

APPENDIX 4.1: SUMMARY OF EIA CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND ACTION TAKEN

Abbreviations

AA	Aberdeen Airport
BT	British Telecom
CE	Crown Estates
EA	Edinburgh Airport
FLS	Forestry and Land Scotland
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HIA	Highlands and Islands Airports
IF	Ironside Farrar
KSF	Kyle of Sutherland Fishery Board
KSDT	Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fisheries Trust
LCC	Lairg Community Council
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MSS	Marine Scotland Science
NATS	NATS Safeguarding
NG	National Grid
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SF	Scottish Forestry
SM	Scottish Ministers
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SW	Scottish Water
THC	The Highland Council
TS	Transport Scotland
VS	Visit Scotland

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1a	Unless stated to the contrary in the Scoping Opinion, Scottish Ministers expect the EIA Report to include all matters raised in	SM 01	4	N/A	The EIA Report addresses all matters raised in consultee responses, as laid out

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	responses from the consultees and advisors.				in this table.
1b	The Scottish Ministers are satisfied that the requirements for consultation set out in Regulation 12(4) of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 have been met.	SM 02	4	N/A	Noted.
1c	Scottish Ministers request that the Applicant contacts Scottish Water and makes further enquiries to confirm whether there are any Scottish Water assets which may be affected by the Proposed Development, and include details in the EIA Report of any relevant mitigation measures to be provided.	SM 03	5	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development	Scottish Water were contacted on 23 rd July 2019, and response received on 25 th July 2019 identifying the presence of two infrastructure assets within the vicinity of the Proposed Development. The noted chapter identifies these and sets out measures to protect them from works associated with the Proposed Development.
1d	Scottish Ministers request that the Applicant investigates the presence of any private water supplies that may be impacted by the Proposed Development. The EIA Report should include details of any supplies identified, and an assessment of the potential impacts, risks and any mitigation which would be provided.	SM 04	5	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The noted chapter details the private water supplies identified and the risk of impacts from the Proposed Development. Appropriate mitigation is set out to protect supplies and ensure no adverse effects.
1e	Scottish Ministers request a Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment is undertaken as part of the EIA process. This must be in accordance with the Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments (Second Edition).	SM 05	6	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils, and Appendix 10.2: Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment	A Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment has been carried out for the Proposed Development. It included as the noted appendix and summarised within the noted chapter. It is in accordance with the noted guidance.
1f	Visual material must be provided in accordance with The Highland	SM 06	6	Chapters 3:	Visualisations are included with Chapter 3

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	Council requirements. The EIA Report is expected to consider the landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Development, and make a distinction between the two.			Description of the Proposed Development, and 6: Landscape and Visual Impact	of the EIA Report to illustrate the appearance of the Proposed Development. Chapter 6 sets out detailed landscape and visual impact assessments, and distinguishes between the two.
1g	Ministers are aware that further engagement is required between parties regarding the refinement of the design of the Proposed Development and request that they are kept informed of relevant discussions.	SM 07	6	Chapter 2: Route Selection and Alternatives	Letters were issued to the RSPB and Visit Scotland on 11 th December 2019 as responses to their Scoping comments to address some of the points raised, and copies issued to the Scottish Ministers. Extensive discussions have been carried out between the Applicant and Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) regarding the alignment of the Proposed Development and its potential effects upon their interests within Dalchork Forest, and these are detailed within the noted chapter and throughout this appendix.
1h	The mitigation measures suggested for any significant environmental impacts identified should be presented as a conclusion to each chapter, and within a consolidated schedule of all mitigation measures provided in tabular form.	SM 08	6	Chapter 12: Schedule of Mitigation Measures	Each chapter of the EIA Report sets out the proposed mitigation within its concluding sections, and the noted chapter contains a consolidated schedule of all mitigation measures proposed through the EIA Report.
1i	Two areas of note that Scottish Ministers often don't get feedback on from consultees are peat landslide hazard risk assessment and private water supplies.	SM 09	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	A Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment is included as an appendix to the noted chapter, and identification and assessment of likely impacts of the Proposed

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					Development on private water supplies is detailed within the chapter itself. A schedule of monitoring is proposed at one private water supply (Abhainn Sgeamhaidh) to ensure no adverse effects to the quality or quantity of this supply.
2	Aberdeen Airport confirm that the Proposed Development is located outwith their consultation zone, and therefore have no comment to make.	AA 01	44	N/A	Noted. As such, no further consultation is considered necessary.
3	British Telecom have reviewed the Proposed Development and it should not cause interference with the current and presently planned radio network.	BT 01	41	N/A	Noted.
4	Crown Estates confirm that the assets of Crown Estate Scotland are not affected by the Proposed Development.	CE 01	24	N/A	Noted.
5	Edinburgh Airport confirm that the Proposed Development is located outwith their consultation zone, and therefore have no objection to the proposal.	EA 01	45	N/A	Noted. As such, no further consultation is considered necessary.
6	FLS raised concerns in relation to potential adverse effects on current open peatland restoration works, and proposed an alternative alignment avoid or reduce these, while noting that a wayleave would not be granted for the EIA Scoping alignment.	FLS 01	N/A	Chapters 2: Consideration of Alternatives, and 11: Forestry; and Appendix 10.3: Peat Investigation	The Applicant held meetings with representatives of FLS to discuss the issues raised, and carried out supplementary environmental surveys. Ground Investigation (GI) works were also carried out to determine the extent of potential adverse effects on the current restoration works, and this information was presented directly to FLS at the aforementioned meetings and is included as the noted appendix. The alignment was

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					revised, as discussed further in Chapters 2 and 4 of the EIA Report, in order to avoid peatland restoration areas. This has consequently increased potential forestry impacts by requiring a greater loss of woodland area in comparison, as described in Chapter 11.
7a	In the Scoping Report, one Scheduled Monument: Altbreck, broch 1650 m ESE of Dalchork Bridge (SM1829) has been identified as having a prominent position in the landscape and intervisibility with other defensive sites. Given that the Proposed Development may interfere with lines of sight with other monuments in the area, HES would recommend a visualisation be provided from this asset to aid in assessing impacts. HES' Managing Change Guidance Note on Setting should be referred to as part of this assessment.	HES 01	26	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	A visualisation has been produced to aid in assessing potential impacts of the Proposed Development on this Scheduled Monument. The noted guidance has been referred to.
7b	Overall, HES agree with the proposed approach for baseline collection, prediction and significance assessment, and have not identified any key issues that have been omitted from the Scoping Report. HES note that direct impacts on nationally important heritage assets have been avoided; however, the potential for setting impacts remains and this will be the most important issue to consider in the assessment.	HES 02	26	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	Noted. Impacts upon the setting of nationally important heritage assets have been considered as part of assessment.
7c	HES welcome that Appendix 2 of the Gate Check Report notes that impacts on the setting of nationally important heritage assets will be assessed. HES also welcome that visualisations have been produced to inform the assessment of potential indirect impacts on the broch (SM1829).	HES 03	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	The noted chapter contains a full assessment of the likely direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Development on nationally important heritage assets. A visualisation has been produced from Altbreck Broch to inform the assessment of

