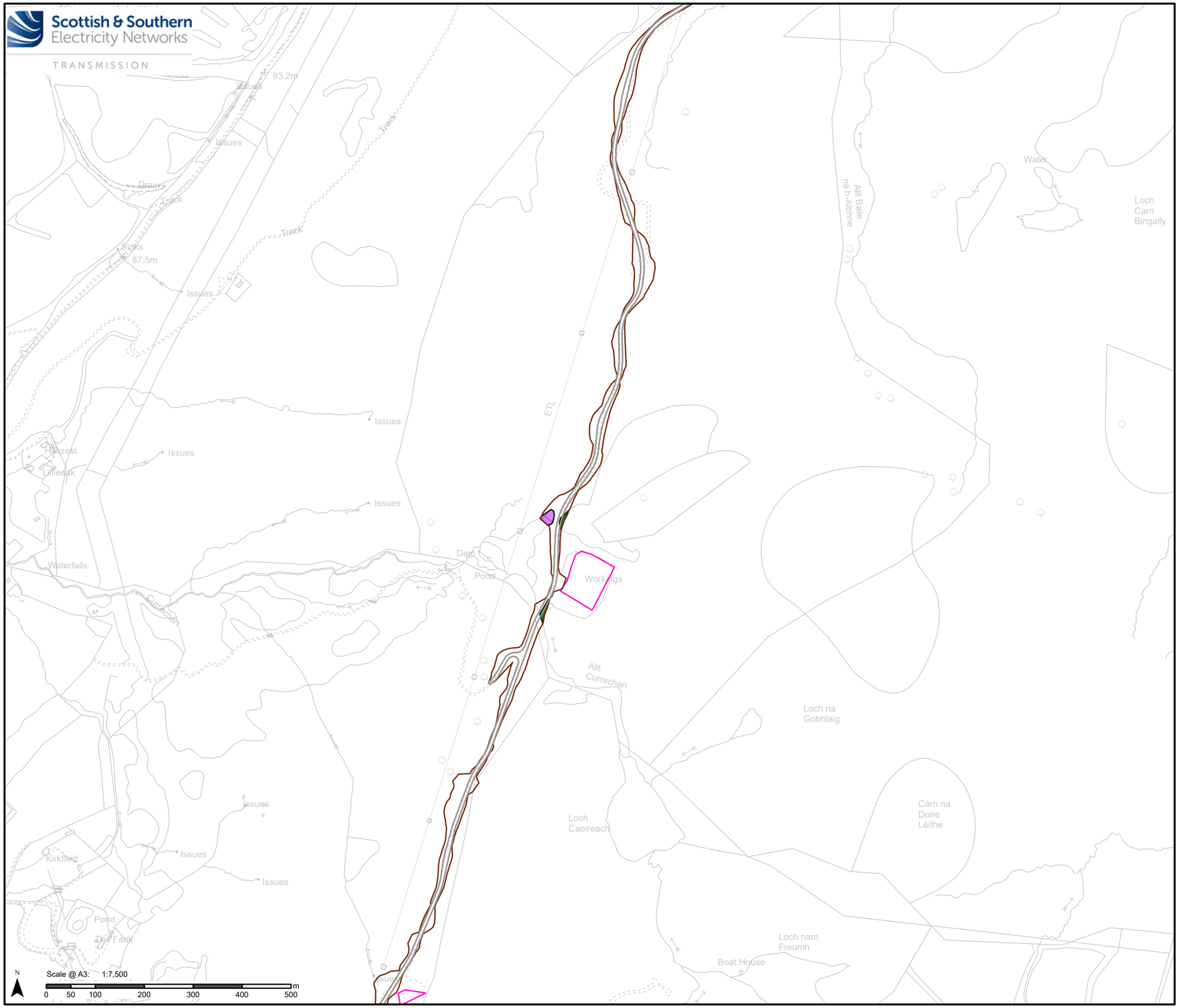
Drawing: Figure 1b



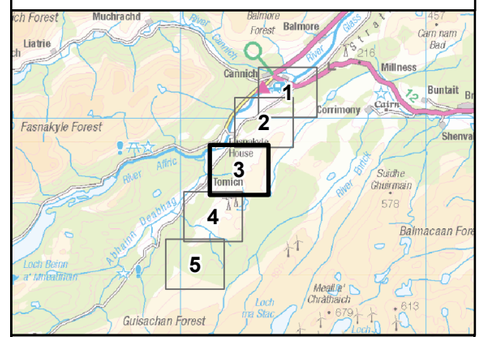
Legend

National Forestry Inventory - Forestry Habitat Type

- Broadleaved
- Felled

