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The Scottish Government
Energy Consents Unit

Scoping Opinion on behalf of the Scottish Ministers under the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection
SP Transmission Plc

11 April 2024

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

1.1 This scoping opinion is issued by the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit on behalf of the Scottish Ministers to SP Transmission Plc, a company incorporated under the Companies Acts with company number SC189126 and having its registered office at 320 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, Scotland, G2 5AD ("the Company") in response to a request dated 06 December 2023 for a scoping opinion under the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 in relation to the proposed Heathland Grid Farm Wind Connection ("the proposed development"). The request was accompanied by a scoping report.

1.2 The proposed development would be located approximately 10km southwest of West Calder, West Lothian, and approximately 15km east of Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, with the grid connection extending to the east to Wishaw Substation located off Castlehill Road within Wishaw.

1.3 The proposed development would comprise of a new 132kV overhead line (OHL) connecting Heathland Windfarm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation. The OHL will be approximately 22km in length, supported by wooden poles, and the western section of the route, connecting to Wishaw Substation, will be an underground cable (UGC).

1.4 In addition to the grid connection there will be ancillary infrastructure including:

- Tree felling or lopping (where required);
- Construction of temporary construction compounds;
- Preparation of temporary accesses (where required);
- Excavation and construction of foundations;
- Assembly and erection of poles;
- Insulator and conductor erection and tensioning; and
- Clearance of equipment and access, and reinstatement to its former use/condition.

1.5 The proposed development is within the planning authority areas of North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council.

2. Consultation

2.1 Following the scoping opinion request a list of consultees was agreed between SP Transmission Plc and the Energy Consents Unit. A consultation on the scoping report was undertaken by the Scottish Ministers and this commenced on 22 December 2023. The consultation closed on 26 January 2024. Extensions to this deadline were granted to 23 February 2024. One statutory consultee provided a delayed response 04 March 2024, and another statutory consultee 11 March 2024, both included in this Scoping Opinion. The Scottish Ministers also requested responses from their internal advisors Transport Scotland and Scottish Forestry. Standing advice from Marine Directorate – Science Evidence Data and Digital (MD-SEDD) has been provided with requirements to complete a checklist prior to the submission of the application for consent under section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. All consultation responses received are attached in ***ANNEX A Consultation responses***.

2.2 The purpose of the consultation was to obtain scoping advice from each consultee on environmental matters within their remit. Responses from consultees and advisors, including the standing advice from MD-SEDD, should be read in full for detailed requirements and for comprehensive guidance, advice and, where appropriate, templates for preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report.

2.3 Unless stated to the contrary in this scoping opinion, the Scottish Ministers expect the EIA report to include all matters raised in responses from the consultees and advisors.

2.4 To date no response has been received from South Lanarkshire Council, and it has been decided that the Scottish Ministers will provide a scoping opinion at this time based on the consultation responses received and that in the event that a response is subsequently received from South Lanarkshire Council, it will be published on the ECU website as an addendum to this scoping opinion.

2.5 In addition to South Lanarkshire Council, the following organisations were consulted but did not provide a response:

- West Lothian Council;
- John Muir Trust;
- RSPB Scotland;
- Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays);
- Scottish Wildlife Trust;
- Woodland Trust;
- West of Scotland Archaeology Service; and
- Overtown Community Council.

2.6 With regard to those consultees who did not respond, it is assumed that they have no comment to make on the scoping report, however each would be consulted again in the event that an application for section 37 consent is submitted subsequent to this EIA scoping opinion.

2.7 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.

3. The Scoping Opinion

3.1 This scoping opinion has been adopted following consultation with North Lanarkshire Council, within whose area the proposed development would be situated, NatureScot (previously "SNH"), Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Environment Scotland, all as statutory consultation bodies, and with other bodies which the Scottish Ministers consider likely to have an interest in the proposed development by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities or local and regional competencies.

3.2 The Scottish Ministers adopt this scoping opinion having taken into account the information provided by the applicant in its request dated 06 December 2023 in respect of the specific characteristics of the proposed development and responses received to the consultation undertaken. In providing this scoping opinion, the Scottish Ministers have had regard to current knowledge and methods of assessment; have taken into account the specific characteristics of the proposed development, the specific characteristics of that type of development and the environmental features likely to be affected.

3.3 A copy of this scoping opinion has been sent to North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council for publication on their website. It has also been published on the Scottish Government Energy Consents website at www.energyconsents.scot.

3.4 The Scottish Ministers expect the EIA report which will accompany the application for the proposed development to consider in full all consultation responses attached in **Annex A and Annex B**.

3.5 The Scottish Ministers are satisfied with the scope of the EIA set out in the scoping report.

3.6 In addition to the consultation responses, Ministers wish to provide comments with regards to the scope of the EIA report. The Company should note and address each matter.

3.7 Scottish Water provided information on whether there are any drinking water protected areas or Scottish Water assets on which the development could have any significant effect. The Scottish Ministers request that the company contacts Scottish Water (via EIA@scottishwater.co.uk) and makes further enquires to confirm whether there any Scottish Water assets which may be affected by the development, and includes details in the EIA report of any relevant mitigation measures to be provided.

3.8 The Scottish Ministers request that the Company investigates the presence of any private water supplies which may be impacted by the development. The EIA report should include details of any supplies identified by this investigation, and if any supplies are identified, the Company should provide an assessment of the potential impacts, risks, and any mitigation which would be provided.

3.9 Marine Directorate – Science Evidence Data and Digital (MD-SEDD) provide generic scoping guidelines for onshore wind farm and overhead line development Onshore Renewables Interactions - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) which outline how fish populations can be impacted during the construction, operation and decommissioning of a wind farm or overhead line development and informs developers as to what should be considered, in relation to freshwater and diadromous fish and fisheries, during the EIA process.

3.10 In addition to identifying the main watercourses and waterbodies within and downstream of the proposed development area, developers should identify and consider, at this early stage, any areas of Special Areas of Conservation where fish are a qualifying feature and proposed felling operations particularly in acid sensitive areas.

3.11 MD-SEDD also provide standing advice for onshore wind farm or overhead line development (which has been appended at Annex B) which outlines what information, relating to freshwater and diadromous fish and fisheries, is expected in the EIA report. Use of the checklist, provided in Annex 1 of the standing advice, should ensure that the EIA report contains the required information; the absence of such information may necessitate requesting additional information which may delay the process. Developers are required to submit the completed checklist in advance of their application submission.

3.12 The Scottish Ministers consider that where there is a demonstrable requirement for peat landslide hazard and risk assessment (PLHRA), the assessment should be undertaken as part of the EIA process to provide Ministers with a clear understanding of whether the risks are acceptable and capable of being controlled by mitigation measures. The Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments: Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments (Second Edition), published at Proposed electricity generation developments: peat landslide hazard best practice guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot), should be followed in the preparation of the EIA report, which should contain such an assessment and details of mitigation measures. Where a PLHRA is not required clear justification for not carrying out such a risk assessment is required.

3.13 The scoping report identified viewpoints at Table 6-1 to be assessed within the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA). It is further noted that significant effects related to recreation, tourism, and socioeconomics should be included in the LVIA, as outlined in section 11 of the scoping report. Similarly, land use, agriculture and forestry outlined in section 12 of the scoping report should be included in the LVIA. The production of the LVIA should follow discussions with NatureScot, North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council.