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					indirect impacts on this asset and included as Figure 9.2 .
8	Highlands and Islands Airports confirm that the Proposed Development is located outwith the safeguarding surface areas for Inverness Airport, and therefore have no objection to the proposal.	HIA 01	46	N/A	Noted.
9	Ironside Farrar acknowledge that proposals are made to avoid deep peat where possible, however the guidelines are applicable to peat of greater than 0.5 m deep and on slopes of 2 degrees or greater in areas of blanket bog. Given these conditions are anticipated to be present across much of the site and also that access tracks and compounds, laydown areas and the like have yet to be identified, Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment should be undertaken to support the application.	IF 01	30	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils, and Appendix 10.2: Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment	A Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment has been carried out for the Proposed Development. It included as the noted appendix, and summarised within the noted chapter.
10	Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries note that the proposed route would involve crossing several watercourses. The Tirry catchment is the subject of a salmon restoration project involving the Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fishery Board, SSE and SEPA. As such, maximum attention must be given to protecting the aquatic and riparian environment throughout any development activity.	KSF 01	31	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The noted chapters set out best practice and mitigation measures designed to protect watercourses during development activities.
11	Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fisheries Trust hold electrofishing data for this area, which can be provided in map format. KSDT request details of the methodology for laying the cable under the River Tirry.	KSDT 01	N/A	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development	Noted. The methodology for laying the cable was issued to the Trust via email on 20 December 2019.
12	Lairg Community Council have reviewed the Scoping Report provided and do not have any issues with the proposal.	LCC 01	32	N/A	Noted.
13	The Ministry of Defence note no concerns with the application.	MOD 01	33	N/A	Noted.
14a	Marine Scotland Science suggest that the Applicant contacts the Kyle of Sutherland and the Brora District Salmon Fishery Boards	MSS 01	34	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10:	The Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fishery Board provided comment directly

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	and the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust for information on local fish populations and fisheries.			Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	to the Scoping request. The Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust was contacted on 13 th May 2019 and the Brora District Salmon Fishery Board on 14 th May 2019 for comment. The Brora District Salmon Fishery Board was contacted again on 25 th October 2019; however, no response has been received.
14b	It is suggested that the Applicant consult the Marine Scotland Science generic scoping and monitoring guidelines prior to preparation of the EIA Report.	MSS 02	34	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The generic scoping and monitoring guidelines have been consulted as part of the EIA.
15	NATS have examined the Proposed Development from a technical safeguarding aspect and it does not conflict with their safeguarding criteria. As such, no safeguarding objection is raised.	NATS 01	39	N/A	Noted.
16	National Grid noted that searches identified no apparatus in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Development.	NG 01	35	N/A	Noted.
17a	The Proposed Development is within / adjacent or within connectivity distance of a number of designated sites, including the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Protection Area (SPA), the Lairg and Strath Brora SPA, and the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA. It has the potential to impact on a number of priority species, some of which are features of the designated sites. As such, it is important that the survey work undertaken is comprehensive to enable a robust impact assessment.	RSPB 01	42	Chapter 8: Ornithology	The noted chapter sets out the surveys undertaken to facilitate assessment of potential impacts of the Proposed Development on designated sites and priority species.
17b	RSPB Scotland is concerned that no information has been provided in the Scoping Report about the areas covered by the Applicant's bird survey work. No vantage point viewsheds have been presented	RSPB 02	42	Chapter 8: Ornithology	The methodology and extent of bird surveys was agreed Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) via consultation carried out

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	<p>and there is no map that shows the area covered by other surveys. It is therefore difficult to assess whether adequate survey work has been undertaken to inform the assessment as maps showing viewsheds / coverage have not been presented. From the information presented it is also impossible to assess whether an additional season of survey work is required for some species to ensure a representative dataset is used to assess the impacts.</p>				<p>between September 2017 and March 2018. SNH broadly agreed with the approach proposed and suggested some minor amendments to the vantage points (VPs), and the surveys were carried out accordingly. Following findings of initial surveys, it was proposed that additional Black Grouse and raptor surveys be undertaken to adequately assess potential impacts on these species. Further to this, surveys specific to diver species on Loch Dubh Cùl na Capulich, and an additional VP, were proposed to be undertaken, which were subsequently agreed with SNH.</p>
<p>17c</p>	<p>It is highlighted that a number of surveys undertaken for priority bird species have not followed standard methodologies in relation to timing and number of visits as has been stated in the Scoping Report. This reduces confidence in whether the data presented is representative and may affect whether an adequate assessment of the likely impacts on birds can be made.</p>	<p>RSPB 03</p>	<p>42</p>	<p>Chapter 8: Ornithology</p>	<p>The noted chapter details the surveys undertaken in reference to the standard methodologies. Individual points are discussed further below.</p>
<p>17d</p>	<p>Section 6.4.3 of the Scoping Report states that diver surveys were carried out in July and August 2018 according to best practice methodologies. Standard methodology for black-throated divers is to survey lochs three times within May, June and July. Therefore, delaying survey work for this species until July, as the Applicant has, may mean that early failed attempts at breeding are missed. Similar timing issues apply to the red-throated diver surveys carried out.</p>	<p>RSPB 04</p>	<p>42</p>	<p>Chapter 8: Ornithology</p>	<p>Diver VP surveys were carried out in July and August once it had been established that breeding activity was present on Loch Dubh Cùl na Capulich. This was with the specific aim of establishing flight activity once an initial alignment for the overhead line had been set which passed through</p>

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					the potential zone of disturbance. Wider diver surveys were carried out as per the methods detailed and commenced in May, as noted in Section 6.2.2 of the Scoping Report.
17e	Section 6.4.5 of the Scoping Report states that raptor surveys were undertaken in May and July according to best practice. This does not follow standard methodology as early visits have been missed, and failed attempts at breeding may have been missed as a result.	RSPB 05	43	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Raptor surveys were carried out through May, June and July of 2018, and continued up until the end of July. It is accepted that breeding raptor activity prior to this period may have been missed; however, the majority of raptor species breed from late April / early May to August. It is considered that the survey window applied has significant, and a high probability of sufficient, overlap with this timeframe. In addition, the survey area does not hold suitable habitat for those raptor species where breeding commences earlier (e.g. eagle species and peregrine).
17f	It is important that the potential impacts (including disturbance and collision risk) of construction and operation of the OHL on red listed species of conservation concern, as well as the qualifying species of SPAs, are properly assessed, with Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) being undertaken where necessary. RSPB welcome inclusion of black grouse surveys, although the detail presented on coverage and visits undertaken is limited.	RSPB 06	43	Chapter 8: Ornithology	The ornithology assessment set out in the noted chapter considers potential impacts, including disturbance and collision, on red-listed species and qualifying interests of SPAs at both construction and operation stages. A Habitats Regulation Appraisal is discussed within the noted chapter and its associated appendices. The noted chapter details the coverage and visits in relation to

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					black grouse surveys.
17g	It is essential that the impacts of this Proposed Development are assessed in combination with other proposed and consented developments in the area, including, for example, the Lairg to Loch Buidhe Overhead Powerline proposal, as well as proposed wind farms, particularly in relation to black-throated divers and hen harriers.	RSPB 07	43	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Potential cumulative impacts are considered as part of the ornithological assessment presented in the noted chapter.
17h	The EIA Report should fully discuss mitigation measures required to reduce impacts on priority species and habitats present along the OHL. RSPB would urge that undergrounding of the OHL be considered as mitigation where there is potential for collision risk and appropriate line marking as an alternative.	RSPB 08	43	Chapter 8: Ornithology	A section on mitigation measures is included within the noted chapter, outlining best practice measures to be put in place for both the construction and operation stages of the Proposed Development to limit potential adverse effects on bird species and habitats. As detailed in the noted chapter and its appendices, likely impacts on ornithology interests are not significant and thus undergrounding as a mitigation measure has not been progressed. Line marking is proposed near Loch Dubh Cùl na Capulich to further reduce potential collision effects on red-throated divers. It is highlighted that the Applicant has produced a suite of General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and Species Protection Plans (SPPs) in consultation with SNH, and all works would be carried out in accordance with these plans.

