



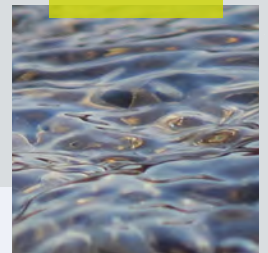
Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

TRANSMISSION

Garvary Wind Farm Connection

Pre-Application Consultation

October 2026



ssen-transmission.co.uk/garvary

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The consultation event will be taking place on:

Thursday 1 October, 4pm–7pm
Bonar Bridge Community Hall, Lairg Road, Bonar Bridge, IV24 3EA



Powering change together



If we want to deliver on clean power and energy security targets and provide power for future generations, upgrades to Scotland’s electricity transmission infrastructure are needed.

The shift to a cleaner, more sustainable future is about more than tackling the impact of climate change, it’s about ensuring that future generations can thrive.

Countries around the world are investing in their energy infrastructure to support increasing electricity demands and to deliver on clean power targets and the UK is leading the way in building a modern, sustainable energy system for the future.

We all have a part to play

The UK and Scottish governments have set ambitious energy security and clean power targets, and we all have a part to play in delivering them.

At SSEN Transmission, we work closely with the National Energy System Operator (NESO) to connect vast renewable energy resources - like solar, wind, hydro and marine generation — to areas of demand across the country. Scotland will play a particularly big role in meeting increasing electricity demand.

But there is more to be done. By 2050, the north of Scotland is expected to contribute more than 50GW of low carbon power to the GB energy system. Today, the region has around 11GW of renewable generation connected to the network.

At SSEN Transmission, it is our role to build the energy system of the future. To do that, we are planning to invest around **£29 billion** in the coming years to upgrade the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland. It’s an investment that will unlock cleaner, more secure energy for homes and businesses now, and for generations to come. **By 2050, annual electricity demand is expected to at least double** - our investment will support the connection of more clean power to meet that demand to the GB electricity network, supporting up to **17,500 jobs in Scotland**, with more than **8,000** of those in the north of Scotland, along the way.

Who we are

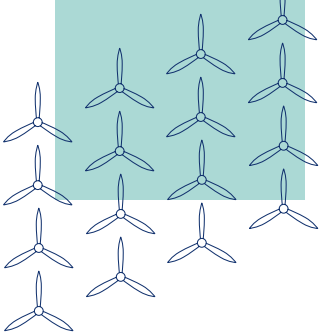
We are responsible for maintaining and investing in the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland. We are part of SSE plc, one of the world’s leading energy companies with a rich heritage in Scotland that dates back more than 80 years. We are also closely regulated by the GB energy regulator Ofgem, who determines how much revenue we are allowed to earn for constructing, maintaining and renovating our transmission network.

What we do

We manage the electricity network across our region which covers a quarter of the UK’s land mass, crossing some of the country’s most challenging terrain. We connect renewable energy sources to our network in the north of Scotland and then transport it to where it needs to be. From underground/subsea cables and overhead lines to electricity substations, our network keeps your lights on all year round.

Working with you

We understand that the work we do can have an impact on communities and we are committed to minimising our impacts and maximising all the benefits that our developments can bring to your area. To do that we provide all the information you need to know about our plans and how they will impact communities like yours. The way we consult is also a two-way street and we want to hear people’s views, concerns, or ideas – and harness local knowledge – so that our work benefits communities today and long into the future. You can share your views with us at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/talk-to-us/contact-us/



Project overview

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission) propose to construct and operate a 132 kilovolt (kV) underground cable (UGC) to connect the consented Garvary Wind Farm to the existing Loch Buidhe substation.

This consultation event is related to the proposed underground cable between Garvary Wind Farm and Loch Buidhe substation.

