

Volume 2: Chapter 6 – Scope and Consultation

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Appendices (Volume 4 of this EIAR)

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Figures (Volume 3 of this EIAR)

There are no figures associated with this Chapter.

6. SCOPE AND CONSULTATION

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) describes the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment, as required by the *EIA Regulations*. The Scoping process enables those potential likely significant effects to be identified. Although not a legislative requirement, scoping was identified as being a useful tool early in the project development process, as it provides key consultees with the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Development and its emerging likely environmental effects. Having regard to the requirements of Regulation 12(4) of the *EIA Regulations*, the list of organisations consulted for the Proposed Development included the EIA consultation bodies¹, statutory consultees², non-statutory consultees and other public bodies³, to capture the views of as many stakeholders as possible. This provides a basis for ensuring the assessment of environmental effects is focused on issues of genuine potential significance and ensures that a proportionate approach to the EIA is undertaken. Stakeholder engagement is a key part of the EIA process and is important for the successful delivery of an application for a development of this nature. Consultation and engagement early in the process, as well as advice and input sought from key consultees, helps greatly to inform decisions about the design and scoping of the EIA for the Proposed Development.
- 6.1.2 This Chapter describes the EIA Scoping process, including consultation which was specifically undertaken to determine the scope of the EIA Report (EIAR), and the consultations that were undertaken more generally to inform the local community and other stakeholders of the progression at each key stage of the project. These took place both at the consultation stage to inform design, assessment and survey methods, and at the pre-application stage to inform the details of the Proposed Development in accordance with the *Energy Consents Unit Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989*⁴. Whilst consultation to inform the scope of the EIA and more general project consultation have been undertaken separately, feedback of relevance to the scope and content of the EIA from the general stakeholder engagement has been considered in the EIA process. The identification and environmental appraisal of the design of the Proposed Development has also been informed by consultation as detailed further in **Volume 2, Chapter 4: Consideration of Alternatives**. Additionally, a brief description of the environmental effects of potential significance associated with the Proposed Development which are addressed in detail in each of the Technical Chapters (**Volume 2**) is outlined in this Chapter, as well as those that have been scoped out from further assessment.

6.2 Consultation with the Local Community and Stakeholders

- 6.2.1 Throughout the evolution of the Proposed Development, SSEN Transmission has sought to maintain an open dialogue with stakeholders and local communities in proximity to the Proposed Development. This has included carrying out in-person consultation events during the design process for the Proposed Development. Additionally, for those members of the public that could not attend the in-person events, the same information was presented within a virtual consultation room which could be accessed via the project website⁵. Consultation has involved engaging with statutory consultees, non-statutory consultees, community members and local organisations, as well as landowners

¹ Consultation Bodies are defined in the *EIA Regulations* as the planning authority, Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot), the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

² Statutory and non-statutory consultees are not defined by the *EIA Regulations*. SSEN Transmission has sought to consult with organisations of a statutory nature (for example community councils) and those of a non-statutory nature (eg environmental groups) who may have opinions or information of relevance to the EIA process.

³ Public bodies are defined in the *EIA Regulations* as “those which the Scottish Ministers consider are likely to have an interest in the proposed development by reason of that body’s specific environmental responsibilities or local and regional competencies”. HM Government, 2017. *The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/101/contents/made>.

⁴ The Scottish Government, 2022. *Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/good-practice-guidance-applications-under-sections-36-37-electricity-act-1989/>

⁵ SSEN Transmission, n.d. Kintore to Tealing 400 kV Overhead Line Project webpage. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/kintore-tealing-400kv-ohl-connection/?panel=panel-5>

and occupiers that may be impacted by the Proposed Development. These events have taken place at a formative stage of the proposals and the feedback has informed the further development of the proposals.

- 6.2.2 It is noted that the consultation events for the Proposed Development were combined with the Kintore to Tealing 400 kV Overhead Line (OHL) consultations. As a result, the Proposed Development was presented in a context of the wider development project, therefore providing a broader understanding of the wider project goals.
- 6.2.3 A Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC Report) has been submitted alongside the EIAR and this provides detail of the consultation events and engagement that have been undertaken.