3.14 The noise assessment should be carried out in line with relevant legislation and standards as detailed in section 9 of the scoping report. The noise assessment report should be formatted as per Table 6.1 of the IOA “A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise.”. It is further expected that all noise from construction works would comply with North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council area’s guidelines for construction noise.

3.15 The potential impacts, as outlined in section 7 of the scoping report, on the designated sites, specified in Table 7-1 and Figure 7.4, should be considered in risk mitigation assessments made by the developer. Furthermore, the status of the designated sites, including the areas of peatland, means that the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &.) Regulations 1994 as amended (the "Habitats Regulations") will apply to this case and should be considered in the EIA.

3.16 A Species Protection Management Plan is recommended to be included, so as to provide detailed and up-to-date information using approved survey methodologies.

3.17 It is recommended by the Scottish Ministers that any decisions on ecology and ornithology surveys – species, methodology, vantage points, viewsheds & duration – site specific & cumulative – should be made following discussion between the Company and NatureScot, North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council. Regarding ornithology, a licensed surveyor should perform surveys of nesting and activity and the potential cumulative ornithological impacts, covering a buffer zone of at least 500 metres, and at least 1km for parts of the structure where there is a collision risk.

3.18 The assessment on archaeology and cultural heritage impact should be carried out in line with relevant legislation and standards as detailed in section 5 of the scoping report, taking into account the criteria formatted in Table 5-1, and the recommendations highlighted by HES through their consultation (Annex A).

3.19 Where borrow pits are proposed as a source of on-site aggregate they should be considered as part of the EIA process and included in the EIA report detailing information regarding their location, size, and nature. Ultimately, it would be necessary to provide details of the proposed depth of the excavation compared to the actual topography and water table, proposed drainage and settlement traps, turf and overburden removal and storage for reinstatement, and details of the proposed restoration profile. The impact of such facilities (including dust, blasting and impact on water) should be appraised as part of the overall impact of the working. Information should cover the requirements set out in 'PAN 50: Controlling the Environmental Effects of Surface Mineral Workings'.

3.20 Ministers are aware that further engagement is required between parties regarding the refinement of the design of the proposed development regarding, among other things, surveys, management plans, peat, radio links, finalisation of viewpoints, cultural heritage, cumulative assessments, and request that they are kept informed of relevant discussions.

4. Mitigation Measures

4.1 The Scottish Ministers are required to make a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the proposed development on the environment as identified in the environmental impact assessment. The mitigation measures suggested for any significant environmental impacts identified should be presented as a conclusion to each chapter. Applicants are also asked to provide a consolidated schedule of all mitigation measures proposed in the environmental assessment, provided in tabular form, where that mitigation is relied upon in relation to reported conclusions of likelihood or significance of impacts.

5. Conclusion

5.1 This scoping opinion is based on information contained in the applicant's written request for a scoping opinion and information available at the date of this scoping opinion. The adoption of this scoping opinion by the Scottish Ministers does not preclude the Scottish Ministers from requiring of the applicant information in connection with an EIA report submitted in connection with any application for section 37 consent for the proposed development.

5.2 This scoping opinion will not prevent the Scottish Ministers from seeking additional information at application stage, for example to include cumulative impacts of additional developments which enter the planning process after the date of this opinion.

5.3 Without prejudice to that generality, it is recommended that advice regarding the requirement for an additional scoping opinion be sought from the Scottish Ministers in the event that no application has been submitted within 12 months of the date of this opinion.

5.4 It is acknowledged that the environmental impact assessment process is iterative and should inform the final layout and design of proposed developments. The Scottish Ministers note that further engagement between relevant parties in relation to the refinement of the design of this proposed development will be required and would request that they are kept informed of on-going discussions in relation to this.

5.5 Applicants are encouraged to engage with officials at the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit at the pre-application stage and before proposals reach design freeze.

5.6 When finalising the EIA report, applicants are asked to provide a summary in tabular form of where within the EIA report each of the specific matters raised in this scoping opinion has been addressed.

5.7 It should be noted that to facilitate uploading to the Energy Consents portal, the EIA report and its associated documentation should be divided into appropriately named separate files of sizes no more than 10 megabytes (MB).

Jennifer Gessler
Energy Consents Unit
11 April 2024

ANNEX A

Consultation

List of consultees who provided a response.

• North Lanarkshire Council	A1- A3
• NatureScot	A4 - A8
• Historic Environment Scotland	A9 - A13
• Scottish Environmental Protection Agency	A14 - A22
• Transport Scotland	A23 - A24
• Scottish Forestry	A25 - A27
• Scottish Water	A28 - A29
• Network Rail	A30 -A31

Internal advice from areas of the Scottish Government was provided by officials from Transport Scotland, Scottish Forestry and Marine Directorate (in the form of standing advice from Marine Directorate – Science Evidence Data and Digital (MD-SEDD).

See Section 2.4 above for a list of organisations that were consulted but did not provide a response.

A1

Our Ref: 24/00013/CNS
Your Ref: ECU00004997
Contact: Ann McGregor
Tel: 01236 632500
E-mail: Planningenquiry@northlan.gov.uk
Date: 15 February 2024

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Enterprise And Communities
Civic Centre
Windmillhill Street
Motherwell ML1 1AB
Planningenquiry@northlan.gov.uk

Jennifer Gessler
Onshore Electricity, Strategy and Consents
Directorate for Energy and Climate Change
Scottish Government
5 Atlantic Quay 150 Broomielaw
Glasgow | G2 8LU

By email to: jennifer.gessler@gov.scot

Dear Jennifer,

Consultation ECU00004997: Scoping Opinion for overhead line (OHL) at 132 kV, supported by wooden poles (15 metres in height) connecting Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation

Thank you for your consultation on the above and my apologies for the late response.

I am currently awaiting comments from NLC Green Space and will forward these to you in due course. However, in the interim I wish to make the following observations:

Noise

With respect to the proposed works (and in particular the proposed underground section as illustrated in Figure 1 below), it is expected that noise from all construction works would comply with the guidelines for construction noise within the North Lanarkshire Council area, i.e there should be no noise produced outside the guideline times in Figure 2 below in order to minimise construction noise impact on existing neighbouring properties.

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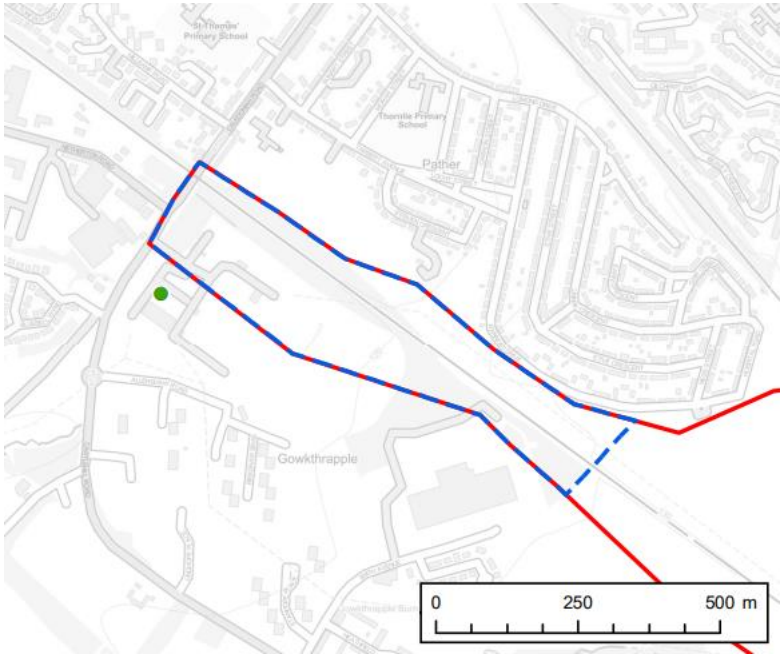

Figure 1.

