

APPENDIX 4.4 - SCOPING MATRIX

Appendix 4.4: Scoping Matrix

Abbreviations

BT	British Telecom
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HIAL	Highlands and Islands Airports Limited
JRC	Joint Radio Company
MD-SEDD	Marine Directorate – Science Evidence Data and Digital
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NDSFB	Northern District Salmon Fisheries Board
NS	NatureScot
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
ScW	ScotWays
SF	Scottish Forestry
SW	Scottish Water
THC	The Highland Council
TS	Transport Scotland

Table 1 – Scoping Matrix

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
001	Scoping Consultations	Scottish Ministers expect the EIA Report which will accompany the application for the Proposed Development to consider in full all consultation responses.	ECU - 01	6	Volume 1 – All Chapters	All consultation responses received are summarised within this Scoping Matrix and addressed throughout the EIA Report, where relevant.
002	Scoping Consultations	Scottish Ministers are broadly content with the EIA set out in the Scoping Report. In addition to the consultation responses, Ministers wish to provide comments with regards to the scope of the EIA report. The Applicant should note and address each matter.	ECU - 02	6	Volume 1 – All Chapters	This has been noted, and all consultation responses received are summarised within this Scoping Matrix and addressed throughout the EIA Report, where relevant.
003	Route Selection	Scottish Ministers request that justification of Route Selection is included in the EIA Report.	ECU - 03	6	Volume 1 – Chapter 2 – The Routeing Process and Alternatives	The noted chapter sets out the alternative options considered and discusses the reasons for identifying the proposed alignment and design solution.
004	Scoping Consultations	Scottish Ministers note the detailed comments provided by RSPB Scotland and NatureScot and agree with all their requests.	ECU - 04	6	Volume 1 – All Chapters	RSPB Scotland and NatureScot consultation responses received are summarised within this Scoping Matrix and addressed throughout the EIA Report, where relevant.
005	Scottish Water Assets	Scottish Ministers request that the Applicant contacts Scottish Water and makes further enquiries to confirm	ECU - 05	6	Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	Further consultation with Scottish Water was not required as Scottish Water's scoping response provided all the required information. This along with published data sets was sufficient for the

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		whether there are 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.				assessment. Assessments of potential impacts on the water environment is included in the noted chapter.
006	Private Water Supplies	Scottish Ministers request that the Applicant 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 Applicant should provide an assessment of the potential impacts, risks and any mitigation which would be provided.	ECU - 06	6	Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	Assessment of potential impacts to private water supplies is included in the noted chapter.
007	MD-SEDD EIA Guidance	Scottish Ministers reference Marine Directorate – Science Evidence Data and Digital (MD-SEDD), who provide generic scoping guidelines and standing advice for OHL development which outline how fish populations can be impacted during construction, operation and decommissioning. The guidelines inform developers as to what should be considered during the EIA Process. The standing advice outlines	ECU- 07	7	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	MD-SEDD standing advice and guidance has been noted and fisheries interests discussed where appropriate in Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology , with watercourses also discussed in Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water MD-SEDD checklist completed and included with application.

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		what information, relating to freshwater and diadromous fish and fisheries, is expected in the EIA report. A checklist is provided to accompany submission.				
008	Impacts on Fish Populations	Scottish Ministers outline that in addition to identifying the main watercourses and waterbodies within and downstream of the proposed development area, developers should identify and consider any areas of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) where fish are a qualifying feature and proposed felling operations particularly in acid sensitive areas.	ECU - 08	7	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	MD-SEDD standing advice and guidance has been noted and fisheries interests discussed where appropriate in Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology , with watercourses also discussed in Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water .
009	Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment (PLHRA)	Scottish Ministers outline that where there is a demonstrable requirement for peat landslide hazard risk assessment (PLHRA), the assessment should be undertaken as part of the EIA process.	ECU - 09	7	Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	A PLHRA has been carried out as part of the EIA Report and is included in Volume 4 - Appendix 9.1: PLHRA to the noted chapter.
010	Landscape and Visual Impact – Visualisations	Scottish Ministers advise that Viewpoints should be prepared to inform and support the LVIA and must be agreed in advance with THC and NS.	ECU - 10	7	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 - Landscape and Visual	The noted chapter identifies and describes the visualisation that will be prepared to inform and support the LVIA. The visualisations are included as Volume 3a – Visualisations (to NatureScot standards) and Volume 3b - Visualisation (to THC standards) .

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011	Alternatives	Scottish Ministers expect the Applicant to carry out adequate pre-application consultation and demonstrate the alternatives considered for the Proposed Development prior to arriving at the final design. The EIA Report should include a description of the main alternatives and a discussion of the main reasons for selection of the chosen option, including comparison of environmental effects.	ECU - 11	7 - 8	Volume 1 - Chapter 2 - The Routeing Process and Alternatives	The noted chapter sets out the alternative options considered and discusses the reasons for identifying a proposed alignment and design solution. Details of pre-application consultation are included in Volume 1 - Chapter 4 - Scope and Consultation , and also Volume 4 – Appendix 4.1 – Public Consultation Report .
012	Further Consultation	Scottish 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, finalisation of viewpoints, cultural heritage, cumulative assessments, and request that they are kept informed of relevant discussions.	ECU - 12	8	Volume 1 - Chapter 4 - Scope and Consultation	This has been noted. The Energy Consents Unit have been kept informed of any further discussions with consultees.
013	Mitigation	Scottish Ministers outlined that the mitigation measures suggested for any significant environmental impact identified should be presented as a conclusion to each chapter. The Applicant is also asked to provide a	ECU - 13	8	Volume 1 – Technical Chapters (6 – 13)	Mitigation measures are proposed at the end of each technical chapter (Chapter 6 – 13). Volume 1 - Chapter 3 - The Proposed Development also includes some general mitigation measures which apply across the Proposed Development.

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		consolidated schedule of all mitigation measures presented in the EIA Report in tabular form.				A consolidated Schedule of Mitigation is also presented as Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Schedule of Mitigation of the EIA Report in tabular form.
014	Further Consultation	It is acknowledged by Scottish Ministers that the EIA process is iterative and further engagement between relevant parties may be required to refine the design of the Proposed Development. Scottish Ministers request they are kept informed of on-going discussions in relation to this.	ECU - 14	8	Volume 1 - Chapter 4 - Scope and Consultation	This has been noted. The Energy Consents Unit have been kept informed of any further discussions with consultees.
015	ECU Consultation	The Applicant is encouraged to engage with the ECU at the pre-application stage and before proposals reach design freeze.	ECU - 15	8	Volume 1 - Chapter 4: Scope and Consultation	<p>The Applicant has engaged with the ECU during the pre-application stages, as set out within the noted chapter.</p> <p>A Gate Check 1 Report was issued to the ECU and key stakeholders, prior to submission of the section 37 application. The purpose of the Gate Check 1 Report is to outline consultations with statutory and non-statutory consultees, engagement with the local community and how matters raised during the scoping process have been dealt with in the EIA Report.</p> <p>A Gate Check 2 call was held on 29th October 2024 between the ECU and representatives of the Applicant. Administrative requirements and timing of the submission were discussed.</p>

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016	Scoping Matrix	When finalising the EIA Report, the Applicant is asked to provide a summary in tabular form of where within the EIA Report each of the specific matters raised in the Scoping Opinion have been addressed.	ECU - 16	9	Volume 4 - Appendix 4.4: Scoping Matrix	This Scoping Matrix addresses the noted request.
017	Upload to ECU Portal	To facilitate uploading to the ECU Portal, the Applicant is reminded that the EIA report and its associated documentation should be divided into appropriately named separate files of sizes no more than 10 megabytes (MB).	ECU - 17	9	Full EIA Report	All parts of this EIA Report have been divided into appropriately named separate files of sizes no more than 10 MBs for upload to ECU Portal.
018	Radio Network	The Project should not cause interference to BT's current and presently planned radio network.	BT - 01	11	N/A	This has been noted.
019	Designated Historic Sites	HES can confirm that there are no designated assets within their remit in the near surrounding area which would be likely to have significant visibility of the proposed development and are consequently satisfied that significant effects on the setting of assets within HES' remit are unlikely. Therefore, HES agree that further detailed assessment is not required for HES' specific historic	HES - 01	12-13	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	This has been noted and outlined in the noted chapter and Volume 1 – Chapter 10 - Cultural Heritage .