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18a	SEPA provided advice previously when consulted on the Screening request, and welcome that their comments had been incorporated into the Scoping Report. Engagement with the Applicant would be welcomed at an early stage to discuss any issues raised in the Scoping response.	SEPA 01	58	N/A	Noted. SEPA attended the Gate Check Meeting held on 16 th December 2019 and provided further guidance on the EIA, as described in this appendix.
18b	The application should include full layout details of the construction works at a scale which allows the detail to be understood. The working corridor should be shown on a plan, accompanied by all associated construction works including access routes, laydown areas and construction compounds.	SEPA 02	58	Chapters 3: Description of the Proposed Development, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The noted chapters and accompanying figures set out all works associated with the Proposed Development at a scale allowing detail to be understood.
18c	No poles or construction works for poles should be located within the banks of any watercourse crossings.	SEPA 03	58	Chapters 3: Description of the Proposed Development, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Indicative pole positions are included in figures accompanying Chapter 3. As set out in Chapter 10, micro-siting of poles would be utilised to avoid construction works being located within the banks of any watercourse crossings.
18d	No poles or construction works for poles should be located within any wetland areas identified as part of the Extended Phase 1 habitat survey, which should be carried out for all un-forested areas. If this is not possible then Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Development Proposals on Groundwater Abstractions and Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems should be followed.	SEPA 04	58	Chapters 3: Description of the Proposed Development, and 7: Ecology	Subject to other environmental constraints, the Proposed Development has avoided areas of GWDTE. Groundwater abstractions have been identified and avoided.
18e	Information should be provided on how impacts on deep peat have been avoided. The use of bog mats and low impact vehicles should be considered.	SEPA 05	59	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology,	The noted chapter provides information in relation to impacts on deep peat and avoidance or mitigation of impacts on such.

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				Geology and Soils	
18f	It is presumed that there would be no new permanent watercourse crossings. Proposals for temporary crossings should be outlined.	SEPA 06	59	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The noted chapter sets out details of temporary watercourse crossings.
18g	Reassurance is required that any felled timber would be removed from site and not left as waste. Tree felling proposals should be shown to meet the requirements of Use of Trees Cleared to Facilitate Development on Afforested Land – Joint Guidance from SEPA, SNH and FCS.	SEPA 07	59	Chapter 11: Forestry	The noted chapter identifies that any felled timber would be removed from site, and the noted guidance referred to.
18h	It is presumed that no borrow pits would be required; however, if this is not the case SEPA should be consulted further in order to provide advice on this aspect.	SEPA 08	59	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development	No borrow pits are proposed as part of the Proposed Development.
18i	A schedule of mitigation supported by site specific maps and plans must be submitted. These must include reference to best practice pollution and prevention construction techniques and regulatory requirements. They should set out the daily responsibilities of EcoWs, how site inspections would be recorded and acted upon, and proposals for a planning monitoring enforcement officer.	SEPA 09	59	Chapter 12: Schedule of Environmental Mitigation	The noted chapter sets out a schedule of all mitigation measures proposed in the EIA Report.
18j	Authorisation is required under the CAR Regulations to carry out engineering works in or in the vicinity of inland surface waters (other than groundwater) or wetlands.	SEPA 10	59	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Noted. CAR authorisation would be sought from SEPA where required.
18k	Management of surplus peat or soils may require an exemption under The Waste Management Licensing Regulations. Proposed crushing or screening will require a permit under The Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations.	SEPA 11	59	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Noted. Permits would be sought from SEPA where required.

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18l	An application for a construction site licence under CAR for water management will be required for sites of 4 ha or more in area, 5 km or more in length, or sites which contain more than 1 ha of ground on a slope of 25 degrees or more.	SEPA 12	59	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Noted. CAR authorisation would be sought from SEPA where required.
18m	The submission must demonstrate how the layout has been designed to minimise disturbance of peat and consequential release of CO ₂ and outline the preventative / mitigation measures to avoid significant drying or oxidation of peat.	SEPA 13	61	Chapters 2: Route Selection and Alternatives, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The noted chapters outline the change in design of the OHL to minimise disturbance of peat soils, and mitigation measures to be put in place to reduce potential adverse effects.
18n	The submission must include a detailed map of peat depths, with all built elements overlain to demonstrate how the Proposed Development avoids areas of deep peat and other sensitive receptors such as GWDTEs.	SEPA 14	61	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	A map of peat depths recorded across the development area is included as a figure accompanying the noted chapter. All built elements of the Proposed Development are displayed.
18o	The submission must include a table which details the quantities of acrotelmic, catotelmic and amorphous peat which will be excavated for each element and where it will be reused during reinstatement. Details of the proposed widths and depths of peat to be reused and how it will be kept wet permanently must be included.	SEPA 15	61	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The noted chapter and its associated appendices include information on the nature of peat soils at the site and measures to reduce effects arising from peat extraction.
18p	Proposals must be in accordance with Guidance on the Assessment of Peat Volumes, Reuse of Excavated Peat and Minimisation of Waste and SEPA's Developments on Peat and Off-Site uses of Waste Peat.	SEPA 16	61	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The Proposed Development is in accordance with the noted guidance.
18q	Applicants must consider whether a full Peat Management Plan is required or whether the information would be best submitted as part of the Schedule of Mitigation.	SEPA 17	61	Appendix 10.1: Peat Management Plan	A peat management plan is included as the noted appendix. This is a "Stage 1" plan which gives an overview of the peat management practices to be put in place.

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					Prior to works commencing on site, a more detailed "Stage 2" peat management plan would be produced and agreed with SEPA.
18r	The submission must include a map demonstrating that all GWDTE are outwith a 100 m radius of all excavations shallower than 1 m and outwith 250 m of all excavations deeper than 1 m and proposed groundwater abstractions. If these minimum buffers cannot be achieved, a detailed site-specific risk assessment will be required.	SEPA 18	62	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Areas of GWDTE are indicated on figures accompanying the noted chapters. As the noted within Chapter 10, the GWDTE areas are considered to be sustained by runoff and incident rainfall, rather than groundwater. As such, the buffers as noted are not considered to apply in this instance.
18s	The submission must include a map demonstrating that all groundwater abstractions are outwith a 100 m radius of all excavations shallower than 1 m and outwith 250 m of all excavations deeper than 1 m and proposed groundwater abstractions. If these minimum buffers cannot be achieved, a detailed site-specific risk assessment will be required.	SEPA 19	62	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Groundwater abstractions are indicated on figures accompanying the noted chapter. All abstractions are outwith the noted buffers.
18t	A Schedule of Mitigation, supported by site-specific maps and plans must be submitted. These must include reference to best practice pollution prevention and construction techniques and regulatory requirements. They should set out the daily responsibilities of ECoWs, how site inspections will be recorded and acted upon and proposals for a planning monitoring enforcement officer.	SEPA 20	62	Chapter 12: Schedule of Environmental Mitigation	A Schedule of Mitigation is included within the noted chapter.
18u	SEPA would ask that the Applicant make is clear on site plans where permanent access roads (spurs) will be located, and have the peat depth information overlaid with this. If peat is to be impacted, SEPA would ask that appropriate proposals for peat re-use are made.	SEPA 21	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The locations of permanent access tracks are noted on figures associated with the noted chapter. In particular, Figure 7.3 displays the tracks in relation to GWDTE habitats, and Figure 10.6 overlays the

