

Dunoon to Loch Long 132 kV OHL Rebuild
Environmental Impact Assessment
Volume 4 | Technical Appendix

Appendix 12.4 - Compensatory Planting
Management Strategy

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1 Introduction

This Appendix presents information relevant to the Dunoon to Loch Long 132 kV Overhead Line (OHL) Rebuild (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development'). It should be read in conjunction with **Chapter 3: Description of the Proposed Development** and **Chapter 12: Forestry** of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report. The location and layout of the Proposed Development are shown in **Figure 1.1 Site Location** and **Figure 3.1 Site Layout** of the EIA Report.

As detailed in **Chapter 12: Forestry**, the Proposed Development impacts a total area of 84.85 ha of forestry and woodland. This area has been identified as the maximum area for woodland removal for the Proposed Development. **Appendix 12.4 Native Woodland Management Strategy** demonstrates that a greater area of ancient semi-natural and native woodland retention may be achievable prior to the Proposed Development's construction phase. This in-turn would reduce the total area of woodland removal required for the Proposed Development. At this stage it is anticipated that any increase in woodland retention area would be nominal.

In accordance with the Applicant's commitment to achieve no net loss of woodland for new Development Projects, the area of woodland removal for the Proposed Development will be replanted through the application of this Compensatory Planting Management Strategy.

2 Purpose of the Strategy

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

The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (ESQCR, 2002)¹ 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.

The regulations also contain requirements on quality and continuity of electricity supply to ensure an efficient and economic service to customers and consumers.

Further legislation arrived in 2006 with the ESQCR, 2006; Amendment², 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 trees and branches hitting the electricity network.

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.

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

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

² Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity (Amendment) Regulations 2006 (ESQCR, 2006) URL: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1521/made

of the Development, 'off-site'³ woodland planting must be achieved.

4 Compensatory Planting Scheme

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 Proposed Development, or as agreed with respective stakeholders, for woodland planting of suitable bare land by the Applicant.

The Applicant is and 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.

Through liaison with these landowners, areas of bare land suitable for woodland planting will be identified and whereby they would enter into a 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 Proposed Development.

On agreement with the landowner a formal woodland planting scheme design will be produced and submitted to Scottish Forestry⁴ for consultation and approval.

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

After the 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 Proposed Development and has secured no net loss of woodland.

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

⁴ Scottish Forestry - the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulations. URL: www.forestry.gov.scot