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		environment remit at the national level and can be scoped out of the EIA Report.				
020	Airport	At the given position and height, the development would not infringe the safeguarding criteria and operation of Wick Airport. Any variation of the parameters, HIAL will require to be further consulted.	HIAL - 01	14	N/A	This has been noted.
021	Location of Development	RSPB do not think that this is an appropriate location for an OHL due to the direct and indirect impacts on multiple designated sites. There are other options available for siting this OHL and the Applicant needs to fully justify the decision and provide appropriate level of information within the EIA to allow assessment of the predicted impacts.	RSPB - 01	15	Volume 1 – Chapter 2 – The Routeing Process and Alternatives.	The noted chapter sets out the alternative options considered and discusses the reasons for identifying the proposed alignment and design solution.
022	Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands Protected Sites	The proposed OHL passes through the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA, SAC and Ramsar and the West Halladale SSSI; all designated for internationally and nationally important populations of birds and habitats. The EIA must include sufficient information	RPSB - 02	16	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	The potential direct and indirect impacts on the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar and SPA are discussed within the noted chapters. A Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), including an Appropriate Assessment, for the

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		to inform an Appropriate Assessment by the competent authority.				<p>Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar is presented in Volume 4 - Appendix 7.6.</p> <p>A Shadow HRA, including an Appropriate Assessment, for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA is presented in Volume 4 - Appendix 8.4.</p>
023	Alternatives	Full justification of the route selection process should be included within the EIA and report to inform the HRA.	RPSB - 03	16	Volume 1 – Chapter 2 – The Routeing Process and Alternatives.	The noted chapter sets out the alternative options considered and discusses the reasons for identifying the proposed alignment and design solution.
024	Bird Survey Validity	RSPB do not agree that the current surveys are sufficient for determining impact. Most ornithological surveys were carried out between October 2018 and August 2019 which are now out of date. Although these surveys can be used for context in the EIAR, as well as information gained from other developments, they cannot be used to inform this development itself. RSPB also did not agree that these surveys were sufficient at the time [of the 2020 scoping] ¹ and justification is required if only using this data. The only surveys	RPSB - 04	17	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	A discussion on the datasets used to inform the ornithological impact assessment is set out in the noted chapter.

¹ A Scoping Report was submitted to the Scottish Ministers by the Applicant in April 2020 for an OHL connection supported by trident-H wood pole

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		within date are scarce breeding bird surveys conducted between Amay and August 2022. RSPB welcome this inclusion but consider it insufficient in scope as they neither cover the one full year recommended by Naturescot guidance nor do they cover the full breeding seasons for many of the SPA species.				
025	Wintering Bird Surveys	RSPB recommend including wintering bird surveys, as although wintering birds are not SPA qualifying species, including these surveys is considered best practice and the site may be important for wintering species such as Schedule 1 Hen Harrier and may be on commuting and migration routes for geese and swan species.	RPSB - 05	18	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	A discussion on the datasets used to inform the ornithological impact assessment is set out in the noted chapter.
026	White-tailed Eagle and Curlew Surveys	RSPB hold records of Schedule 1 protected White-tailed Eagle and Red listed bird of concern Curlew in the vicinity of the proposed development, and these should be included in any surveys.	RPSB - 06	18	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	A data request from the RSPB was reviewed to inform the assessment, as discussed in the noted chapter.

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027	Peat Depth and Habitat Surveys	Peat depth and habitat surveys should be undertaken along the preferred route to inform the final alignment deviation choices.	RPSB - 07	18	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 1 – Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	Results of habitat surveys and assessment of likely impacts on ecological receptors are set out in the noted ecology chapter. Full results are included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.3 - Habitat Survey Results and shown on Volume 2 – Figure 7.7 - Habitat Survey Results . A peat probing campaign has been carried out across the project to establish peat depths and inform siting of infrastructure, as well as appropriate mitigation, as discussed in the noted chapter and its supporting appendices.
028	Ornithology Impact Assessment	RSPB noted that surveys should allow for analysis of negative impacts associated with both construction and operation of OHLs, including collision, displacement, habitat loss and disturbance. This is needed to provide up-to-date information on bird disruption and activity to assess likely effects and inform required mitigation and compensation.	RPSB - 08	18	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	The noted chapter includes an assessment of the Proposed Development on ornithology and suggests appropriate mitigation to avoid or reduce adverse effects, where required.
029	Information to be included in the EIA Report (Ornithology)	RSPB recommend the following is provided within the EIA Report to demonstrate the survey data are adequate, robust and accurate:	RPSB - 09	18	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	Details of the surveys are included in the noted chapter, along with Volume 4 - Appendix 8.1 - Ornithology Technical Report .

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Full information on the VP work undertaken including dates, times and weather conditions. b. Maps showing VP locations that also denote viewsheds and OHL locations including steel lattice towers and ancillary development. c. Maps showing survey areas for breeding bird and wintering bird surveys. d. Maps showing diver, wader, Common Scoter and raptor breeding, foraging and roosting areas, and commuting routes. 				Survey areas and key results are included on the relevant Figures within Volume 2 of the EIA Report, with additional confidential results Figures included within Volume 4 - Appendix 8.2 Ornithology Confidential Annex and Volume 4 - Appendix 8.3 - Strathy North Wind Farm Ornithology Summary Report (Confidential) .
030	Survey Coverage	The surveys should cover all of the proposed route of the OHL including ancillary structures and existing and proposed new access tracks.	RPSB - 10	19	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	Details of the survey areas are included in the noted chapter, and set out in Volume 4 - Appendix 8.1 - Ornithology Technical Report and illustrated on the supporting Chapter 8 Figures included in Volume 2 of the EIA Report.
031	Developments to be included in the cumulative assessment	Developments considered in Table 3.1 [of the Scoping Report] are insufficient in scope as it does not include all relevant developments at the	RPSB - 11	19	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	Details of the developments included in the assessment of cumulative effects are set out in the noted chapter.

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		appropriate level. It should include the existing Strathy North Grid Connection and any existing 33 kV and 11 kV distribution network infrastructure.				Developments included in the assessment are considered to be proportionate to the scale of the Proposed Development.
032	Cumulative Impacts on SPA and NHZ species	Due to the likely significant effect of this development on the SPA, impacts should be assessed for the SPA populations as well as the NHZ level. A robust cumulative assessment of collision risk, disturbance, displacement and barrier effects should take account of all operational, consented and proposed wind energy schemes and their associated infrastructure that could impact on bird populations of both the relevant NHZ and Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA.	RPSB - 12	19	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	Potential cumulative effects on important ornithological features are considered in the noted chapter. Where a potential cumulative effect was identified, this was assessed against the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA population, as this was considered to be the most appropriate scale for the relevant IOFs; as the NHZ populations are larger than the SPA, and hence potential effects would affect a smaller proportion of the NHZ population compared with the SPA population, this is considered to be a suitable approach.
033	Cumulative Displacement Impacts	The cumulative disturbance and displacement impact on birds from the increase in traffic and noise from the additional use of the existing wind farm access tracks during construction and maintenance of this OHL should be included. Any identified impacts should be assessed against the relevant SPA and NHZ populations.	RPSB - 13	19	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	Potential cumulative effects on important ornithological features are considered in the noted chapter.

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034	In-combination effect of other projects	The in-combination effect of other relevant plans or projects within the wider NHZ5 (i.e the Sutherland spaceport and Limekiln and Creag Riabhach OHLs) should be considered.	RPSB - 14	19	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	<p>Details of the developments included in the assessment of cumulative effects are set out in the noted chapter.</p> <p>Developments included in the assessment are considered to be proportionate to the scale of the Proposed Development.</p>
035	Peat Survey	A peat depth survey should be undertaken to minimise impacts on peat by helping to avoid deeper than 0.5 m. Horizontal directional drilling through bedrock should be considered for sensitive peatland habitats that cannot be avoided.	RPSB - 15	20	Volume 1 – Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	A peat probing campaign has been carried out across the project to establish peat depths and appropriate mitigation as set out in the noted chapter and in Volume 4 – Appendix 9.1: PLHRA and Appendix 9.2 – Outline Peat Management Plan (PMP) .
036	Climate Change	RSPB do not agree that an assessment of climate change has been scoped out of the EIA assessment.	RPSB - 16	20	Throughout the EIA	Climate change is considered throughout the EIA Report, where relevant.
037	Candidate World Heritage Site (WHS)	The site overlaps with the candidate Flow Country World Heritage Site (WHS) ⁴ . RSPB recommend that an assessment utilising the UNESCO Impact Assessment Guidance Toolkit is undertaken alongside the EIA.	RPSB - 17	20-21	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology	<p>Assessment of the potential impacts on the Flow Country WHS is discussed in the noted chapter and Volume 4 – Appendix 7.7 - Flow Country WHS Assessment.</p> <p>This was informed by assessment work presented in the noted chapter and in the Shadow HRA in respect of the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar, which overlaps with the</p>

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						WHS boundary within the Proposed Development LoD. The assessment used THC's Flow Country Candidate World Heritage Site Impact Assessment Toolkit ² as published on THC's website. The toolkit is a modified version of the guidance and toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context Resource Manual (UNESCO and Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, 2022).
038	Mitigation	The EIA report should fully discuss mitigation measures required to reduce impacts of displacement, disturbance and direct mortality on qualifying SPA species and Birds of Conservation Concern and deterioration of habitats present along the line during both construction and future maintenance. Evidence should be provided for the assumed effectiveness of proposed mitigation based on experience from other projects.	RPSB - 18	21	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	The noted chapter includes an assessment of the Proposed Development on ornithology and suggests appropriate mitigation to avoid or reduce adverse effects, where required.
039	Design	Flight activity data from vantage points should be used in conjunction with NatureScot guidance to best minimise impacts on birds through design.	RPSB - 19	21	Volume 1 - Chapter 8 - Ornithology	The assessment included in the noted chapter has been carried out in accordance with relevant guidance.

