

Annex P - Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment

November 2022





ARCUS

**ARGYLL SUBSTATIONS – CRAIG MURRAIL
ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL**

ANNEX P

PEAT LANDSLIDE HAZARD AND RISK ASSESSMENT

NOVEMBER 2022



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Arcus Consultancy Services Ltd (Arcus) was commissioned by ERM on behalf of SSEN Transmission Ltd (the Applicant) to carry out a Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment (PLHRA) to support an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Craig Murrail Substation and associated infrastructure (the Development) as part of the Argyll and Kintyre 275 kV Substations Upgrade, located approximately 3 kilometres (km) north of Lochgilphead (the Site) at National Grid Ref. 187725 691030.

The proposed substation, Temporary Works Area (TWA), Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) attenuation pond and permanent access tracks (hereby known as the Proposed Development) will be subject to Town and Country Planning, while the OHL Tie-In, Temporary Diversion accompanying towers and temporary access track (hereby known as the Associated Development) will be submitted for Section 37 consent. The Site Layout Plan is shown on **Figure 1 in Appendix A** of this PLHRA.

This PLHRA has been prepared to inform Argyll & Bute Council (the Council) and statutory consultees of the estimated peat excavation and re-use potential, proposed peat and soils management methodologies to be employed during construction.

It should be noted that both Development's construction schedules will be aligned. Therefore, peat excavation and re-use will be considered within the wider scope of the Project.

This PLHRA will ensure the Project constitutes a construction project that complies with good practice in accordance with Scottish Renewables (SR) and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) guidance¹.

The PLHRA is accompanied by the following appendices:

- Appendix A: Figures;
- Appendix B: Site Photographs;
- Appendix C: Hazard Rank Calculations; and
- Appendix D: Peat Coring Records.

1.2 Scope and Purpose

The scope of this PLHRA is to:

- Review available desk-based information on the Site;
- Undertake a site walkover survey and peat probe surveys to characterise the prevailing ground conditions and identify existing or potential peat instability;
- Report on the findings of the survey and assess the potential instability risk and estimate the hazard from any potential peat slide; and
- Recommend mitigation measures and specific construction methodologies that should be considered during the construction period, if required.

This PLHRA provides factual information on the peat survey results relating to the Proposed Development and Associated Development. The desk-based information and site surveys have been utilised to assess the potential risk of any peat slide. The methodology adopted, and details on the assessment, are outlined in **Sections 3, 4 and 5** of this PLHRA. The

¹ Scottish Government (2017) Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments: Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2017/04/peat-landslide-hazard-risk-assessments-best-practice-guide-proposed-electricity/documents/00517176-pdf/00517176-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00517176.pdf> (Accessed 23/06/2022)

assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Scottish Government Guidance in assessing the likelihood, and consequence, of peat slide².

1.3 Project team

Team Member	Job Title	Qualifications	No. Years Experience
Gregor Hirst	Senior Engineer	BSc (Hons)	6 Years
David Ballentyne	Principal Engineer	BSc (Hons)	18 Years
Tomos Ap Tomos	Technical Director	BEng (Hons) MCIHT	25 Years

This assessment was undertaken by Gregor Hirst (BSc Hons), a Geo-Environmental Engineer of 6 years, and was supported by David Ballentyne a Geo-Environmental Civil Engineer with for over 18 years of experience in ground condition assessment. This Chapter has been technically reviewed by Tomos Ap Tomos, Technical Director of Engineering.

² Scottish Government (2017): Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments: Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments; Second Edition, April 2017 [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2017/04/peat-landslide-hazard-risk-assessments-best-practice-guide-proposed-electricity/documents/00517176-pdf/00517176-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00517176.pdf> (Accessed 23/06/2022)

2 SITE INFORMATION AND DESK STUDY

2.1 Site Description and Topography

The land within the site boundary (the Site) which contains the Proposed Development and Associated Development is located approximately 3 kilometres (km) north of Lochgilphead, covering an area of approximately 94 hectares (ha) centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 87742 91011. The Site is located within the administrative boundary of Argyle & Bute Council (the Council). The Site is adjacent to existing Forestry Land Scotland (FLS) track associated with Achnabreac Forest, accessed from the A816 near Cairnbarn.

Topographically the Site has a gradual slope throughout from north west to south east; however, no steep gradients were observed during the walkover and the proposed infrastructure is generally located in flatter areas. The elevation of the Site ranges from around 110 metres (m) Above Ordnance Survey Datum in the south east (AOD) to around 150 m AOD in the north western sector of the Site.

There are a number of drainage channels associated with the forestry plantation at the Site, including a surface water feature which passes through a culvert beneath a track which dissects the Site from north east to south west; however, there are no recorded watercourses or lochs present within the Site boundary.

The predominant land use within the Site is commercial forestry plantation.

2.2 Site Walkover

The purpose of the desk study and site visit was to gain a thorough understanding of site conditions including topography, geology, existing peat instability and hydrology. The outcome of this stage of the study was to determine which areas required detailed intrusive survey (by peat probing) and ultimately provide data for the assessment of PLHRA.

A site walkover was undertaken in November 2021 prior to the commencement of the peat probing exercise. The Site was examined for evidence of peatlands, presence of landslip and localised haggling. Geological mapping and areas of interest were pre-loaded to a handheld device for reference during the site walkover. Following a review of these in parallel with the initial site walkover, the desk study aimed to identify and or verify the following:

- The general condition of peat deposits;
- Evidence of any previous peat instability;
- The presence of low lying wet/peat lands; and
- Watercourses and other potential receptors.

2.2.1 Site Conditions

The Proposed Development and Associated Development are in an area of mature conifer woodland with potential for red squirrel, a protected species. It is underlain by class 5 peat and does not support peatland habitats. Lochgilphead is approximately 3 km to the south. Auchoish, long cairn Scheduled Monument is approximately 600 m to the west. Knapdale National Scenic Area is approximately 1.8 km to the north west of the Site.

Neither mining nor quarrying activities are known to have taken place at the Proposed Development or Associated Development.

Site photographs taken during the site walkover are included in **Appendix B**.

2.3 Published Geology

2.3.1 Superficial Soils

Available British Geological Survey (BGS)³ indicates an absence of superficial deposits across the entirety of the Site. However, given the rural upland location, a thin covering of peaty soil is anticipated across the majority of the site.

Figure 2 illustrates the 'Superficial Soils' map included in **Appendix A**.

2.3.2 Solid Geology

Published bedrock geology mapping information on solid geology indicates the eastern and southern sectors of the Site (where the proposed infrastructure is located) is underlain by Semipelite and Calcareous of the Ardrishaig Phyllite Formation. The remainder of the Site is underlain by Quartzite of the Crinan Grit Formation, other than various thin Sills and Dykes made up of intrusions of silica-poor magma, comprising a mixture of Metagabbro, Metamicrogabbro, Basalt and Metalimestone, which are present throughout the Site.

No geological faults or linear features are present at the Site or in the surrounding area.

Figure 3 illustrates the 'Solid Geology' included in **Appendix A**.

2.4 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

The Site is characterised by its generally flat topography, and lies in close proximity to a watershed running from the north to the south of the Site. Water therefore flows to the Lower Badden Burn to conference with and including the Auchoish Burn to the west and the Dippin/Cuilarstich Burn to the east. Both of these river systems drain to Loch Gilp.

Lower Badden Burn to conference with and including the Auchoish Burn, passes to the west of the Site and flows in a southerly direction. This watercourse has a SEPA overall classification⁴ of 'Moderate'. The Dippin/Cuilarstich Burn passes the Site to the east and also flows in a southerly direction, it has a SEPA overall classification of 'Moderate'.

Initial desk-based review indicated the Site is likely to be partially underlain by peat with significant quantities of pockets of deep peat in isolated areas.

The SEPA Aquifer Classification Map of Scotland⁵ reveals that the Site is situated within an area underlain by a low productivity aquifer where flow is virtually all through fractures and other discontinuities.

The SEPA River Basin Management Plan Interactive Map reveals that the Site is underlain by the Oban and Kintyre groundwater body. This groundwater body is classified by SEPA under the Water Framework Directive⁶ as having a status of Good.

Figure 4 illustrates the Geomorphology of the Site and is included in **Appendix A**

2.5 Historical Landslip and Geomorphology

No evidence of historic landslip or peat haggling was noted during the Site walkover and topsoil, where undisturbed, generally appeared to be in good condition. Due to the presence of extensive forestry plantations at the Site, it is considered that properties of the

³ British Geological Survey (2019) Geology of Britain [Online] Available at: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (Accessed 01/06/22)

⁴ SEPA Water Classification Hub (2020) [Online] Available at: [Water Classification Hub \(sepa.org.uk\)](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water-classification-hub) (Accessed 01/06/2022)

⁵ Scotland's Environment (2019) SEPA Aquifer Classification Map of Scotland [Online] Available at: <https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/> (Accessed 01/06/22)

⁶ European Parliament (2000) Directive 2000/60/EC [Online] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:5c835afb-2ec6-4577-bdf8-756d3d694eeb.0004.02/DOC_1&format=PDF (Accessed 01/06/22)

peat deposits may have been altered and may not pose the same risk of instability as undisturbed peat. Nonetheless, the possibility of instability within peat soils cannot be discounted, especially where there are significant topographic variances and the presence of watercourses, and when there could be future deforestation.

