

File Note

Hurlie Substation

Sender	Recipient(s)
Harry Naylor	Chris Gardner
Project Number	Date/Time
12370	8 th April 2025

Dear Chris,

This File Note has been prepared following discussions between SSEN Transmission and Aberdeenshire Council regarding the requirement to update the photomontages used in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and the Cultural Heritage Assessment viewpoints, to remove the enclosures for the future connection bays from the planning application for the Hurlie substation. There are no enclosures associated with the future connection bays, so by removing these the updated photomontages provide a more accurate depiction of the Proposed Development.

The purpose of this File Note is to provide a formal response which identifies the relevant conclusions in the LVIA and the Cultural Heritage assessments that draw upon the view of the infrastructure that has been removed and reviews all relevant statements in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) to confirm if they are still valid.

Importantly, the original photomontages used in both the LVIA and Cultural Heritage Assessment included the Synchronous Condenser buildings, which represent the tallest infrastructure within the Proposed Development, and assessed these at the correct height of 15 m. There has been no change in the maximum height of the infrastructure and therefore in overall terms the assessment parameters remain unaltered.

The table below highlights the six Viewpoints that were assessed within the LVIA and the Cultural Heritage Assessment along with the Viewpoint name and figure number in the EIAR.

Viewpoints	Viewpoint name	EIAR Figure number
LVIA Viewpoint 1	Hillhead of Auquhirie	8.5
LVIA Viewpoint 2	Nether Wyndings	8.6
LVIA Viewpoint 3	Rickarton	8.7

Bristol
Cardiff
Edinburgh
Glasgow
London
Manchester
Sheffield

landuse.co.uk

Land Use Consultants Ltd
Registered in England
Registered number 2549296
Registered office:
250 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8RD

100% recycled paper

Landscape Design
Strategic Planning & Assessment
Development Planning
Urban Design & Masterplanning
Environmental Impact Assessment
Landscape Planning & Assessment
Landscape Management
Ecology
Historic Environment
GIS & Visualisation
Transport & Movement Planning
Arboriculture



LVIA Viewpoint 4	Minor road west of Kirktown of Fetteresso	8.8
LVIA Viewpoint 5	Hill of Swanley	8.9
Cultural Heritage Viewpoint 1	Raedykes Roman Camp	9.6

The table below notes the conclusions in the EIAR that draw upon the view of the infrastructure that has been removed from the planning application and whether the conclusions within the assessment remain valid.

Assessment	Statement	Conclusion
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.22: Operational Effects of LCT 29: Summits and Plateaux – Aberdeenshire under the ‘Magnitude of Change during Operation – Year 0’ heading, it is noted that ‘Site infrastructure, particularly taller elements within the Proposed Substation, would be visible from the more elevated areas within the LCT in proximity to the east and west of the Site.’	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser will still be visible and the statement that taller elements would be visible from the more elevated areas remains valid.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.23: Operational Effects of LCT 24: Coastal Farmed Ridges and Hills - Aberdeenshire under the ‘Magnitude of Change during Operation – Year 0’ heading, it is noted that ‘Site infrastructure, particularly taller vertical elements, are likely to be partially visible from the northernmost elevated areas of this LCT.’	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser will still be visible and the statement that taller elements would be visible from the northernmost elevated areas remains valid.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.24 Operational Effects on Viewpoint 1: Hillhead of Auquhirie under the ‘Magnitude of Change during Operation– Year 0’ heading, it is noted that ‘Substation components, primarily vertical elements of up to 15 m height, would be visible in views filtered by existing mature forestry along the southern, eastern and southeastern edges of the Proposed Development.’	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser will still be visible and the conclusion that vertical elements of up to 15m height would be visible remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.24 Operational Effects on Viewpoint 1: Hillhead of Auquhirie under the ‘Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10’ heading, it is noted that ‘Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the then semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treelines.’	Despite the removal of the enclosures the synchronous condenser will still be visible and the conclusion that the magnitude of change would remain medium, and the effect would be Moderate (Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.25: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 2: Nether Wyndings under the ‘Magnitude of Change during Operation– Year’ heading, it is noted that ‘Taller vertical elements within the Proposed Development would be seen above the intervening treeline; however, these would not exceed the height of the elevated landforms to the east and southwest and would be backclothed.’	The synchronous condenser will still be visible and therefore the statement that taller vertical elements within the Proposed Development would be seen above the intervening treeline remains unaltered.

