

Appendix V6-9.1: Kyle Farm and Mudalach Woodland Report – Alternative Alignment

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1. Woodland Characteristics

Kyle Farm & Mudalach Woodland is owned by the Scottish Ministers and managed by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) – North Forest District. The woodland is accessed from the A87 approximately 7 miles east of Broadford (see **Figure 1: Location plan**).

Part of this woodland is commercial conifer plantation, with Lodgepole pine as its principal conifer species. Other parts of this woodland are included within the Kinloch and Kyleakin Hills SAC / SSSI noted for the Western Acidic Oak Woodland, however the main species present within the survey areas were mature native upland birch.

The Alternative Alignment affects the woodland between towers BF36B to BF47B and BF72B to BF80B.

The forest is managed as per the LMP Kinloch Hills and Broadford.

Towers BF36B-BF44B

Poor quality Lodgepole pine, growing on mix of flushed peats and peaty gleys, with generally wet ground conditions resulting in poor quality, stunted growth and checked areas. Identified within the LMP for felling within phase 4 (2035-2039). Significant areas of failed planting and open ground towards Towers BF39B-BF42B. Additional felling will be required within the more mature crop to create a green wind firm edge.



Checked LP, very wet ground conditions.



Open habitat around tower BF43B.

Towers BF44B-BF47B

Mature upland birch riparian woodland (W4), within the SAC.

Towers BF72B-BF80

The tree species present within this part of the woodland site include Sitka Spruce (SS) and Lodgepole pine (LP) growing on a mix of flushed peats and peaty gleys, with generally wet ground conditions, with resultant mixed growth rates ranging from severely checked to good growth where the crop is on drier knolls identified within the LMP for Phase 1 felling (2020-2024). Additional felling will be required to create a wind firm edge. Approximately 0.17ha of mature upland birch woodland (W4) will be impacted within this felling area.

2. Development Requirements

A resilient OC of 40m in width either side of the OHL would be required throughout the commercial woodland i.e. Towers BF36B-BF44B and BF72B-BF80. This would be reduced to 15 m in width either side of the OHL within the SAC area i.e. Towers BF44B-BF47B. This allows for the widest part of the tower and an allowance for maintaining the necessary safety clearance distances.

The commercial woodland is served by well-constructed Class A forest roads from the unclassified Kylerhea public road. These forest roads would reach towers BF36B-BF47B and BF72B-BF80. These roads can serve as the main arterial construction route.

Tree felling and timber extraction would be able to utilise existing tracks, prior to any construction activity.

Stump removal and residue mulching would be required for the installation of tracks within the operational corridor and at each tower structure construction compound for the formation of a temporary crane pad.

3. Wind Blow Risk

There is a low-medium wind blow risk across much of the woodland (DAMS Score of 17). There are several tower spans where the proposed OC opens a green edge to the prevailing wind necessitating additional felling out-with the OC to reach a stable edge. In areas where the trees are smaller due to age or exposure then the wind blow risk is reduced along with the requirement for additional felling to wind firm boundaries.

4. Woodland Management Impact

The line route will create additional challenges for the future management of the forest as it dissects existing management units and introduces an electrical hazard. The constraint associated with the electrical hazard will be reduced by regular maintenance of the Operational Corridor which will avoid the incidences of “Red Zone” trees (reference FISA 804 “Electricity at Work: Forestry”). As part of construction works, dedicated crossing points will be discussed once the overhead line has been constructed, thus insuring safe future working within the woodland.

The total loss of Native Broadleaved woodland resulting from the Alternative Alignment is 0.71 hectares.