3 SITE SURVEYS AND RESULTS

3.1 Investigations

The existing peat depths across the Site have been determined through a peat probe survey undertaken as recommended in the NatureScot (formally Scottish Natural Heritage), Scottish Government and James Hutton Institute guidance for investigating peat⁷.

The probe positions for the survey were determined by the proposed layout of the Proposed Development and Associated Development and provided detailed information across the various proposed infrastructure at frequencies as follows:

- Substation – 10 m x 10 m grid to the extent of the proposed footprint;
- Temporary Works Area – 25 m x 25 m grid; and
- Tracks – Every 50 m along the centreline with perpendicular offsets, 15-25 m either side.

It should be acknowledged that natural variations in peat depth/thickness could occur between probe positions, although areas of infrastructure have undergone intensely spaced probing and this would be less likely.

3.2 Summary of Peat Depths

Throughout the peat survey, a total of 483 probes were progressed. The average peat depth across the Site is 1.22 m with over 31% of probes recording depths of 0.5 m or less and a majority of probes recording peat depths of 1.00 m or less. Despite a relatively high percentage of probes recording peat depths in excess of 1.0 m, depths are largely consistent across the Site with less than 22% of locations recording peat at depths greater than 2.0 m.

The maximum peat depth recorded at the Site was 4.5 m in the north eastern sector of the Site. Peat depths of up to 2.9 m were also recorded along the south eastern edge of the proposed substation and up to 3.5 m in the vicinity of the proposed tower in the southern sector of the Site.

Table 1 summarises the recorded peat depths.

Table 1: Peat Depth Summary

Peat Depth Range (m)	Nº of Peat Probes	Percentage of Total
0.00 - 0.50	150	31.1
0.51 - 1.00	98	20.3
1.01 - 1.50	75	15.5
1.51 - 2.00	55	11.4
2.01 - 2.50	55	11.4
2.51 - 3.00	36	7.5
>3.00	14	2.9
Σ =	483	

The peat probe locations and depths are shown on **Figure 5** appended with this PLHRA, and detailed probing records are included in **Appendix C**. The Interpolated Peat Depths were determined using the Inverse Distance Weighting (IDW) method of interpolation to a resolution of 5 m and are illustrated on **Figure 6**.

⁷ Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage and James Hutton Institute (2017) Guidance on Developments on Peatland (Online). Available at: [Guidance+on+developments+on+peatland+-+peatland+survey+-+2017.pdf \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0044/0044_0001.pdf) [Accessed 23/06/2022].

3.3 Peat Cores

Peat cores were also obtained from selected areas of the Site where peat probing had identified areas of deep peat, in order to further characterise the peatland. The methodology in which the peat coring was undertaken was guided by the Peatland Survey (2017) *Guidance on Developments on Peatland*⁸, commissioned by the Scottish Government, Scottish National Heritage (now NatureScot) and SEPA. An outline of the methodology along with photographs and characterisation of the peat cores are presented in the Peat Coring Records in **Appendix D**.

Humification of peat is determined using the Von Post scale which indicates the degree to which peat has undergone humification or, more correctly, a type of decomposition which includes breakdown under anaerobic conditions. The Von Post Scale (H) ranges from 1 to 10, the higher the number the higher the degree of humification.

The core samples were obtained to depths ranging from 1.8 m to 3.0 m and humification values ranged between 3 and 9, generally becoming more humified with depth, as presented in the Peat Coring Records along with definitions of the Von Post values in **Appendix D**.

⁸ Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, SEPA (2017) Peatland Survey. *Guidance on Developments on Peatland*.

4 GUIDANCE AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Overview of Guidance and Peat Failure Mechanisms

4.1.1 Peat Depth and Slope

The Scottish Government guidance divides peat instability into two categories: 'peat slides' and 'bog bursts'. The guidance states that peat slides have a greater risk of occurrence in areas where:

- Peat is encountered at or near to ground surface level;
- The thicknesses are recorded in the region of 2.0 m (above which, in general terms, peat instability would increase with peat thickness); and
- The slope gradients are steep (between 5° and 15°).

Bog bursts are considered to have a greater risk of occurrence in areas where:

- Peat depth is greater than 1.5 m; and
- Slope gradients are shallow (between 2° and 10°).

It should be noted however that peat instability events, although uncommon, can occur out with these limits. Reports of bog bursts are generally restricted to the Republic and Northern Ireland.

Further to the general guidance above, in relation to peat depth, it is considered that the extent and depth of peat is controlled to a degree by rainfall and elevation, giving rise to three common types of peat (Boylan et al. 2008⁹):

- Upland Blanket Bog: Blanket bogs are typically about 3 m thick however; they can be up to 5 m thick. Generally thinning at greater elevations;
- Raised Bog: Raised bogs generally tend to be 3-12 m thick, averaging 7 m with their growth occurring above the water table; and
- Lowland Blanket Bog: Much the same as the upland version; however, they form around sea level in areas of very high rainfall.

Generally, the potential for peat instability increases with peat depth, however other instability indicators need considered, namely slope and substrate.

4.1.2 Substrate

Peat slide failures tend to occur at the interface of the peat and underlying substrate therefore, understanding the nature of the underlying substrate can provide a key factor when considering the risk stability.

Using the peat probe refusal, an estimation of the underlying materials can be determined based on:

- Gradual refusal – Clay;
- Crunching/Gritty – Weathered Rock/Sand and Gravel; or
- Abrupt Refusal/Hard – Rock.

Where sand and/or gravel is recorded, the interface is considered to be the best-case scenario with the highest friction value.

Where clay is recorded, the upper horizons of the clay are typically softened through poor drainage in this soil group with low shear strengths expected. While rock substrate provides a high strength, the surface being smooth can lead to a weak interface, with similar risk to that of a clay substrate.

⁹ Boylan et al (2008) Peat Slope Failure in Ireland

The presence of slip material, or evidence of peat instability would represent the worst-case scenario for the assessment of substrate.

The substrate parameters are included in the Hazard and Exposure Assessment in **Section 5** of this PLHRA.

4.1.3 Other Considerations

Preparatory factors which effect the stability of peat slopes in the short to medium-term include:

- Loss of surface vegetation (deforestation);
- Changes in sub-surface hydrology;
- Increase in the mass of peat through accumulation, increase in water content and growth of tree planting; or
- Reduction in shear strength of peat or substrate due to chemical or physical weathering, progressive creep and tension cracking.

Triggering factors which can have immediate effect on peat stability and act on susceptible slopes include:

- Intensive rainfall or snow melt causing pressures along existing or potential peat/substrate interfaces;
- Snow melt;
- Alterations to drainage patterns, both surface and sub-surface;
- Peat extraction at the toe of the slope reducing the support of the upslope material;
- Peat loading (commonly due to stockpiling) causing an increase in shear stress; and
- Earthquakes or rapid ground accelerations such as due to blasting or mechanical movement.

Consideration of peat stability should form an integral part of the design of infrastructure to be constructed on peatlands. While peat does not wholly provide a development constraint, areas of deep peat or peat deposits on steep slope should be either avoided through design and micro-siting; or mitigation measures should be designed to avoid instability and movement.

4.2 Methodology

Despite being an application under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997¹⁰, the PLHRA has been carried out in accordance with the Energy Consents Unit, Scottish Government guidance of 2017 titled Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments - Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Developments¹¹.

In June 2014, Scottish Planning Policy¹² (SPP) and National Planning Framework (NPF3)¹³ were published. In relation to peat and the assessment of effects on resource, NPF3 references SNH Scotland's National Peatland Plan¹⁴. These policy, framework and guidance documents are considered in this PLHRA.

¹⁰ Scottish Government (1997) Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 [Online] Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/contents> (Accessed 20/08/22)

¹¹ Scottish Government (2017) Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment: Best Practice Guide for Proposed Electricity Generation Development [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/04/8868> (Accessed 20/08/22)

¹² Scottish Government (2014) Scottish Planning Policy [Online] Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/Policy> (Accessed 20/08/22)

¹³ Scottish Government (2014) National Planning Framework 3 [Online] Available at: <http://scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00453683.pdf> (Accessed 20/08/22)

¹⁴ SNH (2015) Scotland's National Peatland Plan [Online] Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/climate-change/taking-action/carbon-management/restoring-scotlands-peatlands/scotlands-national-peatland-plan> (Accessed 20/08/22)

The PLHRA undertaken is based on:

- Desk based assessment;
- Site Walkover;
- Infrastructure specific probing; and
- A hazard and risk ranking assessment.

The area of the Site subject to assessment was determined by the Proposed Development and Associated Development layout which considered both recorded peat deposits as well as other physical and environmental constraints.

4.2.1 Development of Hazard Rank

The early stages of the PLHRA including the desk study, site visit and peat probing were carried out in parallel with the assessment of wider constraints to inform the layout of the Proposed Development and Associated Development. Following identification of peat depths within the Site, the assessment has determined the potential effects on the peat resource from construction activities which would include:

- Construction of tracks;
- Foundation construction;
- Construction of hardstanding; and
- Temporary storage of peat and soils.

An assessment of the peat probing data and a review against desk study information was undertaken and a hazard rank was calculated for different zones across the site reflecting risk of peat instability/constraint to construction.