Permanent Layout

- Access Track
- Access Track Earthworks
- Borrow Pit



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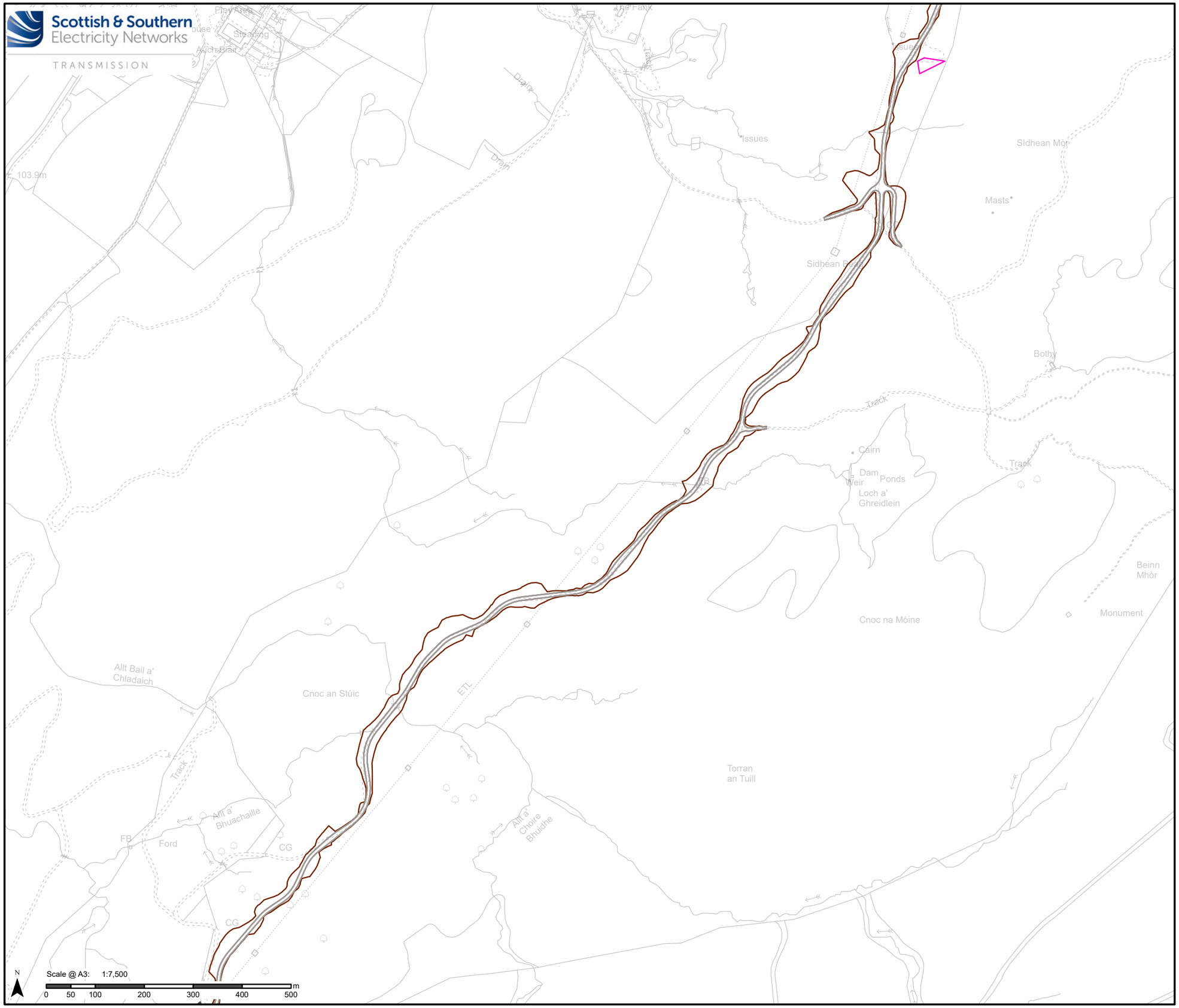
Drawing: Figure 1c