Engagement to Date

- 6.2.4 A first round of stakeholder and public consultation for the Proposed Development was undertaken between May and July 2023. The consultation presented information on the wider Kintore to Tealing 400 kV OHL project, and included information for the Tie-Ins that form the Proposed Development. The consultation included information regarding site options, environmental and technical considerations, and the project development process, and explained the factors which were taken into consideration in the process.
- 6.2.5 The consultation sought to capture views from:
- statutory consultees;
 - non-statutory consultees;
 - community members and local organisations, including local elected members; and
 - landowners and occupiers.
- 6.2.6 Project documents prepared to inform this consultation are available on the SSEN Transmission project website⁵. Statutory and non-statutory consultees were notified regarding the consultation and a number of these organisations provided written consultation responses to the Applicant. These responses have been taken into account in the preparation of this EIAR and where relevant to the different environmental technical assessments presented.

Outcome of Consultation

- 6.2.7 Feedback from the consultation was collated, analysed and used to inform the design process for the Proposed Development.
- 6.2.8 Two *Reports on Consultation* (RoC⁶, ⁷) were published by the Applicant in December 2023 and January 2025 which presented the outcomes of the consultation process, the responses to the feedback received and confirmed the selection of the Proposed Development.

Pre-Application Consultation

- 6.2.9 A Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) event was undertaken at Tealing Village Hall on 7 March 2024 to present the background to the Proposed Development, the site selection process, the preliminary designs together with a summary of the environmental and technical factors taken into account in the design process. The PAC event was an opportunity for the community to see the initial proposals and to provide feedback. A Consultation Booklet was prepared to support the event and circulated to statutory and non-statutory consultees and other interested parties. It was also published on the SSEN Transmission project website.
- 6.2.10 A second PAC event was held on 5 June 2024 for the Proposed Development, at which a figure and description of the Proposed Development was included in the Consultation Booklet for public review and comment (shown in page 8).

⁶ SSEN Transmission, 2023. Kintore to Tealing 400 kV Overhead Line. Report on Consultation. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/globalassets/projects/rocs/tkup-ohl/report-on-consultation---kintore-to-tealing-400kv-ohl.pdf>

⁷ SSEN Transmission, 2023. Kintore to Tealing 400 kV Overhead Line. Report on Consultation. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/globalassets/projects/kintore---tealing-400kv-ohl-downloads/alignment-report-on-consultation/kintore-tealing-report-on-consultation-january-2025.pdf>

- 6.2.11 A series of public events was organised from 23 September 2024 until 10 October 2024 where the Potential Alignment for the OHL, with Alternative Alignment options in some locations was presented through maps and visualisations. A figure and brief description of the Emmock – Tealing Tie-Ins were included in the consultation booklet. In January, a RoC was produced providing a summary of the feedback received in response to the consultation booklet. The RoC did not identify any comments related to Emmock – Tealing Tie-Ins other than for the tie-ins to be included within appropriate cumulative assessments.
- 6.2.12 A further series of public events were organised across the project route for the Kintore to Tealing 400 kV OHL from 24 February until 13 March 2025 where SSEN Transmission shared its final Proposed Alignment for the OHL, presented through maps and visualisations. A figure and brief description of the Emmock – Tealing Tie-Ins was included in this information.
- 6.2.13 SSEN Transmission is in receipt of comprehensive feedback and consultation responses from stakeholders in connection with the Emmock substation and the Kintore to Tealing 400 kV OHL which both overlap with the development footprint of the tie-ins. Information that has been received through this consultation process will be included within the scope of the application for the Proposed Development in so far that is it pertinent and relevant.

6.3 EIA Screening

- 6.3.1 A Screening request was issued to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government on 21 August 2024. A Screening Opinion was provided by the ECU on 13 November 2024. The Screening Response, taking into account the selection criteria within Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations, determined that the application for consent requires to be accompanied by a full Environmental Impact Assessment report.

6.4 EIA Scoping

- 6.4.1 A Scoping Report was issued to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government on 11 April 2025 (see **Volume 4, Appendix 6.1: Scoping Report**). A Scoping Opinion was provided by the ECU on behalf of Scottish Ministers on 28 May 2025 and is included in **Volume 4, Appendix 6.2: Scoping Opinion**.
- 6.4.2 The responses and requests contained within the Scoping Opinion were considered in detail during the EIA process. **Volume 4, Appendix 6.3: Consultation Matrix** of this EIAR includes details of the key issues that were raised during the Scoping consultation and how and where they are addressed within this EIAR.