Where practical, the Proposed Development and Associated Development design would be progressed to avoid areas of a risk score above 'low'. Where this would not be achievable, areas affected would be discussed as having significant effect, with relative mitigation measures proposed to reduce this, and recorded on a risk register which sets out specific mitigation measures which are considered necessary to reduce the risk of inducing instability.

Details of the hazard and risk ranking assessment is included in **Sections 5 and 6** of this PLHRA.

5 HAZARD AND EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT

5.1 Background

A 'Hazard Ranking' system has been applied across the Site based on the analysis of risk of peat slide as outlined in the Scottish Government guidance. This is applied on the principle:

$$\text{Hazard Ranking} = \text{Hazard} \times \text{Exposure}$$

Where 'Hazard' represents the likelihood of any peat slide event occurring and 'Exposure' being the impact or consequences that a peat slide may have on sensitive receptors that exist on and around the Site.

5.2 Methodology

The determination of Hazard and Exposure values is based on a number of variables which impact the likelihood of a peat slide (the Hazard), and the relative importance of these variables specific to the Site.

Similarly, the consequences or Exposure to receptors is dependent on variables including the particular scale of a peat slide, the distance it will travel and the sensitivity of the receptor.

In the absence of a predefined system, the approach to determining and categorising Hazard and Exposure is determined on a Site by Site basis. The particular system adopted for the PLHRA assessment is outlined in the following sub sections.

5.3 Hazard Assessment

The potential for a peat slide to occur during the construction depends on several factors, the importance of which can vary from Site to Site. The factors requiring considerations would typically include:

- Peat depth;
- Slope gradient;
- Substrate material;
- Evidence of instability or potential instability;
- Vegetation cover; and
- Hydrology.

Of these, peat depth and slope gradient are considered to be principal factors. Without a sufficient peat depth and a prevailing slope, peat slide hazard would be negligible.

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Of these, peat depth and slope gradient are considered to be principal factors. Without a sufficient peat depth and a prevailing slope, peat slide hazard would be negligible.

The Slope Gradient has been established using a Digital Terrain Model (DTM) to a resolution of 5 m which is illustrated in **Figure 7**. For the Proposed Development and Associated Development, the substrate material is also considered a relevant factor in relation to slide.

Vegetation cover and evidence of instability or potential instability were assessed during site surveys and, alongside satellite photography, informed the Geomorphology Map

presented in **Figure 4**. This information was also considered during the adoption of hazard zones across the Site, which are presented in **Figure 9**: Hazard Rank Zonation Plan.

Due to the nature of the assessment and number of data points used to establish hazard ranking, gathering hydrological data at each probe point through the use of groundwater boreholes and a subsequent monitoring period is considered impractical. Therefore, an assumption on groundwater levels has been adopted for the assessment that 90% of the peat at each probe location is below the water table. As such, it is assumed that the water table across the Site is relatively high.

5.4 Hazard Rating

When several factors may impact on the Hazard potential, a relative ranking process is applied attributing different weighting to each factor as shown below.

Table 2: Coefficients for Slope Gradients

Slope Angle (degrees)	Slope Angle Coefficients
Slope < 2°	1
2° < Slope < 4°	2
4° < Slope < 8°	4
8° < Slope < 15°	6
Slope >15°	8

Table 3: Coefficients for Peat Thickness and ground conditions

Peat Thickness	Ground Conditions Coefficients
Peaty or organic soil (<0.5 m)	1
Thin Peat (0.5 – 1.0 m)	2
Deep Peat (>1.0 m)	3*
Deep Peat (>3.0 m)	8

* - Note that thicker peat generally occurs in areas of shallow gradient and records and research indicate that thick peat does not generally occur on the steeper gradients.

Table 4: Coefficients for Substrate

Substrate Material	Substrate Coefficients
Sand/gravel	1
Rock	1.5
Clay	2
Not proven	2
Slip material (Existing materials)	5

The Hazard Rating Coefficient for a particular location is calculated using the following equation:

$$\text{Hazard Rating Coefficient} = \text{Slope Gradient} \times \text{Peat Thickness} \times \text{Substrate}$$

From the Hazard Rating Coefficient, the risk to stability can be ranked as set out in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Hazard Rating

Hazard Rating Co-efficient	Potential Stability Risk (Pre-Mitigation)
<5	Negligible
5 to 15	Low
16 to 30	Medium
31 to 50	High
> 50	Very High

5.5 Peat Stability Assessment

The likelihood of a particular slope or hillside failing can be expressed as a Factor of Safety. For any potential failure surface, there is a balance between the weight of the potential landslide (driving force or shear force) and the inherent strength of the soil or rock within the hillside (shear resistance).

The guidance states that the 'Infinite Slope' method of analysis, after Skempton and DeLory (1957), is the most well established and commonly applied method for the assessment of peat slope stability. The stability of a slope can be assessed by calculating the factor of safety F , which is the ratio of the sum of resisting forces (shear strength) and the sum of the destabilising forces (shear stress):

$$F = \frac{c' + (\gamma - m\gamma_w)z \cos^2 \beta \tan \phi'}{\gamma z \sin \beta \cos \beta}$$

Where c' is the effective cohesion, γ is the bulk unit weight of saturated peat, γ_w is the unit weight of water, m is the height of the water table as a fraction of the peat depth, z is the peat depth in the direction of normal stress, β is the angle of the slope to the horizontal and ϕ' is the effective angle of internal friction. Values of $F < 1$ indicate a slope would have undergone failure under the conditions modelled; values of $F > 1$ suggest conditions of stability.

Assumed geotechnical parameters have been utilised in the formula to inform the stability assessment, based on literature values to inform the stability analysis, as included in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Literature for Geotechnical Parameters of Peat

Reference	Effective Cohesion C' (kPa)	Effective Angle of Friction ϕ (°)	Unit Weight γ (kN/m ²)	Comments
Hanrahan et al (1967) ¹⁵	5.5 – 6.1	36.6 - 43.5	-	Remoulded H4 Sphagnum peat
Hollingshead and Raymond (1972) ¹⁶	4.0	34	-	-
Hollingshead and Raymond (1972)	2.4 – 4.7	27.1 – 35.4	-	Sphagnum peat (H3, mainly fibrous)
Carling (1986) ¹⁷	6.52	0	10	-
Kirk (2001) ¹⁸	2.7 – 8.2	26.1 – 30.4		Ombrotrophic blanket peat
Warburton et al (2003) ¹⁹	5.0	23	9.68	Basal Peat
Warburton et al (2003)	8.74	21.6	9.68	Fibrous Peat

¹⁵ Hanrahan et al (1967) - Hanrahan, E.T., Dunne, J.M., and Sodha, V.G. 1967. Shear strength of peat. Proceedings Geotechnical Conference, Oslo, Vol. 1, pp. 193–198.

¹⁶ Hollingshead and Raymond (1972) - Hollingshead, G.W., and Raymond, G.P. 1972. Field loading tests on Muskeg, Canadian Geotechnical Journal, 9(3): 278–289.

¹⁷ Carling (1986) - Peat slides in Teesdale and Weardale, northern pennines, July 1983: Description and failure mechanisms

¹⁸ Kirk (2001) - Initiation of a multiple peat slide on Cullcagh Mountain, Northern Ireland

¹⁹ Warburton et al (2003) - Anatomy of a Pennine peat slide, Northern England

Dykes and Kirk (2006)	3.2	30.4	9.61	Acrotelm
Dykes and Kirk (2006)	4.0	28.8	9.71	Catotelm

C' – effective cohesion (kPa), typically ranging from 2.5 to 8.5 therefore 5.0 has been adopted for the purposes of the assessment.

ϕ – effective angle of friction ($^{\circ}$), typically ranging from 21.6 to 43.5 therefore 29.6 has been adopted for the purposes of the assessment.

γ – unit weight (kN/m²), typically ranging from 9.61 to 10, therefore 10 has been adopted for the purposes of the assessment.

In accordance with the best practice method, F values of <1.0 indicate slopes that would experience failure under the modelled conditions and as such are considered areas of high risk. However, Boylan et al (2008) indicate that a relatively high value of F=1.4 should be used to identify slopes with the potential for instability. Adopting this approach, high risk areas are indicated where F is <1.0, medium risk areas are indicated as 1.01 to 1.50 and >1.5 are low risk.

Using digital terrain modelling and GPS co-ordinates of each peat probe, a factor of Safety, F has been calculated for each probe locations which has been interpolated through ArcGIS Spatial Analyst tools. The Factor of Safety Assessment provides a sense check of the ranking based system, providing an absolute approach to the 'Factor of Safety Plan' is shown on **Figure 8**.

The results of the Factor of Safety calculations indicated all points on the Site as low risk. This was primarily due to the light undulating topography and generally flat-lying conditions on the Site.

5.6 Exposure Assessment

The main Exposure receptors identified within the Site and surrounding area which could potentially be affected in the event of a peat slide were existing and/or proposed infrastructure, watercourses and associated tributaries and sensitive habitats.

The impact of a peat slide on receptors can be assessed on a relative scale based on the potential for loss of habitat, a historical feature or disruption/danger to the public. To effectively assess the impact, the assessment of Exposure effect must also consider the distance between the hazard and the receptor, and the relative elevation between the two.