Monday to Friday	08:00 hours to 19:00 hours
Saturdays	08:00 hours to 13:00 hours
Sundays	No noise producing works audible at nearest residential property

Figure 2.

Potential Ground Contamination, Noise, And Air Quality

It is noted in Section 7 of the EIA Scoping report that a separate standalone Phase I Geotechnical and GeoEnvironmental report will be included in the EIA report. It is noted in Section 9 that noise impact assessment using the 'ABC' method in BS5228 is intended to be undertaken, and that Table 9-4 summarises the various aspects with respect to potential noise and vibration impacts to be included in the EIA report in due course. It is also noted that liaison between the developer and the relevant local authority environmental health services is intended with respect to the detail of the noise impact assessment work.

I agree with the commentary in Section 13 of the EIA Scoping report that any potential air quality impact should be scoped out of any further consideration in the EIA. I am also in general agreement with the relevant sections of the Scoping Report and trust that these comments (particularly the comments with respect to construction noise activities) will be noted by the developer at this time.

A3

I trust this information is of assistance. However, should you have any further queries in relation to this matter you can contact the case officer Ann McGregor by email at: planningenquiry@northlan.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Redacted

Lorna Bowden
Planning and Place Manager

A4

NatureScot
Scotland's Nature Agency
Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

Jennifer Gessler
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU

11 March 2024
Your ref: ECU00004997
Our ref: CEA173755

Dear Sir/Madam,

Electricity Act 1989
The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
Request for Scoping Opinion for proposed Section 37 application for the Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection, North Lanarkshire

Thank you for your original consultation dated 22 December 2024 consulting NatureScot over the scoping advice request. Please accept my apologies for the delays that there have been to the provision of this response.

EIA scoping advice from NatureScot focuses on the key natural heritage issues that we believe should be scoped into any Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the specific project concerned. In this response we therefore consider the following –

- Protected sites,
- Protected species,
- Ornithology
- Nationally important peatland habitat, and
- Landscape and visual amenity.

I hope that you will find the following advice on the required scope of Environmental Assessment to be of use in responding to the current request.

Protected sites

As is recognised in the reports submitted by the applicant for this project, there are statutory protected nature conservation sites in the vicinity of their project, the closest of which being the Braehead Moss European Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the east – designated to protect

its active raised bog habitat, see https://sitelink.nature.scot/site/8212 - and one of the constituent sites of the Clyde Valley Woodlands European SAC (Garrion Gill Site of Special Scientific Interest) to the west – designated to protect its mixed woodland on base-rich soils, see https://sitelink.nature.scot/site/8224.

Additionally there are two additional European Special Protection Areas (SPAs), classified to protect internationally important migratory bird populations, that are within the connectivity distance for the species concerned (i.e. the radius within which impacts on the relevant bird populations must be considered). These are – the Westwater SPA classified to protect an internationally important population of wintering pink-footed geese along with the site's wider wintering wildfowl assemblage (https://sitelink.nature.scot/site/8591), and the Slammanan Plateau SPA classified to protect an internationally important population of wintering taiga bean geese (https://sitelink.nature.scot/site/9184). See also our specific advice on ornithology below.

Although direct impacts on these sites do not seem likely as a result of this proposal, the status of these SACs and SPAs means that the requirements of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 as amended (the "Habitats Regulations") will apply in this case. Consequently, Energy Consents will be required to consider the effect of the proposal on these designations before it can be consented (commonly known as a Habitats Regulations Appraisal or 'HRA'). The NatureScot website has a summary of the legislative requirements at https://www.nature.scot/doc/legislative-requirements-european-sites.

To enable you to do this, the applicant's EIA should consider the likelihood of significant effects on the qualifying interests of each of these SACs. Where any such likelihood is identified, proposals to mitigate impacts such that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity (in terms of the Conservation Objectives for each site) should be presented in the EIA Report (EIAR).

In addition to these nationally and internationally protected natural heritage sites, the proposed route may pass through or close to sites identified by the local authorities in either the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan or the North Lanarkshire LDP, and protected by policies therein. The EIA should therefore also assess any impacts of the development on the integrity of such sites and set out adequate mitigation or compensation measures where such impacts are identified.

Protected species

Surveys to determine whether any places of rest/shelter used by any protected species of animal might be in any way affected by the overhead line development should form a key part of the applicant's EIA.

Where any such impacts are deemed possible, Species Protection Plans for the relevant protected species should be produced based on adequately detailed and up-to-date information obtained using approved survey methodologies. Such Species Management Plans will ultimately be used to support any protected species development licence applications that are found to be necessary for this proposal, and will enable NatureScot to advise the planning authority as to whether such licences are likely to be forthcoming.

Further advice on protected species and development can be found on our website at https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/planning-and-development-advice/planning-and-development-protected-species.

In particular, should any trees require felling to deliver this powerline that are identified as having medium bat roosting potential or higher, full bat roost surveys of these trees should be carried out – with Species Protection Plans produced where any roosts are in fact identified in trees to be felled – prior to this application being determined. This should avoid the potential risk of any consent issued for this project being rendered unusable. Specific advice on bats and development can be found on our website at https://www.nature.scot/doc/standing-advice-planning-consultations-bats.

Ornithology

As the most significant natural heritage impacts from new powerlines can often be on wild birds, ornithology should be a key focus of the applicant's EIA. Specific advice on powerlines and ornithology can be found on our website at https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-assessment-and-mitigation-impacts-power-lines-and-guyed-meteorological-masts-birds.

The sources consulted for the applicant's initial ornithological desk study should include the local raptor study group and the RSPB (the latter for records of black grouse specifically). If black grouse are in fact present within 1.5km, or have recently been present in this area, specific surveys for this species will need to be added to the scope of the EIA.

We can confirm that the applicant's proposed use of vantage points (VPs) and their proposed survey hours per month are satisfactory. The buffer zone around this proposed development that should be covered by ornithological surveys should be at least 500 metres. Flight lines should be mapped, with height estimated at approximately 15 second intervals (as for most species it is unlikely to be constant). No other data relating to the birds themselves need be recorded, however the applicants thus far do not appear to have provided details on the time-of-day that they propose to carry out bird surveys – e.g. whether this will be random (i.e. as-and-when conditions allow) or structured to ensure the capture of relevant information at different times of day. Details of the weather conditions during survey periods should be included in the EIAR.

The applicant's proposals for assessing the impacts on breeding barn owl is lacking in detail at present, and the EIAR will ultimately be required to include details on the location of any suitable habitat and of where such suitable habitat is occupied by breeding owls. The identification of potential barn owl nest sites should be done between autumn and early spring. To check whether any potential nest sites identified are in fact in use, checks should be made in summer after mid-June (to avoid disturbance at the nest site earlier in the breeding season, when desertion is more likely to result). This can be done by looking for signs below/around the potential nest site (which requires to be undertaken by a licensed surveyor), or by observing activity at the site from a distance. Details on methods are available from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management website at https://cieem.net/resource/barn-owl-survey-methodology-and-techniques-for-use-in-ecological-assessment/. Finally, the proposed buffer zone for barn owl surveys appears to be very small and the applicant has not provided any

justification for this. The recommended buffer for other structures where there is a collision risk is at least 1 km.

