



Following our meeting with the Ardhasaig community some additional information regarding alternative options to our proposed Overhead Line (OHL) alignment ahead of our Section 37 planning submission.

### Underground Cabling

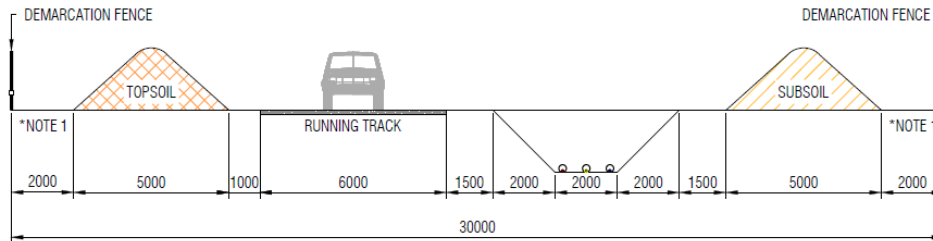
The first alternative option was for underground cables. Undergrounding the circuit has been discounted for a number of technical reasons.

#### **Access during faults:**

The main reason is for the maintenance of the line in the future. In the event of a fault on the OHL, the fault can be detected and rectified in a matter of days. However, if the fault occurs in an underground cable the time needed to locate and rectify the fault increases and could potentially take months to fix. For this reason, our operation and maintenance team encourages the projects to avoid underground cable sections wherever possible.

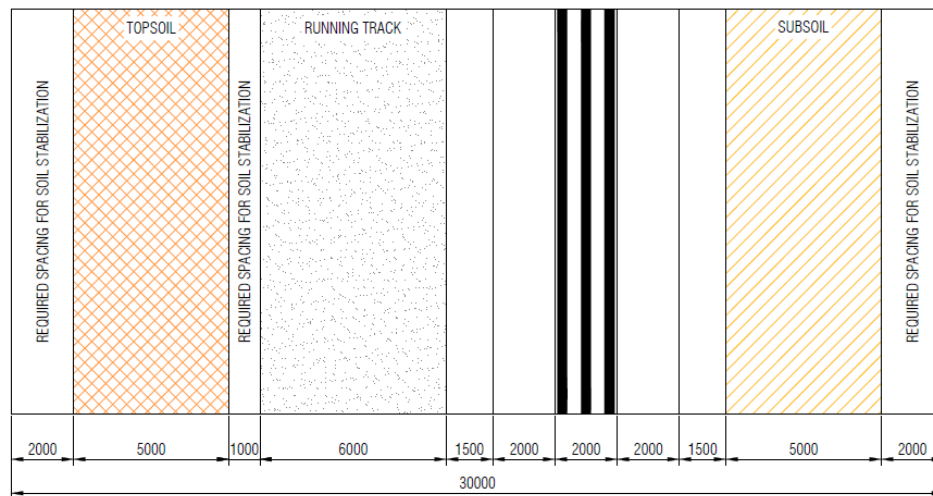
#### **Installation footprint:**

Another reason cabling the circuit has been discounted is due to the footprint which would be required to install the cables. A trench, approximately **6m wide and 1.5m** deep would need to be dug along the route. In order to excavate the trench a running track and separate spoil heaps for the subsoil and topsoil is required. This makes the working corridor typically **30m** as seen in the image below. This large land take and the multiple movements of heavy plant increase the potential damage to the local environment during construction. Given the presence of shallow rock in the area, the construction activities to excavate and install approximately 1 km of cable will take a considerable time and include the use of a large pneumatic breaker to peck away the rock causing considerable noise disruption throughout the works.



**SECTION THROUGH WORKING EASEMENT**

SCALE 1:150



**PLAN ON WORKING EASEMENT**

SCALE 1:150

**Routing through Lochannan Lacasdail**

In regard to the second alternative option for rerouting the OHL down Lochannan Lacasdail, this has also been discounted for a number of technical reasons.

#### **Lack of access tracks:**

The main reason why this is not a preferred option is due to the lack of access tracks in this area. When constructing trident wood poles, it is usually not necessary to install access tracks as the machinery used can track across the open ground and we can utilise the existing tracks in the area. However, if we were to route the line down this section there would be a 5km section over rough boggy terrain without any access tracks which could be used for construction or operations and maintenance. This would increase the time taken to construct and also repair the line if we were required to track over such a distance with the machinery. In the event of an emergency or incident on site, the lack of access would present a serious challenge to rescue an operative should they become injured.

#### **Terrain:**

Another key issue with this route is the terrain. This section has very steep side slopes which lead down to the Loch and would present a serious risk of danger during construction and maintenance operations if the poles were to be built on the side slopes. The length of the sections with the extreme side slopes is larger than that of the preferred option and there is no option to bring the line to flatter ground as we have attempted to do in the Ardhasaig community.

As designers under the **Construction Design and Maintenance (CDM) Regulations 2015** we have a duty to design out the risks to operatives at all times of the assets life where at all possible. It is for this reason and the reasons above that we have discounted this option as not preferable compared to our current proposal.

I hope the above clears up any outstanding issues you had on the project regarding alternative options following our meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October.

I also wanted to make you aware that a visual fly-through of the proposed development is available online. The fly-through provides an opportunity to visualise the outline design of the development and should assist in understanding our proposal prior to submission.

The fly-through can be viewed at <https://www.3dwtech.co.uk/dashboard/ssen/lt245-harris-stornoway/portal/>. This link can also be found via the project website at <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/harris--stornoway-132kv-ohl/>. The project website provides further details regarding our various consultations and the full route selection process.

**If you shared the link to the original meeting with another member of the community I will not have a record of their email address, could I ask you to share this response to the questions raised as well, thank you.**

If you have any further questions, then please do not hesitate to contact me, and thank you for joining us on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2022.

Kind Regards,

Lisa



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**Advance warning I am on holiday from 12<sup>th</sup> September till 21<sup>st</sup> September**

**Working Hours Mon-Thurs 7.45 am-5.45 pm. Please note I do not work on Fridays**