5. Mitigation Opportunities

The reduction in the OC within the SAC area would reduce the impact on the native woodland within this area, which is a qualifying feature of the SAC.

a. Restructuring

Clear felling and restocking of Kyle Farm & Mudalach is ongoing and will continue to be undertaken by the landowner in the future, regardless of development felling, as detailed in the LMP. It is recognised that the proposed route will result in felling being brought forward from 2025 which will impact on the proposed LMP coupes in the north of the plan area and may require substitute changes in the wider plan area to smooth timber production. The felling of the Operational Corridor for the development, will create a new green edge, allowing the landowner to carry out future clear fell more safely in proximity to the new power line.

b. Restocking

Restocking would be carried out by the landowner in all areas out-with the OC with suitable species to continue the commercial viability of the forest. It is anticipated that native broadleaved regeneration is likely to occur within the OC from towers BF44B-BF47B and BF72B-BF80 due to the presence of mature birch woodlands. Any opportunity to restock within the OC would be discussed with the landowner following felling to link in with adjacent planned felling coupes where appropriate.

Refer to **Figure 3** for plan showing on site restocking.

6. Net Effect/Summary

Tower Span	Operational Requirements
BF35-BF43B	Gross area of OC felling required, undertaken by the Applicant. Clear fell all standing commercial trees within OC – LP/SS/L – 6ha
BF44B- BF47B	Gross area of OC felling required, undertaken by the Applicant. Clear fell native woodland within 60m OC – 0.57ha
BF72B-BF80	Gross area of OC felling required, undertaken by the Applicant. Clear fell all standing commercial trees within OC – LP/SS/L – 13.5ha
Felling for new access tracks	Clear 20m buffer along new access tracks - 0.59ha
Additional area of recommended felling outside OC for wind throw or forest design purposes (Landowner to fell under forest plan revision or felling licence) BF36B-BF44B	Clear fell to windfirm edge – SS/LP/L – 4.2ha
Additional area of recommended felling outside OC for wind throw or forest design purposes (Landowner to fell under forest plan revision or felling licence) BF72B-BF80	Clear fell to windfirm edge – SS/LP/L – 10.7ha
Compensatory Planting Options	
Potential onsite replacement planting/ regeneration within OC	0
Nett effect (Loss of Woodland)	20.6
Operational Works	
Total Area (ha)	
Clear fell harvesting within OC	20.07
• Felling within SAC	0.1
• Felling out with SAC	19.97
Clear fell harvesting out with OC	14.9
Felling on new access tracks	0.59
TOTAL	35.56