In terms of the proposed general breeding bird surveys, we support the proposed use of a modified Common Bird Census and Brown & Shepherd methodology. However we note that some habitats have apparently been excluded from the survey. For example it is well understood that goshawks may be present in conifer plantations in this general area, and we would advise that these be checked for this species at least. Likewise, omitting improved grassland could risk breeding waders being missed.

NatureScot is content with the applicant's proposals for non-breeding/wintering bird surveys. These surveys should inform the HRA for the SPAs within connectivity distance – as discussed in relation to protected areas above.

The EIAR should set out clearly what geographical area has been checked for other potential contributing developments in order to inform their assessment of cumulative ornithological impacts. Those they have identified so far are extremely close to the proposed new powerline, which potentially could be read to suggest that only a small (and therefore inadequate) area around the proposed development was used. If considering cumulative impacts on any particular designation that exists to protect nationally or internationally important bird populations it is our advice that other relevant developments should be searched for within an area 20 km out from the boundary of the designation in question.

Additionally, general mitigation measures sufficient to ensure that no illegal disturbance to active bird nests during construction should be set out in the EIAR. Further advice on development and breeding birds can be found on our website at https://www.nature.scot/doc/standing-advice-planning-consultationsbirds.

Peatland habitat

As noted in the applicant's scoping submissions, it is possible that part of the new powerline route could pass through areas of peatland, including some areas south of the Kingshill Plantation that were identified as Class 1 Peatland by NatureScot's Carbon & Peatland Map 2016. Such peatlands include nationally important areas of deep peat and priority peatland habitats - and are therefore likely to be of high conservation value. Additionally, as is well understood, hydrologically intact peatland acts as one of the country's most important carbon stores, while the hydrological disruption of peatland to facilitate development can be a significant contributor to atmospheric carbon emissions.

Detailed advice on assessing the impacts of development on peatland habitats can be found on our website at https://www.nature.scot/doc/advising-peatland-carbon-rich-soils-and-priority-peatland-habitats-development-management.

The applicant's EIAR should include a full and detailed assessment of the likely impacts on peatland. The methodologies covered in our on-line guidance (as linked to above) should be followed in full, or detailed justifications should be provided for any deviations from these methods. The EIAR should set out any attempts to avoid areas of important peatland through

micrositing – and, where this is not possible, the mitigation and/or compensation measures necessary to offset any impacts should be assessed with details of how these measures will be secured set out in the Report.

Landscape & visual amenity

At the present time, NatureScot is only able to provide detailed advice on assessing the landscape and visual impacts of development proposals where these will impact on nationally important landscape resources such as National Scenic Areas or areas of Wild Land. As this will not be the case with this particular project, we would instead simply refer the applicant to our standing advice on assessing such impacts – which can be found on our website at https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-tools-and-techniques/landscape-and-visual-impact-assessment. As can be seen, this guidance was written with the principal aim of providing advice in relation to wind farm developments. However the principles and general advice are relevant to all development types.

Other than the above, NatureScot is content that any other potential issues relevant to our remit (e.g. recreational access, green network & placemaking, etc.) can be scoped out of the EIA for this proposal given the nature of the development.

I hope you find these belated comments to be of some use. However please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if there is any aspect of this advice that you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Dave Lang
Operations Officer
West Central Scotland

A9

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

By email to: Econsents_Admin@gov.scot

Jennifer Gessler
Case Officer | Onshore Electricity, Strategy and Consents
Energy Consents Unit

Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH

Enquiry Line: 0131-668-8716
HMConsultations@hes.scot

Our case ID: 300070249
Your ref: ECU00004997
20 February 2024

Dear Jennifer Gessler

The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection
Scoping Report

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 22 December 2023 about the above scoping report. We have reviewed the details in terms of our historic environment interests. This covers world heritage sites, scheduled monuments and their settings, category A-listed buildings and their settings, inventory gardens and designed landscapes, inventory battlefields and historic marine protected areas (HMPAs).

The relevant local authorities' archaeological and cultural heritage advisors will also be able to offer advice on the scope of the cultural heritage assessment. This may include heritage assets not covered by our interests, such as unscheduled archaeology, and category B- and C-listed buildings.

Proposed Development
We understand that the proposed development comprises a grid connection approximately 22 km in length between Heathland Wind Farm and the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation, consisting of a 132 kV overhead line supported by wooden poles between 11m and 16m in height.

Scope of assessment
We welcome that the environmental impact assessment (EIA) undertaken in support of the development will include an assessment of impacts on the historic environment. This assessment should be undertaken by a suitably experienced heritage professional with an understanding of heritage issues. The assessment should meet the requirements of National Planning Framework 4, the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, and our Managing Change guidance note on Setting. Additional guidance can also be found in the Cultural Heritage Appendix to the EIA Handbook.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

Potential Direct Impacts
We can confirm that there are no scheduled monuments, category A-listed buildings, Inventory battlefields, GDLs, or World Heritage Sites within the proposed development boundary.

Potential Setting Impacts
There are nationally important heritage assets within the proposed study area that may experience impacts on their settings. Further details are provided in the annex to this letter; the attached list is not comprehensive and includes only those designated historic environment assets that we are currently able to identify based on the details provided about the proposed development at this stage.

We expect that all designated assets within the study area be assessed, and that if an asset is scoped out of more detailed assessment, the reasons for this should be presented in the written report. This assessment should demonstrate a full appreciation of the setting of each heritage asset and should recognise that impacts may occur on views from, towards or across individual heritage assets as well as from potential changes to their experience. Our Managing Change guidance note on Setting provides further detail on this matter.

Our Position
Our initial appraisal suggests that nationally important historic environment assets are unlikely to experience significant impacts to a magnitude sufficient for us to object. However, this is subject to the results of full assessment and our review of further information provided by the EIA Report.

Further information
Guidance about national policy can be found in our 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' series available online at www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes. Technical advice is available on our Technical Conservation website at https://www.engineshed.scot/.

We hope this is helpful. Please contact us if you have any questions about this response. The officer managing this case is Cailee Mellen and they can be contacted by phone on 0131 651 6807 or by email on cailee.mellen@hes.scot.

Yours sincerely

Historic Environment Scotland

ANNEX

Scoping Report

Assessment Methodology

We are content with the proposed 250m study area for potential direct physical impacts and the 1km study area for potential setting impacts. We welcome that a ZTV will also be used alongside the search radius to identify heritage assets that have the potential to experience impacts to their setting.

However, the cultural heritage chapter states that:

> *The Study Area for the assessment of setting will be limited to 1km. The setting assessment will be guided by assets which fall within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Some assets beyond this distance may also be considered where elements of their setting extend within the 1km Study Area.*

From this, it is unclear if the assessment methodology includes all assets within the 1km study area or just those that are also within the ZTV. It also may not capture assets that lie fully outside the study area but within the ZTV nor assets that lie outside the ZTV but could still experience potential setting impacts. We therefore expect all assets within the 1km study area to be assessed and that if an asset is scoped out of more detailed assessment, the reasons for this should be presented in the written report. Furthermore, we expect the assessment to consider the following: assets outwith the 1km study area with sensitivity for potential impacts because they retain long and key views; potential impacts on any key views of assets from third points which may fall in the ZTV; and views towards assets where the proposed development may backdrop assets in important and/or reciprocal views.

