

Routeing Consultation Report Addendum

Introduction

Consultation on the route options presented in February 2023 has resulted in further consideration of previously lesser preferred options and exploration of new options during Stage 2:Route Selection. These are within the local settlements of Tarvie, Strathpeffer and Contin, and are illustrated below (**Figure 1**). Four potential routes have been identified in this section, with Options 1 and 2 being in closer proximity to Strathpeffer. Options 3 and 4 travel further west through Tarvie before continuing south and then east to the west of Fairburn.

Constraints in the area include areas of ancient woodland of semi-natural origin, a Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA), the Fairburn Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL) and the Grade A-listed Fairburn Tower and Coul House. Proximity to communities at Strathpeffer, Contin, Marybank and Tarvie are also a key consideration.

Option 1 and 2 largely route through agricultural land with good public roads for accesses with gentle gradients of slope. Main challenges for both Options 3 and 4 are third party developments, terrain and access. Both Options 3 and 4 run through the proposed Tarvie Wind Farm. Also, the routes for Options 3 and 4 are sited on slopes, with large cross sections observed where Option 3 runs parallel to Loch Achonachie.

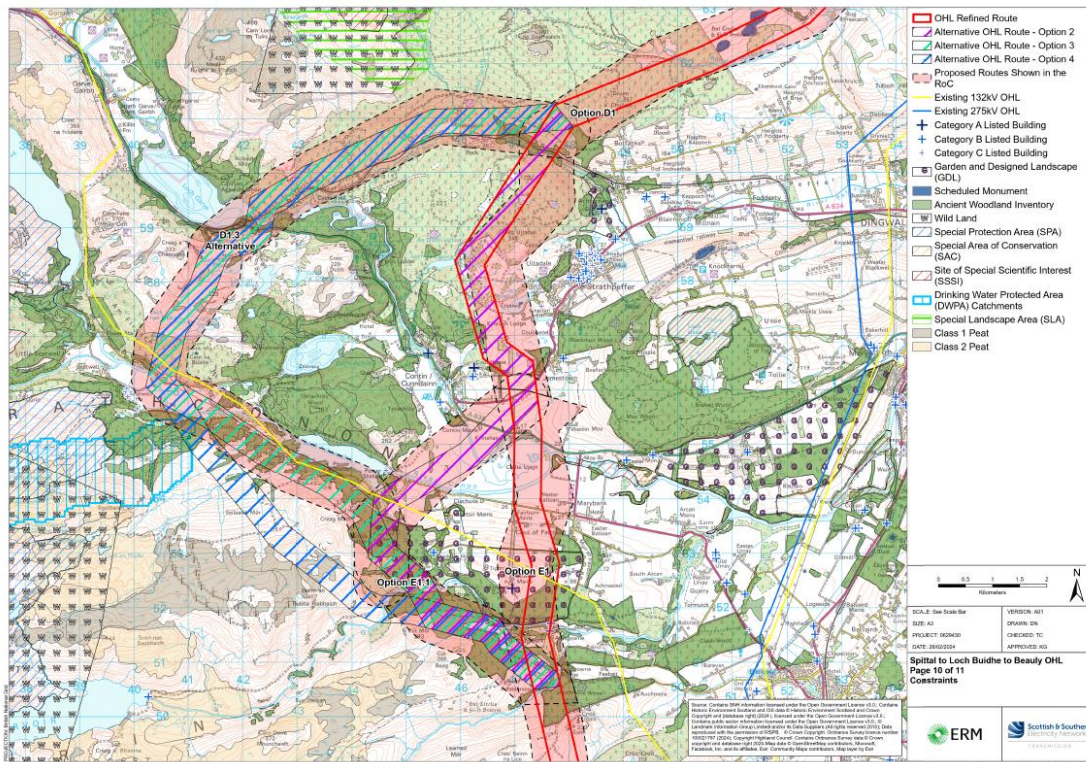


Figure 1: Section D/E Alternative Route Options

Alternative Route Assessment

A red, amber, green (RAG) rating has been applied to each topic area indicating potential impacts. This rating is based on a four-point scale of comparative appraisal ranging from scenarios of potentially minor effects or technical challenges, with little or no requirement for mitigation (Green rating) through to potentially major effects or technical challenges which may be difficult to mitigate (Red rating). The objective of the RAG rating is to identify points of difference between the potential impacts of the route options as outlined below (**Table 1**), with the full engineering and environmental comparisons of the options outlined in **Tables 2 and 3**.