6.5 Further Consultee Engagement

- 6.5.1 Consultation engagement has been ongoing throughout the different stages of the project and continued throughout the Scoping and EIA process. This engagement kept key EIA consultees updated on the project and allowed SSEN Transmission to agree important methodological issues for EIA related activities such as survey scopes and approaches, assessment methods, and approaches to mitigation.

6.6 Issues Scoped into Assessment

- 6.6.1 During the Scoping process, it was confirmed that the following topics required detailed assessment within the EIAR:
- **Landscape and Visual Amenity** – Potential impacts of the Proposed Development on designated landscape areas, landscape character and visual receptors cannot be discounted. Therefore, further assessment is required. (**Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Amenity**).
 - **Cultural Heritage** – Potential impacts of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage and archaeology assets, including on their setting, cannot be discounted. Therefore, further assessment is required. (**Volume 2, Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage**).
 - **Ornithology** – Effects of the proposed alignment of the OHLs on assemblages of avian species and impact to the Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within the vicinity of the Proposed Development cannot be discounted. Therefore, further assessment is required. (**Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ornithology**).
 - **Noise and Vibration** – during construction, noise and vibration effects (including from traffic where relevant) on sensitive receptors identified in proximity to construction working areas. Operational noise effects associated with OHL conductor noise for nearby sensitive receptors (**Volume 2, Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration**).

- **Cumulative Effects** – Effects of the Proposed Development in combination with other projects in the area cannot be discounted. Therefore, further assessment is required. (**Volume 2, Chapter 11: Cumulative Effects**)

6.6.2 Within the above topics, some specific aspects and potential effects have been scoped out of the EIA. Full details of this are provided in the Scoping Opinion (see **Volume 4, Appendix 6.2: Scoping Opinion**).

6.7 Issues Scoped out of Assessment

6.7.1 During the Scoping process, it was identified that a number of environmental topics do not require detailed assessment within the EIAR as it was considered that they are not likely to give rise to significant effects. These topics were referred to in the Scoping Report (see **Volume 4, Appendix 6.1: Scoping Report**) as topics to be scoped out from further consideration within the EIAR and they are discussed in this section.

Land Use and Recreation

Land Use

- 6.7.2 The Site currently comprises agricultural land primarily given over to grass crop with traditional boundary treatments including stonewalls, ditches and fences. There are no other land uses within the Site.
- 6.7.3 The majority of the agricultural land surrounding the Proposed Development is Class 3.2, which is considered non-prime agricultural land as defined under the *Macauley Institute's Land Capability for Agriculture Assessment*⁸.
- 6.7.4 There are no Class 1 or 2 agricultural designations in the study area (defined by the permanent land take). The Westfield – Tealing 275 kV OHL runs through Class 3.1 agricultural land described as “*land capable of producing consistently high yields of a narrow range of crops and/or moderate yields of a wider range. Short grass leys are common*”. Due to the limited scale of works for permanent tower positions, the tie-in connections for the Westfield – Tealing 275 kV OHL are not predicted to have a Significant effect on Class 3.1 agricultural land.
- 6.7.5 Due to the limited footprint of tower foundations, the Proposed Development will not significantly detract from the agricultural land available, nor will it materially alter the overall land use in the area. Buffers around the towers will not change the general use of the land for agriculture.
- 6.7.6 Reinstatement to agricultural use following construction will be achieved through careful design and liaison with the relevant landowner with no operational impacts on land-use beyond direct land-take anticipated. The maintenance of towers will not impact land use or amenity in the area. Wayleave will only be required for occasional maintenance as needed.