We welcome that the setting assessment will follow the guidance laid out in our Managing Change document on setting. However, we note that sections 5.9 and 5.10 reference potential screening from surrounding commercial forestry and other vegetation. As stated in the Managing Change guidance, this type of screening cannot necessarily be relied upon to mitigate adverse impacts of a development because they are subject to environmental and other factors that may vary over time (e.g. wind blow, felling, seasonal changes which affect leaf cover, etc).

We also note that table 5-3 uses a matrix for significance of effect that is inconsistent with that which is outlined in the EIA Handbook, with impacts of medium magnitude on assets of high significance and impacts of high magnitude on assets of medium significance being classified as ‘moderate’ rather than ‘major.’ We recommend that the EIAR follows the assessment methodology laid out in Appendix 1 of the EIA Handbook.

Site Visits

We recommend that site visits be conducted to the development site and that viewpoints from within the site be considered. We also recommend that site visits be conducted to any assets within the study area and/or ZTV that may experience potential impacts on

their setting. These should be undertaken by a suitably experienced heritage professional with an understanding of heritage issues.

Visualisations

We note that visualisations will be provided in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment chapter, but we recommend that cultural heritage specific visualisations be produced where relevant. If initial assessment identifies potential significant impacts on heritage assets, wireframe visualisations should be produced to help analyse those impacts. If this exercise confirms the potential impacts as being significant, then photomontages should also be prepared for the relevant assets. We recommend that the selection of heritage assets for wireframe production be confirmed with Historic Environment Scotland at an early stage.

Historic Environment Scotland's Interests

We are content that the proposed development should not result in any direct physical impacts on nationally important historic environment assets. Any potential impacts that could result from the proposed development will relate to the settings of such assets.

Scheduled Monuments

There are four scheduled monuments within the 1km study area:

- **Brewshott limestone quarry (SM9679)**
- **Haywood deserted mining village (SM9684)**
- **Tashieburn, horse engine platform (SM9700)**
- **Cleugh House, bell pits and inclined plane (SM11234)**

There is also one scheduled monument immediately adjacent to the 1km study area

- **Wilsontown Ironworks (SM2654)**

All of these monuments are industrial in character, consequently their settings at these locations are primarily associated with the availability of materials, power, workers, and other key resources.

The proposed development would be visible from these monuments but at present we do not anticipate it would significantly negatively impact their settings. Other scheduled monuments within the ZTV are relatively distant from the proposed development and again we do not anticipate it would significantly negatively impact their settings. However, confirmation of this opinion is dependent on further assessment and information as provided by the EIAR.

Category A-Listed Buildings & Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs)

The following A-listed buildings are located outwith the 1km study area but within the ZTV:

- **St Ignatius Roman Catholic Church (LB47975)**
- **High Mill Chapel Street (LB726)**
- **Carstairs House (LB712)**
- **St Mary Aisle (LB692)**

- **Carnwath Cross (LB694)**
- **Shotts, Calderhead Road (LB50013)**

The following GDLs are located outwith the 1km study area but partially within the ZTV.

- **Lee Castle (GDL00257)**

The development, according to the ZTV, would be visible in only part of the GDL. Trees/vegetation are located between this area and the development site and modern development can already be seen in long distance views.

- **Dalzell House (GDL00132)**

Based on the map provided, this GDL is just outside the ZTV. If new information shows otherwise, it would still be unlikely that the development would affect the GDL due to the urban context between the GDL and the development site.

The lists of assets discussed above should not be considered exhaustive, but rather serve as a reference to those that appear most likely to experience impacts to their settings at this stage. We do not consider it likely that these assets would be significantly affected by the proposed development but would expect this to be demonstrated through assessment.

Historic Environment Scotland
20 February 2024

Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Buidheann Dìon Àrainneachd na h-Alba

Jennifer Gessler
Planning Department
Energy Consents Unit - ECU

By email only to: Econsents_Admin@gov.scot

Our Ref: 11590
Your Ref: ECU00004997

SEPA Email Contact:
planning.south@sepa.org.uk

11 January 2023

Dear Jennifer Gessler

Electricity Act 1989 - Section 37
ECU00004997
Request for Scoping Opinion – Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection
Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation

Thank you for consulting SEPA for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping opinion in relation to the above development on 22 December 2023 We would welcome engagement with the applicant at an early stage to discuss any of the issues raised in this letter and would especially welcome further pre-application engagement once initial peat probing and habitat survey work has been completed and the layout developed further as a result.

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) has recently been published. The guidance referenced in this response is being reviewed and updated to reflect the new policies. It will still provide useful and relevant information but some parts may be updated further in the future.

Advice for the planning authority / determining authority

To **avoid delay and potential objection** the EIA submission must contain a scaled plan of sensitivities, for example peat, GWDTE, proximity to watercourses, overlain with proposed

Chairman
Bob Downes

CEO
Nicole Paterson

Angus Smith Building
6 Parklands Avenue
Eurocentral
Holytown
North Lanarkshire
ML1 4WQ

Tel: 03000 99 66 99
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development. This is necessary to ensure the EIA process has informed the layout of the development to firstly avoid, and then reduce then mitigate significant impacts on the environment. We consider that the issues covered in Appendix 1 below must be addressed to our satisfaction in the EIA process. This provides details on our information requirements and the form in which they must be submitted.

1. General comments

1.1 We are generally content with the approach to be taken to the scope and level of detail proposed in the EIA Report. Our generic scoping requirements are outlined in the attached appendix, but they should be considered within the context of NPF4. SEPA will be especially interested in the application clearly demonstrating how the mitigation hierarchy outlined in policy 5 has been applied.

1.2 We also provide the following pre-application advice:

• We consider that the following key issues must be addressed (a) Minimising impacts on peat and peatland (b) Avoiding good quality or rare GWDTE habitats and minimising impacts on other GWDTE habitats, and (c) Avoiding impacts on watercourses and other water features by ensuring suitable buffers, and using best practice design crossings.

• The application should include clear information on supporting infrastructure such as tracks including whether they are temporary or permanent and method of construction. They should be shown to minimise peat disturbance. If there is the proposal to reuse disturbed peat in peatland restoration then the submission should include information on the location of the areas to be restored and a justification for the need for the works.

• In relation to the drawings to be provided then please ensure they are at a scale and include relevant information to allow us to easily understand how the proposal will impact on aspects of the environment in which we have an interest. For example showing buffers to watercourse and individual peat probes.

2. Regulatory advice for the applicant

2.1 Details of regulatory requirements and good practice advice, for example in relation to private drainage, can be found on the regulations section of our website. If you are unable to find the advice you need for a specific regulatory matter, please contact a member of the

A16

local compliance team at: lanark@sepa.org.uk .

If you have queries relating to this letter, please contact us at the email above including our reference number in the email subject.