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					tracks on recorded peat depths. Proposals for peat re-use are set out within Appendix 10.1: Peat Management Plan .
18v	SEPA note that there will be a site compound either side of the River Crask. Details of peat depths and any peat re-use / storage proposals should be clearly outlined, along with restoration proposals for temporary infrastructure.	SEPA 22	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	The indicative locations of site compounds either side of the River Crask and recorded peat depths are displayed on the figures associated with the noted chapter. Proposals for peat re-use, storage and restoration are outlined in Appendix 10.1: Peat Management Plan .
18w	It is noted that the route will cross areas of deep peat. SEPA note that some of the most difficult ground conditions have been avoided, but any sensitive wetland habitats and deep peat areas should have clear mitigation, outlining how impacts will be minimised. The Applicant has noted that bog matting might only be appropriate in some locations depending on topography and that low ground pressure vehicles are commonly used. SEPA would ask that a suite of measures be considered by site contractors to ensure a precautionary approach is taken to minimise impacts on peat and wetlands.	SEPA 23	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	Mitigation measures specific to GWDTEs are presented within Chapter 7 and mitigation measures specific to deep peat are presented in Chapter 10. Appendices 10.1: Peat Management Plan , and 10.2: Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment , give further detail on management of peat at the site, and risks associated with peat slide. The Principal Contractor will make best use of available options to minimise impacts on peat and wetlands.
18x	SEPA welcome that no felled timber will be left on site and that trees under a merchantable size will be utilised for the biomass market.	SEPA 24	N/A (Gate Check)	N/A	Noted.
18y	It is noted that there will be a Peat Management Plan produced, and this should address any re-use of excavated peat that will not be directly used for backfilling. Due to the peatland restoration works taking place, the re-use proposals and working methods should	SEPA 25	N/A (Gate Check)	Appendix 10.1: Peat Management Plan	The noted appendix outlines the general nature of peat management works given the information available at this stage. The Applicant will liaise directly with FLS and

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	outline how they will compliment these works. Methods / approach to ditch blocking should be outlined, etc.				the SNH Peatland Action Group during the development of the Stage 2 PMP, and any requirement for post construction reinstatement and restoration.
18z	SEPA note that the location of a site compound / laydown area will be left to discretion of the principal contractor at a later stage. SEPA would expect an indicative location to be identified to ensure that peat and GWDTE considerations have been considered, and if the permission for these is included within this proposed consent, then we are likely to ask for a condition to be applied.	SEPA 26	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development	As discussed in the noted chapter, the locations of any temporary site compounds would be at the discretion of the Principal Contractor. Insufficient information is available at this stage to determine indicative locations, and they may be located away from the site altogether; however, all available information relation to peat soils and GWDTEs would be made available to the Principal Contractor in order to ensure compounds are sited so as to avoid peat and GWDTE.
19a	The Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy includes a strong presumption in favour of protecting Scotland's woodland resources.	SF 01	47	Chapter 11: Forestry	The Proposed Development addresses this through minimising the woodland removal both through careful route selection and by defining the Operational Corridor (OC) on a case by case basis.
19b	Woodland removal should be allowed only where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits.	SF 02	47	Chapter 11: Forestry	The OHL is required to connect the consented Creag Riabhach Wind Farm to the national grid, which meets the acceptability criteria given in Annex C of the policy (see SF01), as the proposed change in land use would contribute significantly to helping Scotland mitigate or

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					adapt to climate change by facilitating appropriate development of renewable energy projects.
19c	SF is satisfied with the proposed scope of the Forest Impact Assessment, and notes the Applicant's commitment to vary the width of the OC according to the height of adjacent crop, in order to minimise the area of tree felling and woodland removal required to accommodate the Proposed Development.	SF 03	47	Chapter 11: Forestry	Following the tree height predictions, the width of the OC reflects potential falling distance of trees throughout their life cycle.
19d	As a result of introduction of new guidance (Scottish Government's policy on control of woodland removal: implementation guidance, February 2019), SF now asks that compensatory planting is provided for all areas of woodland that need to be removed to directly accommodate the OHL and associated infrastructure, therefore the Forestry Impact Assessment will need to identify areas of permanent woodland loss, for which compensatory planting will be required.	SF 04	48	Chapter 11: Forestry	All woodland removal, both within the OC and anything beyond for the purposes of the Proposed Development, is recorded in the noted chapter.
19e	SF notes the Applicant is aware that any additional felling, outwith the Proposed Development's OC will fall under Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018, and therefore will need to be covered by a forest plan or a felling permission, and will be conditioned on a suitable restock plan.	SF 05	48	Chapter 11: Forestry	Any permanent woodland removal outwith the OC is identified within the noted chapter.
19f	Scottish Forestry noted that they intend to put forward a condition for compensatory planting for all areas of woodland loss.	SF 06	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 11: Forestry	Noted. Proposals for compensatory planting are discussed within the noted chapter.
19g	Scottish Forestry commented during the Gate Check meeting that the operational corridor is for all afforested ground whether there is standing timber or the areas are felled but to be restocked. Only areas of open ground, such as peatland restoration areas, would not	SF 07	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 11: Forestry	As described within the noted chapter, the operational corridor has been determined using the North Sutherland Land Management Plan Future Habitats map (6)

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	be liable for compensatory planting.				which sets out the planned use of each forest block. As such, while much of Dalchork Forest appears as open ground due to recent felling works, the OC takes into account future restocking plans.
20a	SNH raised concerns in relation to the indicative alignment traversing a section of the Ben Klibreck Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), citing potential adverse effects on blanket sphagnum bog and a small strip of marsh / marshy grassland. The OHL would cross an area of blanket bog likely to be very wet and sensitive to disturbance, and it would be challenging to construct and maintain the OHL in this area without damaging the habitat. SNH considered that modification of the proposed route could avoid impacts on the SSSI altogether, and included a suggested realignment.	SNH 01	N/A (Pre-app)	Chapters 2: Consideration of Alternatives, and 7: Ecology	The alignment was amended to traverse west of the Crask Inn, rather than through a short section of SSSI to the east, avoiding it altogether.
20b	Several protected areas could be affected by the proposal. SNH advise that the route should seek to avoid protected areas or, where this is not possible, to minimise impacts on protected areas.	SNH 02	N/A (Pre-app)	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 8: Ornithology	The Proposed Development follows an alignment designed to avoid, as far as practicable, designated areas.
20c	SNH are broadly in agreement with the proposed scope of Vantage Point surveys, however advise that Vantage Point 2 be rotated to the south-west to ensure coverage of the loch complex around Lochan na Brice Moire within Cnoc An Alaskie SSSI, and that Loch Beannach be included within diver surveys to inform flight lines and activities from this SPA loch.	SNH 03	N/A (Pre-app)	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Vantage Point 2 was rotated to the south-west, and diver surveys included Loch Beannach (loch 11 on Figure 8.1).
20d	SNH advise that for all Natura sites, the EIA Report should make a detailed assessment of the likely impacts and identify mitigation to avoid or minimise impacts identified. The EIA should include a Habitat Regulations Appraisal for each Natura site and, if necessary,	SNH 04	49	Chapter 7: Ecology, and Appendix 7.4: Report to Inform the Appropriate	Assessment of likely impacts on Natura sites is detailed in the noted chapter, with further details provided in the noted appendix.