5.7 Exposure Rating

Similar to the Hazard Rating, the Exposure Ratings were determined using relative ranking process by attributing the different weighting systems to each factor as shown below:

Table 7: Coefficients for Receptor Type

Receptor	Receptor Coefficients
Road, path or track	3
Minor water feature	6
Site infrastructure	6
Dwelling	8
Major water feature	8
Blanket bog	8

Table 8: Coefficients for Distance from Receptor

Distance from Receptor	Distance Coefficients
> 1 km	1
100 m to 1 km	2
10 m to 100 m	3
<10 m	4

Table 9: Coefficients for Receptor Elevation

Receptor Elevation	Elevation Coefficients
< 10 m	1
10 m to 50 m	2
50 m to 100 m	3
> 100 m	4

The Exposure Rating Coefficient for a particular location is calculated using the following equation:

$$\text{Exposure Rating Coefficient} = \text{Receptor} \times \text{Distance} \times \text{Elevation}$$

From the Exposure Rating Coefficient, the risk to stability can be ranked as set out in **Table 10**.

Table 10: Exposure Rating

Exposure Rating Co-efficient	Potential Stability Risk (Pre-Mitigation)
<6	Very Low
6 to12	Low
13 to 24	High
24 to 30	Very High
>30	Extremely High

5.8 Rating Normalisation

In order to achieve an overall Hazard Ranking in accordance with the Scottish Government Guidance, the Hazard and Exposure Rating Coefficient derived from the coefficient tables are normalised as shown in **Table 11**.

Table 11: Rating Normalisation

Hazard Rating		Exposure Rating	
Current Scale	Normalised Scale	Current Scale	Normalised Scale
< 5 Negligible	1	<6 Very Low	1
5 to 15 Low	2	6 to 12 Low	2
15 to 30 Medium	3	13 to 24 High	3

30 to 50 High	4	25 to 30 Very High	4
>50 Very high	5	>30 Extremely High	5

The record of the Hazard Rank Assessment is included in **Appendix C** of this PLHRA.

6 HAZARD RANKING

Having identified the rating coefficients in **Section 5** of this PLHRA, it is possible to categorise areas of the Site with a Hazard Ranking by multiplying the Hazard and Exposure Rating. Hazard Ranking and associated suggested actions matrix are shown in **Tables 12** and **13** below:

Table 12: Hazard Ranking and Suggested Actions

Hazard Ranking		Action Suggested in the Scottish Executive Guidance
17-25	High	Avoid project development at these locations.
11-16	Medium	Project should not proceed unless hazard can be avoided or mitigated at these locations, without significant environmental impact, in order to reduce hazard ranking to low or less
5-10	Low	Project may proceed pending further investigation to refine assessment. Mitigation of hazards maybe required through micro-siting or re-design at these locations.
1-4	Negligible	Project should proceed with monitoring and mitigation of peat landslide hazards at these locations as appropriate.

Table 13: Hazard Ranking Matrix

Hazard Rating	5	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
	4	Negligible	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	3	Negligible	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	2	Negligible	Negligible	Low	Low	Low
	1	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Low
		1	2	3	4	5
		Exposure Rating				

Receptor exposure was assessed for each of the five hazard zones using the approach in **Section 5**. A summary of the Hazard Ranking result for each identified area is summarised in **Table 14** and is presented in **Figure 9** - Hazard Ranking Zonation Plan. The zonation is based on a combination of considerations including calculated hazard result, peat depth, topography, receptors and land uses.

7 SLIDE RISK AND MITIGATION

7.1 General

The PLHRA has shown the Site to be of 'negligible' and 'low' hazard ranking with no areas of 'medium' or 'high' hazard ranking.

Of the 483 probe points, all were 'negligible' other than nine where 'low' hazard rankings were recorded. No 'medium' or 'high' risk areas have been identified within the Proposed Development or Associated Development and therefore a significant risk of peat slide is not considered to present based on the Hazard Ranking assessment. Nonetheless, a risk from peat slide may still exist and mitigation measures as outlined in **Section 7.3** of this PLHRA should be applied to minimise any risk.

Where the hazard ranking has been lowered through mitigation measures, the original ranking will remain in the overall hazard zoning plan. It should be acknowledged that the hazard zonation plan is based on the pre-mitigation status.

While specific recommended mitigation in 'low' ranked areas are proposed, other mitigation is embedded in the design. It is also necessary for detailed design and construction of the Proposed Development and Associated Development to be undertaken in a competent and controlled manner.

The embedded mitigation and good practice measures are set out in **Section 7.2** of this PLHRA. It should be noted that the mitigation measures defined are not exclusive and other forms of mitigation may well be required and should be implemented during construction of the Proposed Development and Associated Development.

Table 14: Hazard Ranking

Hazard Area and Infrastructure		Unmitigated Hazard		Mitigated Hazard	
Hazard Area	Infrastructure Affected	Ranking	Key Aspects	Specific Actions	Ranking
H1	Proposed Substation	Low	Location and topography: Zone covering northern quarter of the proposed substation in the western Site area. Hydrology: No watercourses run through this hazard zone Peat Depth: 0.1 m - 2.5 m. Generally, <1.0 m Slope Gradient: 0° to <10° Exposure: Proposed infrastructure	Best practice measures in relation to drainage prior to and during construction will be implemented as outlined in Annex J: Water Construction Environmental Management Plan (WCEMP) and management of peat and peaty soils as outlined in Annex N: Peat Management Plan (PMP) . During construction visual inspections and monitoring in	Negligible

Hazard Area and Infrastructure		Unmitigated Hazard		Mitigated Hazard	
				areas with the potential for peat slide risk should take place.	
H2	Proposed Substation	Negligible	<p>Location and topography: South western Site area covering remaining three quarters of the Proposed Substation area.</p> <p>Hydrology: No watercourses run through this hazard zone</p> <p>Peat Depth: 0.0 m – 3.1 m. Generally, <2.00 m</p> <p>Slope Gradient: 0° to <30°</p> <p>Exposure: Proposed infrastructure</p>	Best practice measures in relation to drainage prior to and during construction will be implemented as outlined in Annex J: WCEMP and management of peat and peaty soils as outlined in Annex N: PMP .	Negligible
H3	Proposed Temporary Access Track, Pylon 2 and SUDS Attenuation Pond	Low	<p>Location and topography: Flat area covering the southern sector of the Site</p> <p>Hydrology: No watercourses run through this hazard zone</p> <p>Peat Depth: 1.80 m – 3.50 m. Generally, <3.00 m</p> <p>Slope Gradient: 0° to <5°</p> <p>Exposure: Proposed infrastructure</p>	Best practice measures in relation to drainage prior to and during construction will be implemented as outlined in Annex J: WCEMP and management of peat and peaty soils as outlined in Annex N: PMP . During construction visual inspections and monitoring in areas with the potential for peat slide risk should take place.	Negligible
H4	Proposed Temporary Access Track, Pylon 1	Negligible	Location and topography: Area covering the south	Best practice measures in relation to drainage prior to	Negligible

Hazard Area and Infrastructure		Unmitigated Hazard		Mitigated Hazard	
			eastern sector of the Site Hydrology: No watercourses run through this hazard zone Peat Depth: 0.1 m – 2.3 m. Generally, <1.00 m Slope Gradient: 0° to <10° Exposure: Proposed tracks	and during construction will be implemented as outlined in Annex J: WCEMP and management of peat and peaty soils as outlined in Annex N: PMP .	
H5	Proposed Temporary Works Area and Temporary Track	Negligible	Location and topography: Large area covering the north eastern sector of the Site Hydrology: No watercourses run through this hazard zone Peat Depth: 0.1 m – 4.5 m. Generally, <1.50 m Slope Gradient: 0° to <15° Exposure: Proposed infrastructure	Best practice measures in relation to drainage prior to and during construction will be implemented as outlined in Annex J: WCEMP and management of peat and peaty soils as outlined in Annex N: PMP .	Negligible

7.2 Embedded Mitigation

Embedded mitigation includes measures taken during design of the Proposed Development and Associated Development to reduce the potential for peat slide risk. In summary the principal measures that have been taken are:

- Locating infrastructure on shallower slopes, where possible; and
- Locating infrastructure on areas of shallow peat (or no peat) where possible.

7.3 Peat Slide Mitigation Recommendations

The following mitigation measures should be adopted post consent stage to validate the PLHRA and influence the detailed design of the Proposed Development and Associated Development, including:

- Ground investigations prior to detailed design;

- Identification of areas sensitive to changes in drainage regime prior to detailed design;
- Update the PLHRA as necessary following detailed ground investigations;
- Development of a drainage strategy that will not create areas of concentrated flow and will not affect the current peatland hydrology;
- Design of a Development drainage system for tracks and hardstanding that will require minimal ongoing maintenance during the operation of the substation;
- Inspection and maintenance of the drainage systems during construction and operation;
- Identification of suitable areas for stockpiling material during construction prior to commencement of works; and
- Consideration of specific construction methods appropriate for infrastructure in peat land (i.e. geogrids) as part of design Development.

8 CONCLUSIONS

This PLHRA has been undertaken for the Proposed Development and Associated Development in accordance with best practice, as detailed in **Section 4.2** of the PLHRA. The early stages of the assessment included a desk study, historic peat probing across the Site, followed by completion of Phase 1 peat probing and a further intensive probing exercise on the finalised Site layout design. The information gathered during this investigation was used to develop a Hazard Ranking across the Site.