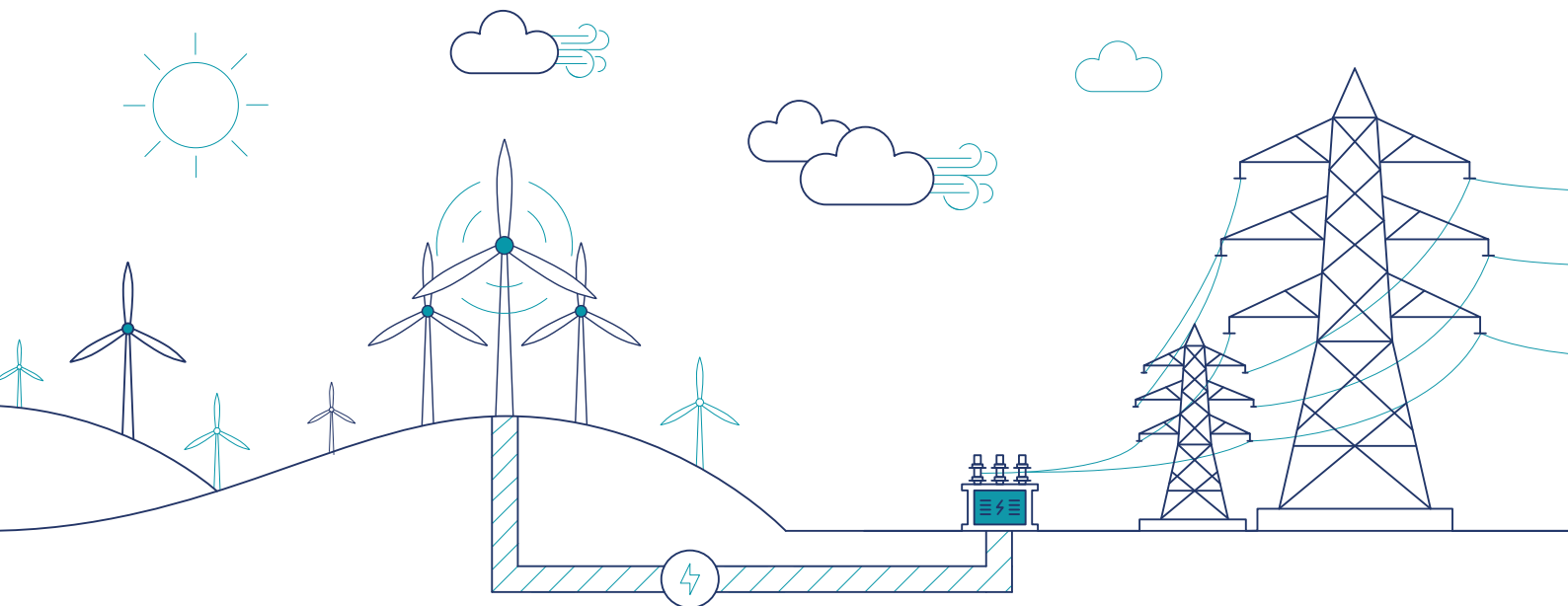
About the project

Coriolis Energy and ESB are the Developers for the consented Garvary Wind Farm, consisting of 24 turbines up to 180m in height, with an installed capacity of 222MW.

As the licenced transmission network operator for the north of Scotland, SSEN Transmission have a responsibility under Section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to support fair competition in electricity generation and supply. We have obligations to offer non-discriminatory terms for connection to the transmission system, both for new generation and for new sources of electricity demand. Under our Network Operator's Licence, this connection should be efficient, coordinated and economic, whilst having the least possible impact on the environment.

The proposed development will comprise of the following:

-  Installation of approximately 6km 132kV underground cable between the proposed Garvary Wind Farm substation and the existing Loch Buidhe substation.
-  Construction of temporary access tracks within the proposed cable corridor.
-  Works within the operational footprint of Loch Buidhe substation to facilitate the new 132kV connection



Garvary Wind Farm Connection - Proposed Cable Corridor

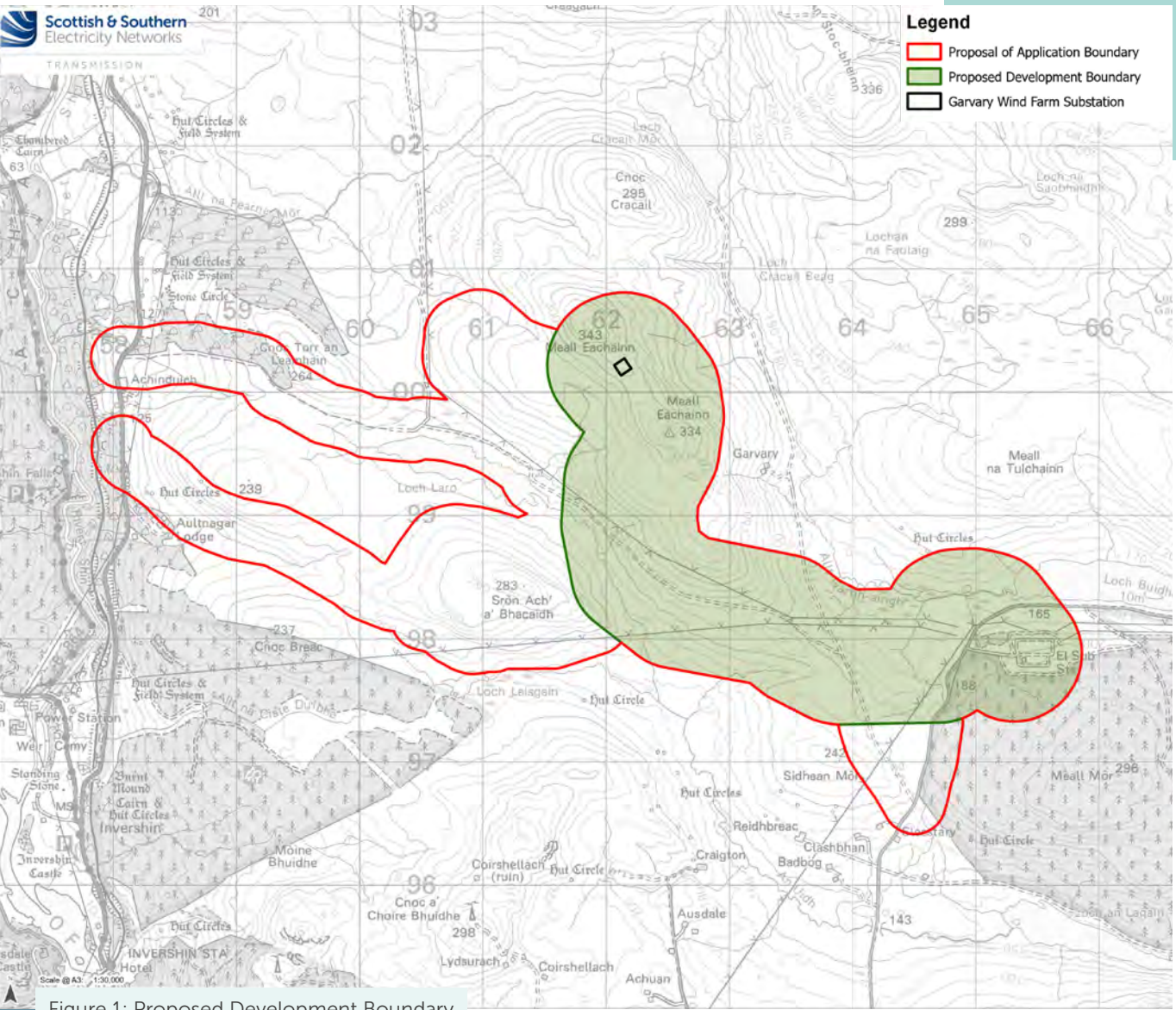
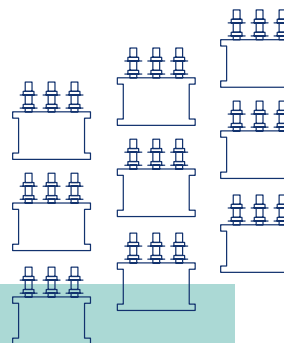