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	an Appropriate Assessment should also be undertaken.			Assessment	
20e	For the Special Protection Areas, SNH have seen partial ornithology survey results, and would be happy to comment on the remaining ornithology surveys prior to submission. If there is a risk to Special Protection Area (SPA) species this should be fully explored and appropriate mitigation, such as relocating the line, line marking or undergrounding proposed to ensure impacts are avoided or minimised.	SNH 05	49	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Potential impacts of the Proposed Development on ornithology and SPA designations are discussed within the noted chapter.
20f	It is advised that the OHL be constructed outside the breeding season for upland breeding birds from 15 th March to 15 th August inclusive. If this cannot be achieved, it is advised that pre-construction surveys should be carried out prior to any work commencing in the breeding season.	SNH 06	50	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Mitigation measures are included within the noted chapter to protect birds should construction take place during the breeding season.
20g	<p>The Proposed Development would cross the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for its various upland habitats, including blanket bog and wet heath, as well as otter and marsh saxifrage.</p> <p>SNH welcome the revised OHL route and note that no poles would be placed within this protected area. Details of whether vehicles would need access to this location in order to string and tension the line should be included within the EIA Report.</p> <p>SNH welcome the intention to carry out otter surveys for this proposal prior to construction commencing. Depending on the results of this survey, a species protection plan may be required. Pre-construction surveys should be scheduled to allow for sufficient time for species licences, if required, to be applied for before construction starts.</p>	SNH 07	50	Chapter 7: Ecology	<p>It is not anticipated that any vehicles would require to take access through the designated site in order to string and tension the line.</p> <p>Potential impacts upon otters are discussed within the noted chapter, and likely to be non-significant.</p>

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20h	<p>The Proposed Development would cross the Caithness and Sutherland Peatland SPA, designated for its various upland waders, waterfowl and raptors.</p> <p>SNH welcome the revised OHL route and note that no poles would be placed within this protected area. The EIA Report should clearly detail what mitigation would be implemented to prevent impacts to this protected area.</p> <p>Advice has been provided previously specifically on the red-throated divers using Loch Dubh Cùl na Caplich. These divers would be considered part of the qualifying interest of the SPA. SNH welcome the intention to move the OHL further from this loch to reduce collision risk. It is advised that line marking of this section would also be required to further reduce collision risk to red-throated divers. It is advised that the LOD (Limit of Deviation) through this section be restricted in order to avoid the line moving closer to the loch during construction.</p>	SNH 08	50 / 51	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Mitigation measures to protected designated areas are set out within the noted chapter. Diver species are considered in detail within the noted chapter. A 250 m buffer was applied to Loch Dubh Cùl na Caplich and the Limit of Deviation restricted to ensure that the Proposed Development would not move any closer to the site.
20i	<p>The Proposed Development would cross the River Naver SAC, designated for its freshwater pearl mussel and Atlantic salmon.</p> <p>The impacts to this SAC should be fully considered within the hydrology section of the EIA Report.</p> <p>Both features of this SAC require good quality water to be maintained and are particularly sensitive to pollution, siltation and sedimentation. Construction of the OHL could therefore affect this protected area. The EIA Report should clearly detail what mitigation would be implemented to avoid impacts to this protected area.</p>	SNH 09	51	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils, and Appendix 7.4: Report to Inform the Appropriate Assessment	Potential impacts upon this designated site are considered within the noted chapters, and further details presented in the noted appendix. Best practice measures, to be set out within the CEMP, are considered sufficient to protect this designation.

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20j	<p>The Proposed Development would be situated close to the Lairg and Strath Brora Lochs SPA, designated for its breeding black-throated divers.</p> <p>SNH have not seen any survey results from ornithological work undertaken to date for this SPA and therefore cannot advise on what mitigation would be appropriate at this stage. Given the distance to the SPA and the proposed OHL lying between it and Loch Shin, which is an important feeding area, black-throated divers could be affected by this proposal.</p> <p>The EIA Report should clearly detail what mitigation would be implemented to prevent impacts to this protected area.</p>	SNH 10	51	Chapter 8: Ornithology	The noted chapter includes assessment of potential impacts upon this designated site, and appropriate mitigation discussed.
20k	<p>The Proposed Development would be situated close to the Strath Carnaig and Strath Fleet Moors SPA, designated for its breeding hen harrier.</p> <p>SNH have not seen any survey results from ornithological work undertaken to date for this SPA and therefore cannot advise on what mitigation would be appropriate at this stage. Connectivity distances for hen harrier state their core range as being 2 km. The southern section of the OHL where it meets the proposed substation is on the edge of this core range at 2.1 km. Thus, SPA hen harriers could be affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Pre-construction surveys for hen harrier should be carried out prior to any construction commencing. It is advised that a hen harrier species protection plan should accompany the EIA Report.</p>	SNH 11	51	Chapter 8: Ornithology	The noted chapter includes assessment of potential impacts upon this designated site, and appropriate mitigation discussed. Pre-construction surveys for hen harrier would be carried out prior to any works commencing on site. The Applicant has developed General Environmental Management Plans (GEMPs) and Species Protection Plans (SPPs) for construction works that may negatively impact upon ornithological receptors.
20l	SNH welcome that the revised OHL seeks to minimise the number	SNH 12	52	Chapters 3:	As described within the noted chapters, full

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	<p>of poles within the Ben Klibreck Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to not more than five poles.</p> <p>It is advised that a full NVC survey and peat depth survey should be undertaken for this section. It is considered that the LOD for this section is too large and these surveys would help to limit the scope of deviation. Although the Scoping Report states that this area is wet heath, SNH's habitat data suggests there may be pockets of blanket bog and these should be avoided.</p> <p>It is advised that low ground pressure machines be used for all construction within this protected area and in order to minimise ground disturbance poles should not be dragged across the site. It is considered that a detailed construction method statement should be included as a supporting document within the EIA. It is advised that a restoration plan should also accompany the EIA detailing what restoration methods would be used to ensure fragile upland habitats recover successfully. The plan should also detail what monitoring and subsequent actions would be undertaken to ensure restoration is successful.</p> <p>Construction compounds or pulling points required to tension the line are not identified within the Scoping Report. It is advised that these should be clearly marked on the map provided and they should not be located within this protected area. SNH would not support the construction of built tracks within this protected area.</p>			Description of the Proposed Development, 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	<p>NVC and peat depth surveys have been taken for the full route of the Proposed Development, inclusive of the SSSI. The LOD has been restricted in places to limit potential impacts upon this designation.</p> <p>It is intended that low ground pressure machines would be used in all areas of soft ground. Where required, helicopters may be employed to avoid ground disturbance in sensitive areas. Details of the construction methods are set out in Chapter 3.</p> <p>Methods for reinstatement would be detailed in construction method statements, as part of the CEMP.</p> <p>As noted in Chapter 3, the locations of construction compounds would be set by the Principal Contractor, with any necessary permissions obtained separately from this application. Pulling points would also be set by the Principal Contractor. Neither construction compounds nor pulling points would be located within the SSSI. No construction of built tracks is proposed within the SSSI.</p>
20m	SNH note the intention to carry out Wild Land Assessment for the Foinaven – Ben Hee Wild Land Area (WLA) and Ben Klibreck –	SNH 13	52	Chapter 6: Landscape and	The Screening responses from SNH (26 th November 2018) and THC (5 th December