The findings of the probing indicate that the majority of the Proposed Development and Associated Development are underlain by peat less than 1.25 m in thickness with the exception of P2 which lies in an area where peat was recorded up to 3.5 m. While pockets of deep peat were recorded during the peat probing, deeper across the wider site area, the Proposed Development and Associated Development were designed to largely avoid these areas.

Based on the scope of the study, the PLHRA has indicated that the majority of the Site is generally of 'negligible' hazard ranking with two areas highlighted as 'low' hazard ranking.

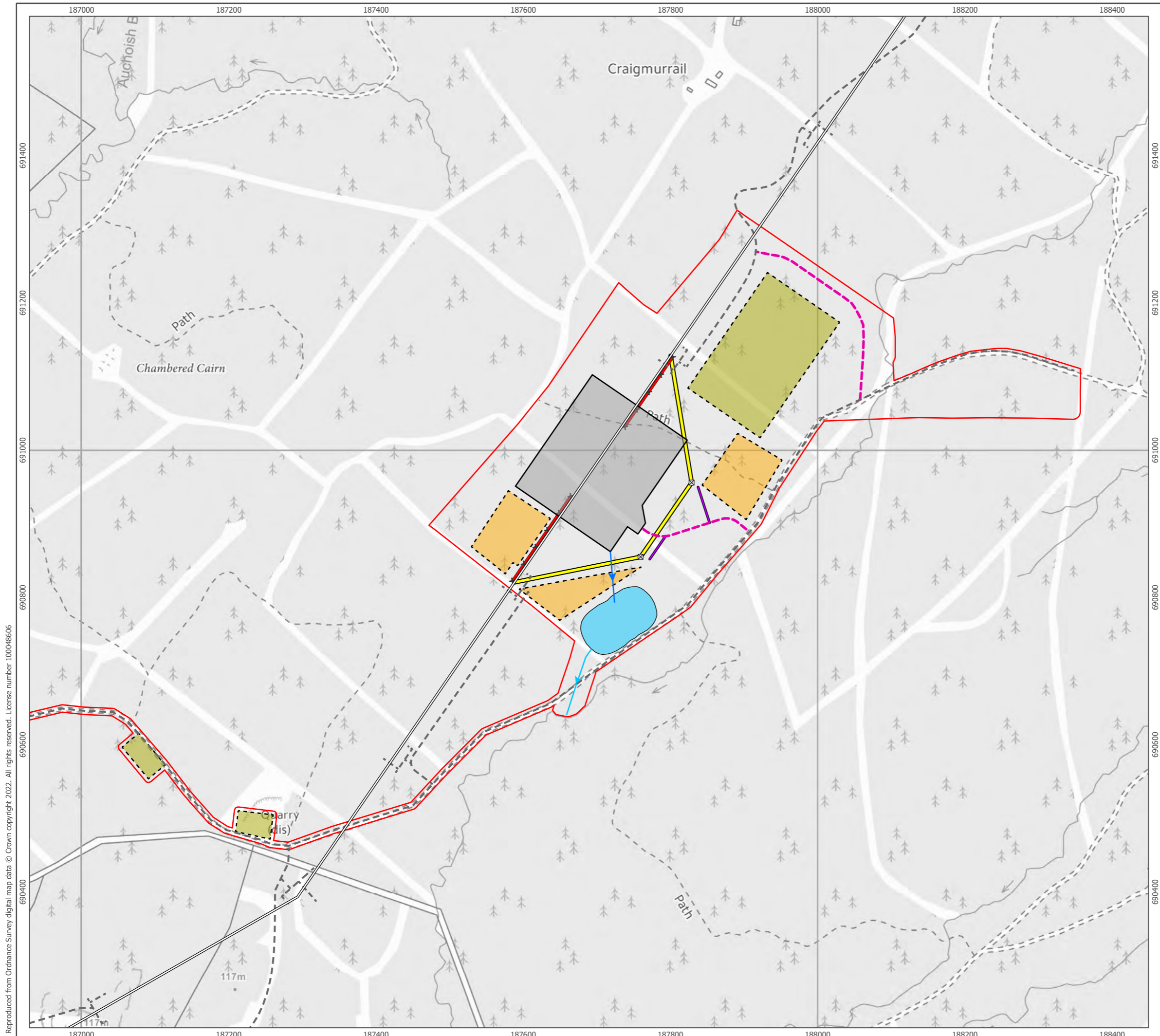
Notwithstanding the findings of the PLHRA, the final design of infrastructure should be carefully sited and micro-siting adopted if required in order to maintain the design objective of avoiding any potential peat slide risk.

9 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The following sources of information were used as part of the desk study investigations:

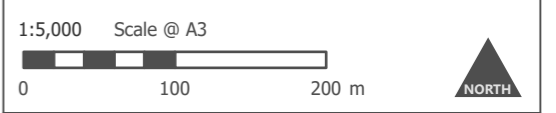
- British Geological Survey - Online GeoIndex;
- Ordnance Survey (OS) topographical information;
- Aerial and Satellite photography.
- Soil Survey of Scotland - MacAulay Institute for Soil Research (1984);
- Soil Survey of Scotland - Scottish Peat Surveys (1964);
- Scottish Government - Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessments (2017);
- Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, SEPA (2017) Peatland Survey, Guidance on Developments on Peatland;
- The Scottish Government - Scotland's Third National Planning Framework (2014);
- The Scottish Government - Scottish Planning Policy (2014);
- Assessments by other technical specialists (specifically hydrology and ecology for data on sensitive receptors); and
- Scotland's Environment Interactive Map.

APPENDIX A - FIGURES



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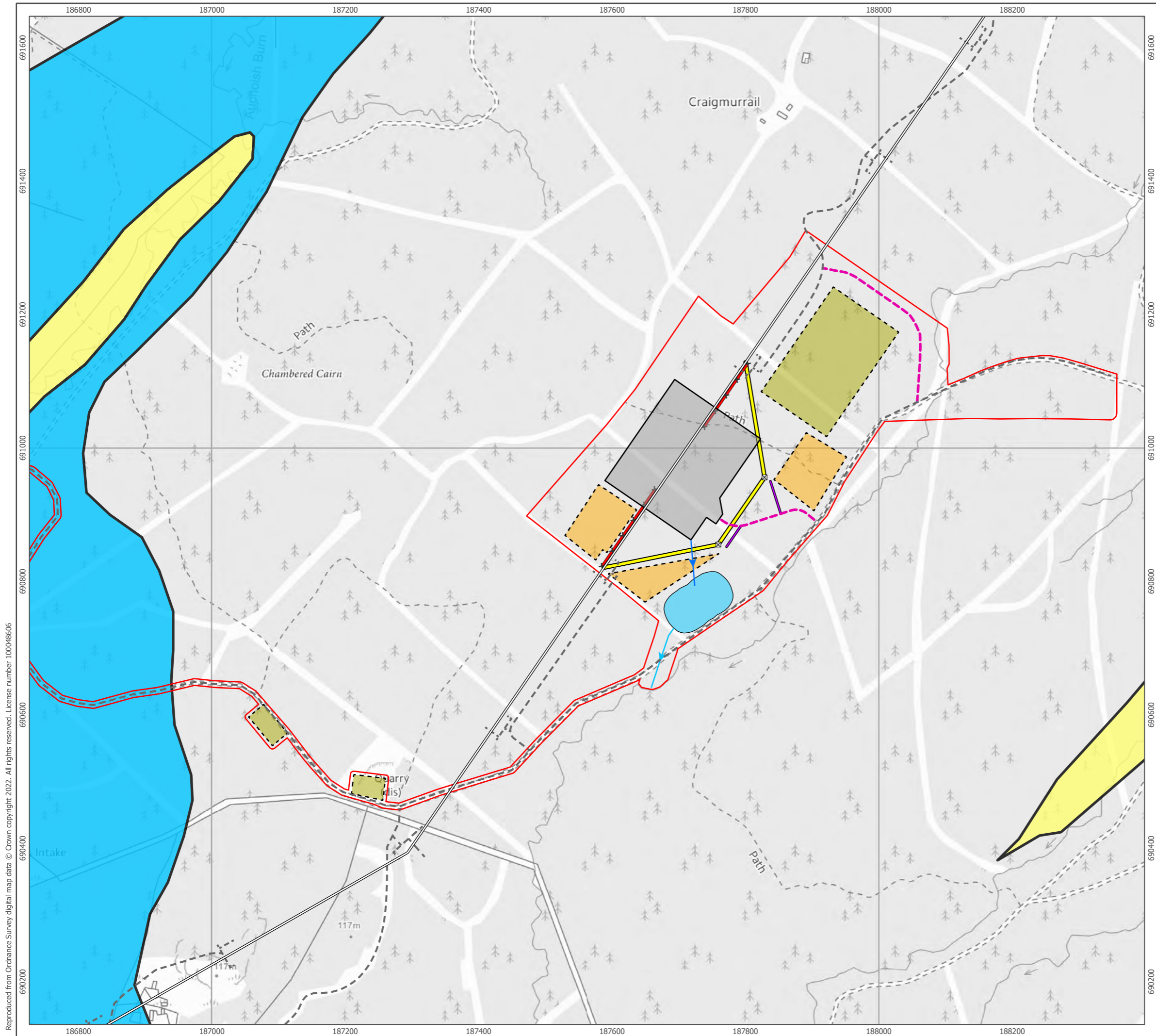
- Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
- - - Existing Access Track
- Proposed Development:**
- ▭ Town & Country Planning Boundary
- ▬ Proposed Permanent Access Track
- SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- ▭ Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- ▭ Proposed Substation Layout
- ▭ SUDs Pond
- ▭ Temporary Peat Storage Area
- Associated Development:**
- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downleads
- ▬ Temporary Access Track
- ▬ Temporary OHL Diversion