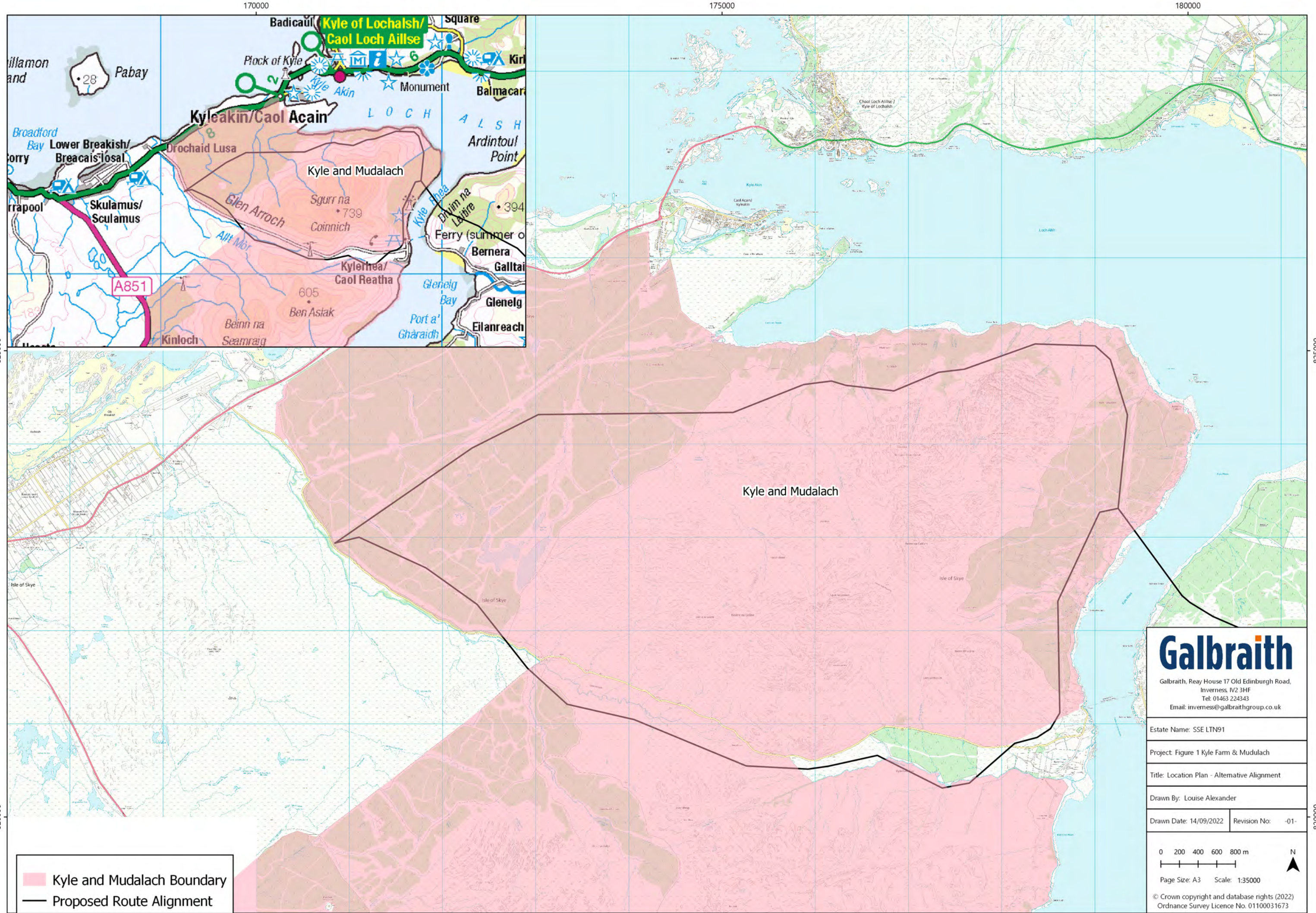
7. Compensatory Planting

The total amount of net felling requiring compensation under the Control of Woodland Removal Policy is 20.6hectares, made up of:

- 19.89 ha Commercial Woodland
- 0.7 ha Native Woodland
 - 0.1 ha SAC semi-natural woodland
 - 0.6 ha Non SAC semi-natural woodland

The dismantling of the existing 132 kV OHL would allow potential opportunities for compensatory planting where practical and in agreement with the landowner.

Further discussion on compensatory requirements associated with the SAC, and opportunities with respect to natural regeneration following dismantling of the existing OHL, are discussed within the Shadow HRA that accompanies the section 37 application.



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Kyle and Mudalach Boundary
 Proposed Route Alignment

Galbraith
 Galbraith, Reay House 17 Old Edinburgh Road,
 Inverness, IV2 3HF
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 Email: inverness@galbraithgroup.co.uk

Estate Name: SSE LTN91	
Project: Figure 1 Kyle Farm & Mudalach	
Title: Location Plan - Alternative Alignment	
Drawn By: Louise Alexander	
Drawn Date: 14/09/2022	Revision No: -01-