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	<p>Armine Forest WLA for the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The revised OHL route would be largely screened by the roadside trees and Dalchork Forest. Given this screening and the height of the OHL, it is considered that the Proposed Development would have limited visibility over either WLA. It is therefore not considered that Wild Land Assessments would be required for this proposal and can be scoped out of the EIA.</p>			Visual Assessment	2018) advised that an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on these two WLAs would be required. It was therefore stated in the Scoping Report that the intention was to assess effects on wild land. However, in light of SNH's Scoping Response and consideration of the revised proposal, assessments on wild land have been scoped out of the assessment.
20n	<p>Some of the Proposed Development would cross through Class 1 & 2 Carbon Rich Soils, Deep Peat and Priority Peatland Habitat. It is advised that the construction methodology should detail how impacts would be minimised on this nationally important habitat.</p> <p>It is not clear whether constructed tracks would be required to facilitate construction of the OHL within Class 1 & 2 areas; however, it is considered that these and construction compounds should not be located within these areas. SNH advise that the use of low ground pressure vehicles, temporary trackway or bog mats and minimising vehicle movements would reduce impacts to this habitat. As per the advice in relation to the Ben Klibreck SSSI, this should be set out in a detailed construction method statement. A restoration plan should also be provided to show how any damage to this habitat would be restored on completion of the works.</p> <p>Mapping identifies areas of Class 5 peatland within Dalchork Forest. It is advised that any peatland which has undergone restoration within this forest to be either Class 1 or 2 peatland habitat, and therefore the same principles set out above would apply to these areas.</p>	SNH 14	52 / 53	Chapters 3: Description of the Proposed Development, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	<p>Construction methodology for the Proposed Development is set out in Chapter 3, and methods to minimise impacts on peat soils set out in Chapter 10.</p> <p>As noted in Chapter 3, construction of tracks would be limited to two short forest spur roads to prevent dissection of forest blocks. Access for the Proposed Development would be obtained by low ground pressure vehicles, where required, with temporary access panels employed where necessary.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

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20o	<p>It is advised that pre-construction surveys should be undertaken to inform the presence of protected species. If protected species could be affected, mitigation should be identified and a species protection plan supplied within the EIA Report. Pre-construction surveys should be scheduled to allow for sufficient time for species licence applications, if required, to be applied for before construction starts.</p> <p>A survey for protected breeding birds, which may be affected by the Proposed Development, is also advised prior to any construction taking place. If protected breeding birds could be affected, mitigation should be identified and a species protection plan supplied within the EIA Report.</p> <p>Where a protected bird species does not have connectivity to a SPA, the EIA should demonstrate the significance of the impacts in relation to the favourable conservation status of the Natural Heritage Zone (NHZ) population.</p>	SNH 15	53	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 8: Ornithology	As set out within the noted chapters, pre-construction surveys are proposed to be undertaken, and mitigation measures proposed to reduce potential impacts upon such following the results of surveys carried out as part of the EIA. As set out within Chapter 8, most species identified within the Study Area are considered to have connectivity to one of the surrounding SPAs. Where this is not the case (e.g. black grouse), significance of impacts have been measured against the population status in NHZ 5.
20p	<p>In reference to Loch Dubh Cul na Caplich, SNH note that the proposal does not intend to line mark the section of OHL passing nearby. SNH advise that line marking will be required to reduce collision risk to red-throated divers using this loch, and will not support the proposal without the addition of line marking in this section.</p>	SNH 16	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 8: Ornithology	Potential collision effects on red-throated divers as a result of the Proposed Development have been considered and deemed unlikely to be significant. However, in order to further reduce potential collision risk, and be in keeping with SNH comments, line marking is proposed along this section, and set out within the noted chapter and its relevant appendices.
20q	<p>SNH do not have any further comments to make regarding the Foinaven – Ben Hee WLA or the Ben Klibreck – Armine Forest WLA. SNH note the intention to underground part of the route</p>	SNH 17	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Assessment	Noted. As shown on Figure 3.1 and discussed within the noted chapter, the segment of connection route west of the

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	around the Crask Inn and consider that this will further reduce landscape and visual impacts.				Crask Inn has been changed to underground cable.
20r	<p>The proposed line will cross through an area at the north end of Dalchork Forest recently restored through Peatland Action. Restored peatland, particularly forest to bog restoration as has carried out here, is inherently sensitive to future disturbance which may result in prolonged poor restoration success.</p> <p>As per scoping discussions with the Applicant, SNH advise that this area should be left in as good or better condition on completion of the construction of the line. SNH advise that, in order to minimise impacts on this restored area that a pre- and post-construction drone survey should be undertaken to allow effective comparison of habitat condition before and after construction.</p> <p>Depending on the condition of the habitat post construction, restoration of this restored area may be required. The extent of restoration required and methods used should be agreed between SNH, Forest and Land Scotland and the Applicant prior to any post-construction restoration. At this stage, the requirement for a compensatory restoration area cannot be ruled out. Should this be required the size and location of any compensatory area should also be agreed post construction between SNH, Forest and Land Scotland and the Applicant.</p> <p>SNH welcome the revisions to the OHL to avoid other peatland restoration areas within Dalchork Forest.</p>	SNH 18	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	As noted within chapters 7 and 10, drone surveys are proposed in order to assess the condition of peatland restoration areas before and after construction to determine any loss of condition and restoration works required as a result. Should this be required, the extent of restoration required and methods used to achieve this will be agreed between SNH, FLS and the Applicant.
20s	SNH note that the proposal has been revised and a section of underground cable is now proposed around the Crask Inn and under the River Tirry. SNH advise that the River Tirry could support	SNH 19	N/A (Gate Check)	Chapters 7: Ecology, and 10: Hydrology,	Chapter 7 sets out mitigation measures specifically to avoid adverse effects on freshwater pearl mussels. Chapter 10