Recreation

- 6.7.7 The Site is characterised by private agricultural land with farm access road for which the main users are residents. Recreational users can currently visit Balkello Woodland, located approximately 1 km from the first redirected tower (AT4) of the Alyth – Tealing 275 kV OHL, along a core path which runs from southeastern edge of the wood, parallel to and approximately one-half kilometre from proposed towers AT3 to AT5 of the Proposed Development. Otherwise, the survey area supports no other forms of recreational activity.
- 6.7.8 The existing Alyth – Tealing 275 kV OHL currently runs north-south through the upper part of Balkello Woodland where the core path meets the woodland, near the proposed future location of tower AT3, which will replace an existing tower. The Proposed Development is an extension of the existing Alyth – Tealing 275 kV OHL and is not anticipated to have Significant effects on recreation.
- 6.7.9 An Outline Outdoor Access Management Plan (OAMP) (**Volume 4, Appendix 3.7: Outline Outdoor Access Management Plan**) accompanies this EIAR and suggests mitigation for two core paths situated near to the Proposed Development. These include Core Path 207 Kirkton of Tealing to Balnuith which sits adjacent to the northern boundary of Tealing Substation and under a section of OHL which is to be dismantled, and Core Path 210 Kirkton of Auchterhouse to Balluderon which passes under towers AT1 and AT2. The final Outdoor Access Management Plan

⁸ The Scottish Government, 2022. *National scale land capability for agriculture*. [Online] Available at: <https://soils.environment.gov.scot/maps/capability-maps/national-scale-land-capability-for-agriculture/>

will be approved as a condition of the deemed planning permission, and should further measures be necessary they would be added as part of the discharge of those conditions.

- 6.7.10 **No Significant effects are likely** for Land Use or Recreation during construction or operation.

Ecology

Designations

- 6.7.11 The Proposed Development has no direct interaction with any internationally designated sites. Tower 179 (see **Volume 3, Figure 3.1: Proposed Development for which Section 37 (Electricity Act, 1989) is sought**) on the Tealing to Westfield 275 kV OHL, nominally located within Long Established of Plantation Origin (LEPO) woodland, is west of the location where new works would be required for the OHL diversion and would not be affected by the Proposed Development. **No Significant effects are likely** during construction or operation.

Habitats

- 6.7.12 Construction impacts will be restricted to Negligible loss of habitat around the footprint of the new OHL towers and associated access tracks⁹. Micrositing of the final alignment will seek to avoid any sensitive habitats identified in pre-construction surveys.
- 6.7.13 Permanent habitat loss may occur if some access tracks remain in situ following construction works and in relation to the new tower foundations. However, in the context of the wider landscape these habitat losses will likely be Negligible and would not affect ecologically important habitats.
- 6.7.14 No potential Significant operational impacts have been identified.
- 6.7.15 Given the relatively short length of the proposed OHL diversions, the ability to microsite structures away from sensitive ecological receptors, and the relatively small area of habitat to be lost (in the context of the wider landscape), **no Significant effects are likely** during construction or operation.

Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils

- 6.7.16 The Fithie Burn is hydrologically connected to the Dighty Burn Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS) which is located approximately 2.5 km south of the Proposed Development. However, as this connection is via approximately 9 km of watercourse, impacts are considered unlikely.
- 6.7.17 The design has incorporated a 50 m buffer from all watercourses and water features, which will minimise any effect on water quality and hydrology during construction. However, two of the existing towers (WT9 and TW3) which are to be upgraded and used for the Proposed Development are 16 m and 25 m respectively from watercourses and both are within the predicted fluvial flood risk area from the Fithie Burn and a tributary.
- 6.7.18 Applied good practice mitigation, including construction pollution control measures and construction Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be in place during construction to avoid sedimentation and run-off from construction working areas reaching the water environment. These are detailed in SSEN Transmission's General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and the Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) (See **Appendix 3.2 General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and Species Protected Plans (SPPs)** and **Appendix 3.4 Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)**), which together with on-site Environmental Clerk of Works (ECOW) supervision will limit the potential impacts on the water environment.
- 6.7.19 Additional bespoke mitigation (eg silt fences, swales) will be put in place during the upgrades to towers WT9 and TW3 given their proximity to watercourses. In addition, no work will be undertaken during flood events in the known flood risk areas of the Site.
- 6.7.20 Existing access tracks will be used as much as possible, and new temporary tracks will be designed to avoid any new watercourse crossings and avoid flood risk areas.

⁹ As discussed in **Volume 4, Appendix 6.1: Scoping Report, Table 4.1 Topics Scoped Out**.