² It is noted that the Flow Country WHS has been formally inscribed as a WHS since the toolkit was published, and therefore is no longer a 'candidate' WHS. However, the toolkit has yet to be updated and therefore the 'candidate' WHS toolkit remains applicable until such time an updated version is published by The Highland Council.

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		Undergrounding / HDD should be considered as mitigation where there is potential for bird collision risk and appropriate line marking as an alternative. HDD should also be considered so that loss of qualifying habitats is avoided.				
040	BNG, Biodiversity Enhancement and HMP	RSPB support the aim of the Applicant of enhancing biodiversity and achieving BNG and the preparation of an HMP. Opportunities for habitat enhancement through a BNG scheme should be implemented alongside mitigation hierarchy, including avoiding damage to protected sites and species where possible.	RPSB - 20	21	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 - Ecology	<p>The Applicant is committed to incorporating Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) into their projects and a BNG assessment will be provided an agreed upon with relevant consultees post submission of the application and prior to determination, secured by a condition of consent.</p> <p>Biodiversity Net Gains for the project will be set out in the overarching HMP for the Connagill Cluster, which is being developed in consultation with NatureScot (see Volume 4 - Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP). This aims to deliver landscape-scale habitat enhancement in accordance with SSEN's BNG commitments, as well as to meet the requirements of NPF4 Policy 3.</p>
041	Habitat Management Plan	RSPB recommend the HMP contains detailed ecological justification for any habitat management proposals and seek to enhance key habitats, such as blanket bog, occurring within the area.	RSPB - 21	22	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 - Ecology	<p>As described in the noted chapter, an overarching Habitat Management Plan for the Connagill Cluster Grid Connections is being developed in consultation with NatureScot to deliver landscape-scale habitat enhancement. An Outline HMP is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP.</p>

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042	Forestry Assessment	SF are concerned that forestry has been scoped out of the EIA process without a detailed assessment of the potential impacts. The scoping report has not adequately addressed the potential impact on woodland, trees or previously afforested land awaiting restock. SF encourage the planning authority to ensure that proposed changes to woodland address the requirements of the Control of Woodland Removal Policy (2019) and other relevant guidance to help reach an informed decision on the potential impact of the proposed development. Detailed information on any compensatory planting proposals should also be provided, compliant with UK Forestry Standard.	SF - 01	35	Volume 1 – chapter 12 - Forestry	<p>A specific assessment on forestry interest has been completed and included in the noted chapter which also sets out compensatory planting requirements.</p> <p>The Applicant is committed to meeting the requirements of the Scottish Government's Policy Control of Woodland Removal and the supporting guidance.</p>
043	Compensatory Planting	Any compensatory planting required as a result of the Proposed Development may also need to be considered under The Forestry (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 and should follow the process for preparing a woodland creation proposal.	SF - 02	35	Volume 1 – chapter 12 - Forestry	<p>A specific assessment on forestry interest has been completed and included in the noted chapter which also sets out compensatory planting requirements.</p> <p>Replanting / compensatory planting proposals will comply with UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) and associated guidelines which may apply, or any other such replacement standard applied by the planning (consenting) authority. Planting will be supported by</p>

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						an approved replanting plan and shall identify, location, species and woodland design, timing, maintenance, monitoring, and reporting standards.
044	DWPA	There are no Scottish Water drinking water catchments or water abstraction, which are designated as DWPA's under the Water Framework Directive, in the areas that may be affected by the proposed works.	SW - 01	36	N/A	This has been noted.
045	Scottish Hill Track	Scottish Hill Track Route 344: Strath Halladale (Trantlebeg) to Strathy crosses or is close to the application site. It runs along an existing track that will be affected by the Proposed Development and used to access the site. ScW welcome that the Applicant is aware of the Scottish Hill Track and an Outdoor Access Plan is proposed.	ScW - 01	38	Volume 1 – Chapter 6 – LVIA Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport Volume 1 – Chapter 13 – Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation	The referenced recreational route has been considered within the noted chapters. A draft Outdoor Access Plan is also included as an appendix (see Volume 4 – Appendix 11.2).
046	Other Public Access	Details about other forms of public access which may be affected by the	ScW - 02	38	N/A	This is welcomed.

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		application site is enclosed in the Catalogue of Rights of Way Guidance Notes.				
047	SEPA Interests	As this is a relatively small-scale proposal and the reason for the EIA does not specifically relate to SEPA's interests, SEPA have no site-specific advice to provide and refer the developer to the relevant standing advice.	SEPA - 01	44	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	This has been noted. Further consultation has taken place with SEPA as outline in the noted chapter.
048	Traffic and Transport Assessment	TS consider the assessment approach set out in the Scoping Report appropriate. TS consider the potential impact on the trunk road network for the construction of an OHL 35 km away to be negligible. However, a simple threshold assessment should be provided in the EIA Report to support this view.	TS - 01	46	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport Volume 4 – Appendix 11.1 – Transport Assessment	This has been noted. A traffic and transport assessment has been completed and is set out in the noted chapter and supporting appendix.
049	AIL Assessment	TS is satisfied that an Abnormal Indivisible Load assessment be scoped out of the EIA.	TS - 02	46	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	This has been noted and is scoped out of the noted chapter.
050	Military Aircraft	The application site falls within part of the UK Military Low Flying System designated Tactical Training Area 14T	MoD - 01	47-49	N/A	This has been noted. The relevant information will be provided to the MoD on submission of the application.

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		(TTA 14T), an area within which military aircraft may conduct low level flight training. The MoD has no safeguarding concerns subject to a condition being added to any consent issued, requiring that sufficient data is submitted to ensure that structures are accurately charted to allow deconfliction. The MoD should be consulted at all future stages for this proposed development.				
051	Protected Sites	The Applicant should assess the direct and indirect impacts on the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC and SPA and their qualifying interest in context of their conservation / management objectives. The proposal should be assessed both as a single development and cumulatively with other relevant developments affecting these protected sites.	NS - 01	50	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	Potential direct and indirect effects on designated sites are discussed within the noted chapters, and where relevant, proposed mitigation is presented. A Shadow HRA for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.6 and a Shadow HRA for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 8.4.
052	Appropriate Assessment	The proposal is likely to result in loss of blanket bog, the ability to actively form peat, maintain hydrology and the structure and function of blanket bog. NS consider that an EIA assessment of this proposal is unlikely to result in 'no	NS - 02	51	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology	Potential effects on the designated sites are discussed within the noted chapter. A Shadow HRA for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.6.

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		significant effect' and mitigation is unlikely to result in 'no adverse effect on site integrity' in the appropriate assessment.				
053	Information to be included in EIA Report	NS require the following to be included with the application:	NS - 03	52		The following confirms where the relevant information listed in NS's response has been addressed in the EIA Report.
		Habitat survey (NVC) and maps identifying areas / features mentioned in Annex 1 of NS guidance ³ .	NS - 04	52	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology	Results of habitat surveys and assessment of likely impacts on ecological receptors are set out in the noted ecology chapter. Full results are included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.3: Habitat Survey Results and shown on Volume 2 – Figure 7.7 - Habitat Survey Results . An assessment on potential areas of groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems (GWDTE) is included in Volume 1 – Chapter 9 - Soils, Geology and Water .
		Construction Management Plan detailing how construction methods will minimise impacts on peatland including direct disturbance and changes in hydrology.	NS - 05	52	Volume 4 - Appendix 3.7 – Outline CEMP	An outline CEMP is included in the noted appendix.