Figure 1: Proposed Development Boundary

Garvary Wind Farm Connection - Location Plan

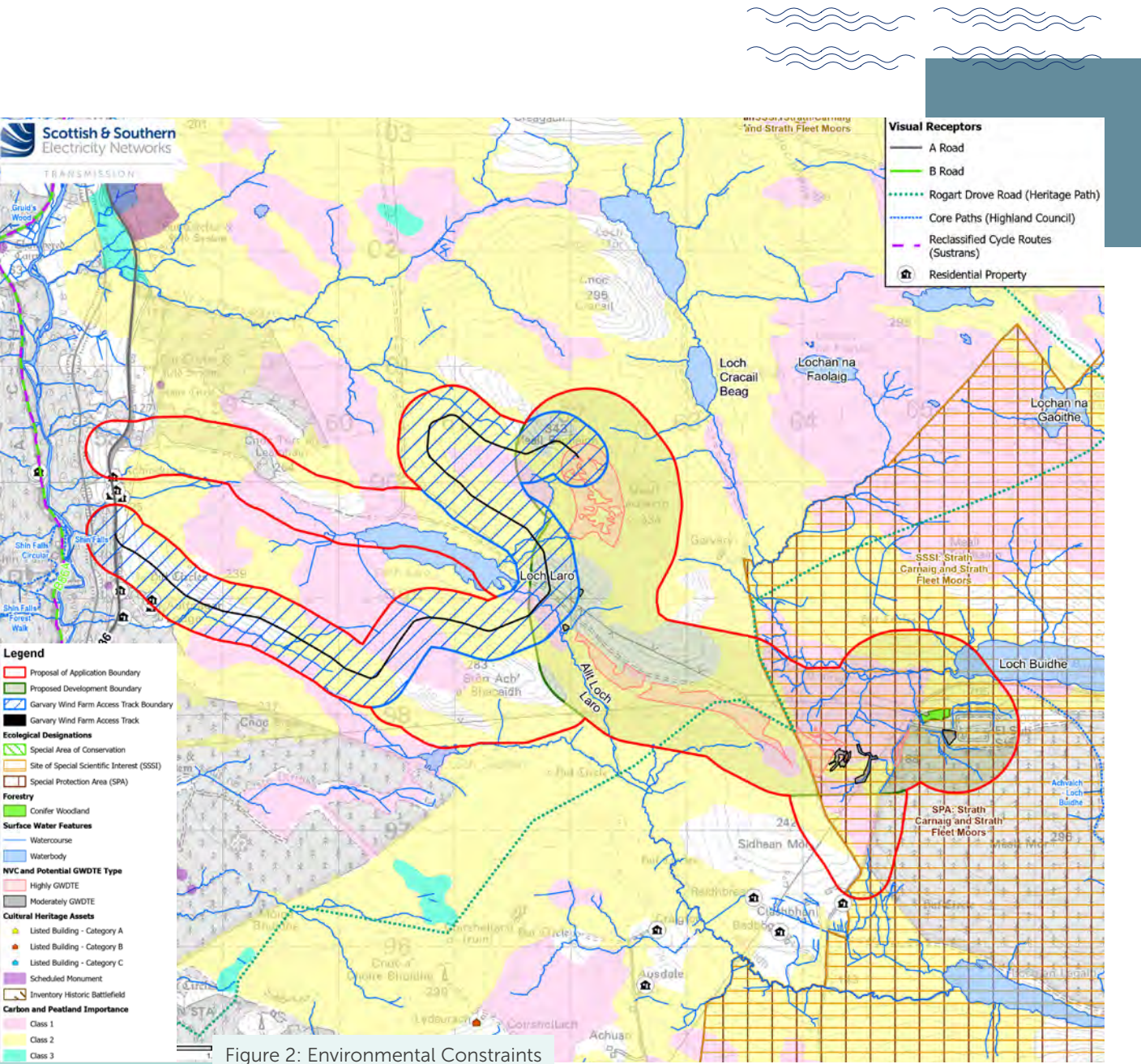


Figure 2: Environmental Constraints

Environmental Constraints

In selecting the Proposed Cable Corridor, consideration has been given to a number of environmental factors. Key environmental constraints include, but are not limited to, the following.

