

# **Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275kV Connection**

## **Environmental Impact Assessment**

### **Volume 4 | Appendix 11.3**

#### **Woodland Planting Management Strategy**

**April 2022**



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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Technical Appendix (TA) presents information relevant to the Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275kV Connection. It should be read in conjunction with the **Volume 2 – EIA Report** specifically **Chapter 11: Forestry**, for full details of the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2 Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (the Applicant) who, operating and known as Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), own, operate and develop the high voltage electricity transmission system in the north of Scotland and remote islands. Due to the growth in renewable electricity generation in the north and north-east of Scotland, upgrade of the transmission network is required in order to provide the necessary increase in transmission capacity.
- 1.1.3 The Applicant is proposing to apply for consent under section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 to construct and operate a 13.3 kilometre (km) double circuit 275 kV overhead line (OHL), supported by lattice steel towers between a proposed substation at Creag Dhubh to the existing Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) 275 kV OHL that runs from Dalmally to Inverarnan, near Succoth Glen, connecting via a Tie-In connection (the 'Proposed Development'). The location of the Proposed Development is shown in **Figure 1.1: Location Plan and Overview (EIAR Volume 3a)**.
- 1.1.4 As detailed in **Volume 2 – EIA Report - Chapter 11: Forestry**, the proposed Development impacts a total area of 64.17 ha of woodland. This area has been identified as the maximum area for woodland removal for the Development. Reference to **Volume 4 – Technical Appendix 11.2 – Native Woodland Management Strategy**, demonstrates that a greater area of ancient semi-natural and native woodland retention may be achievable prior to the Development's construction phase. This in-turn would reduce the total area of woodland removal required for the Development. At this stage it is anticipated that any increase in woodland retention area would be nominal.
- 1.1.5 In-line with the Applicant's commitment to achieve no net loss of woodland for new Development Projects, the area of woodland removal for the Development, Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275kV Connection will be replanted through the application of this Woodland Planting Management Strategy.

## 2 Purpose of the Strategy

- 2.1.1 This report explains the management strategy that will be undertaken by the Applicant prior to and during the Development construction phase, to implement the replanting of the total area of woodland removed.

## 3 Woodland Planting Management Constraint

- 3.1.1 The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (ESQCR, 2002)<sup>1</sup> specify safety standards to protect the general public and consumers from danger of overhead electricity powerlines. These standards outline minimum safety clearances and the Distribution Network Operator's (DNO's) duty to maintain these safety clearances.
- 3.1.2 The regulations also contain requirements on quality and continuity of electricity supply to ensure an efficient and economic service to customers and consumers.

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<sup>1</sup> Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (ESQCR, 2002) URL: [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2665/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2665/contents/made).

- 3.1.3 Further legislation arrived in 2006 with the ESQCR, 2006; Amendment<sup>2</sup>, which extended the above duties of the DNO to make their overhead powerlines resilient to the effect of major storms. This includes reducing the risk of falling trees and branch wood of hitting the electricity network.
- 3.1.4 The result of this legislation is that the DNOs in addition to maintaining the vegetation to minimum safety clearances, now must seek to achieve further clearances for trees which may be affected by storm weather conditions.
- 3.1.5 Due to the requirements of the ESQCR it is generally not feasible to replant woodland within the operational areas of the Development. Therefore, in order to replant the woodland removal area of the Development, 'off-site'<sup>3</sup> woodland planting must be achieved.

## 4 Compensatory Planting Scheme

- 4.1.1 The Applicant will implement the required woodland planting through the management of a Compensatory Planting Scheme. This management process is based on liaising and securing agreements with landowners that are located within the same Local Authority area as the Development for woodland planting of suitable bare land by the Applicant.
- 4.1.2 The Applicant will continue to undertake liaison with,
- Landowners who own the land where the proposed Development is to be located.
  - 'Not for Profit' Organisations e.g. Community Trusts, who own or have rights to areas of land and wish to plant woodland.
  - Landowners within the Local Authority area of the proposed Development, who wish to plant woodland.
- 4.1.3 Through liaison with these landowners, areas of bare land suitable for woodland planting will be identified as part of a formal Compensatory Planting Scheme agreement with the Applicant. The total area of bare land secured for woodland planting would meet the total area of woodland removal of the Development.
- 4.1.4 On agreement with the landowner a formal woodland planting scheme design will be produced in-line with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)<sup>4</sup> guidance and submitted to Scottish Forestry<sup>5</sup> for consultation and approval.
- 4.1.5 Following completion of the approval process, the Applicant will undertake the woodland planting as per the scheme design and will maintain the newly planted area for the required period in-line with forestry industry best practice to ensure successful woodland establishment is achieved.

## 5 Reporting

- 5.1.1 After planting scheme approval is received from Scottish Forestry, the Applicant will formally report to the Planning Authority that the required woodland planting area has been achieved to meet the total woodland removal area of the Development and has secured no net loss of woodland.

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<sup>2</sup> Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity (Amendment) Regulations 2006 (ESQCR, 2006) URL: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1521/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1521/made).

<sup>3</sup> 'off-site' meaning alternative bare land areas suitable for woodland planting out-with the Development's operational area.

<sup>4</sup> The UK Forestry Standard 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (2017); The Governments' approach to sustainable forestry URL: [The UK Forestry Standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://The UK Forestry Standard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)).

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Forestry - the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulations. URL: [www.forestry.gov.scot](http://www.forestry.gov.scot).