³ NatureScot (2023) Advising on Peatland, Carbon-rich Soils and Priority Peatland Habitats in Development Management. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/doc/advising-peatland-carbon-rich-soils-and-priority-peatland-habitats-development-management>

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		Peat Management Plan	NS - 06	52	Volume 1 – Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water	Management of peat is considered within the noted chapter and see Volume 4 – Appendix 9.2 – Outline PMP .
		Habitat Management Plan	NS - 07	52	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology	<p>As set out in the noted chapter, the Applicant is committed to delivering a Habitat Management Plan for the Connagill Cluster Grid Connection, and this is being developed in consultation with NatureScot to deliver landscape-scale habitat enhancement, and to mitigate the potential cumulative impacts on peatland habitat within the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar. This will also include measures to compensate for direct and indirect permanent impacts on peatland habitats outwith the SAC / Ramsar boundary.</p> <p>An Outline HMP is detailed in Volume 4 - Appendix 7.8.</p>
054	Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA	Consideration must be given to SPA bird species so that Conservation Objectives of the site can be maintained. Further advised that the Proposed Development is likely to disturb and possibly displace SPA species (e.g., waders) through construction activity, and there may also be significant effects on other species, such as red-throated diver,	NS - 08	52	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	<p>Potential impacts on important ornithological features, including qualifying features of the SPA are discussed in the noted chapter, and where relevant, mitigation is presented.</p> <p>Potential effects on designated ornithological features of these sites are also considered in Volume 4 – Appendix 8.4 - Shadow HRA for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA.</p>

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		which would have to avoid overhead lines whilst flying to and from the sea to feed during the breeding season.				
055	Information from other developments	NS advise that other wind farm developments will provide useful information with respect to SPA species distribution and movement and recommend that they are consulted.	NS - 09	52	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 - Ornithology	<p>Data was requested from wind farm developers connected to the Connagill Cluster Grid Connection projects. The datasets that were shared were reviewed as part of the desk study and relevant data was used to inform the assessmtn detailed in the noted chapter.</p> <p>As detailed in Volume 4 - Appendix 8.1 - Ornithology Technical Report, the most recent available data from the operational Strathy North and consented Strathy Wood wind farms were reviewed as part of the desk study and relevant data was used to inform the assessment.</p>
056	Proposed Flow Country WHS	The proposed connection lies within a proposed WHS, which is being considered for WHS status due to it being the most outstanding example of a blanket bog ecosystem globally ⁴ .	NS - 10	53	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology	<p>Assessment of the potential impacts on the Flow Country WHS is discussed in the noted chapter and Volume 4 – Appendix 7.7 - Flow Country WHS Assessment. The assessment used THC's Flow Country Candidate World Heritage Site Impact Assessment Toolkit² as published on THC's website.</p> <p>This was informed by assessment work presented in the noted chapter and in the Shadow HRA (Volume 4 - Appendix 7.6) in respect of the potential impacts</p>

⁴ At the time of the Scoping consultation, the Flow Country was a candidate WHS. This has since been inscribed a WHS by Unesco in July 2024.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
						of the Proposed Development on the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar, which overlaps with the WHS boundary within the Proposed Development LoD.
057	Salmon and Sea Trout	There is no mention of salmon or sea trout in the [scoping] documentation. Whilst the Board does not envisage there will be any issues relation to their statutory responsibilities to protect and enhance salmon and salmon fisheries in its area, the NSFB would ask that the developer scope in salmon and sea trout, if only to discount them in the EIA.	NDSFB - 01	54	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology	Aquatic species are considered in the noted chapter. However, no pathway by which salmon or sea trout could be impacted by the Proposed Development were identified, and therefore these species, along with all other fish species, have been scoped out of the EIA.
058	EMC and microwave radio links	JRC confirmed the proposal is cleared with respect to radio link infrastructure operated by the local energy networks.	JRC - 01	55	N/A	This has been noted.
059	Description of Development	THC require that the EIA Report must include: a. A description of the physical characteristics of the development and the land use requirements for construction, operation and decommission phases.	THC - 01	N/A ⁵	Volume 1 - Chapter 3 – The Proposed Development	Volume 1 – Chapter 3 - The Proposed Development details the specific elements of the Proposed Development. The assessment of the Proposed Development is undertaken throughout the EIA Report. The following confirms where each point listed in THC’s response has been addressed: a. See noted chapter. b. See noted chapter.

⁵ The Highland Council scoping response did not form part of the Scoping Opinion issued by ECU.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. a description of the main characteristics of the construction process, for instance nature and quantity of materials used. c. the risk of accidents, particularly in regard to substances or technologies used. d. an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (water, air and soil pollution, noise, vibration, light / flicker, heat, radiation, etc.) resulting from the operation of the development. e. the estimated cumulative impact of the project with other consented or operation development. f. a detailed schedule of mitigation. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The potential for accidents and disasters is discussed in Volume 1 - Chapter 4 - Scope and Consultation, confirming that crisis management and continuity plans are in place across the SSE Group to respond to such events. d. This is discussed in relevant chapters of the EIA Report (e.g. Volume 1 - Chapter 4 - Scope and Consultation and Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water). e. The potential for cumulative impacts is considered within each technical chapter of the EIA Report, where relevant. f. Mitigation measures are proposed at the end of each technical chapter. A consolidated Schedule of Mitigation is also presented as Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Schedule of Mitigation of the EIA Report.
060	Alternatives	<p>THC require a statement outlining the alternatives studied by the Applicant. This should highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • range of technologies considered; • location criteria and economic parameters; 	THC - 02	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 2 - The Routeing Process and Alternatives	A description of the route and alignment selection stage of the project, together with other alternatives considered during the EIA process, can be found in Volume 1 – Chapter 2 - The Routeing Process and Alternatives .

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> access options including laydown areas and accommodation compounds; design and locational options for all elements of the development including access tracks, borrow pits and grid connections; and environmental effects of the different options considered. <p>Such assessment should also highlight sustainable development attributes including for example assessment of carbon emissions.</p>				The route, alignment and EIA stages of the project have sought to minimise environmental effects as far as practicable.
061	Assessment	The EIA Report must provide a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected.	THC - 03	N/A	Volume 1 – All Chapters	The assessment of the Proposed Development is undertaken throughout Volume 1 of the EIA Report.
062	Land Use and Policy	THC require that the EIA Report should recognise the existing land uses affected by the development having particular regard for THC's Development Plan inclusive of all statutorily adopted Supplementary Guidance (SG). Particular attention should be paid to the provisions of the Onshore Wind Energy SG inclusive of	THC - 04	N/A	Volume 1 – All chapters Planning Statement	These policy documents are referenced where appropriate throughout Volume 1 of the EIA Report and the Planning Statement which accompanies the EIA Report.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		<p>any Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal. This is in addition to the expectation of receiving a Planning Statement in support of the application itself which, should comply with the Development Plan, should look at the Circulars and Planning Advice Notes. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight relevant policies, not to assess the compatibility of the proposal with policy.</p>				
063	Land Use and Policy	<p>THC Development Plans Team note that a range of THC's Development Plan policies will apply to the Proposed Development (alongside National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) adopted in 2023), which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) adopted in 2012; and • Caithness and Sutherland Local development Plan (CaSPlan). Although it was acknowledged that it has limited relevance to this kind of proposal. 	THC - 05	N/A	Volume 1 – All Chapters Planning Statement	These policy documents are referenced where appropriate throughout Volume 1 of the EIA Report and the Planning Statement which accompanies the EIA Report.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associated Supplementary Guidance. 				
064	Land Use and Policy	THC Development Plans Team noted that the policy context is evolving and as such the Applicant is advised to review recent Report of Handling for similar national section 37 applications relating to wind farm grid connection developments to further inform the policy section.	THC - 06	N/A	N/A	This has been noted.
065	Land Use and Policy	<p>THC Development Plans Team advise that attention is particularly drawn to NPF4 Policy 3(b) where development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an EIA will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future management. To inform this best practice assessment methods should be used.</p> <p>Proposals should demonstrate how they have met the following criteria</p>	THC - 07	N/A	<p>Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology</p> <p>Volume 4 – Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP</p>	<p>The Applicant is committed to incorporating Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) into their projects and a BNG assessment will be provided an agreed upon with relevant consultees post submission of the application and prior to determination, secured by a condition of consent.</p> <p>Biodiversity Net Gains for the project will be set out in the overarching HMP for the Connagill Cluster, which is being developed in consultation with NatureScot (see Volume 4 - Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP). This aims to deliver landscape-scale habitat enhancement in accordance with SSEN's BNG commitments, as well as to meet the requirements of NPF4.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of irreplaceable habitats. b. Wherever possible nature-based solution have been integrated and made best use of. c. An assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements. d. Significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. e. Local community benefits of the biodiversity and / or nature networks have been considered. 				