Ecology

There are no ecological designated sites within or nearby the Proposed Cable Corridor, there are however ornithological designated sites, which are described in the Ornithology section.

Protected species field surveys identified the presence of water vole, otter, common frog, and common lizard. Suitable roosting and foraging habitat for bats was recorded, although no roosts were identified during field surveys. Limited suitable habitat was present for red squirrel and pine marten, although no field signs were recorded. No evidence of Scottish wildcat or badger was recorded during field surveys. Sensitive ecological habitat features identified to date include blanket bog and degraded blanket bog; upland heathland, including wet heath with the potential to be groundwater dependent; fens and upland flushes with the potential to be groundwater; upland acid grassland; scrub; standing water; and coniferous woodland.

A BNG assessment shall be undertaken for the Proposed Development in order to leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than prior to construction of the UGC.

Ornithology

Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are designated for hen harrier, are located within the eastern extent of the Proposed Cable Corridor. The non-statutory Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors Important Bird Area (IBA) covers the same boundary as the SPA and SSSI and is important for breeding raptors, namely hen harrier.

Vantage point surveys recorded flights by black grouse, golden eagle, goshawk, hen harrier, kestrel, osprey, red kite, and snipe. Breeding raptor surveys recorded hen harrier activity within 2.5km of the Proposed Development, including flights crossing the Proposed Cable Corridor and hunting behaviour by male hen harrier, indicative of a breeding territory. Results also included flights by buzzard, curlew, golden eagle, golden plover, red kite and white-tailed eagle. Moorland breeding bird surveys recorded possible, probable, or confirmed breeding territories for species including black grouse, buzzard, common gull, common sandpiper, curlew, green shank, hen harrier, kestrel, red kite, and snipe, with non-breeding territories also recorded for hen harrier, ringed plover, and golden plover.

A study to inform any Appropriate Assessment will be provided as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA)R, taking account of the potential for connectivity with the SPAs.

Landscape and Visual

The Proposed Cable Corridor is located between Rogart and Invershin in Central Sutherland and the surrounding landscape comprises broad, rounded hills, gently rolling moorland, lochs, burns and peatland. The surrounding landscape context has a strong natural character with limited residential settlement and minimal built form, consisting of dry heathland and blanket bog, semi-natural woodland and commercial forestry. The overall landscape pattern is defined by expansive open landscapes, muted colours of heather and grassland, and subtle variations in elevation that create a continuous and cohesive upland scene.

From a landscape perspective, key receptors include Landscape Character Type (LCT) 135: Rounded Hills – Caithness and Sutherland. This LCT is the 'host' for the Proposed Cable Corridor with potential for both direct and indirect effects although energy infrastructure is an established landscape feature, and the Proposed Development is likely to result in temporary and reversible impacts.

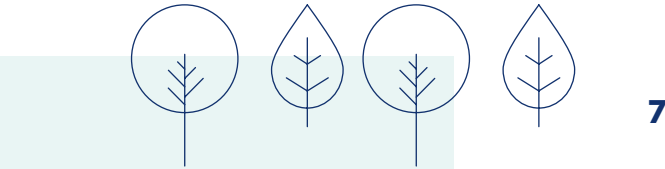
From a visual perspective, key receptors include local residents within 3km (smaller residential settlements and individual properties along or near route/access roads), users on Loch Buie Road, recreational users (people using the area for fishing or hiking activities), Rogart Drove Road and core path SU09.19 Achvaich to Loch Buidhe.

The EIAR will include a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment accompanied by annotated photographs for selected viewpoints.

Cultural Heritage

There are no Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within the Proposed Cable Corridor, and no part of the Corridor lies within a World Heritage Site, Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape, Inventory Historic Battlefield or Conservation Area.

There are eleven non-designated heritage assets identified within the Proposed Cable Corridor. Of these eleven designated heritage assets two, Puill Fhraoich Township (MHG10052) and Cnoc Garbh-Airigh Township (MHG10057) are sensitive to the potential effects during the construction of the Proposed Development.



Peat

The Proposed Cable Corridor passes through areas categorised as Class 1, Class 2, and Class 5 peatland based on the SNH Carbon and Peatland Map (2016). Class 1 and Class 2 areas are defined as nationally important carbon rich soils, deep peat and priority peatland habitat. Class 5 areas comprise carbon rich soils and deep peat but contain no active peatland habitat.

Peat depth surveys indicated that 83% of the Proposed Cable Corridor is underlain by peat of a depth less than or equal to 1.0m, although deeper peat was also identified at a small number of locations generally between 1.0m and 2.0m. A very small number of the sample points identified peat between 2.5m and greater than 4m depth of peat.

The EIAR will consider potentially significant effects on peat and carbon rich soils arising from construction of the Proposed Development, including peat disturbance and stability. Potential carbon emissions from peatland disturbance associated with the construction of the Proposed Development will also be considered within a Peat Carbon Assessment, which will be included as a Technical Appendix to the EIAR.

Noise

The Proposed Cable Corridor is located within a predominantly rural area, with no residential properties within 500m. The closest residential property and nearest noise sensitive receptor is located in Clashban.