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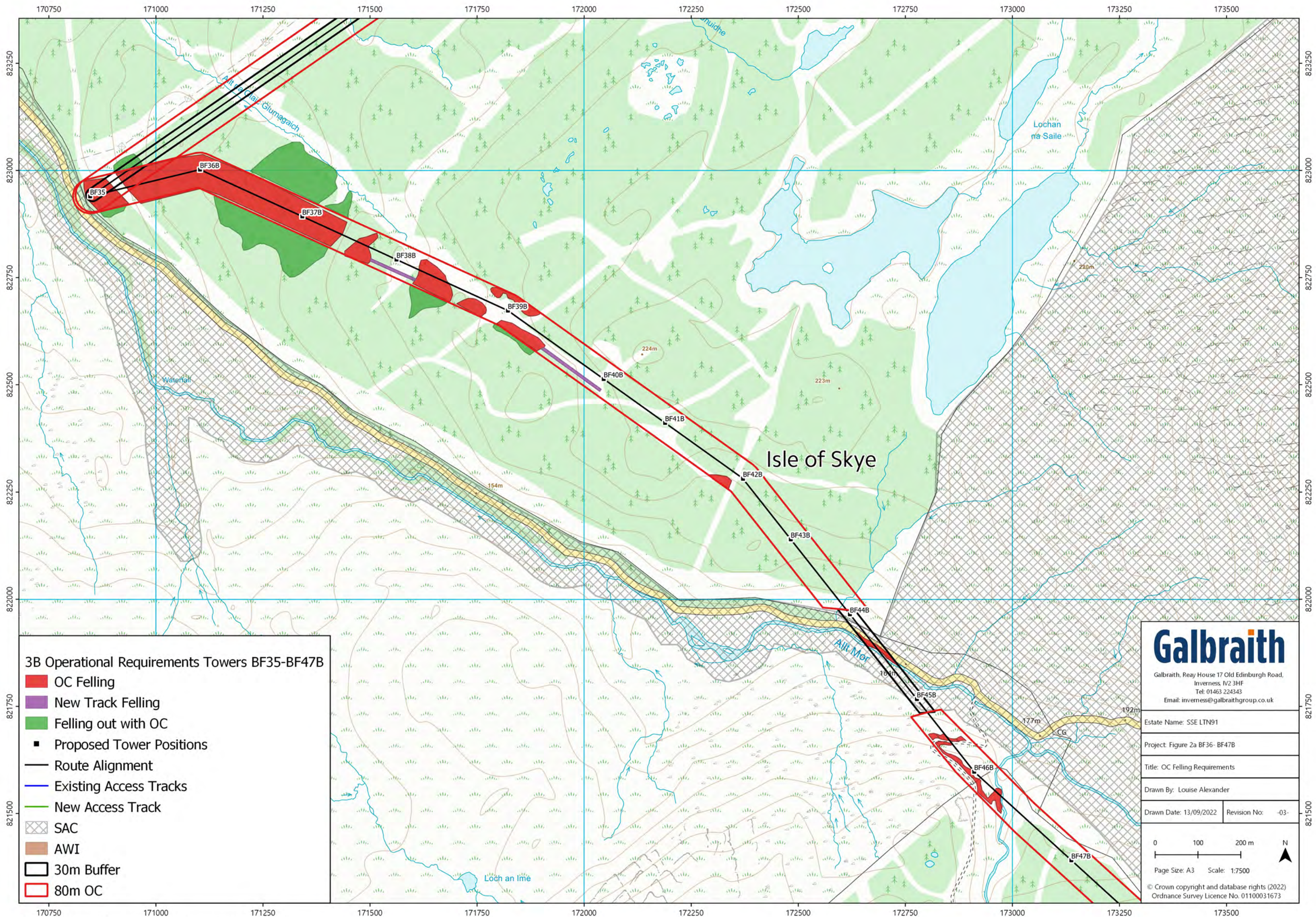
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3B Operational Requirements Towers BF35-BF47B

- OC Felling
- New Track Felling
- Felling out with OC
- Proposed Tower Positions
- Route Alignment
- Existing Access Tracks
- New Access Track
- SAC
- AWI
- 30m Buffer
- 80m OC