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
066	Sustainability	THC outline that a Sustainable Design Statement is required which includes details on design, building materials and minimising environmental impacts of development.	THC - 08	N/A	Planning Statement	Information on sustainable development is included in the Planning Statement.
067	Landscape and Visual	THC outline the need for the distinction between landscape and visual contexts, and so therefore require separate assessments, without the use of panoramic imagery for the visual impact assessment.	THC - 09	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The LVIA in the noted chapter considers and assesses the subjects of landscape and visual amenity separately.
068	Landscape and Visual	THC are generally content with the viewpoints proposed in the Scoping Report. The purpose of the selected and agreed viewpoint shall be clearly identified and stated in the supporting information.	THC - 10	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The noted LVIA chapter identifies and describes the viewpoint used for production of the photomontage to support and inform the LVIA.
069	Landscape and Visual	THC suggest that photomontages should be prepared to Highland Council Standards. Separate volumes of visualisations should be prepared to both Highland Council Standards and NatureScot guidance. These should be provided in hard copy and request that for THC's	THC - 11	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual Volume 3a - Visualisations to Naturescot Guidelines	A photomontage to assist with the assessment and determination of the EIA are included in accordance with NS guidance in Volume 3a and in accordance with THC guidance are included in Volume 3b of the EIA Report. It covers all relevant impacts of all elements of the Proposed Development and will be provided in an A3 hard copy. As described in the noted chapter, the visual assessment is receptor-based and considers all

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		volume, these are provided in an A3 ring bound folder for ease of use.			Volume 3b - Visualisations to The Highland Council Guidelines	potential receptors within the study area rather than a small number of viewpoints, which provides a more detailed and robust assessment. The visualisation is illustrative of the type of view that would be obtained and is considered fully representative of visual receptors using the study area.
070	Landscape and Visual	The EIA should include the expected visual impact of all elements associated with a proposed development (including the tracks, substations, battery storage and on-site borrow pits).	THC - 12	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The LVIA in the noted chapter considers the impacts of all elements associated with the Proposed Development.
071	Landscape and Visual	The LVIA should clearly set out the methodology with a clear matrix approach supported by descriptive text setting out how conclusions have been reached.	THC - 13	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The LVIA has been carried out in accordance with best practice guidance The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) and criteria used are in accordance with this guidance in terms of identification and presentation of significant effects.
072	Landscape and Visual	THC require that all core paths and long-distance trails, are assessed when considering the impacts on recreational routes.	THC - 14	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The noted chapter considered impacts on recreational routes. Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport and its associated appendix (Volume 4 - Appendix 11.2 - Draft Outdoor Access Management Plan), along with Volume 1 – Chapter 13 – Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation , also considers impacts on recreational routes.

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073	Landscape and Visual	THC expect that LVIA refers to the Councils Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance and expect an assessment of the proposal against the criterion set out within this guidance.	THC - 15	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The LVIA assessment has considered the criterion noted within this guidance.
074	Landscape and Visual	THC expect that the LVIA assesses the impacts on any landscapes designated at a national and local scale.	THC - 16	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The LVIA in the noted chapter considers the impacts on designated landscapes.
075	Landscape and Visual	THC consider it appropriate to include an assessment of the special qualities of the Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra Special Landscape Area (SLA) within the LVIA.	THC - 17	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The LVIA in the noted chapter includes an assessment of the special qualities of the Farr Bay, Strathy and Portskerra SLA.
076	Landscape and Visual	THC expect that an assessment of the impact on all potentially effected Wild Land Areas (WLAs) be included in the EIAR, given the proximity to a number of WLAs and the theoretical visibility of the scheme from within the WLAs.	THC - 18	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	WLA 39: East Halladale Flows lies more than 6 km from the Proposed Development to the east and would have no intervisibility with the Proposed Development and is therefore not included in the landscape assessment.
077	Landscape and Visual	The residential visual amenity should be assessed for all properties, settlements, housing groups within 2 km of the development within the LVIA.	THC - 19	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual	The noted Chapter considers potential effects, including cumulative effects, of the Proposed Development on visual amenity during construction and operation.

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		THC agree that given Braerathy Lodge is derelict and is to be demolished, it is acceptable to scope out of the assessment.				This is noted regarding Barerathy Lodge.
078	Cultural Heritage	The application boundary may contain a number of historic environment assets, which may not be accurately represented on the HER so all upstanding remains should be identified by survey and the potential for buried features or deposits, stated in the report. Where impacts are unavoidable, methods to mitigate this impact are expected to be discussed in detail.	THC - 20	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 10 – Cultural Heritage	Details of the baseline cultural heritage findings are outlined in the noted chapter, along with an assessment of likely significant effects and mitigation, where necessary.
079	Cultural Heritage	THC are content to scope out the impacts of the proposal on designated heritage assessments given there are no designated assets both within and immediately surrounding the site. However, the noted Cultural Heritage Assets require to be assessed at application stage given these are located in the vicinity of the proposal. In addition, the application site is located within the candidate Flow Country World Heritage Site ⁴ , with perceived impacts on this designation	THC - 21	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation Volume 1 – Chapter 10 – Cultural Heritage	This has been noted with regard to scoping out the impacts of the Proposed Development on designated heritage sites. The potential for direct effects on cultural heritage assets have been addressed in the noted chapter. Given the Flow Country WHS was inscribed for purely nature criteria, being the most expansive and best example of blanket bog in the world and inscribed only for its globally important natural ecosystems, this has not been covered in the cultural heritage assessment, but instead is discussed in

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		required to be assessed within any future submission.				Volume 4 – Appendix 7.7 - Flow Country WHS Assessment.
080	Ornithology	The presence of Schedule 1 birds and qualifying interests of SPAs and other areas designated for avian interests must be included and considered as part of the planning application.	THC - 22	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 – Ornithology Volume 4 – Appendix 7.6 - Shadow Habitats Regulations Appraisal (SPA)	The noted chapter consider natural heritage designations for avian interests. It includes an assessment of the Proposed Development on ornithology and suggests appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or reduce adverse effects. Specifically in relation to the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA, a Shadow HRA is provided in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.6.
081	Ornithology	An assessment of the impacts to birds through collision, disturbance, electrocution and displacement from foraging, breeding, roosting habitat will be required for both the proposed development and cumulatively with other proposals.	THC - 23	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 – Ornithology	The noted chapter includes an assessment of the Proposed Development and cumulatively with other proposals, on ornithology, and suggests appropriate mitigation measures to avoid or reduce adverse effects.
082	Ornithology	THC noted that the EIAR should be clear on the survey methods and any deviations from guidance.	THC - 24	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 – Ornithology	Details of the survey methods are presented in the noted chapter and full details included in Volume 4 – Appendix 8.1 - Ornithological Technical Report.

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083	Ornithology	THC note that given the level of protection of species within the North Caithness Cliffs SPA it requires to be scoped in within any EIA submission unless confirmed by NatureScot.	THC - 25	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 – Ornithology	NatureScot have been consulted and confirmed it was acceptable to scope out the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the SPA.
084	Ornithology	THC note that given the level of protection of species within the North Sutherland Coastal Islands SPA designated site, these required to be scoped in within any EIA submission, unless confirmed by NatureScot.	THC - 26	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 8 – Ornithology	NatureScot have been consulted and confirmed it was acceptable to scope out the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the SPA.
085	Ecology	THC noted that the EIAR should provide a baseline survey of the bird and animals (mammals, reptiles and amphibians etc.) interest on site.	THC - 27	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 1 - Chapter 8 – Ornithology	The relevant ecological and ornithological baseline survey results and associated assessments can be found in the respective noted chapters.
086	Ecology	THC noted that the EIAR should provide an account of the habitats present on the proposed development site. It should identify rare or threatened habitats, and those protected by European or UK legislation, or identified	THC - 28	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology Volume 4, Appendix 7.3: Habitat	Detailed results from UKHab and NVC surveys and associated target notes (including for notable species) are summarised in the noted chapter and included in Volume 4 - Appendix 7.3 – Habitat Technical Report and Volume 2 - Figure 7.7 – Habitat Survey Results.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		in national or local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs).			Technical Report	Results from the surveys were used to inform the iterative design process and avoid or minimise impacts on sensitive habitats where practicable.
087	Ecology	<p>Habitat enhancement and mitigation measures should be detailed, particularly in respect to blanket bog, in the context of both biodiversity conservation and the inherent risk of peat slide. Details of any habitat enhancement programmes for the proposed site should be provided.</p> <p>The EIAR should address whether or not the development could assist or impede delivery of elements of the BAPs.</p>	THC - 29	N/A	<p>Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology</p> <p>Volume 4, Appendix 7.8: Connagill Cluster Outline HMP</p>	<p>Compensation and enhancement for loss of peatland habitat will be presented in an overarching Habitat Management Plan for the Connagill Cluster Grid Connection projects (an outline is provided as Volume 4 - Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP) to deliver landscape-scale habitat enhancement to meet the requirements of NPF4 Policy 3.</p> <p>The Applicant is committed to incorporating BNG into their projects and a BNG assessment will be provided an agreed upon with relevant consultees post submission of the application and prior to determination, secured by a condition of consent.</p>
088	Ecology	THC expect that a Peat Management Plan should be submitted to overcome significant effects on peatland and Carbon Rich Soils, Deep Peat, and Priority Peatland Habitat.	THC - 30	N/A	<p>Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water</p> <p>Volume 4, Appendix 9.2: Outline Peat Management Plan</p>	A Peat Management Plan (PMP) is presented as Volume 4 - Appendix 9.2 – Outline PMP , appended to the noted chapter. It details safeguards that would be used to safeguard peat and sequestered carbon within the peat.