- 6.7.21 Subsequent to comments raised in the Scoping Opinion (**Volume 4, Appendix 6.2: Scoping Opinion**) by SEPA and the Scottish Ministers, provided in **Volume 4, Appendix 6.4: Private Water Supply and Groundwater Abstractions Assessment** is an appraisal of the risk of impacts upon four known or suspected Private Water Supplies (PWS) within 250 m of the Proposed Development.
- 6.7.22 There are no Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPAs) (Surface) within 1 km of the Proposed Development. The entirety of Scotland, including the Proposed Development, is a Drinking Water Protected (Groundwater) area.
- 6.7.23 Extensive Hydrology and Ecology surveys were carried out as part of the Kintore to Tealing 400 kV Overhead Line EIAR. The nearest area of Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystem (GWDTE) to the site is over 14 km to the north of the Proposed Development and has therefore not been considered further in the EIA.

Geology and Soils

- 6.7.24 The underlying geology at the Site is the Dundee Flagstone Formation which comprises a mixture of medium to coarse grained, cross-bedded sandstones and substantial, distinctive, flaggy sandstones interbedded with minor siltstones and mudstones, interdigitated with the Ochil Volcanic Formation. This is overlain with surface deposits of Devensian Till. This assemblage is common within the wider area and does not comprise an area of geological rarity or interest.
- 6.7.25 The area is not associated with the release of Radon gas with the Site lying in the lowest band of Radon potential.
- 6.7.26 Although the Site is given over to agriculture, the soils on Site are not Prime Agricultural Land. Given the Sites history, and current use, as arable land it is not anticipated that soil pollution is present and therefore construction of the Proposed Development is considered unlikely to mobilise contaminants.
- 6.7.27 NatureScot (2016) Carbon and Peatland Mapping indicates that there are no areas of peat or carbon rich soils within the Proposed Development. The soils are classed as Class 0 – Mineral Soils.
- 6.7.28 **No Significant** effects are likely for hydrology, hydrogeology, or the underlying soils/geology during the construction and operation or cumulatively.

Traffic and Transport

- 6.7.29 Access to existing towers for both the Alyth – Tealing 275 kV OHL and Tealing to Westfield 275 kV OHLs is required during tie-in diversions. It is assumed that construction access agreed for the eastern end of these OHL projects would be retained and used for access to the new sections of towers on the OHL tie-in diversions. Reconductoring for both OHLs forms part of a separate application.
- 6.7.30 The Proposed Development would require the use of existing farm roads as well as new access roads and wayleave on private property to accommodate construction/maintenance of the redirected lines and the tie-backs between Emmock and Tealing substations, and for upgrades to existing towers, and removal of towers. This access/wayleave will be agreed with local landowners.
- 6.7.31 Traffic generated by the Proposed Development during the construction phase, based upon the Applicant's experience developing similar infrastructure, would be minimal in volume and would utilise existing traffic routes with residual capacity.
- 6.7.32 Although the volume of construction traffic would be low (and would not be considered as Significant) this information would be updated against the proposed construction programme in the form of a concise Transport Statement (TS) that would be incorporated in the Section 37 application documentation.
- 6.7.33 Emmock Road (an established active travel route) may require consideration during the construction phase in relation to construction of the Emmock substation, to the extent that works for these developments overlap and/or occur in parallel. If needed, this would be addressed in a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) for Emmock substation.
- 6.7.34 The effects on traffic and transportation would be temporary and of limited duration. Trunk roads and local roads could accommodate transportation of components for towers and other materials for construction and installation on-

site. To the extent possible, access tracks for construction of Emmock substation would be used in combination with construction of new temporary tracks where needed on agricultural land.

6.7.35 **No Significant effects are anticipated** from transportation and traffic during construction and operation.

Population and Human Health

6.7.36 SSEN Transmission develops, builds and operates infrastructure to meet all applicable health and safety legislation, and guidance set by relevant bodies, principally the UK Government, Scottish Government, the Health and Safety Executive and the industry regulator, Ofgem. The requirements include those associated with EMFs.

6.7.37 In respect of EMFs, SSEN Transmission strictly follow the guidance as set by the UK Government, which in turn is informed by international guidance.

6.7.38 As well as setting exposure limits that protect against known, established effects of EMF, the UK Government's guidance¹⁰ also includes precautionary measures to protect against possible effects below the exposure limits that have not been established by science.

6.7.39 In addition to this, the UK Health Security Agency and Department of Health have a remit to review new research in this area and ensure that current guidelines and policies are reflective of that research.

