

Kinardochy to Errochty Underground Cable – Compound, Junction and Track Works Design & Access Statement

March 2026

Prepared for **Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared to support a planning application by Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (“The Applicant”), operating and known as Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (“SSEN Transmission”). The application seeks planning permission under Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) to construct approximately 1.7 km of permanent access track, two associated temporary laydown / compound areas, two temporary junction bellmouths, widen two sections of existing access track, approximately 868 m in total, and construct two sections of temporary access track approximately 243 m in total between the existing Errochty substation and the new Kinardochy substation, within Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) local authority area, hereafter referred to as “the Proposed Development”. In this DAS, the terms ‘Applicant’ and ‘SSEN Transmission’ are used interchangeably unless the context requires otherwise.
- 1.2 The Proposed Development is required to facilitate the installation of a double circuit 132 kilovolt (kV) underground cable (UGC) between the between Errochty and Kinardochy substations, under the wider Beauly – Denny Second Circuit 400 kV Upgrade Project, which is considered to be a ‘National Development’ under National Planning Framework (NPF) 4. The UGC itself is considered by the Applicant to benefit from permitted development rights under Class 40 1 (a) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 and is not assessed within the supporting documents or DAS.
- 1.3 The substation works and connection thereof are required as a result of the Scottish and UK Government’s Net Zero climate change targets and associated guidance which result in significant increases in renewable generation, requiring greater capacity across the UK grid. As such significant investment in new transmission network infrastructure to transport renewable energy and reinforce the network is required and is a priority. As part of this UK network reinforcement, the Applicant is proposing to upgrade the existing Beauly-Denny 275 kV circuit to 400 kV to mirror the ratings of the existing circuit which runs along the route. The upgrade can make use of the existing overhead line (OHL) infrastructure but requires alterations and additions to be made to the associated substations along the route at Beauly, Fasnakyle, Fort Augustus, Tummel, Errochty, Kinardochy and Braco West. Works are required to varying degrees at each of these locations and will be subject to differing consenting types and timescales.
- 1.4 The energy regulator, Ofgem, approved the need for these upgrade projects as part of its Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) framework decision. The Beauly-Denny 400 KV project, alongside several other major network upgrades planned in the north of Scotland, forms part of a Great Britain wide programme of works that are required to meet UK and Scottish Government energy targets. There is a strong expectation from Government and Ofgem that these projects will be delivered by 2030. Specifically, these projects are needed to deliver the Government’s 2030 renewable targets as set within the British Energy Security Strategy (BESS) (April 2022).
- 1.5 SSEN Transmission has a licence obligation to invest in its existing assets to maintain network health and conditions, thereby improving operational flexibility and resilience.