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Site Layout Plan
Figure P.1

Craig Murraill
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment



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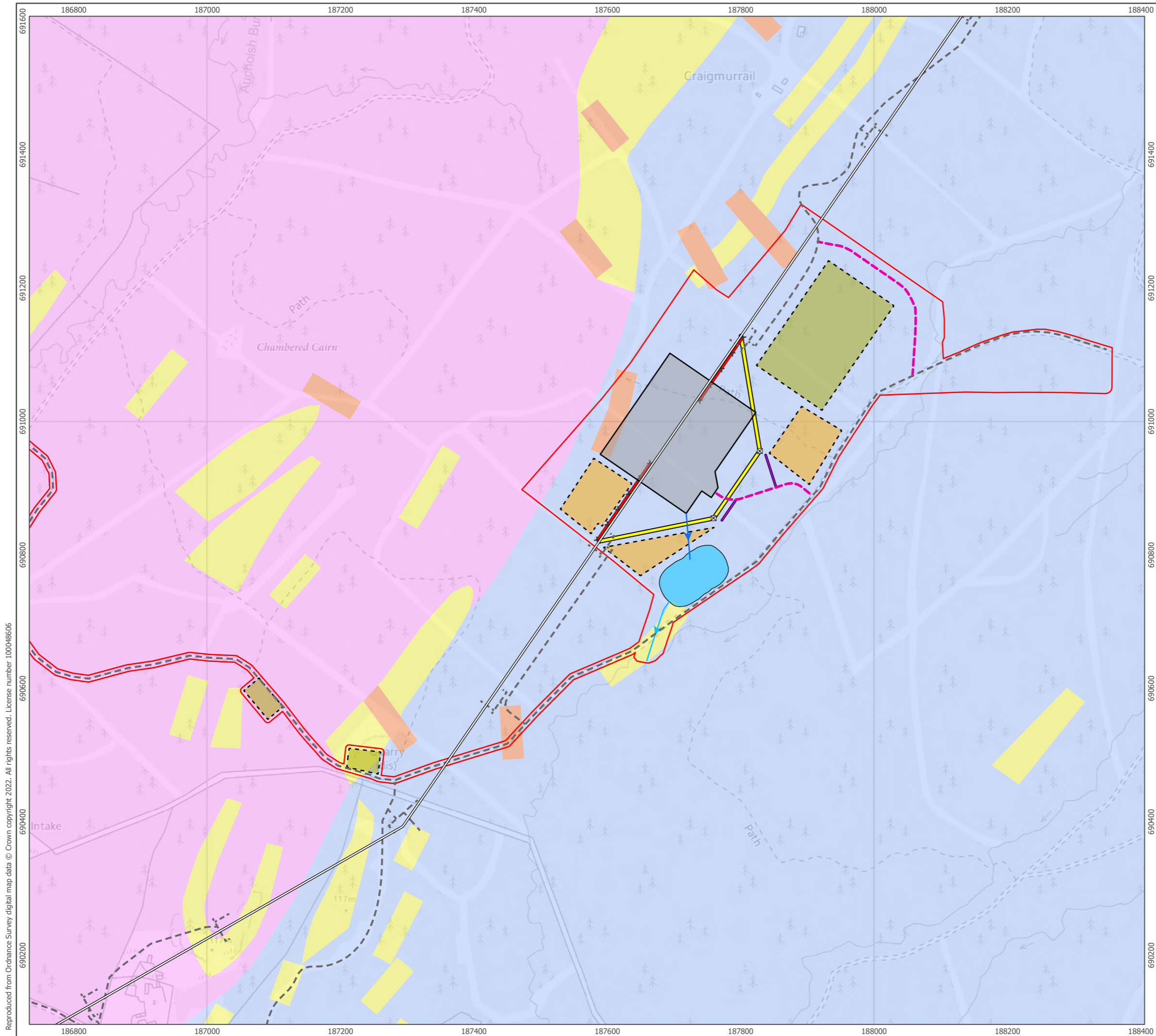
- Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
- - - Existing Access Track
- Proposed Development:**
- ▭ Town & Country Planning Boundary
- ▬ Proposed Permanent Access Track
- SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- ▭ Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- ▭ Proposed Substation Layout
- ▭ SUDs Pond
- ▭ Temporary Peat Storage Area
- Associated Development:**
- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downloads
- ▬ Temporary Access Track
- ▬ Temporary OHL Diversion
- Superficial Soils**
- ▭ Alluvium
- ▭ Till, Devensian
- ▭ Superficial Soils Not Mapped

1:5,500 Scale @ A3



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Superficial Soils
 Figure P.2

Craig Murrail
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment



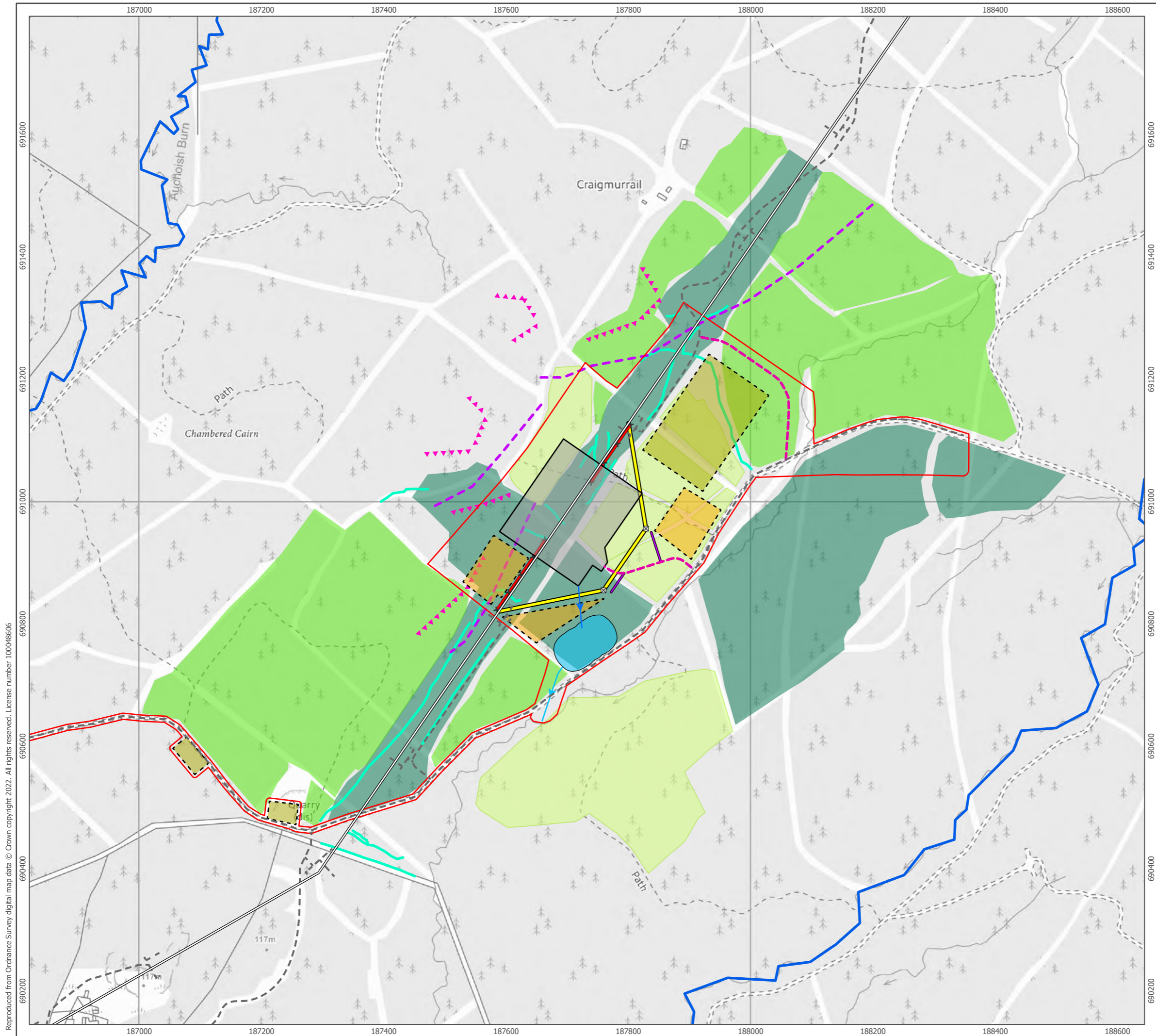
- Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
- - - Existing Access Track
- Proposed Development:**
- Town & Country Planning Boundary
- Proposed Permanent Access Track
- ▶ SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- ▶ SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- Proposed Substation Layout
- SUDs Pond
- Temporary Peat Storage Area
- Associated Development:**
- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downloads
- Temporary Access Track
- Temporary OHL Diversion
- Solid Geology**
- Ardrishaig Phyllite Formation
- Crinan Grit Formation
- Dalradian Supergroup
- Mull Dyke-Swarm