Kind regards,

Silvia Cagnoni
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Service

Ecopy to: jennifer.gessler@gov.scot ;

Disclaimer: This advice is given without prejudice to any decision made on elements of the proposal regulated by us, as such a decision may take into account factors not considered at this time. We prefer all the technical information required for any SEPA consents to be submitted at the same time as the planning or similar application. However, we consider it to be at the applicant's commercial risk if any significant changes required during the regulatory stage necessitate a further planning application or similar application and/or neighbour notification or advertising. We have relied on the accuracy and completeness of the information supplied to us in providing the above advice and can take no responsibility for incorrect data or interpretation, or omissions, in such information. If we have not referred to a particular issue in our response, it should not be assumed that there is no impact associated with that issue. For planning applications, if you did not specifically request advice on flood risk, then advice will not have been provided on this issue. Further information on our consultation arrangements generally can be found on our website planning pages - www.sepa.org.uk/environment/land/planning/.

Appendix 1: Detailed scoping requirements

This appendix sets out our minimum information requirements and we would welcome receipt and discussion around these prior to formal submission to avoid delays. There may be opportunities to scope out some of the issues below depending on the site. Evidence must be provided in the submission to support why an issue is not relevant for this site to **avoid delay and potential objection.** If there is a significant length of time between scoping and application submission the developer should check whether our advice has changed.

1. Site layout

1.1 All maps must be based on an adequate scale with which to assess the information. This could range from OS 1: 10,000 to a more detailed scale in more sensitive locations. Each of the maps below must detail all proposed upgraded, temporary and permanent infrastructure. This includes all tracks, excavations, buildings, borrow pits, pipelines, cabling, site compounds, laydown areas, storage areas and any other built elements. Existing built infrastructure must be re-used or upgraded where possible. The layout should be designed to minimise the extent of new works on previously undisturbed ground. For example, a layout which makes use of lots of spurs or loops is unlikely to be acceptable. Cabling must be laid in ground already disturbed such as verges. A comparison of the environmental effects of alternative locations of infrastructure elements, such as tracks, may be required.

2. Engineering activities which may have adverse effects on the water environment

2.1 The site layout should be designed to minimise watercourse crossings and avoid other direct impacts on water features. The submission must include a map showing:

a) All proposed temporary or permanent infrastructure overlain with all lochs and watercourses.

b) A minimum buffer of 50m around each loch or watercourse. If this minimum buffer cannot be achieved each breach must be numbered on a plan with an associated photograph of the location, dimensions of the loch or watercourse and drawings of what is proposed in terms of engineering works. Measures should be put in place to protect any downstream sensitive receptors.

2.2 Further advice and our best practice guidance are available within the water engineering section of our website. Guidance on the design of water crossings can be found in our Construction of River Crossings Good Practice Guide.

2.3 Refer to our Flood Risk Standing Advice for advice on flood risk. Crossings must be designed to accommodate the 0.5% Annual Exceedance Probability flows (with an appropriate allowance for climate change), or information provided to justify smaller structures. If it is considered the development could result in an increased risk of flooding to a nearby receptor then a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) must be submitted. Our Technical flood risk guidance for stakeholders outlines the information we require to be submitted in an FRA. Please also refer to Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) Flood Risk Standing Advice for Engineering, Discharge and Impoundment Activities.

3. Disturbance and re-use of excavated peat and other carbon rich soils

3.1 Where proposals are on peatland or carbon rich soils the following should be submitted to address the requirements of NPF4 Policy 5:

a) layout plans showing all permanent and temporary infrastructure, with extent of excavation required, which clearly demonstrates how the mitigation hierarchy outlined in NPF4 has been applied. These plans should be overlaid on:
   i. peat depth survey (showing peat probe locations, colour coded using distinct colours for each depth category and annotated at a usable scale)
   ii. peat depth survey showing interpolated peat depths
   iii. peatland condition mapping
   iv. National Vegetation Classification survey (NVC) habitat mapping.
b) an outline Peat Management Plan (PMP).
c) an outline Habitat Management Plan (HMP)

Detailed advice

a) Development design in line with the mitigation hierarchy

3.2 In order to protect peatland and limit carbon emissions from carbon rich soils, the submission should demonstrate that proposals:

- Avoid peatland in near natural condition, as this has the lowest greenhouse gas emissions of all peatland condition categories;
- Minimise the total area and volume of peat disturbance. Clearly demonstrate how the infrastructure layout design has targeted areas where carbon rich soils are absent or the shallowest peat reasonably practicable. Avoid peat > 1m depth;
- Minimise impact on local hydrology; and
- Include adequate peat probing information to inform the site layout and demonstrate that the above has been achieved. As a minimum this should follow the requirements of the Peatland Survey – Guidance on Developments on Peatland (2017).

3.3 The Peatland Condition Assessment photographic guide lists the criteria for each condition category and illustrates how to identify each condition category. This should be used to identify peatland in near natural condition and can be helpful in identifying areas where peatland restoration could be carried out.

3.4 In line with the requirements of Policy 5d of NPF4, the development proposal should include plans to restore and/or enhance the site into a functioning peatland system capable of achieving carbon sequestration.

b) The outline PMP should also include:

- Information on peatland condition.
- Information demonstrating avoidance and minimisation of peat disturbance.
- Excavation volumes of acrotelmic, catotelmic and amorphous peat. These should include a contingency factor to consider variables such as bulking and uncertainties in the estimation of peat volumes.
- Proposals for temporary storage and handling.
- Reuse volumes in different elements of site reinstatement and restoration.

3.5 Handling and temporary storage of peat should be minimised. Catotelmic peat should be kept wet, covered by vegetated turves and re-used in its final location immediately after excavation. It is not suitable for use in verge reinstatement, re-profiling/ landscaping, spreading, mixing with mineral soils or use in bunds.

3.6 Disposal of peat is not acceptable. It should be clearly demonstrated that all peat disturbed by the development can be used in site reinstatement (making good areas which have been disturbed by the development) or peatland restoration (using disturbed peat for

habitat restoration or improvement works in areas not directly impacted by the development, which may need to include locations outwith the development boundary).

3.7 The faces of cut batters, especially in peat over 1m, should be sealed to reduce water loss of the surrounding peat habitats, which will lead to indirect loss of habitat and release of greenhouse gases. This may be achieved by compression of the peat to create an impermeable subsurface barrier, or where slope angle is sufficiently low, by revegetation of the cut surface.

c) The outline HMP should include:

- Proposals for reuse of disturbed peat in habitat restoration, if relevant.
- Details of restoration to compensate for the area of peatland habitat directly and indirectly impacted by the development.
- Outline proposals for peatland enhancement in other areas of the site.
- Monitoring proposals.

3.8 To support the principle of peat reuse in restoration the applicant should demonstrate that they have identified locations where the addition of excavated peat will enhance the wider site into a functional peatland system capable of achieving carbon sequestration. The following information is required:

- Location plan of the proposed peatland re-use restoration area(s), clearly showing the size of individual areas and the total area to be restored.
- Photographs, aerial imagery, or surveys to demonstrate that the area identified is appropriate for peat re-use and can support carbon sequestration. This should include consideration of an appropriate hydrological setting and baseline peatland condition.

3.9 In addition, if any proposed re-use restoration areas are outwith the ownership of the applicant, information should be provided to demonstrate agreement in principle with the landowner, including agreed timescales for commencement of the works, and proposed management measures to ensure the restored areas can be safeguarded in perpetuity as a peatland.

3.10 NatureScot's technical compendium of peatland restoration techniques provides a useful overview of the procedural and technical requirements for peatland restoration.