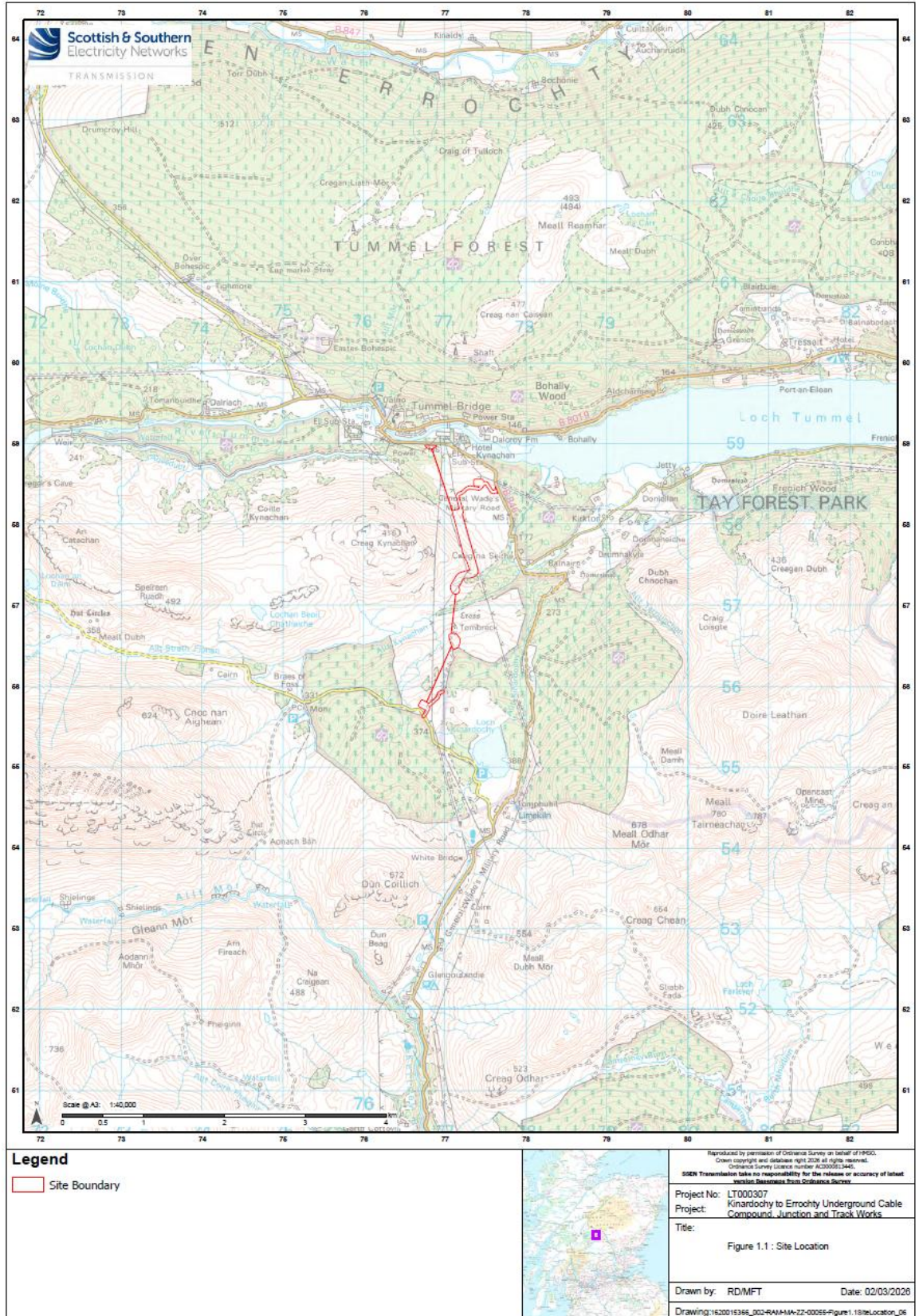
- 1.6 A DAS is required to support the submission of a major planning application as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013. A DAS has a role in conveying design principles which have determined the design and layout of the development proposed, taking account of specific site and locational circumstances.

2. The Site and Site Selection

Site Location and Setting

- 2.1 The Proposed Development is located between approximately 95 m south west of the Errochty 132kV substation at the north and 230 m west of the Kinardochoy substation at the south, south of Tummel Bridge, Perthshire. The Site Location is illustrated on Figure 2.1 below.
- 2.2 The Proposed Development is located in an area with existing above-ground, electrical infrastructure. The existing land use comprises of open moorland used primarily for rough grazing, commercial forestry plantation, native woodland planting and agricultural ground. There are two core paths and a trail of relevance within the 6 km Study Area used for landscape and visual purposes. These are: RANN/108 – Schiehallion route to viewpoint below Boulder Field; Trail R157 - Meall Tairneachan; and DULL/146/147 – Glengoulangie car park to Schiehallion via the B846 at the White Bridge.

Figure 2.1 Site Location Plan



Site Layout

- 2.3 The site location is driven by a locational need to facilitate the installation of a double circuit 132 kV UGC between the Errochty and Kinardochoy substations. Information on environmental baseline conditions has been used as a basis for identifying the access route options, and in reaching the final access route as proposed. Full details can be found in the Environmental Appraisal (EA) which has been submitted as part of the planning application.
- 2.4 In summary, embedded mitigation through design has avoided most woodland and avoids all ancient woodlands and other sensitive habitats/designations. The final site layout has noted a possibility that up to 0.13 ha of assumed woodland may require felling for the proposed bellmouth as a worst case scenario. The extent of actual removal will be minimised insofar as possible through micro-siting. The final site layout has noted a possibility that 0.13 ha of assumed woodland may require felling for the proposed bellmouth, This is discussed in Chapter 9 Forestry of the EA.
- 2.5 No ancient woodland has been identified for felling, although an area of ancient woodland (of semi natural origin) ASNO 1860 2a is located in the southern part of the site, adjacent the permanent access track and within the red line boundary). The Proposed Development would not impact directly on this area of ancient woodland.
- 2.6 The Applicant has committed to providing compensatory planting of equivalent woodland area, if felling is required, with at least the equivalent woodland-related net public benefits.

Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation

- 2.7 The Applicant undertook initial public consultation on the project, as well as direct engagement with consultees, community councils, elected representatives, and landowners and occupiers.
- 2.8 The purpose of the consultation period was for the Applicant to gather feedback from the relevant stakeholders regarding the Site as well as any other potential considerations.
- 2.9 A Pre-Application Advice Request was submitted to PKC on the 5 May 2025 (Reference: 25/00006/PREAPM) with a written response from the council outlining the required reports / assessments to support the application. The Applicant wrote to PKC on 27 November 2025 to confirm that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would not be submitted with the application. PKC responded on 27 November 2025 to confirm that production of a CEMP could be secured instead by condition.
- 2.10 As noted above a voluntary EA has been undertaken and sets out the feedback received from consultees with respect individual topic areas and how the application has addressed any of the comments raised.

PAN and Pre-application Consultation (PAC)

- 2.11 A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) was submitted to Perth and Kinross Council on 23 October 2024, triggering the beginning of the statutory consultation period. The PAN provided the Council with an outline of the application details, dates of public events, publicity arrangements, and confirmation of the site location. Copies of the PAN were provided as required by legislation to the local community council - Killiecrankie, Fincastle and Tummel and the neighbouring Community Council - Dull and Weem as well as Highland Ward Councillors.
- 2.12 During the consultation process changes to the scheduled events took place, with all interested parties being notified of those changes.
- 2.13 Three public events were held for the Proposed Development as follows:
- > **Event 1:** Tuesday 26 November 2024, 2:00pm - 7:30pm – Kynachan Hall, Tummel Bridge, Pitlochry, PH16 5NT.

The Applicant requested comments and feedback from members of the public, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders be provided up to the 14 January 2025.

- > **Event 2:** Monday 28 April 2025, 4pm – 7pm - Kynachan Hall, Tummel Bridge, Pitlochry, PH16 5NT.

This event provided further information about the proposed underground cable, the Applicant's responses to feedback received from the first event, as well as a further opportunity to meet the project team, ask questions and share further comments.

- > **Event 3:** Monday 12 May 2025. 4pm – 7pm – Kynachan Hall, Tummel Bridge, Pitlochry, PH16 5NT.

The Applicant presented feedback and further information on the proposals for temporary and permanent access tracks, temporary bellmouth entrances and temporary compounds to facilitate a new underground cable between Kinardochoy substation and Errochty substation. Final comments and feedback from members of the public, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders on our proposals were requested to be submitted by 26 May 2025.

2.14 The Applicant has addressed the matters raised during the consultation period in formulating and finalising the Proposed Development.

2.15 Full details of the PAC process and how the project has responded to the feedback received are set out in the accompanying PAC Report.