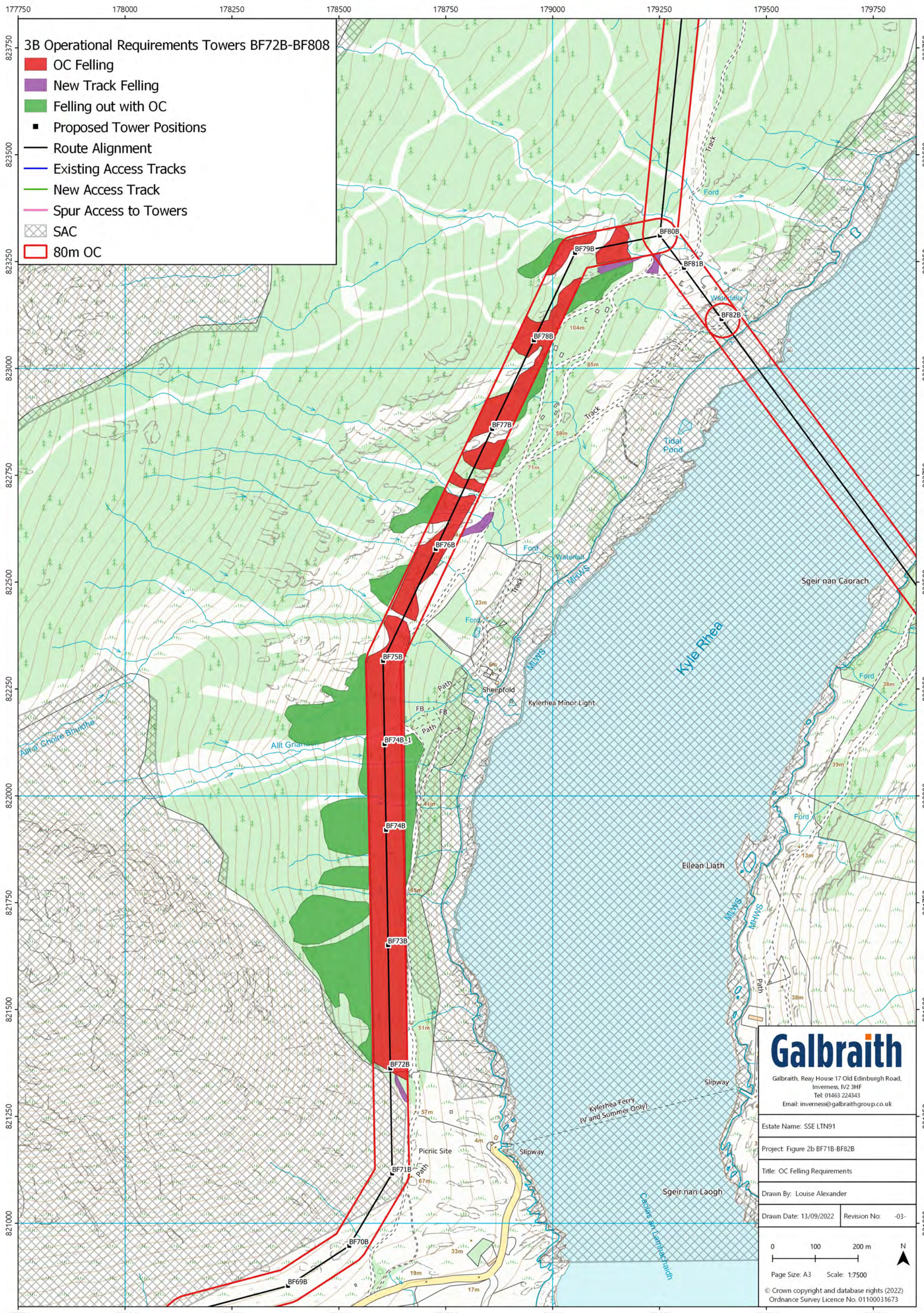
Galbraith
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Estate Name: SSE LTN91	
Project: Figure 2a BF36- BF47B	
Title: OC Felling Requirements	
Drawn By: Louise Alexander	
Drawn Date: 13/09/2022	Revision No: -03-

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3B Operational Requirements Towers BF72B-BF808

- █ OC Felling
- █ New Track Felling
- █ Felling out with OC
- Proposed Tower Positions
- Route Alignment
- Existing Access Tracks
- New Access Track
- Spur Access to Towers
- ▨ SAC
- ▭ 80m OC

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Estate Name: SSE LTN91	
Project: Figure 2b BF71B-BF82B	
Title: OC Felling Requirements	
Drawn By: Louise Alexander	
Drawn Date: 13/09/2022	Revision No: -03-