RAG Rating Summary Tables

Table 1: Option 1, 2, 3 and 4 Environmental RAG Rating Table

Option	RAG Impact Rating – Environmental															
	Natural Heritage					Cultural Heritage		People	Landscape			Land Use			Planning	
	Designations	Protected Species	Habitats	Ornithology	Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Designations	Cultural Heritage Assets	Proximity to Dwellings	Designations	Character	Visual	Agriculture	Forestry	Recreation	Policy	Proposals
Option 1	H	L	M	M	M	H	H	L	H	M	M	M	M	M	M	L
Option 2	H	L	M	M	M	H	M	L	H	M	M	M	M	M	M	L
Option 3	H	L	M	M	M	H	L	L	H	M	M	L	M	M	M	M
Option 4	H	L	M	M	M	M	L	L	M	M	M	L	M	M	M	M

Summary of Key Considerations

Environment & Community

- All options pass through areas of ancient woodland with Option 3 passing through a greater extent of ancient woodland of semi-natural origin (grades 1a and 2a).
- Options 3 and 4 are likely to result in a greater loss of sensitive habitat and present a greater risk to birds due to the increased length and greater potential for collision and barrier effects.
- Options 1, 2 and 3 pass through the Fairburn Castle Garden and Designed Landscape.
- Options 1 and 2 have the potential to impact the setting of the Category A listed Coul House and Option 1 will also impact the setting of the Category A listed Fairburn Tower.
- Options 1 and 2 pass close to more densely populated areas including the communities of Contin and Strathpeffer and associated recreational areas. Options 3 and 4 pass close to the community of Tarvie.
- Options 3 and 4 pass in close proximity to a surface water Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA).
- The proposed Fairburn Wind Farm Extension and the proposed Tarvie Wind Farm are located within or adjacent to Options 3 and 4 and there is the potential for interaction and cumulative effects.
- Options 1 and 2 have the potential to affect prime agricultural land.

Engineering

- Options 1 and 2 are predominantly green or amber scoring as they largely route through agricultural land with good public roads for accesses with gentle gradients of slope.
- Both Options 3 and 4 run through the proposed Tarvie Wind Farm.
- Options 3 and 4 site the route on slopes, with large cross slopes observed where Option 3 runs parallel to Loch Achonachie, which may lead to difficulty in construction and accesses possibly requiring extensive earthworks to install accesses and the towers on the slope.

Taking the above factors into account Option 1 or 2 are the preferred overall routes as there are fewer technical constraints associated with these options than with Option 3 or 4. The 'preferred route' refers to the option which we believe offers an appropriate balance of technical and environmental impact considerations identified through initial assessment. This is then subject to consultation with stakeholders, where local and previously unknown considerations may confirm or alter the initial preference.

Table 2: Engineering Comparison of Overall Options

		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Infrastructure Crossings	Major Crossings	HV OHL Crossings: crossing 132kV OHL Beauly – Corriemoillie (BM1& BM2) near Muirton Mains One Railway crossing River Connon and Black Water crossing	HV OHL Crossings: crossing 132kV OHL Beauly – Corriemoillie (BM1& BM2) near Muirton Mains One Railway crossing River Connon and Black Water crossing	HV OHL Crossings: crossing 132kV OHL Beauly – Corriemoillie (BM1& BM2) near Muirton Mains One Railway crossing River Connon and Black Water crossing	HV OHL Crossings: crossing 132kV OHL Beauly – Corriemoillie (BM1& BM2) near Muirton Mains One Railway crossing River Connon and Black Water crossing
	Minor Crossings	Crosses A834, A835 and two minor public roads	Crosses A834, A835 and two minor public roads	Crosses A835, two minor public roads and windfarm track	Crosses A835, two minor public roads and windfarm track
Environmental Design	Elevation	4.5% of the routes has elevation above 200m AOD	6% of the routes has elevation above 200m AOD	12% of the routes has elevation above 200m AOD	18% of the routes has elevation above 200m AOD
	Atmospheric Pollution	No atmospheric pollution concerns	No atmospheric pollution concerns	No atmospheric pollution concerns	No atmospheric pollution concerns
	Contamination	No major contamination recorded	No major contamination recorded	No major contamination recorded	No major contamination recorded
	Flooding	>5% of the route in flood risk area	>5% of the route in flood risk area	>5% of the route in flood risk area	>5% of the route in flood risk area
Ground Conditions	Terrain	Open terrain, nearly flat or gently undulating, no cliffs or narrow pinch points	Open terrain, nearly flat or gently undulating, no cliffs or narrow pinch points	Rolling undulating terrain throughout option with slopes up to 40% gradient with single narrow pinch point along Loch Achonachie	Rolling undulating terrain throughout option with slopes up to 40% gradient
	Peat	Small pockets of Class 1 and Class 2 peat	Small pockets of Class 1 and Class 2 peat	Small pockets of Class 1 and Class 2 peat	Small pockets of Class 1 and Class 2 peat, with approximately 3% of the total length going through the Class 1 peat area.

		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Construction and Maintenance	Access Road	Existing network of tracks present with good access for both construction and maintenance	Existing network of tracks present with good access for both construction and maintenance	Route further away from existing tracks requiring more purpose built access tracks with large cross sections observed where it runs parallel to Loch Achonachie, which may lead to difficulty in construction and accesses possibly requiring extensive earthworks to install accesses	Route further away from existing tracks requiring more purpose built access tracks
	Angle Towers	No of angle towers – 9	No of angle towers – 13	No of angle towers – 20	No of angle towers – 19
Proximity	Clearance	Properties within the route	Properties within the route	Properties within the route	Properties within the route
	Windfarms	No windfarm as per our record	No windfarm as per our record	Runs through the proposed Tarvie Wind Farm	Runs through the proposed Tarvie Wind Farm and close to Fairburn Wind Farm
	Communication Masts	Low risk of communication masts	Low risk of communication masts	Low risk of communication masts	Low risk of communication masts
	Urban Environment	No urban areas within route. Several dispersed properties within the route	No urban areas within route. Several dispersed properties within the route	No urban areas within route. Several dispersed properties within the route	No urban areas within route. Several dispersed properties within the route
	Metallic Pipeline	No known pipelines	No known pipelines	No known pipelines	No known pipelines