6.7.40 The UK Government's latest policy on EMF is set out in *National Policy Statement EN-5*, (NPS EN-5)¹¹ which was reissued in November 2023 and came into force on 17 January 2024. This latest policy is reflective of that review process and in line with the NPS EN-5, the current UK Government guidance, informed by relevant international guidance, is therefore still considered appropriate by the UK Government and its public health experts. Whilst electricity consenting decisions are devolved to Scottish Ministers and the NPS EN-5 is therefore not all relevant in Scotland, SSEN Transmission can confirm compliance with all EMF guidance as set out in the NPS EN-5.

6.7.41 There have been over four decades of research looking into whether EMF can cause health effects and there are no scientifically proven effects below the exposure limits. When SSEN Transmission design OHLs, substations and cable installations, the design process is designed to ensure that exposure limits will not be exceeded, even when operating at 100% capacity. SSEN Transmission also seeks to ensure that necessary precautionary measures are also applied to the design where required.

6.7.42 In summary, the guidance the Applicant follows, which remains subject to ongoing review as required, ensures that safety measures will be applied to the Proposed Development. No significant environmental effects relating to EMFs are predicted.

6.7.43 With regard to the objections related to adverse effects on mental health, raised during the public consultations, the Applicant is mindful of there being a level of uncertainty created by the consultation and consenting stages for the application process related to the Proposed Development. For this reason, SSEN Transmission aimed to balance the need for certainty and a swift application process whilst still providing sufficient opportunity for stakeholders to feed into the consultation processes during the design phases of the Proposed Development. There was an aim to identify options that provided an appropriate balance across a variety of constraints and interests. Every attempt was made to inform communities of the options being considered, and decisions being made at each stage. This was to ensure that ultimately the overall most appropriate Proposed Development was selected, having regard to the different environmental factors that required to be taken into account, together with competing technical and economic considerations.

6.7.44 The potential for significant effects on population and human health was considered in the Scoping Report in relation to a range of health determinants in addition to EMFs. **No significant effects were predicted**, and it is not considered that reported mental health effects arising indirectly from uncertainty around the application process would give rise to significant human health effects.

¹⁰ The UK Government, Updated 2019. *Electromagnetic fields*. [Online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/electromagnetic-fields>

¹¹ The UK Government, Updated 2024. *National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5)* [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-policy-statement-for-electricity-networks-infrastructure-en-5>

Air Quality

- 6.7.45 Local air quality is a combination of background air quality, representative of general levels of pollution away from busy roads and industrial activity and added emissions from local emission sources. Due to the generally rural nature of the Site, emissions from road traffic and industrial sources are likely to be minimal. The Proposed Development is not located within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The nearest AQMA is the Dundee AQMA which lies approximately 2.5 km to the south of the Site and covers the city of Dundee, implemented due to breaches of NO₂ and PM₁₀.
- 6.7.46 Construction Phase – Emissions associated with the Proposed Development will be limited to temporary and short-term emissions during key phases of construction. Although access to Emmock Road is currently proposed to be drawn from just within the northern periphery of the Dundee AQMA, exhaust gases from vehicles and construction plant are considered unlikely to result in Significant adverse effects on the basis that effects will be short-lived, associated only with key stages of construction and management plans will ensure construction traffic is directed from the north, travelling south down the A90, therefore limiting the potential for construction traffic to interact with the AQMA.
- 6.7.47 **No Significant Effects are likely** for operational or maintenance activities that will give rise to emissions to air.