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089	Ecology	<p>THC expect that an up-to-date National Vegetation Classification (NVC) survey and a commitment to undertake peatland restoration on an area of an increased size to that of the application site.</p> <p>The EIAR should provide details of all direct, indirect, permanent and temporary impacts to any bog habitat present on the site.</p>	THC - 31	N/A	<p>Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology</p> <p>Volume 4, Appendix 7.3: Habitat Technical Report</p> <p>Volume 4 – Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP</p>	<p>Detailed results from UKHab and NVC surveys undertaken in 2022 and 2024 are summarised in the noted chapter and included in Volume 4 - Appendix 7.3 – Habitat Technical Report and Volume 2 - Figure 7.8 – Habitat Survey Results.</p> <p>Results from the surveys were used to inform the iterative design process and avoid or minimise impacts on sensitive habitats where practicable.</p> <p>The Applicant is committed to delivering a HMP for the Proposed Development in combination with other projects that make up the Connagill Cluster Grid Connections. An Outline HMP is presented in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.8.</p> <p>Permanent and temporary habitat losses are quantified in the noted chapter (habitats within the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar, which are also applicable to the West Halladale SSSI and Flow Country WHS due to the overlapping boundaries and non-designated habitats).</p>
090	Ecology	<p>THC note that the EIAR should address the likely impacts on the nature conservation interests of all designated sites in the vicinity of the proposed development. Proposals for any mitigation that is required to avoid</p>	THC - 32	N/A	<p>Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology</p> <p>Volume 4, Appendix 7.6: Shadow HRA for the</p>	<p>The relevant ecological and ornithological noted chapters consider natural heritage designations.</p> <p>Assessment of impacts on the qualifying features of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar and SPA has been undertaken in the noted Shadow HRA's for the Proposed Development.</p>

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		<p>impacts or reduce to a level where they are not significant should be included.</p> <p>The potential impact of the development on other designated areas such as SSSI's should be considered and where possible, appropriate mitigation outlined in the EIAR.</p>			<p>Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar</p> <p>Volume 1 - Chapter 8 – Ornithology</p> <p>Volume 4, Appendix 8.4: Shadow HRA for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SPA</p>	
091	Ecology	If wild deer are present or will use the site, an assessment of the potential impact on deer will be required.	THC - 33	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology	Deer were scoped out of the EIA Report as there is no potential for the Proposed Development to give rise to significant adverse effects on them, as set out in the noted chapter.
092	Ecology	THC noted that the EIAR needs to address the aquatic interests within local watercourses that may be affected by the development. The EIAR should	THC - 34	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology	The Proposed Development would not directly impact any watercourses, and a minimum buffer of 10 m would be maintained between construction activities and watercourses. The towers have been designed to achieve a minimum offset of 20 m from watercourses.

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		evidence consultation input from the local fishery board(s) where relevant.				<p>The potential for pollution to watercourses is assessed in the noted chapter in respect of potential impacts to otter (a qualifying feature of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC/ Ramsar).</p> <p>Potential effects on surface and groundwater flows and quality are assessed in Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water.</p> <p>The Northern District Fisheries Board were consulted at scoping stage and their comments have been captured in this Appendix and the noted chapter.</p>
093	Ecology	THC noted that the EIAR should include a map and assessment of impacts upon GWDTE and buffers.	THC - 35	N/A	<p>Volume 1 - Chapter 7 – Ecology</p> <p>Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water</p>	<p>Details of the UKHab and NVC survey are presented in the noted chapter and illustrated on Volume 2 – Figure 7.7 – Habitats Survey Results. Impacts on sensitive habitats (including GWDTE) are quantified in Volume 1- Chapter 7 – Ecology.</p> <p>An assessment on potential areas of GWDTE are also included in Volume 1 - Chapter 9 – Soils, Geology and Water.</p>
094	Ecology	A draft Habitat Management Plan (HMP) and Species Protection Plan (SPP) should be produced as part of the EIA including any proposals for mitigation and enhancement in relation to important habitats and species.	THC - 36	N/A	<p>Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology</p> <p>Volume 4 - Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP</p>	<p>An overarching HMP for the Connagill Cluster Grid Connection projects is being developed in consultation with NatureScot to deliver landscape-scale habitat enhancement, and to mitigate the potential cumulative impacts on peatland habitat within the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar, including measures to compensate for direct and indirect permanent impacts on peatland habitats</p>

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		<p>Any compensatory planting should be carefully considered and included in the HMP.</p> <p>The HMP should include a comprehensive monitoring programme for all habitat improvements and breeding birds on the site.</p> <p>The HMP should include a protocol for reporting collisions to NS.</p>			Volume 4 - Appendix 3.6 – Species Protection Plans	<p>outwith the SAC / Ramsar boundary. A proposed operational monitoring programme for breeding birds is also included. An Outline HMP is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.8 – Connagill Cluster Outline HMP.</p> <p>The Applicant has developed a series of SPPs in agreement with statutory consultees, including SEPA and NatureScot. These can be found in Volume 4 - Appendix 3.6: Species Protection Plans (SPPs).</p> <p>The Applicant is committed to incorporating BNG into their projects and a BNG assessment will be provided an agreed upon with relevant consultees post submission of the application and prior to determination, secured by a condition of consent.</p>
095	Ecology	THC expect that as marsh saxifrage is a qualifying feature of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatland SAC, it should be included in the EIA unless confirmed otherwise by NS.	THC - 37	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology	NatureScot have been consulted (July 2024) and confirmed it was acceptable to scope out the potential effects of the Proposed Development on marsh saxifrage.
096	Ecology	THC expect that Strathy Point SAC should be included in the EIA unless confirmed otherwise by NS.	THC - 38	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology	NatureScot have been consulted (July 2024) and confirmed it was acceptable to scope out the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the SAC.
097	Ecology	The Scoping Report proposed that all important ecological features (IEFs) identified in the EclA as being of Local	THC - 39	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology	The IEFs scoped into the ecological impact assessment, and the rationale for scoping in or out, is

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		or lower importance, and for which there is not considered to be any potential for significant effects, to be scoped out. THC confirmed it is their view that these should be scoped in and demonstrated within any EIA submitted.				presented in the noted chapter. NS have been consulted and are in agreement with this approach.
098	Ecology	THC expect that aquatic ecological features shall be included within any future submission, unless confirmed otherwise by NS.	THC - 40	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 - Ecology	This has been considered as part of the assessment in the noted chapter.
099	Operational Noise	THC request that a noise assessment with regard to operational phase of the development be submitted within the EIAR. THCs Environmental Health Team request that the Applicant confirms that consideration has been given to the Document 5.3.14H ES Chapter 14 Appendix 14H – National Grid Technical Guidance Note TGN (E)322 (2021) to determine scoping out operational noise.	THC - 41	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	The Applicant has given consideration to the National Grid Technical Guidance Note TGN (E) 322 (2021) and a detailed assessment of operational noise is not considered necessary and will not be included as part of the EIA. Construction noise and vibration would be short term and intermittent and can be controlled through the implementation of a Noise Management Plan, which would be development as part of the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) prepared by the Principal Contractor. The Noise Management Plan would be agreed with The Highland Council as Local Authority, and all construction activities would be undertaken in accordance with good practice guidelines set out in BS 5228-1 and BS 5228-2.
100	Cumulative Noise	The noise assessment must take into account the potential cumulative effects	THC - 42	N/A		