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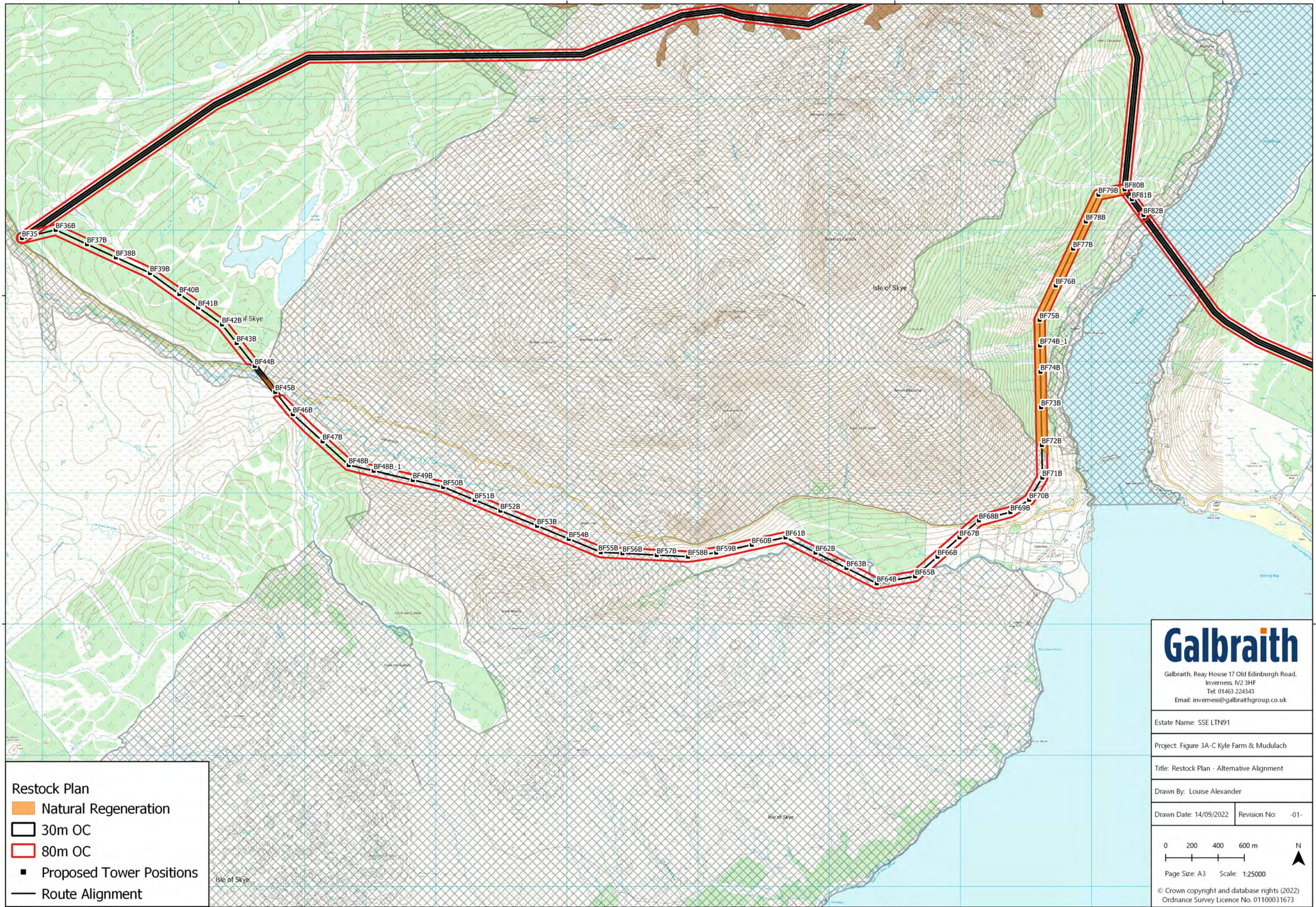
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Restock Plan

- Natural Regeneration
- 30m OC
- 80m OC
- Proposed Tower Positions
- Route Alignment

Galbraith

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Estate Name: SSE LTN91

Project: Figure 3A-C Kyle Farm & Mudulach

Title: Restock Plan - Alternative Alignment

Drawn By: Louise Alexander

Drawn Date: 14/09/2022 Revision No: -01-

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