The EIAR will adopt best practice measures for noise control. The Highland Council Environmental Health Officer will be consulted to confirm an appropriate methodology for assessment as part of the EIAR.

Forestry/Ancient Woodland

There are no ancient woodland sites shown on the Ancient Woodland Inventory or the Native Woodland Survey Scotland within the Proposed Cable Corridor or the surrounding area.

Survey of the area of forestry to the west of Loch Buidhe Substation confirmed that the established Sitka spruce Picea sitchensis woodland is situated on ploughed ground with a tree height estimated as 15m – 18m. There was an area of previously felled ground between this woodland and the Loch Buidhe Substation and its associated infrastructure. The woodland also extends across the Loch Buidhe Substation access track, which leads to the Achormlarie Forest. This woodland is managed by Forestry and Land Scotland, in accordance with the East Sutherland Land Management Plan.

Another SSEN Transmission project (the Shin to Loch Buidhe 132kV OHL Rebuild), prior to the commencement of the Garvary Wind Farm Connection, will utilise the same operational corridor. A forestry assessment will be carried out for Shin to Loch Buidhe 132kV OHL Rebuild which will assess the significance of likely potential effects of both projects on forestry. To avoid the double counting of forestry loss, the Forestry Assessment completed for Shin to Loch Buidhe 132kV OHL Rebuild will be referenced within the Garvary Wind Farm Connection EIAR.

Traffic and Transport

Within the surrounding area, the road network primarily consists of the A836 (between Lairg and the A9), A949 (between the A836 and A9), the A9 (between Evelix and Tain and the U3521 (between the A836 and Loch Buidhe Substation. Sensitive receptors to be considered in the assessment will include users and residents of these road links.

A Transport Assessment will be provided as part of the EIAR to review the impact of transport related matters associated with the Proposed Development. The assessment will include a Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to cover traffic impacts during construction and an assessment of the cumulative effects of other nearby projects.

Water Environment

From west to east, the Proposed Cable Corridor crosses several small watercourses: an unnamed tributary of Allt a'Choin duinn, an unnamed tributary of River Evelix near Puill Fhraoich, an unnamed tributary of Allt Garbh-airigh and Alltan Dubh and its contributing surface water flow paths (a tributary of the Allt Garbh-airigh).

Approximately 200m north of the south-eastern end of the Proposed Cable Corridor, the lower reaches of the Alltan Dubh (where it joins the Allt Garbh-airigh) is at a High Likelihood of river flooding.

The Proposed Cable Corridor is not located within the projected (Medium likelihood, 2080s) SEPA Future Flood Risk Map extent for an elevated risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. The SEPA Future Flood Risk Map, of flood risk associated with surface water and small watercourses (those with a catchment area smaller than 10km²), presents nine flow routes that cross or are located within the Proposed Cable Corridor. These largely follow the route of minor watercourses that serve as tributaries of the River Evelix or Allt Garbh-airigh. Some areas of the Proposed Cable Corridor, close to watercourses, are located within the projected (Medium likelihood, 2080s) SEPA Future Flood Risk Map extent.

There is only one Private Water Supply (PWS) within 250m of the Proposed Cable Corridor, however, this PWS is located within the Loch Buidhe Substation site and relates to rainwater collection.

National Vegetation Classification (NVC) surveying has identified the presence of potential Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). Hydrological assessment (including surveying of the route) will confirm the degree of groundwater dependence and the sensitivity of such habitats to alterations in groundwater supply. Review carried out so far indicates that these habitats are more likely to be rain fed or dependent on surface water supplies and therefore are not likely to be groundwater dependent.

An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will accompany the EIAR which will include mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts on the water environment during construction and operation.

Engineering considerations

Technology selection – underground cable

Choice of technology between overhead line and underground cable is driven by engineering consideration. The new connection will terminate at Loch Buidhe Substation, which is already served by a number of existing overhead lines. The concentration of overhead line infrastructure around the substation creates significant engineering constraints, making the introduction of an additional overhead line particularly challenging. An underground cable connection therefore provides a practical solution for bringing the new circuit into the substation while managing interactions with existing infrastructure.