Table 3: Environmental Comparison of Overall Options 1, 2, 3 and 4

		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Natural Heritage	Designations	Areas of ancient woodland within the route	Areas of ancient woodland within the route	Areas of ancient woodland within the route	Areas of ancient woodland within the route
	Protected Species	Unlikely to compromise the conservation status or essential suitable habitat	Unlikely to compromise the conservation status or essential suitable habitat	Unlikely to compromise the conservation status or essential suitable habitat	Unlikely to compromise the conservation status or essential suitable habitat
	Habitats	May compromise Annex 1 habitat with potential for ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems	May compromise Annex 1 habitat with potential for ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems	May compromise Annex 1 habitat with potential for ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems	May compromise Annex 1 habitat with potential for ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems
	Ornithology	May compromise the conservation status of Schedule 1 bird species or their habitats	May compromise the conservation status of Schedule 1 bird species or their habitats	May compromise the conservation status of Schedule 1 bird species or their habitats	May compromise the conservation status of Schedule 1 bird species or their habitats
	Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology	May compromise quality and or quantity of surface or groundwaters of local importance, during construction	May compromise quality and or quantity of surface or groundwaters of local importance, during construction	May compromise quality and or quantity of surface or groundwaters of local importance, during construction	May compromise quality and or quantity of surface or groundwaters of local importance, during construction
Cultural Heritage	Designations	Likely to compromise the designating features or setting of the Fairburn GDL	Likely to compromise the designating features or setting of the Fairburn GDL	Likely to compromise the designating features or setting of the Fairburn GDL	May compromise the designating features or setting of the Fairburn GDL
	Cultural Heritage Assets	Likely to compromise the setting of Grade A listed Fairburn Tower and Coul House	May compromise the setting of Grade A listed Coul House	Unlikely to compromise the integrity of a conservation area, setting of an A listed building or directly disturb a B/C listed building	Unlikely to compromise the integrity of a conservation area, setting of an A listed building or directly disturb a B/C listed building
People	Proximity to Dwellings	No urban areas within route	No urban areas within route	No urban areas within route	No urban areas within route
Landscape	Designations	Passes through Fairburn GDL and is likely to compromise the	Passes through Fairburn GDL and is likely to compromise the	Passes through Fairburn GDL and is likely to compromise	Passes adjacent to Fairburn GDL and may compromise the

		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
		special qualities of this designated landscape.	special qualities of this designated landscape.	the special qualities of this designated landscape.	special qualities of this designated landscape.
	Character	May compromise characteristic elements of a given landscape.	May compromise characteristic elements of a given landscape.	May compromise characteristic elements of a given landscape.	May compromise characteristic elements of a given landscape.
	Visual	May compromise the view or visual amenity of individual properties, sections of the A835 and recreational interests including core paths	May compromise the view or visual amenity of individual properties, sections of the A835 and recreational interests including core paths	May compromise the view or visual amenity of individual properties, sections of the A835 and recreational interests including core paths	May compromise the view or visual amenity of individual properties, sections of the A835 and recreational interests including core paths
Land Use	Agriculture	Passes through prime agricultural land (LCA 1, 2 and 3.1)	Passes through prime agricultural land (LCA 1, 2 and 3.1)	Avoids interaction with prime agricultural land (LCA 1, 2 and 3.1)	Avoids interaction with prime agricultural land (LCA 1, 2 and 3.1)
	Forestry	Interaction with the forestry operations may compromise the commercial returns from the forestry	Interaction with the forestry operations may compromise the commercial returns from the forestry	Interaction with the forestry operations may compromise the commercial returns from the forestry	Interaction with the forestry operations may compromise the commercial returns from the forestry
	Recreation	Potential to compromise the recreational amenity of core paths in Strathpeffer and Fairburn	Potential to compromise the recreational amenity of core paths in Strathpeffer and Fairburn	Potential to compromise the recreational amenity of core paths in Strathpeffer, Tarvie and Fairburn	Potential to compromise the recreational amenity of core paths in Strathpeffer, Tarvie and Fairburn
Planning	Policy	May be contrary to national, regional or local planning policy due to potential for impact on habitats and designations.	May be contrary to national, regional or local planning policy due to potential for impact on habitats and designations.	May be contrary to national, regional or local planning policy due to potential for impact on habitats and designations.	May be contrary to national, regional or local planning policy due to potential for impact on habitats and designations.
	Proposals	No other projects known to the planning system have been identified, which may interact with the option	No other projects known to the planning system have been identified, which may interact with the option	Fairburn Wind Farm Extension and Tarvie Wind Farm within the option	Fairburn Wind Farm Extension and Tarvie Wind Farm within the option