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Solid Geology
 Figure P.3
Craig Murrail
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment

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Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
 - - - Existing Access Track

Proposed Development:

- Town & Country Planning Boundary
- Proposed Permanent Access Track
- ▶ SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- ▶ SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- Proposed Substation Layout
- SUDs Pond
- Temporary Peat Storage Area



Associated Development:

- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downloads
- Temporary Access Track
- Temporary OHL Diversion

Geomorphology

- Major Watercourse
- ▼▼▼ Top of Slope
- - - Bottom of Slope
- Artificial Drainage
- Young Forestry
- Mature Forestry
- Deforested Area

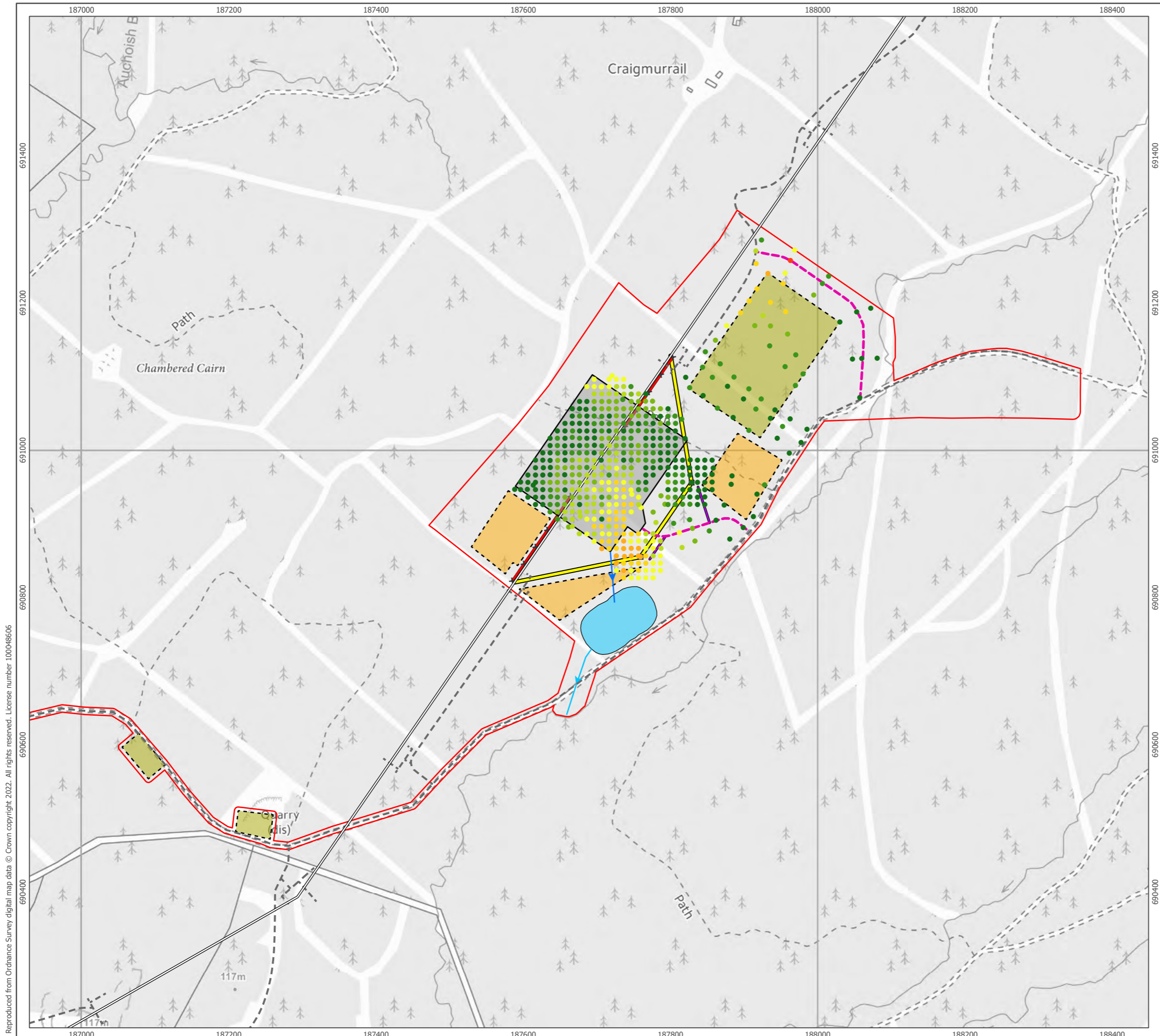
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Geomorphology Map
Figure P.4

Craig Murrail
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment



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- Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
- - - Existing Access Track
- Proposed Development:**
- ▭ Town & Country Planning Boundary
- Proposed Permanent Access Track
- SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- ▭ Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- ▭ Proposed Substation Layout
- ▭ SUDs Pond
- ▭ Temporary Peat Storage Area
- Associated Development:**
- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downloads
- Temporary Access Track
- Temporary OHL Diversion
- Recorded Peat Depths (m)**
- 0.01 - 0.50
- 0.51 - 1.00
- 1.01 - 1.50
- 1.51 - 2.00
- 2.01 - 2.50
- 2.51 - 3.00
- 3.01 - 3.50
- 3.51 - 4.00
- 4.01 - 4.50

1:5,000 Scale @ A3

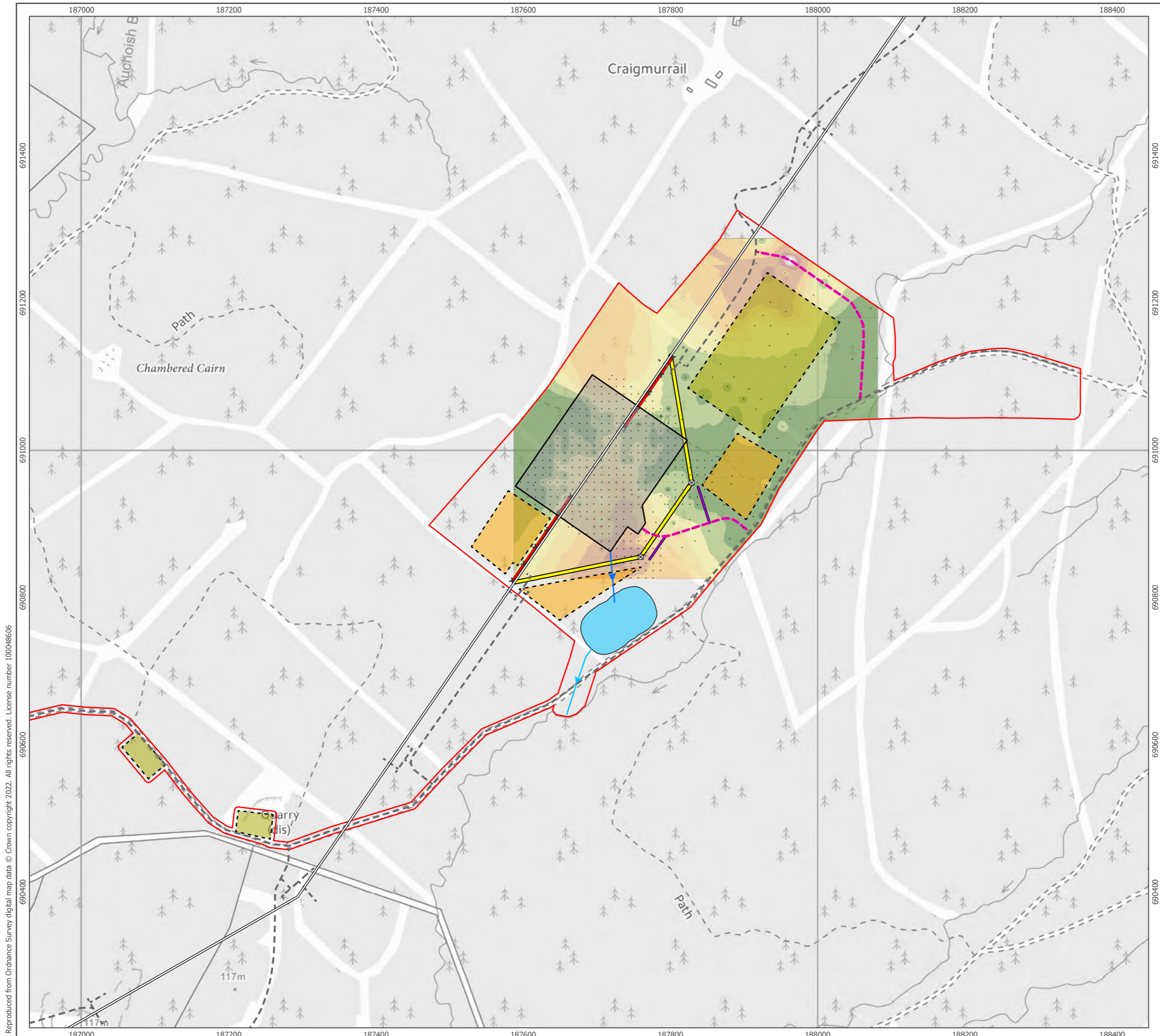
0 100 200 m

NORTH

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Checked By: DB	Date: 28/11/2022