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	<p>freshwater pearl mussels. Bentonite is stated as being non-hazardous; however, it has been found to be hazardous to freshwater pearl mussels.</p> <p>SNH acknowledge that compounds will be constructed a minimum of 20 m from the river and that no machines will enter the river. The EIA Report should detail what mitigation and pollution prevention measures will be put in place to ensure that any waste products from the horizontal directional drilling, including bentonite, are not released into the River Tirry. It is not clear where these waste products will be stored or disposed of on completion of the works.</p> <p>SNH further advise that a full geotechnical survey is undertaken prior to any drilling operations to ensure that drilling does not take place through unconsolidated materials as this may result in a bentonite leak within the river bed.</p>			Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	notes that details of the drilling fluid, including any necessary foaming agents, would be maintained on site to inform correct use, treatment and disposal. Chapter 10 also identifies that, prior to establishment of entry and exit pits for the drilling works, a site investigation would be completed to confirm ground conditions, the results of which would be used to design the drilling programme and ensure no loss of bentonite to the River Tirry.
21a	Scottish Water has no objection to the Proposed Development. The Applicant should be aware that this does not confirm the Proposed Development can be currently serviced. According to Scottish Water's records, there is no water or waste water infrastructure within the vicinity of the Proposed Development, and it is advised that the Applicant investigate private options.	SW 01	54	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development	Noted. The Proposed Development would not require water services.
21b	There are no Scottish Water drinking water catchments or water abstraction sources, which are designated as Drinking Water Protected Areas under the Water Framework Directive, in the area that may be affected by the Proposed Development.	SW 02	54	N/A	Noted.
21c	For reasons of sustainability and to protect customers from potential future sewer flooding, Scottish Water will not accept any surface water connections in to the combined sewer system.	SW 03	55	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed	No discharges into the combined sewer system are anticipated.

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				Development	
21d	The Applicant should be aware that Scottish Water requires land title to the area of land where any pumping station and / or SuDS proposed to vest in Scottish Water is constructed.	SW 04	55	Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development	The Proposed Development does not include provision for a pumping station or SuDS.
21e	Certain discharges from non-domestic premises may constitute a trade effluent, which require separate application for permission to discharge to the sewerage system.	SW 05	56	Chapter 10: Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Geology and Soils	It is not likely that works involved with the Proposed Development would produce any significant level of trade effluent. This may arise from vehicle washing, which would be carried out at the main compound where pollutants, such as oil or grease, and suspended solids can be captured. This would be considered within the project CEMP.
22a	The Council recognises the need for electricity infrastructure to support the growth in the renewables sector. The Council is supportive in principle of electricity transmission proposals which are assessed as not having an unacceptable significant impact on the environment. Any mitigation that may be required should be considered as part of the preparation of proposals.	THC 01	9	N/A	Noted. Mitigation measures are set out within each technical chapter, where necessary, and summarised within Chapter 12.
22b	There are a number of public paths within the 2 km offset of the Proposed Development: two public rights of way and one Core Path. These should be included and assessed in the EIA.	THC 02	11	Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact	Impacts of the Proposed Development on public paths are considered within the noted chapter.
22c	The Council requires separate assessment of landscape and visual effects and “presentation of visual material in different ways”.	THC 03	13	Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact	The assessments of effects on visual amenity and landscape character have been conducted separately, as per best practice, within the noted chapter.
22d	For the visual impact assessment, the Council requires “single	THC 04	13	Chapters 3:	Visualisations have been produced in

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	<i>frame images with different focal lengths taken with a 35mm format full frame sensor camera – not an ‘equivalent.’ The preferred focal lengths are 50mm and 75mm.”</i> These images should form part of the ES and not be separate from it.			Description of the Proposed Development, 6: Landscape and Visual Impact, and 9: Cultural Heritage	accordance with THC (2016) visualisation guidance.
22e	The purpose of the selected and agreed viewpoints shall be clearly identified and stated. Clarification of whether the viewpoint has been chosen for “ <i>landscape assessment, or visual impact assessment, or cumulative assessment, or sequential assessment, or to show a representative view or for assessment of impact on designated sites, communities or individual properties</i> ”.	THC 05	13	Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Impact	The LVIA in the noted chapter provides a detailed assessment of all landscape and visual receptors in the Study Area rather than a less detailed viewpoint based assessment. It therefore takes account of the full range of views. Visualisations from two locations are provided for illustrative purposes to show how the Proposed Development would appear in the landscape. A further visualisation is included as part of the cultural heritage assessment.
22f	Any forthcoming application should be supported by an EIA Chapter on cultural heritage which incorporates the results of a walkover survey and makes recommendations for mitigation where appropriate.	THC 06	12	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	The noted chapter sets out the results of a walkover survey, an assessment of likely impacts from the Proposed Development on cultural heritage assets, and proposals for mitigation.
22g	The assessment will consider potential impacts to upstanding features as well as the potential for buried features and deposits to be present. Potential impacts on monuments must be addressed and illustrated so that a judgement on the appropriateness the	THC 07	12	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	The noted chapter contains an assessment of upstanding features and considers the potential for buried features and deposits. Mitigation measures are proposed to

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	Proposed Development can be made. Where impacts are unavoidable, it would be expected that proposed methods to mitigate this impact will be discussed in detail.				reduce potential impacts on cultural heritage features.
22h	Particular concerns are raised in regards to the prehistoric settlement remains at Cnoc a Catha.	THC 08	12	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	Potential impacts on this site are evaluated in the noted chapter.
22i	The survey and reporting should meet professional standards as set out by ClfA and follow the guidance provided in the Highland Council Standards for Archaeological Work.	THC 09	12	Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage	The survey and reporting have been carried out by a qualified member of ClfA, and in accordance with the noted guidance.
22j	The first consideration for all woodland removal decisions should be whether the underlying purpose of the proposal can reasonably be met without resorting to woodland removal. Justification needs to be given as to why an alternate route cannot be taken which avoids any loss of woodland.	THC 10	12	Chapter 11: Forestry	The alignment as proposed has been determined following route and alignment selection studies, as set out in Chapter 2 of the EIA Report, and on balance with other environmental factors, such as landscape and visual effects, avoidance of areas of deeper peat, and the presence of historic assets. The alignment has been refined to avoid standing blocks of forest, where practicable, and the LOD and OC set out so as to further minimise required felling.
22k	Should no other route be available and on the basis that the OHL grid connection relates to the consented Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, it is considered to meet the acceptability criteria given in Annex C of the policy, as the proposed change would contribute significantly to helping Scotland mitigate or adapt to climate change by facilitating appropriate development of renewable energy projects.	THC 11	12	Chapter 11: Forestry	Noted.
22l	The Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy	THC 12	12	Chapter 11:	All woodland removal, both within the OC

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	includes a requirement for compensatory planting, details of which will need to be submitted in support of any subsequent application, along with a proposed mechanism for delivery.			Forestry	and anything beyond for the purposes of the Proposed Development, is recorded in the noted chapter.
22m	It will also be necessary for the existing Forest Plan to be amended to incorporate the new wayleave. This will include any additional felling and restocking that may be required in order to secure windfirm edges. As stated in the supporting information, the Applicant must demonstrate that 'future forest operations within Dalchork Wood are not compromised' by the Proposed Development.	THC 13	12	Chapter 11: Forestry	The alignment and width of the OC has been designed with consideration of the North Sutherland Land Management Plan, in particular Map 6 – Future habitats, Dalchork (see Appendix 11.1). This is discussed further in the noted Chapter.
22n	A dedicated chapter on Forestry will be required, which includes: 1. An assessment of the Proposed Development against the SG policy on the Control of Woodland Removal. 2. A detailed Compensatory Planting Plan, including a mechanism for delivery. 3. An amended Forest Plan which incorporates the proposed wayleave.	THC 14	12	Chapter 11: Forestry	The noted chapter contains an assessment of the Proposed Development with reference to the Scottish Government's policy on Control of Woodland Removal. The alignment and width of the OC has been designed with consideration of the North Sutherland Land Management Plan, in particular Map 6 – Future habitats, Dalchork (see Appendix 11.1). Proposals for addressing Compensatory Planting are included in the noted Chapter.
22o	A Transport Assessment (TA), or section on traffic and transportation within the Environmental Statement for the Proposed Development, will be required. The TA should identify all Council maintained roads likely to be affected by the various stages of the Proposed Development and consider, in detail, the impact of development traffic, including abnormal load movements, on these roads. Guidance is provided with the Scoping response on matters	THC 15	10 / 11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	A Transport Assessment is included in the noted appendix.