4. Disruption to GWDTE and existing groundwater abstractions

4.1 Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE) are protected under the Water Framework Directive. Excavations and other construction works can disrupt groundwater flow and impact on GWDTE and existing groundwater abstractions. The layout and design of the development must avoid impacts on such areas. A National Vegetation Classification survey which includes the following information should be submitted:

a) A map demonstrating all GWDTE and existing groundwater abstractions are outwith a 100m radius of all excavations shallower than 1m and outwith 250m of all excavations deeper than 1m and proposed groundwater abstractions. The survey needs to extend beyond the site boundary where the distances require it.
b) If the minimum buffers cannot be achieved, a detailed site specific qualitative and/or quantitative risk assessment will be required. Please refer to Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Development Proposals on Groundwater Abstractions and Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems for further advice and the minimum information we require to be submitted.

5. Forest removal and forest waste

5.1 If forestry is present on the site, we prefer a site layout which avoids large scale felling as this can result in large amounts of waste material and a peak in release of nutrients which can affect local water quality. The submission must include a map with the boundaries of where felling will take place and a description of what is proposed for this timber in accordance with Use of Trees Cleared to Facilitate Development on Afforested Land – Joint Guidance from SEPA, SNH and FCS.

6. Borrow pits

6.1 The following information should also be submitted for each borrow pit:

a) A map showing the location, size, depths and dimensions.
b) A map showing any stocks of rock, overburden, soils and temporary and permanent infrastructure including tracks, buildings, oil storage, pipes and drainage, overlain with all lochs and watercourses to a distance of 250m. You need to demonstrate that a site specific proportionate buffer can be achieved. On this map, a site-specific buffer must

be drawn around each loch or watercourse proportionate to the depth of excavations and at least 10m from access tracks.

c) Sections and plans detailing how restoration will be progressed including the phasing, profiles, depths and types of material to be used.

7. Pollution prevention and environmental management

7.1 A schedule of mitigation supported by the above site specific maps and plans must be submitted. These must include reference to best practice pollution prevention and construction techniques (for example, limiting the maximum area to be stripped of soils at any one time) and regulatory requirements. They should set out the daily responsibilities of Ecological Clerk of Works, how site inspections will be recorded and acted upon and proposals for a planning monitoring enforcement officer. Please refer to the Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs) and our water run-off from construction sites webpage for more information.

8. Life extension, repowering and decommissioning

8.1 Proposals for life extension, repowering and/or decommissioning must demonstrate accordance with SEPA Guidance on the life extension and decommissioning of onshore wind farms. Table 1 of the guidance provides a hierarchical framework of environmental impact based upon the principles of sustainable resource use, effective mitigation of environmental risk (including climate change) and optimisation of long term ecological restoration. The submission must demonstrate how the hierarchy of environmental impact has been applied, within the context of latest knowledge and best practice, including justification for not selecting lower impact options when life extension is not proposed.

8.2 The submission needs to state that there will be no discarding of materials that are likely to be classified as waste as any such proposals would be unacceptable under waste management licensing. Further guidance on this may be found in the document Is it waste - Understanding the definition of waste

Development Management and Strategic Road Safety
Roads Directorate

George House 36 North Hanover St Glasgow G1 2AD
Direct Line: 0141 272 7593, Fax: 0141 272 7350
lain.clement@transport.gov.scot

A23

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Jennifer Gessler
Energy Consents Unit
The Scottish Government
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU

econsents_admin@gov.scot

Your ref:
ECU00004997

Our ref:
GB01T19K05

Date:
24/01/2024

Dear Sirs,

ELECTRICITY ACT 1989

THE ELECTRICITY (APPLICATIONS FOR CONSENT) REGULATIONS 2017

REQUEST FOR SCOPING OPINION FOR PROPOSED SECTION 37 APPLICATION FOR HEATHLAND WIND FARM GRID CONNECTION

With reference to your recent correspondence on the above development, we acknowledge receipt of the Scoping Report (SR) prepared by Aecom in support of the above development.

This information has been passed to SYSTRA Limited (SYSTRA) for review in their capacity as Term Consultants to Transport Scotland – Roads Directorate. Based on the review undertaken, Transport Scotland would provide the following comments.

Proposed Development

We understand that the proposed Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection comprises 22km of wood pole 132kV overhead line (OHL), running between Wishaw Substation and Heathland Wind Farm, located approximately 10km southwest of West Calder and approximately 15km east of Wishaw. The proposed line of the OHL does not cross any trunk roads, with the nearest being the M8 which lies approximately 9km to the north at Junction 6 Newhouse.

Assessment of Environmental Impacts

Chapter 10 of the SR presents the proposed methodology for the assessment of Transport. This states that the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines, entitled Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement (July 2023) will be used in the assessment. Transport Scotland considers this appropriate.

We note that a Preferred Route Option has been identified and this has been used to determine the extents of the proposed study area, identified as being the A71 and A706.

Given the distance from, and strategic nature of, the nearest trunk road, Transport Scotland is satisfied that in this instance no assessment of the trunk road junction is required in relation to potential environmental effects associated with increased traffic.

Abnormal Loads Assessment

Chapter 10 makes no reference to the need for Abnormal Indivisible Loads to be used during the construction programme. In the event these are required, it should be noted that Transport Scotland will require to be satisfied that the size of loads proposed can negotiate the selected route and that their transportation will not have any detrimental effect on structures within the trunk road route path.

A full Abnormal Loads Assessment report should be provided with the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) that identifies key pinch points on the trunk road network. Swept path analysis should be undertaken and details provided with regard to any required changes to street furniture or structures along the route.

If AILs are not required, Transport Scotland is satisfied that the proposed OHL will not have any perceivable impact on the trunk road network, and no further information is required is this regard.

I trust that the above is satisfactory but should you wish to discuss any issues raised in greater detail, please do not hesitate to contact me or alternatively, Alan DeVenny at SYSTRA's Glasgow Office who can be contacted on 0141 343 9636.

Yours faithfully

Redacted

Iain Clement

Transport Scotland
Roads Directorate

cc Alan DeVenny – SYSTRA Ltd.

A25

From:	Snape S (Stewart)
To:	Econsents Admin
Cc:	Scottish Forestry Conservancy, Central Scotland
Subject:	RE: Request for Scoping Opinion – Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection
Date:	26 January 2024 10:59:25
Attachments:	image002.png image004.png

Dear Jennifer,

Thank you for the opportunity to inform this scoping request. I am pleased to note that the developer has identified the need for more detail regarding the predicted impact on existing woodland and trees, as identified in paragraph 12.3 of the scoping report:

"12.3 Likely Significant Effects The proposed route crosses areas of rough grazing and some areas of forestry and woodland to the south of Forth and to the northeast of Carluke. The proposed wood pole line would have a small footprint is not anticipated to have a significant effect on land use or agriculture. It is noted that there is a need to provide further detail with the application on tree felling proposals. Woodland impacts will be considered through the provision of a technical report to detail areas of proposed woodland removal, and the potential effects on existing forest design plans. The information provided will take account of The Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal
"

I would suggest that the applicant gives careful consideration to "The Scottish Government's Policy on Control of Woodland Removal" and in particular, if any ancient or semi-natural woodland is likely to be impacted, that a clear rationale explaining the chosen route option is provided and why alternative options were discounted. Also, where the development is routed through commercial forestry, adequate consideration must be given to the potential impact that felling may have on the remaining crop, i.e. felling must be planned such that windfirm edges are secured. Such consideration is likely to mean that felling corridors extend beyond the minimum tolerance required for powerline buffer zones. I would further recommend that an experienced commercial forest management company is consulted on any proposals to route the line through or adjacent to commercial forestry.