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		from an other existing or consented developments.				As such and given the remoteness of construction activity for the project, no detailed assessment of construction noise and vibration associated with plant noise or traffic is included as part of the EIA. This is confirmed in the noted chapter.
101	Background Noise Measurements	THC recommend the Applicant consult with THC's Environmental Health Officer to agree Noise Monitoring Locations and finalise the proposed methodology.	THC - 43	N/A		
102	Construction Noise and Vibration	THC expect an assessment of construction noise and vibration be included within any future submission to ensure it can be appropriately assessed.	THC - 44	N/A		
103	Construction Noise Assessment	If the Applicant intends to undertake noisy work out-with the aforementioned times, a detailed construction noise assessment will be required to be submitted to the planning authority.	THC - 45	N/A	N/A	This has been noted.
104	Traffic and Transport	<p>THC recommend that reference is made to the following documents in the EIAR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Development 	THC - 46	N/A	<p>Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport</p> <p>Volume 4 – Appendix 11.1 – Transport Assessment</p>	This has been noted. Reference to these documents have been made in the noted chapter and supporting appendix.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on the Preparation of Transport Assessment 				
105	Public Road Improvement Works	Any local public road improvements deemed necessary should be design in accordance with THC's published Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments.	THC - 47	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	<p>This has been noted.</p> <p>No public road improvements would be required for the Proposed Development.</p>
106	Traffic and Transport - Operational Assessment	THC are content that an assessment of the operational phase is scoped out of assessment.	THC - 48	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	This has been noted.
107	Transport – ALL Assessment	THC are content that an Abnormal Indivisible Load assessment be scoped out of assessment.	THC - 49	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	This has been noted.
108	Transport – Decommissioning Assessment	THC are content that an assessment of the decommissioning phase is scoped out of assessment.	THC - 50	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	This has been noted.
109	Transport – Construction Assessment	To enable consideration of construction traffic, as a minimum, THC expect the following information to be included in the EIAR:	THC - 51	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	<p>This information has been provided in the noted chapter and supporting appendix, where relevant.</p> <p>No abnormal loads will be required for component delivery to the site.</p>

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The number and type of vehicle movements that will be generated during the construction phase and details of access routes that will be taken. b. A review of the preferred access route for abnormal loads from Port of Entry to the site and details of mitigation measures proposed. c. A similar review of the routes to site for general construction traffic and details of mitigation measures proposed. d. A framework Construction Traffic Management Plan that sets out how the impact of construction traffic is to be minimised and mitigated. 			Volume 4 – Appendix 11.1 – Transport Assessment	
110	Traffic and Transport	When compiling data on predicted traffic movements serving the development the assessment should set out and justify all assumptions made in support of the trip levels used.	THC - 52	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport Volume 4 – Appendix 11.1	Further details of the traffic generation are provided in the noted chapter and supporting appendix.

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					– Transport Assessment	
111	Traffic and Transport	<p>THC would prefer if effort could be made to identify other committed developments in the area that have the potential to influence traffic levels on the proposed access routes.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that the public (trunk) roads serving this site are heavily influenced by tourist traffic during the busier summer season. This should be clearly set out how this has been recognised in the assessment process.</p> <p>Any predicted traffic generated by any timber extraction required in connection with the development should be recognised in the assessment.</p>	THC - 53	N/A	<p>Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport</p> <p>Volume 4 – Appendix 11.1 – Transport Assessment</p>	<p>Committed developments have been accounted for in the assessment in the noted chapter and supporting appendix.</p> <p>The assessment for the trunk road network has been based on AADT traffic flows to ensure a fair baseline. Additional loading at summer will increase the baseline, resulting in a lower impact on the network, potentially reducing mitigation.</p> <p>Timber extraction has been accounted for in the traffic generation and accounts as set out in the noted supporting appendix.</p>
112	Traffic and Transport	THC note that a suitable agreement relating to Section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act and appropriate planning legislation may be required.	THC - 54	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport	Details on a Wear & Tear agreement is included in the noted chapter and in Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Schedule of Mitigation.
113	Traffic and Transport	THC note that intended arrangements for surveying and recording the existing condition of the local public roads impacted by the proposed construction	THC - 55	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 11 - Traffic and Transport	This information has been provided in the noted chapter.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		works prior to any works commencing. It should clarify how the condition of roads will be review and at the end of the proposed development, along with how repair will be undertaken.				
114	Traffic and Transport	THC provided advice on the detail to be included in the Transport Statement . Assessment.	THC - 56	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 11 – Traffic and Transport Volume 4 – Appendix 11.1 – Transport Assessment	This has been noted and the information has been provided in the noted chapter and supporting appendix.
115	Peat Slide Risk Assessment	THC consider the risk of engineering instability relating to the presence of peat on site is included in the EIAR. This should include a comprehensive peat slide risk assessment.	THC - 57	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water Volume 4 – Appendix 9.1 – Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment	Potential effects on peat, including peat slide risk and potential for landslides is discussed within the noted chapter and the following supporting appendices; Volume 4 – Appendix 9.1 – PLHRA and Appendix 9.2 – Outline PMP . These appendices present detailed plans of peat depths, confirm the peat excavation quantities and characteristics of the peat. The PLHRA assesses risks of engineering instability and pollution risk.

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116	Water Environment	THC consider the EIAR should address pollution risk and environmental sensitivities of the water environment.	THC - 58	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water Volume 4 – Appendix 3.7 – Outline CEMP	This information has been provided in the noted chapter.
117	Peat	<p>THC consider the EIAR should include a detailed map of peat depth and evidence that the scheme minimises impact on areas of deep peat.</p> <p>The peat depth survey should be presented as a table detailing re-use proposals.</p> <p>THC consider the EIAR should include site-specific principles on which construction method statements would be development for engineering works in peat land areas and reference to drainage impacts, dewatering and disposal of excavated peat.</p>	THC - 59	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	<p>Details on peat are included in the noted chapter.</p> <p>A peat probing campaign has been carried out across the project to establish peat depth and appropriate mitigation, as set out in Volume 4 – Appendix 9.1 – PLHRA and Appendix 9.2: Outline PMP.</p>
118	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	THC consider the EIAR needs to address the nature of the hydrology and hydrogeology of the site and assess the potential impacts on watercourses,	THC - 60	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	This information has been provided in the noted chapter.

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		water supplies including private water supplies, water quality, water quantity and on aquatic flora and fauna, and demonstrate it will not be degraded by site drainage and excavations.				
119	Hydrology	THC would welcome a full hydrological assessment being scoped in to avoid direct and indirect impacts to any peatland habitats and / or ground water dependent terrestrial ecosystems.	THC - 61	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	This information has been provided in the noted chapter.
120	Watercourse Crossings	THC expect the EIAR to identify all water crossings and include a systematic table of watercourse crossing with detailed justification for any such elements and design to minimise impact.	THC - 62	N/A	N/A	No new watercourse crossings are required for the Proposed Development.
121	Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage	THC's Flood Risk Management Team had no comment to make. However, it was noted that a minimum of a 50 m buffer of all watercourses / bodies to hardstandings, tracks and should be noted and shown on a suitably scaled drawing; various flood risk and surface water Drainage Principles, design standards and best practice measures for the management and control of	THC - 63	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	<p>Figures that accompany the noted chapter show all proposed temporary and permanent infrastructure overlain with all lochs and watercourses.</p> <p>The potential effects on watercourses and waterbodies, and suitable buffers to be maintained, are discussed within the noted chapter. As part of the Proposed Development design, a buffer of more than 20 m has been applied to watercourses and water features such as lochs and ponds, where technically</p>

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		drainage were highlighted by THC, and they confirm that water crossings in the form of culverts or bridges, or upgrades to existing crossings must be designed to accommodate to 1 in 200 year flood event, plus climate change; and the EIA should be informed by the Council's Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment SG.				and practically possible. All the proposed towers have been designed to be outwith the 20 m watercourse buffer however the temporary working areas (in some locations) may be a minimum of 10 m from watercourses and water features. These areas will be demarked and necessary additional safeguards agreed with the site ECoW prior to construction works commencing No new watercourse crossings are required.
122	Private Water Supplies	The Applicant will be required to carry out an investigation to identify any private water supplies, including pipework which may be adversely affected by the proposed development and submit measures to prevent contamination or physical disruption.	THC - 64	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	A private and public water supply risk assessment is included in the noted chapter.
123	Geology	The Scoping Report proposed that effects on geology be scoped out of assessment as no sensitive geological features (except peat) have been identified. THC expect that effects on geology should be scoped in to ensure that it is appropriately assessed and considered given the location of the proposal within the Candidate Flow Country WHS ⁴ .	THC - 65	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	Effects on geology and peat are presented in the noted chapter. An assessment of the WHS, using the THC toolkit is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 7.7 – Flow Country WHS Assessment.