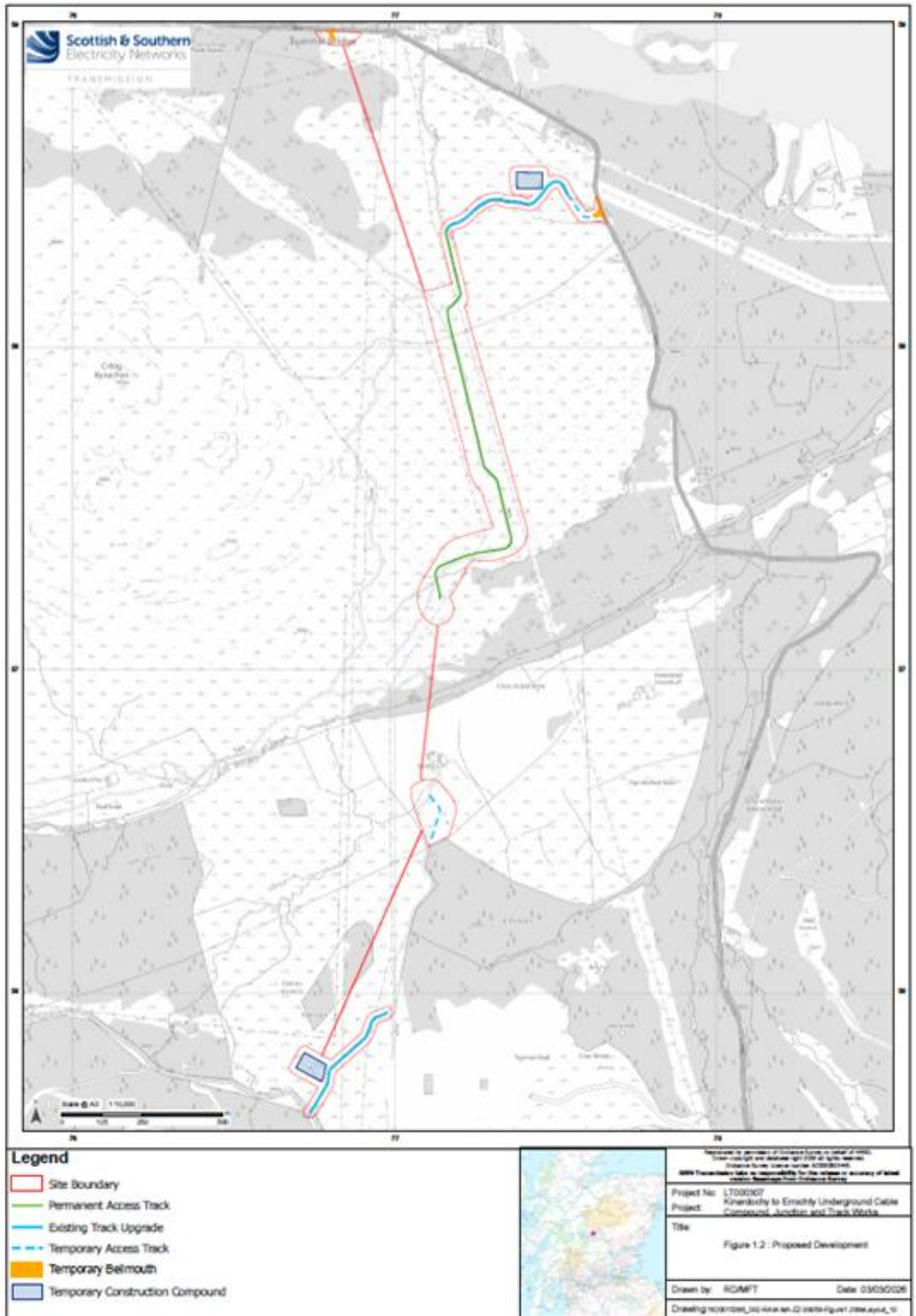
3. The Proposed Development

3.1 The Proposed Development is located approximately 95 m southwest of the Errochty Substation at its closest point and 230 m west of the Kinardochoy substation at its closest point, south of Tummel Bridge, Perthshire.

3.2 The Proposed Development components are illustrated on Figure 1.2 of the EA (reproduced below at Figure 3.1) and will comprise of:

- > 1.7 km of permanent stone access track;
- > 136 m of temporary access track (north);
- > 107 m of temporary access track (south),
- > 462 m of existing track widening (north);
- > 406 m of existing track widening (south);
- > Two temporary bellmouth junctions off the B846 public road;
- > A temporary laydown / construction compound (north) approximately 80 m x 50 m;
- > A temporary laydown / construction compound (south) approximately 89 m x 54 m, and
- > Reinstatement of temporary elements.

Figure 3.1 Proposed Development



Access

- 3.3 The primary access to the Site from the public road would be via the two new temporary bell mouths off the B846 at Tummel Bridge adjacent to the Errochty Substation and approximately 1km further south along the B846.
- 3.4 Permanent stone access tracks are required to facilitate the installation of the UGC and allow access to UGC joint bays for operation and maintenance purposes.
- 3.5 A section of temporary stone access track (north) will be required between the temporary bellmouth leaving the B846 and the northern temporary construction compound to provide construction access.
- 3.6 A section of temporary stone access track is required to facilitate the temporary diversion of an existing access to a residential property during construction. All temporary access tracks will be removed on completion of the works and the area reinstated to its previous condition.
- 3.7 Two sections of existing track will require temporary upgrades in the form of widening to facilitate the installation of the UGC. Temporary widening to the tracks will be removed on completion of the works and the area reinstated to its previous condition.