Climate Change

- 6.7.48 NPF4 sets out a clear policy emphasis on consideration of climate/carbon issues. The policies make clear that lifecycle emissions and effects on peatlands are prominent issues in this context. However, they do not replace the process that needs to be followed through EIA, in particular the ability to scope out considerations where Significant environmental effects are not considered to be likely.
- 6.7.49 Based on the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) assessment of the National Development (the Proposed Development would fall within the definition of a National Development), and the summary of this in Annex B of *National Planning Framework 4* (NPF4)¹², grid transmission projects are an overall and inextricable part of the renewables infrastructure required and collectively they deliver (net) emissions reductions. Therefore, further consideration at the individual project level is not needed.
- 6.7.50 However, review of the findings of the GHG assessment indicates that, at the strategic level, the adverse effects predicted in relation to grid infrastructure are not predicted to be greater than **Minor** in significance and therefore this provides some support for a scoping approach which sets out to scope out effects on the basis they would not be Significant.
- 6.7.51 Overall, the Climate Change Assessment (CCA) for NPF4 predicts a significant beneficial impact on climate for the National Development. NPF4 Policies, particularly Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation) and Policy 5 (Soils) imply further specific consideration (for any development) is required in relation to the potential for projects to have adverse effects on climate.
- 6.7.52 Scoping of the climate topic, or elements of it, should follow the EIA process, ie the assessment is based on the potential for significant effects and should take account of committed mitigation. In determining the significance of effects for GHGs for ASTI projects which are not replacing existing developments as they support a wider network of generators and transmission grid, these projects have overall net beneficial GHG effects.
- 6.7.53 Therefore, **no Significant effects are likely** for climate change, given the wider context of the delivery of net emissions reductions, and climate change was scoped out of the EIA.

Life Cycle/Embodied Carbon and Land Use Change Carbon

- 6.7.54 The CCA undertaken for NPF4 identified some potential for adverse impacts relating to emissions associated with changes in land use (particularly peat loss) and from life cycle emissions associated with materials and components for new wind farms and transmission infrastructure, although these were **not predicted to be Significant**.

¹² Scottish Government, 2023. *National Planning Framework 4*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/documents/>

- 6.7.55 Lifecycle emissions from carbon in embodied materials and components can be scoped out from all ASTI projects, but with coverage included in EIARs (including mitigation commitments) to demonstrate minimisation of emission through circular approaches (eg sustainable construction).
- 6.7.56 Carbon in materials and components for OHLs and substations are acknowledged in NPF4 as requiring consideration for adverse climate effects. However, the calculation of the embodied carbon would arrive at an estimated carbon quantum (for example with reference to relevant carbon targets, inventories etc) and would determine that the value was **Not Significant**. The priority is to ensure that the carbon embodied in the project would be an absolute minimum (as NPF4 Policy 2a requires) through commitment via mitigation in relation to re-use, recycling of materials, circular economy principles, supply chain procurement requirements in contracts and adoption of low carbon construction methodologies etc (see **Volume 4, Appendix 3.4 Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)**). This would also support demonstration of compliance with the principles of NPF4 Policy 12 (Zero Waste).
- 6.7.57 The scoping-out of the climate change assessment is based on the following parameters as not being Significant, namely, land use change issues (particularly with respect to peatlands which are not present in the Site and Negligible life cycle emissions embodied in project construction materials and components.
- 6.7.58 The Proposed Development will not have a **Significant effect** on increasing Life Cycle/Embodied Carbon and Land Use Change Carbon.

Socio-Economic Considerations and Assessments

- 6.7.59 The socio-economic assessment undertaken as part of the needs case for National Developments as defined in NPF4 is an established and settled policy in Scotland. However, due to the limited scale of the Proposed Development and given that the Scoping Opinion did not require any consideration of socio-economics, it is considered unnecessary to revisit or argue material relevance of socio-economic impact.
- 6.7.60 A socio-economic assessment is scoped out of the EIA based on an understanding of the relative scales of individual transmission infrastructure projects proposed in this project where any assessment of impacts is **Minor** and likely **Not Significant**.
- 6.7.61 The assessment is based on the principles of need as set out in Annex B of NPF4, as sufficient justification for development of Scotland's 'Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure'.

Major Accidents and Disasters

- 6.7.62 Given the nature and rural location of the Proposed Development, the potential for effects related to the vulnerability to major accidents and disasters is limited. Notably, the Proposed Development will be designed in accordance with the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM Regulations)*¹³. These regulations ensure the consideration of safety during the design, construction and operation of the Proposed Development and make it unlikely the Proposed Development would contribute to major accidents.
- 6.7.63 The Proposed Development is largely inert, and, by design, will be resilient to the likely effects of climate change. Further, the Proposed Development itself is unlikely to have the potential to act as either a source or a pathway for a hazard, making it unlikely the Proposed Development would contribute to effects arising from a disaster.
- 6.7.64 Additionally, the towers will be secured by perimeter fencing and other relevant security measures which will limit the likelihood of the wider public interacting with the Proposed Development. This further reduces the likelihood that the Proposed Development will contribute to major accidents or effects arising from disasters.
- 6.7.65 Potential significant effects relating to the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to accidents and disasters are **not likely to be Significant** and this topic is therefore scoped out of the EIA.