Assessment	Statement	Conclusion
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.25: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 2: Nether Wyndings under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading, it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treelines.'	The synchronous condenser will still be visible at the south of the platform and the statement that taller elements would remain partially visible above the treelines remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.26: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 3: Rickarton under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading, it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the conclusion that the magnitude of change would remain as low, and the effect would remain as None (Not Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.27: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 4: Minor road west of Kirktown of Fetteresso under the 'Magnitude of Change during Operation– Year 0' heading, it is noted that 'Larger vertical elements within the Proposed Development would extend above the substation platform, but would not exceed the height of the surrounding landform to the east and west, and would be backclothed by forestry further north within the Proposed Development.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, one of which is visible in photomontage 4, the synchronous condenser will still be visible and therefore this statement remains valid.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.27: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 4: Minor road west of Kirktown of Fetteresso under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, one of which was previously visible in photomontage 4, the synchronous condenser will still be visible and the conclusion that the magnitude of change would remain low, and the effect would remain as Minor (Not Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.28: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 5: Hill of Swanley under the 'Magnitude of Change during Operation – Year 0' heading it noted that 'The Proposed Substation would be partially visible with some lower elements filtered by intervening forestry, and larger vertical elements visible extending above the intervening forestry, particularly elements at the southeastern end of the Proposed Substation.'	Due to the removal of the enclosures, larger vertical elements will no longer extend above the intervening forestry at the southeastern end of the Proposed Substation. Larger elements such as the Synchronous

Assessment	Statement	Conclusion
		Condenser will now only extend above the intervening forestry at the southwestern end.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.28: Operational Effects on Viewpoint 5: Hill of Swanley under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline and remain as prominent features above the treeline.' It is further noted that 'Larger vertical elements within the Site that would extend above established mitigation planting would still form prominent features in this close proximity view.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures the synchronous condenser along with other structures will still be visible and the conclusion that the magnitude of change would remain as medium, and the overall effect would remain as Moderate (Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	Table 8.29: Operational Effects on Rickarton assesses the effects on visual receptors from Settlements. Under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be almost entirely filtered and screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the conclusion that the magnitude of change would remain as low, and the effect would remain as None (Not Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	Table 8.30: Operational Effects on Minor Road Network south of the Site under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation – Year 10' heading it states 'In closer range views the Proposed Substation and electrical infrastructure would remain as noticeable features within the landscape'.	Despite the removal of the enclosures, elements of the electrical infrastructure will remain noticeable and the effect would remain as Minor (Not Significant) .
LVIA Chapter 8	Table 8.31: Operational Effects on Minor Road Network east and southeast of the Site under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation – Year 10' heading it states 'In closer range views, from closer sections of the minor road network, the Proposed Substation and electrical infrastructure would remain as noticeable features within the landscape, albeit with reduced prominence.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, elements of the electrical infrastructure will remain noticeable and the effect would remain as Moderate (Significant) .

Assessment	Statement	Conclusion
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.32: Operational Effects on Slug Road / A957 under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading, it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline from the section of the road at Rickarton.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the conclusion that the magnitude of change would remain as low, and the effect would remain as None (Not Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.33: Operational Effects on Recreational Routes within Fetteresso Forest with the representative viewpoint being VP 5, it is noted under the 'Magnitude of Change during Operation – Year 0' that 'Visible elements of the Proposed Development would be seen at distances ranging between 0.4 - 1 km and would form notable features above intervening forestry.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser along with other structures will still be visible and this statement remains valid.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.33: Operational Effects on Recreational Routes within Fetteresso Forest with the representative viewpoint being VP 5, it is noted under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be largely screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline and remain as prominent features above the treeline including from sections of track around Hill of Swanley.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser along with other structures will still be visible and this conclusion that magnitude of change would remain as medium, and the overall effect would remain as Moderate (Significant) , remains unaltered.
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.34: Operational Effects on Recreational Routes near Garrison Hill under the 'Magnitude of Change during Operation – Year 0' heading, it is noted that 'there would be open and longer distance views of the taller components of the Proposed Development that would extend above retained forestry along the north and eastern boundary of the Site, however the proposed components would be backclothed by forestry further south.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser along with other structures will still be visible and the statement that there would be open and longer distance views of the taller components remains valid and Moderate (Significant) .
LVIA Chapter 8	In Table 8.34: Operational Effects on Recreational Routes near Garrison Hill under the 'Mitigation and Residual Effect and Significance during Operation - Year 10' heading, it is noted that 'Lower elevation elements within the Site would be increasingly filtered and screened by the semi-mature planting, although taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline, particularly from sections of the tracks which cross higher elevation along the hill summits.'	Despite the removal of the enclosures, the synchronous condenser along with other structures will still be visible and the statement that taller elements would remain partially visible above the treeline remains valid and Moderate (Significant) .

Assessment	Statement	Conclusion
Cultural Heritage Chapter 9	Under the 'Assessment of Likely Significant Effects – Operation' heading on page 20 it is noted that 'there is potential for elements of the Proposed Development (e.g. platform, bays, control buildings), or associated landscaping, to be present in views to and from scheduled monuments and listed buildings.'	Although the removal of the enclosures will mean that there are fewer visible structures, the synchronous condenser building along with the other structures will still be visible and this statement remains valid.
Noise Chapter 14	Table 14.23 details the Equipment and Input Noise Level.	Despite the removal of the enclosures the information within Table 14.23 remains unaltered as the infrastructure which they house does not generate significant noise and therefore the dominant sources of noise remain the same and the conclusions within Table 14:31: Summary of Significant Effects remains unaltered.

Following consideration of the changes to the visualisations due to the removal of the enclosures for the future connection bays, the conclusions in the LVIA, Cultural Heritage and Noise Assessment that either draw upon the view of this infrastructure, or are a factor of its operation, remain unaltered and all statements within the EIAR remain valid.