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	to be addressed by the TA.				
22p	In considering the transport impacts of the Proposed Development, in addition to the requirements of IEMA's Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic, account must also be taken of the guidance contained in the Transport Scotland document: Transport Assessment Guidance; and the Council's own document: Guidance on the Preparation of Transport Assessments. Details of any other committed developments to be considered in the TA should be obtained from the planning service.	THC 16	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The assessment within the noted appendix considers the transport impacts of the Proposed Development with reference to Transport Scotland's and The Highland Council's guidance.
22q	Any timber extraction required in connection with the Proposed Development should be considered within the TA.	THC 17	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	Anticipated volumes of timber extraction required during the construction phase are included in the noted appendix.
22r	Early contact should be made with the Council's Structures Section regarding any affected Council maintained structures. A number of potentially sensitive structures are noted within the vicinity of the Proposed Development.	THC 18	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	Noted. The Applicant will make arrangements to contact the structures section to discuss their proposals.
22s	The TA should contain full details of the impact on the public road for each of the project phases, unless the impact is thought to be negligible. Where thought negligible, this should be briefly justified. It is acknowledged that normal operational works would not have a significant impact on the public road.	THC 19	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The noted appendix contains an assessment of likely impacts of the Proposed Development on the public road network.
22t	It appears that access from the Highland Council road network would be taken via the A9 trunk road and then along the A949 or the A836. For the avoidance of doubt, access should not come from the north. The publicly adopted Saval Road (U2054) and the A836 north of the junction with the A838 are both classified as 'Consultation Routes' under the Timber Transport Forum rules and this suggests that they are likely to be sensitive to construction	THC 20	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The Transport Assessment details the proposed access routes to the Proposed Development which would be taken from the south. No construction traffic would access the site from the north via Altnaharra.

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	traffic.				
22u	Framework information on principal project accesses, including corridor crossings of the A836, should be provided as part of the TA.	THC 21	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The noted appendix includes information on principal project accesses.
22v	In order to assess the impact of accesses used as part of the Proposed Development, suitable access layout and visibility splays should be provided together with road speed information on main roads. It is acknowledged that there may be a requirement to improve existing or to create new access bell mouths.	THC 22	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The noted appendix includes access layout, visibility splays and speed information. The locations of bellmouths are indicated on accompanying plans.
22w	Should related grid connection and / or substation works be likely to impact on any of the local roads forming the access routes to the site, it would be desirable to consider the impact of these works and the mitigation required in conjunction with the proposed wind farm.	THC 23	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The Transport Assessment includes consideration of mitigation in conjunction with the Wind Farm.
22x	The TA should include a framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) aimed at minimising the impact of the construction traffic. It shall include measures to ensure development traffic adheres to the approved routes and establish protocols for the movement of Heavy Goods Vehicles on minor public roads. Consultation with the local community and the Local Area Roads Office will be required regarding the detailed content and implementation of the CTMP.	THC 24	11	Appendix 3.4: Transport Assessment	The noted appendix includes a framework Construction Traffic Management Plan, which includes the required information.
22y	Notwithstanding the above requirements, there will remain a risk of damage to Council maintained roads from construction related traffic. In order to protect the interests of the Council, as roads authority, a suitable agreement relating to Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act and appropriate planning legislation may be necessary. An appropriate Road Bond or similar security may also be required.	THC 25	11	N/A	Noted. The Applicant will make arrangements to contact the roads authority to discuss and agree proposals.
22z	THC has concerns over the cumulative transport effect in the event	THC 26	N/A (Gate	Appendix 3.4:	The noted appendix includes an

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	that all the various developments proceed simultaneously (e.g. Dalchork Substation, Lairg – Loch Buidhe OHL, Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, the Proposed Development, and timber transport in the area).		Check)	Transport Assessment	assessment of likely cumulative transport effects of the Proposed Development with other nearby developments and operations.
22aa	THC note that hard copies of the s37 application need to be located at their headquarters, their local office in Golspie, and in Lairg as per the Gate Check Report.	THC 27	N/A (Gate Check)	N/A	Hard copies of the s37 application will be made available at the noted locations for public viewing.
23	Transport Scotland note that the route of the OHL is sufficiently remote from the trunk road network that its construction is unlikely to cause any discernible environmental impact on the trunk road network. Therefore, Transport Scotland has no objection to the Proposed Development.	TS 01	40	N/A.	Noted.
24a	<p>Scenery and the natural environment have become the two most important factors for visitors in recent years. The importance of this element of tourism in Scotland cannot be underestimated.</p> <p>It is suggested that full consideration be given to the Scottish Government's 2008 research on the impact of wind farms on tourism. The report contains recommendations for planning authorities which could help minimise any negative effects of renewable energy developments on the tourism industry. The report also highlights a request, as part of the planning process, to provide a tourism impact statement as part of the EIA. It is recommended that an independent tourism assessment should be carried out. This should be geographically sensitive and consider the potential impact on any tourism offerings in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. The impact of any perceived proliferation of developments may have on the local tourism industry, and the local</p>	VS 01	65	Chapter 4: EIA Consultation	<p>In response to the first point raised, the Proposed Development has been routed to minimise its potential to impact upon the environment. The A836 would be utilised for construction and maintenance of the Proposed Development, which also comprises part of National Cycle Route 1. However, it would not form any restriction to the usage of this route. The OHL would not cross any recognised Core Paths, with the closest identified being the SU16.05 west of the A836 and SU16.01 at Lairg, and construction works would not require access along any routes identified as Core Paths.</p> <p>The OHL would largely pass through an area of commercial plantation forestry</p>

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	economy, should also be considered.				<p>which has undergone extensive felling in recent years. However, remaining stands would serve to partially screen the OHL from surrounding views.</p> <p>Many of the area's businesses are based in Lairg. Given partial screening offered by forestry and the distance between the overhead line and the village, there would be very little visibility of the Proposed Development, and it is not anticipated that businesses would be adversely affected.</p> <p>As such, no significant effects on recreation and tourism are anticipated. However, the potential for significant effects on the visual amenity of recreational tourist receptors are considered through the LVIA (Chapter 6). Furthermore, an Outdoor Access Plan would form part of the CEMP, within which details of recreational routes would be provided and appropriate signage or practices put in place to mitigate impacts on recreational users during construction.</p> <p>In response to the second point, the Applicant would highlight that the Proposed Development is, itself, not a wind farm, but rather an associated component, forming the electrical connection to the</p>

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					<p>national grid via the proposed Dalchork substation north of Lairg. Considering the above, potential effects from the Proposed Development on tourism would be limited and of a non-significant level.</p> <p>Consequently, a tourism impact statement would not be proportionate as part of the EIA Report for the Proposed Development given that no significant effects on tourism and recreation are anticipated.</p>