Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks
TRANSMISSION

Dunoon to Loch Long 132kV OHL Rebuild

Environmental Impact Assessment

Volume 4 | Technical Appendix

Appendix 4.3 – Northern Alignment Scoping Consultation

From: [redacted]
Sent: 05 May 2022 09:11
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: 220316 - Scoping - APP to ECU providing CC details and update on scoping documents - Dunoon to Loch Long 132kV OHL Rebuild

Hi [redacted],

As we have progress the alignment for the Dunoon project ahead of the Section 37 submission there have been some significant challenges identified on the higher mountainous terrain in the north section. It is also encompassed on us to provide proposal which is safe to construct, and safe to maintain and operate.

Through early contractor engagement the requirement for extensive use of the helicopters in the north section was quickly identified, however to safely access the tower support construction sites for other plant and operatives, formation of accesses would still be required, which is a significant challenge on the steep rocky ground. These access solutions required to facilitate construction, along with the request to provide more robust access for ongoing maintenance by our colleagues in Transmission Operations may present potential consenting challenges due the works required to form (and potentially retain) these upland accesses.

During a visit to review the access routes proposed by our contractor in this section, an alternative alignment option was conceived which would cross the existing overhead line (OHL) twice, this would deliver a replacement OHL much lower on the hill with the replacement OHL largely following and being built off an existing upgraded track, with shorter sections of new access track required to each tower site. Recent forestry works on the hill beneath the existing OHL have led to this track being upgraded to facilitate the feeling works and extraction of the timber. This option to build the replacement OHL off this forestry track (on Forestry Land Scotland land) appears to offer many advantages, although will likely have increased forestry impacts which will be considered during the EIA. The alternative alignment for the replacement line in this section reduces the altitude of the replacement OHL on the hill offering opportunity to reduce visual impact within the National Park, (although need for consideration of cumulative impacts with the access and forestry identified). I have already engaged with the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park regarding this alternative option, ahead of receiving the revised EIA Scoping Route plan. Please see attached response based on a conceptual alignment within the route which is now being refined (emailed images were lost in their reply – I can forward this by separate email to limit file size issues.)

During the Routeing process, crossing the overhead line was avoided due to the associated complexity of doing so (except for nodal points on flatter areas at Glen Finart and Strath Eachaig, where temporary bypasses etc could make this more feasible if there was a route preference to cross the existing OHL). This alterative replacement OHL option crossing the existing line twice still avoids crossing of larger sections of native habitat woodland when dropping into Glen Finart which scored this option down during the route selection process, and also meets the engineering preference to build the replacement OHL off the north of the existing Loch Long crossing (to build the new line to the south required a much tighter angle to be formed, itself posing engineering challenges.) The replacement alignment through Glen Finart is likely to be proposed on the existing alignment with temporary diversion in place to facilitate this, minimising impacts of the replacement OHL in this area.

This new proposed alignment option is outwith the identified route area presented with our Request for Scoping Report - please see updated figure attached. It is highlighted this alternative OHL Route doesn't alter the factors proposed for consideration in the EIA Scoping report, however will alter the extent and balance of impacts considered within the EIA, as described briefly above. We have also increased the area of the Route shown on the plan around Pucks Glen, as to minimise tree impact here, we are looking at slightly crossing the existing alignment (temporary OHL bypass already identified to route replacement OHL through constrained area). Please can you reissue the revised Route plan to consultees, highlighting that it doesn't significantly change the factors being considered within our EIA Scoping Request Report. The only change identified so far being the additional view point requested by LL&TNP, which we have actioned and caught within current planned surveys.

As I am sure you appreciate there is now a lot of work to do to catch up with program to consider this alternative, with a subsequent delay anticipated on the Section 37 application date. We anticipate that submission will now be in late August/ September, although risk it may be delayed further. I am happy for any further meeting to explain the proposed change further, and illustrate the challenges the rebuild of this line poses. Please note I will be on leave from this afternoon, returning next Wednesday.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Consents and Environment Manager

[redacted]

SSE, Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1 1SN

www.ssen.co.uk

Date Saved: 04/05/2022

Document Path: \\uk.wspgroup.com\Central Data\Projects\70065799_0063 - Figure 2.1 A - Overhead Line Route.mxd

Scoping Updated Sept 2021\LT193_DW_70065799_0063 - LT193 Dunoon to Whistlefield\05 Models and Drawings\MXDs\

Key

- Existing Dunoon Substation
- Tower 15 on Whistlefield - Dunoon 132kV OHL
- Existing OHL
- Proposed OHL Route
- Alternative Proposed OHL Route

N

0 2 4 km

Client: Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks

Project: LT193 Dunoon to Whistlefield 132kV OHL Rebuild

Title: Figure 2.1 A Overhead Line Route

Date:	04 May 2022			Scale:	60,000 @ A3
Drawn:	MAL	Checked:	IM	Approved:	SM