Terrain and route selection

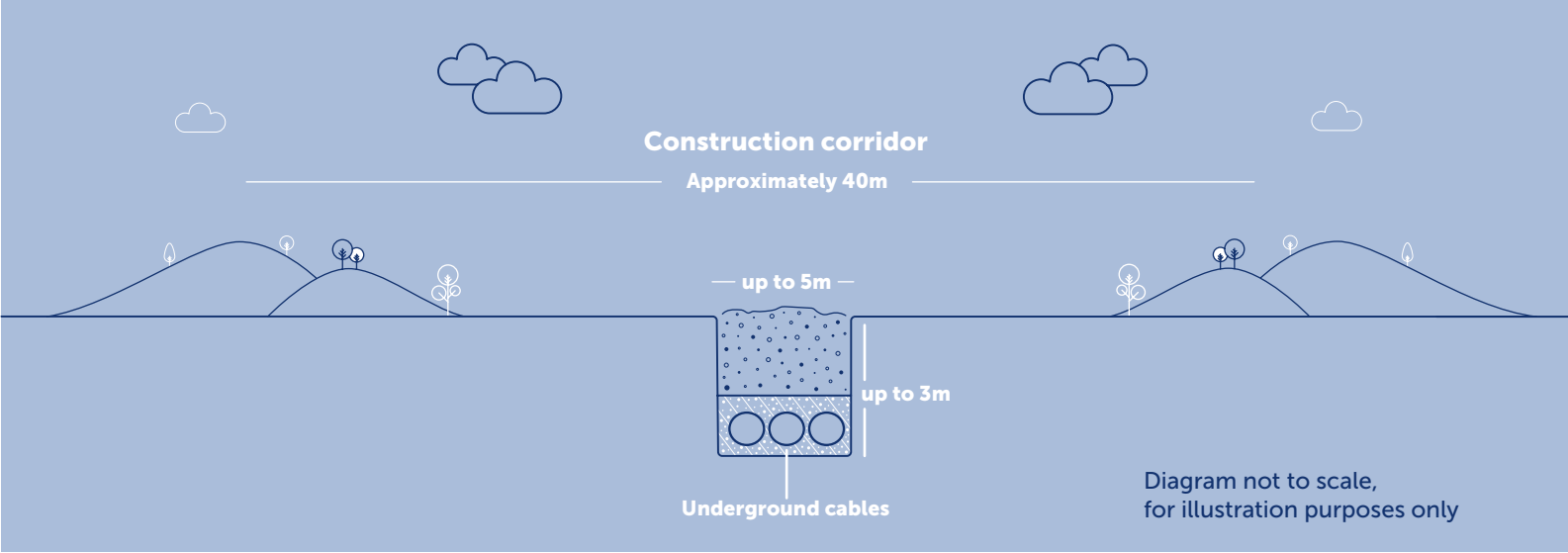
Terrain and gradients are important considerations when determining a technically suitable cable route. Steeper gradients can increase cable pulling tensions during installation and introduce additional engineering challenges throughout the operational life of the cable. The route therefore seeks to follow areas of gentler terrain where practicable, while balancing environmental, land, ground condition and other engineering constraints.

Ground conditions and environmental constraints

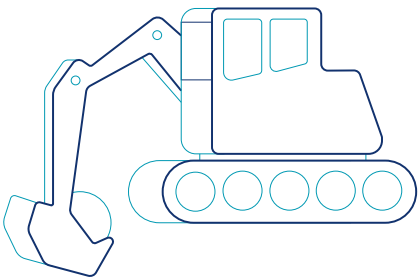
Ground conditions are a key consideration in determining the preferred route. The cable route crosses areas of peat and environmentally sensitive habitat, including a Special Protection Area (SPA). These conditions require careful consideration of both the cable alignment and construction methods to minimise ground disturbance and impacts on sensitive habitats. A defined Limit of Deviation (LoD) provides flexibility for localised micro-siting during detailed design and construction, allowing the alignment to avoid deeper peat, particularly wet or unstable ground, and other local constraints where practicable.



Cross sectional view of proposed cable



Construction of the underground cable



The installation of the cables will employ open-cut trenching techniques within an approximately 40-metre-wide corridor, with the trenches being 3 to 5 metres wide, contingent on depth and ground conditions. A delineated boundary fence will be established along the entire route to separate construction activities from livestock. The underground cable route is made up a single circuit comprising 3 x single-core 132kV XLPE cables housed in PVC ducts, installed at a depth of approximately 1200mm below ground level in trefoil or flat formation. Fibre optic and Distributed Temperature Sensing (DTS) ducts will be installed alongside the power cable ducts. Trenching and backfilling will be undertaken progressively in sections, meaning that the full route will not be excavated at the same time. This phased approach will help maintain access to other parts of the affected land throughout the construction period and minimise disruption to landowners and land users. The trenches will be backfilled with thermally stabilised material to enhance heat dissipation during cable operation under load. The total length of the route is approximately 6km, necessitating cable joint to be strategically located at regular intervals. Each joint bay will have installed an above-ground earth link pillar. If feasible and with landowner consent, protective barriers may be installed around the link pillar to prevent damage. Fibre chambers will also be installed at intervals of every 450 to 500 meters along the route. Link pillars are required to enable future maintenance and safe operation of the circuit.

Construction access and reinstatement

Temporary access will be required along the route to enable construction and cable installation. The location and design of these access arrangements will take account of ground conditions and gradients, particularly across peat and softer ground. Following construction, temporary working areas will be reinstated as close as practicable to their original condition, with only necessary permanent infrastructure, such as joint pillars, remaining visible. A wayleave will be retained along the underground cable route, within which activities will be managed in accordance with the agreed land rights and arrangements with landowners.

Managing construction impacts

We are committed to minimising the effects of construction by identifying and addressing potential issues early in the design process, undertaking detailed environmental assessments, and engaging with local communities and stakeholders. Where impacts cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce effects on people, biodiversity, watercourses, soils, and the local road network.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be developed and implemented to ensure mitigation measures are applied effectively and monitored throughout the construction phase.

A Traffic Management Plan will also be prepared to manage the delivery of plant, equipment, and materials to the site. While some short-term disruption to traffic may occur during construction, measures will be put in place to minimise inconvenience. These may include scheduling deliveries to avoid peak travel periods and sensitive locations. We will continue to work closely with local communities, stakeholders, and contractors to ensure mitigation measures are implemented effectively throughout construction.