Kind regards
Stewart Snape

Stewart Snape MICFor, MRSB
Regulations and Development Manager
Scottish Forestry
Central Scotland Conservancy | Bothwell House | Hamilton Business Park| Caird Park | Hamilton | ML3 0QA
stewart.snape@forestry.gov.scot

Website: forestry.gov.scot

BRAVE values are the roots that underpin Scottish Forestry, to create a workplace where our staff, and the people we work with, feel valued, supported and respected.

Be professional, **R**espect others, **A**ct with honesty and integrity, **V**alue teamwork and collaboration and **E**ncourage innovation and creativity.

Scottish Forestry / Coilltearachd na h-Alba

Scottish Forestry is the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulation.

From: Jennifer Gessler <Jennifer.Gessler@gov.scot>
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:07 PM
Subject: Request for Scoping Opinion – Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection

Dear Consultee,

ELECTRICITY ACT 1989
THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

REQUEST FOR SCOPING OPINION FOR PROPOSED SECTION 37 APPLICATION FOR HEATHLAND WIND FARM GRID CONNECTION

On 06 December 2023, SP Transmission Plc (the Applicant) submitted a request for a scoping opinion from the Scottish Ministers for the proposed section 37 application for the Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection. The proposed development is for an overhead line (OHL) at 132 kV, supported by wooden poles (15 metres in height) connecting Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation, located in the planning authority areas of North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council, in line with regulation 12 of The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

Under regulation 12, Scottish Ministers are required to provide a scoping opinion outlining the information they consider should be included in the EIA report. Ministers are also required to consult the relevant consultation bodies and any other interested party which is likely to have an interest in the proposed development by reason of its specific environmental responsibilities or local and regional competencies.

The scoping report and supporting information can be viewed at the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit website www.energyconsents.scot by:

- clicking on ***Search*** tab; then,
- clicking on ***Simple Search*** tab; then,
- typing **Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection** into ***Search by Project Name*** box then clicking on ***Go***;
- then clicking on **ECU00004997** and then click on ***Documents*** tab.

To allow Scottish Ministers to provide a comprehensive scoping opinion, we ask that you review the scoping report and advise on the scope of the environmental impact assessment for this proposal. Please advise if there are any further matters you would like Ministers to highlight for consideration and inclusion in the assessment, particularly site-specific information.

I would be grateful for your comments by **26 January 2024.** Please note that reminders will not be issued, therefore if we have not received any comments from you, nor a request for an extension to this date, we will assume that you have no comments to make.

Please send your response (in PDF format if possible) to Econsents_Admin@gov.scot. (please note the underscore _ between Econsents and Admin), referencing the project name and ECU number.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Gessler | Case Officer | Onshore Electricity, Strategy and Consents
Directorate for Energy and Climate Change
Scottish Government | 5 Atlantic Quay | 150 Broomielaw | Glasgow | G2 8LU
': Mobile: 07393 248 507| ✉: jennifer.gessler@gov.scot
To view our current casework please visit www.energyconsents.scot
To read the Energy Consents Unit's privacy notice on how personal information is used, please visit http://www.energyconsents.scot/Documentation.aspx

Advanced notice of upcoming leave:
25-26 December 2023
1-8 January 2024

A28

Wednesday, 03 January 2024

Local Planner
Energy Consents Unit
5 Atlantic Quay
Glasgow
G2 8LU

Development Operations
The Bridge
Buchanan Gate Business Park
Cumbernauld Road
Stepps
Glasgow
G33 6FB

Development Operations
Freephone Number - 0800 3890379
E-Mail - DevelopmentOperations@scottishwater.co.uk
www.scottishwater.co.uk
Follow Us

Dear Customer,

Heathland Wind Farm Grid Connection, Wishaw Substation West Calder, North Lanarkshire, ML7 5DT
Planning Ref: ECU00004997
Our Ref: DSCAS-0100897-444
Proposal: new wood pole 132 kilovolt (kV) overhead line (OHL) will connect Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation. Heathland Wind Farm is located approximately 10 km southwest of West Calder, West Lothian and approximately 15 km east of Wishaw, North Lanarkshire with the grid connection extending to the east to Wishaw Substation located within Wishaw.

Please quote our reference in all future correspondence

Audit of Proposal

Scottish Water has no objection to this planning application; however, the applicant should be aware that this does not confirm that the proposed development can currently be serviced. Please read the following carefully as there may be further action required. Scottish Water would advise the following:

Drinking Water Protected Areas

A review of our records indicates that 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 activity.

Surface Water

For reasons of sustainability and to protect our customers from potential future sewer flooding, Scottish Water will not accept any surface water connections into our combined sewer system.

There may be limited exceptional circumstances where we would allow such a connection for brownfield sites only, however this will require significant justification from the customer taking account of various factors including legal, physical, and technical challenges.

In order to avoid costs and delays where a surface water discharge to our combined sewer system is anticipated, the developer should contact Scottish Water at the earliest opportunity with strong evidence to support the intended drainage plan prior to making a connection request. We will assess this evidence in a robust manner and provide a decision that reflects the best option from environmental and customer perspectives.

General notes:

- Scottish Water asset plans can be obtained from our appointed asset plan providers:
    - Site Investigation Services (UK) Ltd
    - Tel: 0333 123 1223
    - Email: sw@sisplan.co.uk
    - www.sisplan.co.uk

I trust the above is acceptable however if you require any further information regarding this matter please contact me on **0800 389 0379** or via the e-mail address below or at planningconsultations@scottishwater.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Kerr.
Development Services Analyst
PlanningConsultations@scottishwater.co.uk

Scottish Water Disclaimer:

"It is important to note that the information on any such plan provided on Scottish Water's infrastructure, is for indicative purposes only and its accuracy cannot be relied upon. When the exact location and the nature of the infrastructure on the plan is a material requirement then you should undertake an appropriate site investigation to confirm its actual position in the ground and to determine if it is suitable for its intended purpose. By using the plan you agree that Scottish Water will not be liable for any loss, damage or costs caused by relying upon it or from carrying out any such site investigation."

A30

The Scottish Government
Energy Consents Unit
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU

Network Rail
Town Planning
151 St Vincent Street
Glasgow
G2 5NW

Martin Henderson
Town Planning Technician

E-Mail:
TownPlanningScotland@networkrail.co.uk

Planning reference: ECU00004997
Case Officer: Jennifer Gessler

Network Rail ref: 412 2023
11/01/2024

Dear Ms Gessler,

THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017
REQUEST FOR SCOPING OPINION FOR PROPOSED SECTION 37 APPLICATION FOR HEATHLAND WIND FARM GRID CONNECTION

Thank you for consulting Network Rail regarding the above development.

We would strongly suggest that reference to the issues below are included in the Scoping Opinion to ensure that potential impacts of both the construction and completed development on the current and future safe and efficient operation of the railway are assessed:

- A Traffic Assessment should be included to assess the effects of construction traffic on existing traffic flows and the public road network. Preferred construction traffic routes should be indicated. This will enable Network Rail to assess the possible impacts where/if the traffic crosses over/under our infrastructure and the suitability of these crossings.

- Details of proposed construction and engineering works in the vicinity of the railway line. Any works over/adjacent to the railway corridor will be subject to further discussion and agreement with Network Rail.

Yours sincerely

Redacted

Martin Henderson
Town Planning Technician