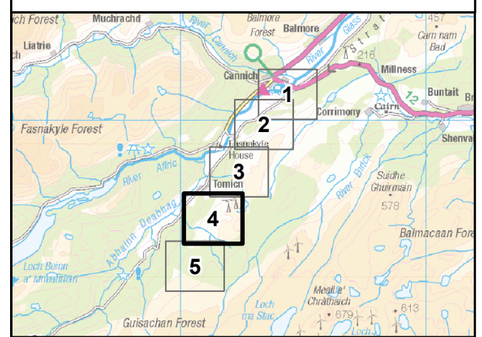
Legend

National Forestry Inventory - Forestry Habitat Type

- Felled

Permanent Layout

- Access Track
- Access Track Earthworks
- Borrow Pit



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Area of NFI Woodland Removal within Design Elements of the Revised Scheme
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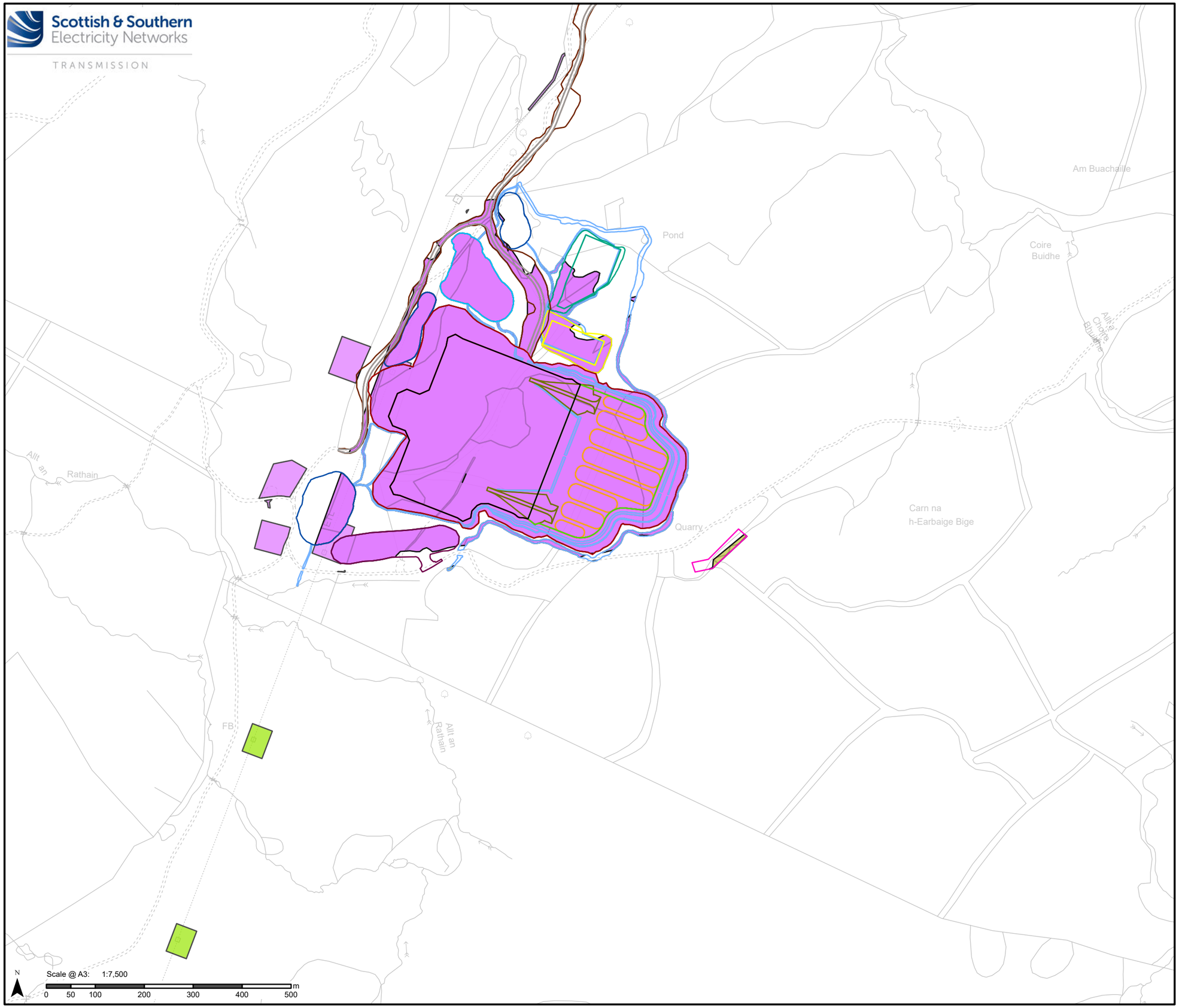
Drawing: Figure 1d



Legend

National Forestry Inventory - Forestry Habitat Type

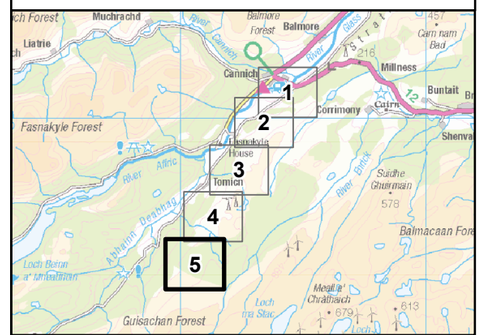
- Assumed woodland
- Conifer
- Felled
- Windblow

Permanent Layout

- Substation Platform
- Substation Platform Earthworks
- Peat Cell Storage Area
- Access Track
- Access Track Earthworks
- Permanent SUDs Basin
- Borrow Pit
- External Peat Cell
- Peat Cell

Temporary Layout

- Temporary Drainage
- Temporary Settlement Lagoon
- Platform Peat Cell Ramp Earthworks
- Temporary Platform Compound 1
- Temporary Platform Compound 2



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Area of NFI Woodland Removal within Design Elements of the Revised Scheme
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Drawing: Figure 1e