The Planning process

The Garvary Wind Farm connection is subject to planning consent through the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Engaging the right people

Applications made under the Town and Country Planning Act are determined by Local Planning Authorities. The Highland Council will be the determining authority for any subsequent application for the Garvary Windfarm connection.

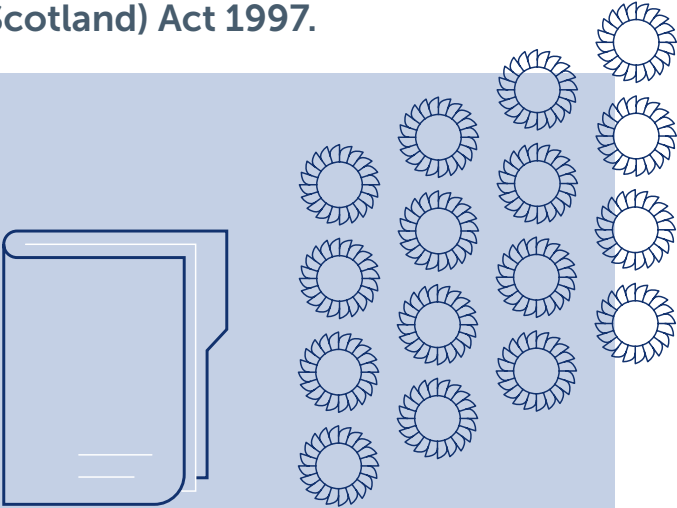
Under the directions of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Strategic and Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure that would normally fall under the 'major' classification by 'The Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009', is designated a national development. Accordingly the Garvary Windfarm Connection is designated a national development and therefore pre-application consultation (PAC) is required with the local community, stakeholders and the public.

The pre-application consultation process

A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) was submitted to The Highland Council on 9 September 2026. This is the first stage in the planning application process, and the beginning of a consultation period that must allow for at least 12 weeks between the start of the pre-application consultation and feedback, and submission of a planning application.

The plans we are consulting on at this event might change between now and the submission of a planning application. The red line boundary that has been submitted with the PAN represents the maximum extent of the land potentially included in the application site, but this area may be reduced or rationalised as the development proposal becomes finalised.

This public event is the first of two public consultation events to be held to provide the opportunity for members of the public to comment on the proposals. A second event will be held on 3 December 2026 at which feedback will be given on the views obtained at the first event. There will also be a short opportunity for comment after this second event. All comments and feedback submitted will be included in a PAC Report to be submitted in support of a planning application.



Submitting the planning application

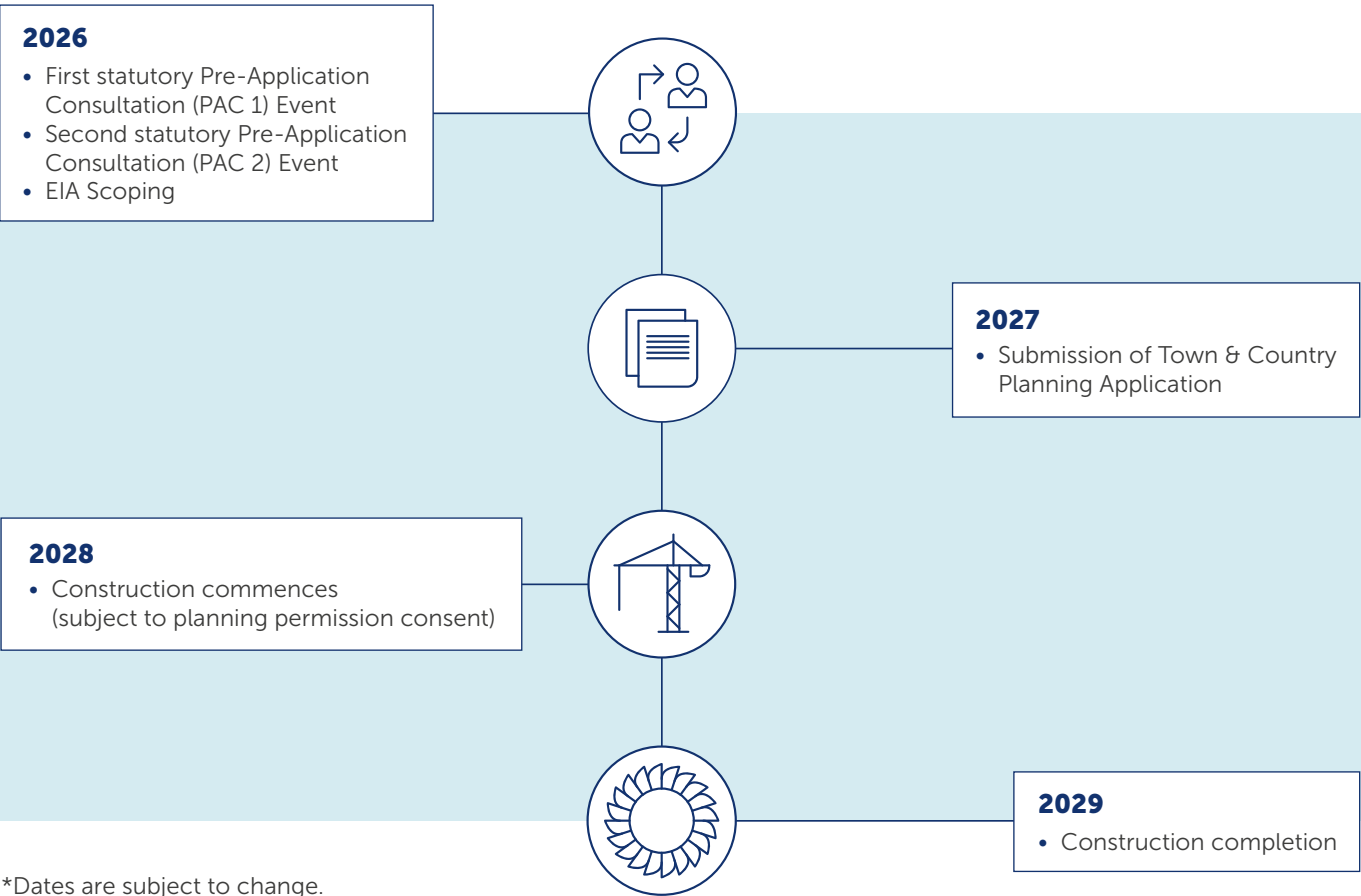
The planning application for the development is due to be submitted to the Highland Council in spring 2027. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be submitted in support of the application along with the PAC Report, providing details of the consultation undertaken and communicating how the consultation process has influenced the proposed development. Where comments are received that cannot be addressed in the final proposal, an explanation will also be given as to why this is the case.