Bellmouth junction

- 3.8 Two temporary bellmouth junctions are required to facilitate construction traffic access of the adjacent B846 public road.

Laydown / construction compounds

- 3.9 Two temporary laydown / construction compounds will be required during construction, located to the northeast and southwest of the Proposed Development as illustrated on **Figure 1.2** of the EA. These would provide office and welfare facilities for site staff, parking, laydown areas, and holding and servicing space for construction plant. It is anticipated these compounds would cover an area of approximately 80 m x 50 m and 89 m x 54 m respectively.

Reinstatement

- 3.10 Following commissioning of the Proposed Development, all temporary construction areas would be reinstated. Reinstatement would form part of the contract obligations for the Principal Contractor and shall include the removal of all temporary site works.
- 3.11 Minor landscaping shall take place as part of the restoration works, in the form of a grass centre strip and reseeding the edges of the permanent track. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment is being undertaken and will be provided to support the application once complete. The Applicant is committed in all projects to deliver 10% net gain.

4. Design

- 4.1 Design principles have been adopted to ensure the Proposed Development is sited and designed as sensitively as possible, taking into account the environment and the context in which it sits.
- 4.2 The layout and design of the Proposed Development has been strongly influenced by the potential impacts on sensitive receptors and features within the surrounding environment. This information has been embedded into the iterative design process to minimise the potential for permanent effects. Potential sensitive receptors within the study area are those where physical or perceptual effects may result as a consequence of the Proposed Development.
- 4.3 The proposed two temporary construction compounds will be removed and the land and area restored to previous use. The proposed stone access tracks are considered to be reflective of

the area, and will limit the visual impact on the landscape, ensuring that there are no unacceptable adverse effects on the environment.

- 4.4 The proposed two junctions are temporary and not out of keeping with the area and will be fully reinstated on completion of the works.
- 4.5 Minor landscaping shall take place as part of the restoration works, in the form of a grass centre strip and reseeding the edges of the permanent track.
- 4.6 The two most sensitive receptors for the Proposed Development's consideration were forestry and ornithology. As noted above, the design has sought to avoid the most sensitive areas of ancient woodland, with no areas being affected by the Proposed Development. In relation to ornithology interests, embedded mitigation is provided and includes a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will be produced by the Principal Contractor and will include measures to protect ornithological features, a pre-construction nesting bird check, and habitat reinstatement / landscape planting which could provide alternative habitat to use by nesting birds. No long-term residual effects are predicted on breeding birds.

5. Access

- 5.1 A DAS is a single document combining the Design Statement which addresses the design of the development and an Access Statement which demonstrates observance of the equal opportunities' requirements. The Statement should explain and justify the accessibility of the Proposed Development.
- 5.2 Accessibility to major infrastructure is fundamentally different by virtue of health and safety and operational regulations, than to that of a public or commercial building. The Site including the temporary construction compounds has been designed to facilitate access for authorised personnel for maintenance and operation only, and to ensure that the Site is secure from intruders.
- 5.3 The proposed permanent stone access track is required to facilitate the installation of the UGC and allow permanent access to UGC joint bays for operation and maintenance purposes. The small section of temporary stone access track is required to facilitate a temporary diversion of an existing access to a residential property during the construction period. Temporary access tracks will be removed on completion of the works and the area reinstated to its previous condition. All junctions will be designed to an acceptable standard for the largest vehicle for construction and operation.
- 5.4 Given the nature of the Proposed Development, once operational the new permanent access track would be limited to authorised persons only and access by members of the public would not be permitted. As required by regulation, the Site has been designed to ensure security from all unauthorised persons.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The Applicant has given careful consideration to the siting, design, layout and access of the Proposed Development to ensure it is designed sensitively for the surroundings. The Proposed Development seeks to fit a functional development which avoids significant impacts on nearby receptors. The design has been progressed to fit sustainably into the environment in which it sits whilst satisfying technical requirements and functionality. Existing infrastructure has been utilised insofar as possible which has limited the need for new tracks. The Proposed Development will support the delivery of sustainable development and reaching net zero targets and increased transmission of renewable energy.
- 6.2 Unauthorised access to infrastructure sites of this nature is prohibited. The site has been designed to reflect the function and technical requirements of the Applicant and relevant health and safety requirements. Access is strictly controlled and limited but has been designed such that all appropriate users can be accommodated.