¹³ The UK Government, 2015. The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. [Online] available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/51/contents>

Material Assets and Waste

- 6.7.66 The construction phase of the Proposed Development will generate some waste that will be managed in accordance with good practice guidance and implementation of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) to implement the waste management hierarchy. Waste that arises is likely to be domestic and commercial wastes and other material arisings, for example, wood, metals and plastics, that will be segregated to allow recycling and appropriate disposal of non-recyclable materials and surplus building materials that will be returned to suitable secondary material processes. Further information on these measures will be included in the outline CEMP (**Appendix 3.4 Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)**) that will be prepared by the Principal Contractor.
- 6.7.67 During the operational phase of the Proposed Development, maintenance activities will generate waste, but this will not be in significant quantities and will likely be restricted to waste associated with employees and visiting contractors. It will be managed on-site and separated into recyclable waste streams accordingly.

6.8 Summary

- 6.8.1 The EIA Regulations set out a number of factors to be considered within an EIAR, specifically, those factors listed under Regulations 4(3) and 4(4), and Schedule 4. **Table 6.1: Assessment of Factors Identified in Regulations 4(3), 4(4) and Schedule 4** describes how this EIAR has addressed these factors.

Table 6.1: Assessment of Factors Identified in Regulations 4(3), 4(4) and Schedule 4

Topic	Potential for Significant Effects
Population and Human Health	Potential effects relating to population and human health arise from EMF during operation of the overhead lines, and air quality, noise and/or vibration effects could arise during construction of towers and accesses, as well as decommissioning. Whilst noise and vibration is scoped in, the potential effects relating to population and human health that arise from any of the above topics are considered not likely to be Significant and are scoped out of detailed assessment as discussed in Section 6.7 of this Chapter.
Biodiversity	Potential effects on biodiversity arise from the construction (including access tracks) of towers, as well as their dismantling. The operation of the Proposed Development will not have any effects upon biodiversity other than those associated with Ornithology (which is in the scope of the EIA). Such effects are considered not likely to be Significant and are scoped out of detailed assessment as discussed in Section 6.7 of this Chapter.
Land (and natural resource availability)	Potential effects on the land as an agricultural resource arise from the construction and operation of towers detracting from the agricultural land available and materially altering the overall land use in the area. Such effects are considered not likely to be Significant and are scoped out of detailed assessment as discussed in Section 6.7 of this Chapter. The potential for likely significant direct effects of the Proposed Development on recreational footpaths are considered in Appendix 3.7: Outline Outdoor Access Management Plan .
Soil (and natural resources availability)	Potential effects on geological receptors, peat and groundwater arise from construction activities. Such effects are considered not likely to be Significant and are scoped out of detailed assessment as discussed in Section 6.7 of this Chapter.
Water (and natural resources availability)	Potential effects relating to the water environment arise from the construction of the Proposed Development in proximity to watercourses, Private Water Supplies (PWS) and Groundwater Dependant Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). Such effects are considered not likely to be Significant and are scoped out of detailed assessment as discussed in Section 6.7 of this Chapter and in Volume 4, Appendix 6.4: Private Water Supply and Groundwater Abstractions Assessment .
Air and Climate	The potential effects on air quality and climate change during construction, operation and decommissioning are considered not likely to be Significant and are scoped out of detailed assessment as discussed in Section 6.7 of this chapter.
Landscape	The potential for significant effects arising from construction and operation of the Proposed Development on designated landscape areas and landscape character are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Amenity .
Cultural Heritage	The potential for significant effects arising from construction and operation of the Proposed Development on Cultural Heritage and archaeological assets are considered in Volume 2, Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage .

Topic	Potential for Significant Effects
Material Assets	Potential effects on material assets (ie the use of construction materials) during the construction phase of the Proposed Development are not likely to be significant given the relatively small scale of construction and the nature of the materials that are required.
Interaction Between Factors (Cumulative effects)	The approach to cumulative effects is outlined within Volume 2, Chapter 5: EIA Process and Methodology . It is considered within each of the technical Chapters in Volume 2 where relevant and is also detailed within a stand-alone Chapter (Volume 2, Chapter 11: Cumulative Effects).