Comments made through the pre-application consultation process are not formal representations to The Highland Council. When the planning application is submitted there will be an opportunity to make formal representations to The Highland Council.



Project timeline

The timeline below identifies key milestones for consenting and construction of the project.



Have your say

We value community and stakeholder feedback. Without this, we would be unable to progress projects and reach a balanced proposal.

We intend to submit our planning application by Spring 2027 and we welcome comments from members of the public, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders regarding our proposals until we submit our planning application.

The feedback period

We will accept feedback from now until **Friday 30 October 2026**.

How to provide feedback:

Submit your feedback online by scanning the QR code on this page or via the form on our project webpage at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/garvary

Email the feedback form to the Community Liaison Manager. Or write to us enclosing the feedback form at the back of this booklet.

What we're seeking views on

We are seeking feedback on the underground cable proposals shared in this booklet. We would like to know if there are any factors or environmental considerations you consider important that you don't feel we have addressed in the proposals, or if you think we can make any improvements, changes or refinements to these proposals.

We want to harness your local knowledge so that we spot any unforeseen challenges early and maximise the potential benefits and opportunities for your communities.

By telling us what you think, you will help shape our proposals.



To support everyone online, we provide accessibility and language options on our website through 'Recite Me'. The accessibility and language support options provided by 'Recite Me' include text-to-speech functionality, fully customisable styling features, reading aids, and a translation tool with over 100 languages, including 35 text-to-speech.

Please select "Accessibility" on our website to try out our inclusive toolbar."

Our Community Liaison team

Each project has a dedicated Community Liaison Manager who works closely with community members to make sure they are well informed of our proposals and that their views, concerns, questions or suggestions are put to our project teams.

Throughout the life of our projects, you will hear from us regularly. We aim to establish strong working relationships by being accessible to key local stakeholders such as community councils, residents' associations and development trusts, and regularly engage with interested individuals.

Community Liaison Manager

The best way to contact us regarding this project is through our Community Liaison Team.

Lisa Marchi

SSEN Transmission, 10 Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1 1SN

lisa.marchi@sse.com

07825 015 507

You can also follow us on social media:

@assentransmission SSENTransmission

SSEN Transmission

Additional information:



The best way to keep up to date is to sign up to project updates via the project webpage:

You can also register for updates at our events, just ask our staff at the welcome desk.

ssen-transmission.co.uk/garvary

Your feedback

Thank you for taking the time to read this consultation booklet. In order to record your views and improve the effectiveness of our consultation, please complete this short feedback form.

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS. (Please tick one box per question only)

Q1. Have we adequately explained the need for the Garvary Wind Farm Connection project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Comments:

Q2. Do you feel enough information has been provided to understand what is being proposed and why?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Comments:

Q3. Are there any additional factors or environmental features that you consider important and should be brought to the attention of the project team?

Comments:



Q4. Do you have any particular concerns or queries on the proposed underground cable project?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

Comments:

Full name: _____ **Email:** _____

Telephone: _____ **Address:** _____

We would like to send you relevant communications via email such as invitations to stakeholder events, surveys, updates on projects, services and future developments from the Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks group listed below. If you are happy to receive email updates please opt in by ticking the box below. You can unsubscribe at any time by contacting us at stakeholder.admin@sse.com or by clicking on the unsubscribe link that will be at the end of each of our emails.

☐ **If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project, please tick this box**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.
Please submit your completed form by one of the methods below:
Post: Lisa Marchi, SSEN Transmission, 10 Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1, 1SN
Email: lisa.marchi@sse.com
Online: ssen-transmission.co.uk/garvary

For information on how we collect and process your data please see our privacy notice available at today's event. This can also be obtained online at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/privacy

Comments forms and all the information from today's event will also be available to download from the project website.

We intend to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist our experienced teams in the analysis of your feedback, so we can categorise key points raised more quickly. You can learn more about how we're utilising AI at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/AIFAQ

Any information given on the feedback form can be used and published anonymously as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks consultation report. By completing this feedback form you consent to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks using feedback for this purpose.

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