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124	Flood Risk Assessment	THC request that a full flood risk assessment is provided in the EIAR.	THC - 66	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	A flood risk assessment is provided in the noted chapter.
125	Drainage Impact Assessment	THC are content that a Drainage Impact Assessment is scoped out of the EIA.	THC - 67	N/A	N/A	This has been noted.
126	Water Quality Monitoring	THC are content that no water quality monitoring be carried out, instead published SEPA water quality data be used to characterise baseline water quality.	THC - 68	N/A	N/A	This has been noted.
127	Geomorphological Assessment	THC request that a geomorphological assessment be scoped in due to the potential impacts on the Candidate Flow Country WHS ⁴ .	THC - 69	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	An assessment of potential change of surface water flow and erosion and sedimentation characteristics which could affect the geomorphology of watercourses is presented in the noted chapter.
128	Soils, Geology and Water – Cumulative Assessment	THC expect that cumulative effects are scoped in within any submission to ensure this can be appropriately considered within the planning assessment.	THC - 70	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 9: Soils, Geology and Water	A cumulative assessment has been completed as set out in the noted chapter.
129	Candidate Flow Country World Heritage Site	THC has produced a toolkit for developers to use in assessments to	THC - 71	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 7 – Ecology	An assessment has been undertaken for the Flow Country WHS as set out in the noted appendix. The assessment used THC's Flow Country Candidate

No.	Subject	Task	Consultee	Scoping Opinion Page Ref.	EIA Report Reference	Comments
		consider impacts to the WHS and a Planning Position Statement, with links provided to access the documents.			Volume 4 – Appendix 7.7 – Flow Country WHS Assessment	<p>World Heritage Site Impact Assessment Toolkit² as published on THC's website.</p> <p>The assessment was informed by assessment work presented in the noted chapter and in Volume 4 - Appendix 7.6 - Shadow HRA for the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar in respect of the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC / Ramsar, which overlaps with the WHS boundary within the Proposed Development LoD.</p>
130	Air Quality and Climate Change	THC's view is that impact on air quality and climate change shall be included within the EIAR.	THC - 72	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	<p>The nature of construction activities means these would be localised, short term and intermittent. Emissions associated with the Proposed Development would be limited to temporary and short-term emissions of exhaust gases from vehicles and construction plant, and the potential for the release of carbon dioxide as a result of dewatering and exposing peat and peat soils during construction. Neither source is considered likely to be significant in terms of global warming potential (GWP). Any potential effects would further be minimised through the implementation of a CEMP, which will be produced prior to construction starting by the Applicant and Principal Contractor, and the Applicant's General Environmental Management Plans (agreed with NatrueScot and SEPA). Climate</p>

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						change will be considered throughout the EIA Report, where relevant.
131	Forestry	<p>THC's view is that a forestry assessment shall be included within the EIAR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The EIAR should indicate all the areas of woodland / trees that would be felled to accommodate the development, including any off-site works / mitigation. b. Compensatory woodland is a clear expectation of any proposals for felling and such mitigation needs to be considered in the assessment. Compensatory planting should be within the Highland area and not form part of an already approved forest plan / proposal. c. Any proposed compensatory planting will be the subject of the Forestry (EIA) Regulations 2017, and a separate application will be required to 	THC - 73	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 12 – Forestry	<p>A forestry assessment has been completed as set out in the noted chapter. It provides an assessment on forestry interests and sets out compensatory planting requirements.</p> <p>Replanting / compensatory planting proposals will comply with UKFS and associated guidelines which may apply, or any other such replacement standard applied by the planning (consenting) authority. Planting will be supported by an approved replanting plan and shall identify, location, species and woodland design, timing, maintenance, monitoring, and reporting standards.</p>

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		<p>be submitted to Scottish Forestry.</p> <p>d. Areas of retained forestry or tree groups should be clearly indicated and methods for their protection described.</p> <p>e. If timber is to be disposed of, details of methodology should be submitted.</p> <p>THC notes that if the development is granted consent, native woodland could be created to offset carbon released in the construction period. This should be on an appropriate site, located within THC area, and as close as possible to the application site.</p>				
132	Land Use and Agriculture	THC are of the view that given there remains a potential impact on neighbouring landowners in relation to the proposed works, even if considered minimal, a land use assessment should be included within the EIAR.	THC - 74	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 3 – The Proposed Development	The potential for impacts on land use is covered off in the noted chapter.
133	Contaminated Land	THC note that further information is not required to support the application as	THC - 75	N/A		This has been noted.

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		there does not appear to be a potential source of contamination onsite.				
134	Aviation, Radar and Telecoms	The EIAR should demonstrate what community assets have been identified and the outcomes of any consultations with relevant authorities.	THC - 76	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	Scoping responses were received from telecommunication and aviation bodies. Consultation was carried out with the Ministry of Defence as set out in the noted chapter.
135	Telecoms	THC are content to scope out impacts to digital television, TV, signals, digital radio and FM radio reception from the EIAR.	THC - 77	N/A	N/A	This has been noted.
136	Socio-Economic, Recreation and Tourism	THC outline that a Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation EIA chapter is required. It is stated that the EIA should estimate who may be affected by the development, in all or in part, which may require individual households to be identified, local communities or a wider socio economic groupings such as tourists and tourist related businesses, recreational groups, economically active, etc. The application should include relevant economic information connected with the project, including the potential number of jobs, and economic activity associated with the procurement,	THC - 78	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 13 – Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation Volume 4 – Appendix 11.2 – Outdoor Access Management Plan	An overview of the socio-economic, recreation and tourism baseline position is presented and the stated impact in terms of economic (jobs, turnover and Gross Value Added (GVA) and social impacts, and the wider community impacts are provided in the noted chapter. An Outdoor Access Management Plan will be prepared for the Proposed Development prior to construction, a draft of which is provided in the noted appendix.

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		construction and operation of the development.				
137	Access Management Plan	THC note relevant policy that the AMP should be in accordance with. It is noted that it should cover existing access and how that will be dealt with during the development and any future access provision within and linking to the development.	THC - 79	N/A	Volume 4 – Appendix 11.2 – Draft Access Management Plan	A draft Outdoor Access Management Plan has been completed as set out in the noted appendix.
138	Construction Management and Health and Safety	<p>The EIA Report needs to address all relevant climatic factors which can greatly influence the impact range of may of the preceding factors on account of seasonal changes affecting rainfall, sunlight, prevailing wind directopm etc.</p> <p>Depending on the proximity of the working area and access route to any houses etc. The Applicant may require to submit a scheme for the suppression of dust during construction.</p> <p>THC in prinicple would request that an Outline CEMD is included with the application.</p>	THC - 80	N/A	Throughout the EIA Report	<p>Climate change is considered throughout the EIA Report, where relevant.</p> <p>An Outline CEMP is included in Volume 4 – Appendix 3.7. Measures for the management of dust during construction are set out in a Dust Management GEMP (see Volume 4 – Appendix 3.5).</p>

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139	Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)	THC are content that EMF can be scoped out of any submitted EIA however details of the relevant compliance with government policy shall be detailed within the submission.	THC - 81	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	This has been noted. The Proposed Development will adhere to the relevant regulations and guidance relating to EMF.
140	Major Accidents and Disasters	THC are content that potential effects of the proposed development related to the vulnerability to major accidents and disasters can be scoped out of any submitted EIA, although details of crisis management plans and continuity plans shall be included within the submission given the potential for this to impact on residential wellbeing and services within the area.	THC - 82	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 4 – Scope and Consultation	This has been noted. The potential for accidents and disasters is discussed in the noted chapter, confirming that crisis management and continuity plans are in place across the SSE Group to respond to such events.
141	Significant Effects on the Environment	THC require the EIA to describe the likely effects of the development on the environment, which should cover the direct effects of any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.	THC - 83	N/A	Throughout the EIA Report	The assessment of likely significant environmental effects is undertaken within each of the technical chapters of Volume 1.
142	Significant Effects on the Environment	THC request that when measuring the positive and negative effects of the development, a four point scale is used	THC - 84	N/A	Volume 1 – Chapter 5 –	The approach to the assessment of effects in this EIA Report is set out in the noted chapter and defined within each of the technical chapters within Volume 1.

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		advising any effect to be either strong positive, positive, negative or strong negative.			EIA Methodology	Effects are assessed in accordance with best practice and industry standards across the technical topics. As such, the request for consideration of effects across a four point scale is not considered appropriate.
143	Mitigation	A description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and where possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment must be set out within the EIA Report. A clear summary table of all mitigation measures associated with the Proposed Development should be provided and entitled draft 'Schedule of Mitigation' and clarify where other groups are involved in its implementation.	THC - 85	N/A	Volume 1 – All Chapters	Mitigation measures are proposed at the end of each technical chapter. A consolidated Schedule of Mitigation is also presented as Volume 1 - Chapter 14 - Schedule of Mitigation of the EIA Report.
144	Mitigation	THC suggests that it should be made clear within the EIA or supporting information, exactly which groups are involved in local liaisons, the remit of the group and the management and resourcing of the required effort.	THC - 86	N/A	Volume 1 - Chapter 3 – The Proposed Development	This has been noted. SSEN Transmission considers it important to act as a responsible developer with regards to the communities which host the construction works. The delivery of a major programme of capital investment provides the opportunity to maximise support of local communities. Employment of construction staff would be the responsibility of the Contractor; however, the Applicant would encourage the Contractor to make

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						<p>use of suitable labour and resources from areas local to the Proposed Development where possible.</p> <p>This will be discussed further with THC and local community groups prior to the commencement of construction.</p>