Recorded Peat Depths
Figure P.5

Craig Murrail
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment



- Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
- - - Existing Access Track
- Proposed Development:**
- ▭ Town & Country Planning Boundary
- Proposed Permanent Access Track
- SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- ▭ Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- ▭ Proposed Substation Layout
- ▭ SUDs Pond
- ▭ Temporary Peat Storage Area
- Associated Development:**
- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downloads
- Temporary Access Track
- Temporary OHL Diversion
- Interpolated Peat Depths (m)**
- ▭ 0.00 - 0.50
- ▭ 0.51 - 1.00
- ▭ 1.01 - 1.50
- ▭ 1.51 - 2.00
- ▭ 2.01 - 2.50
- ▭ 2.51 - 3.00
- ▭ 3.01 - 3.50
- ▭ 3.51 - 4.00
- ▭ 4.01 - 4.50
- Peat Probe Location

1:5,000 Scale @ A3

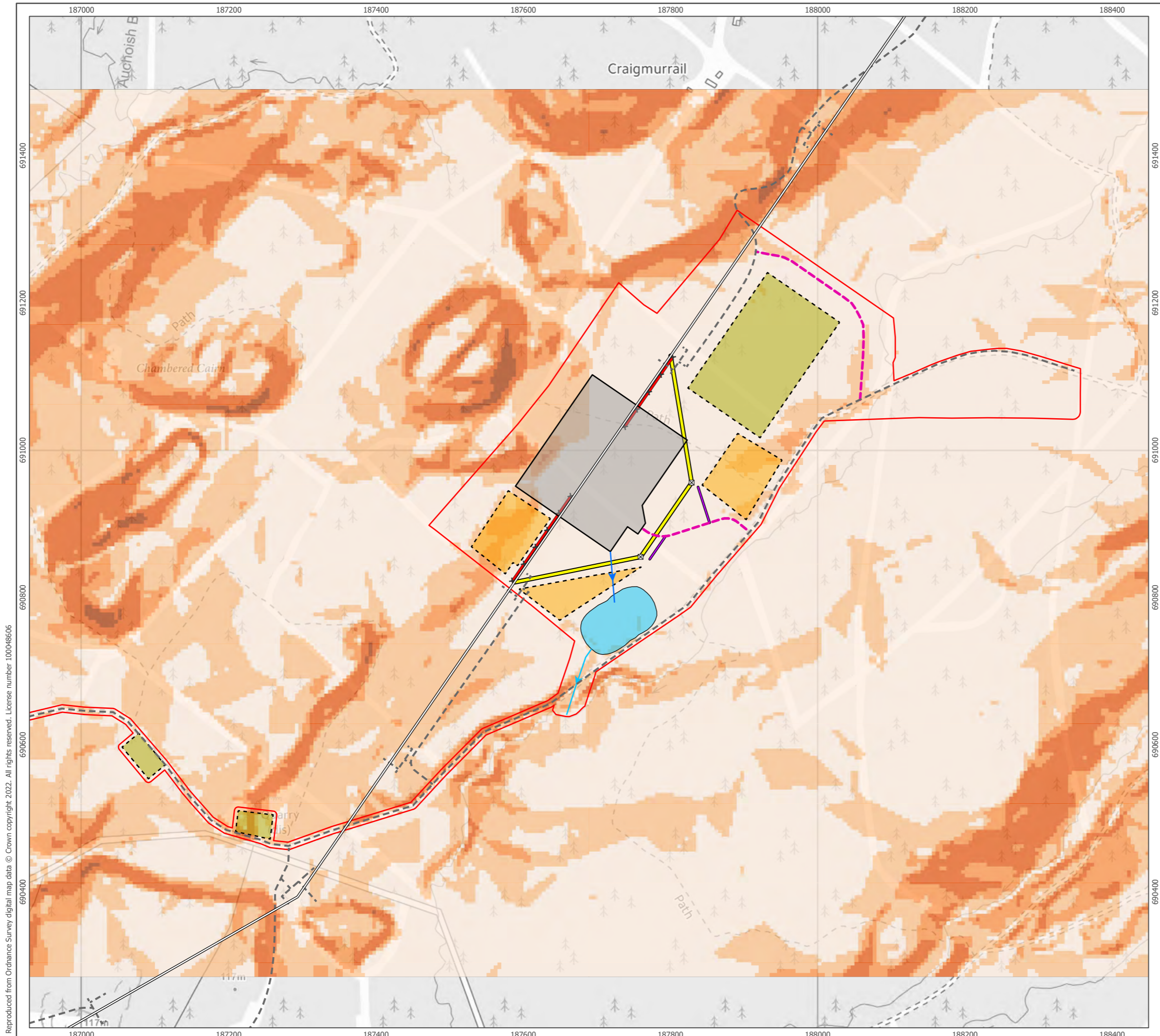



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Interpolated Peat Depths
Figure P.6

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Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment

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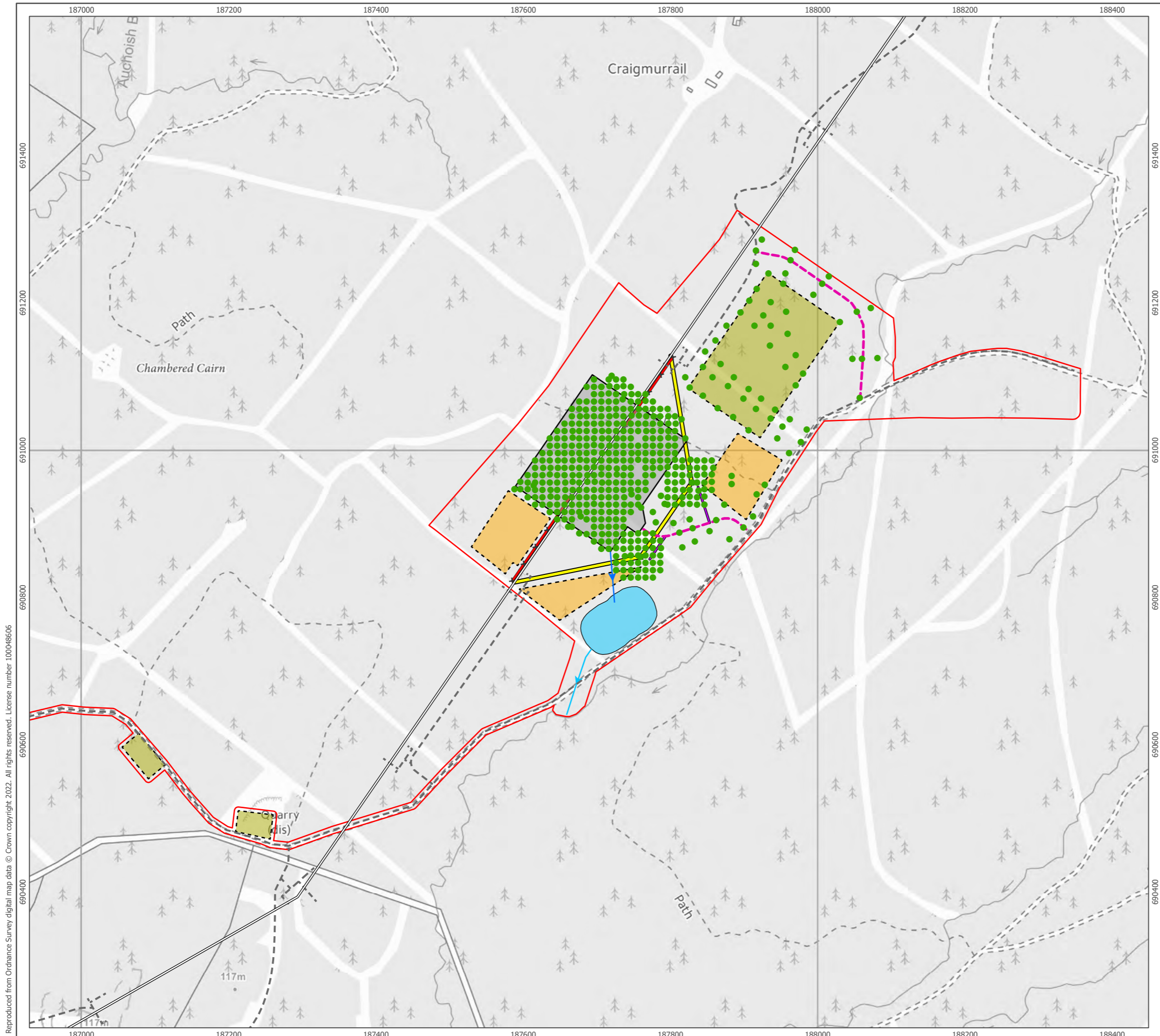
Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
 Existing Access Track
Proposed Development:
 Town & Country Planning Boundary
 Proposed Permanent Access Track
▶ SUDs Inlet Pipeline
▶ SUDs Outfall Pipeline
 Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
 Proposed Substation Layout
 SUDs Pond
 Temporary Peat Storage Area
Associated Development:
 Proposed Tower Location
✕ OHL Downloads
 Temporary Access Track
 Temporary OHL Diversion
Slope Gradient (deg)
 0 - 5
 5 - 10
 10 - 15
 15 - 30
 30 - 90


















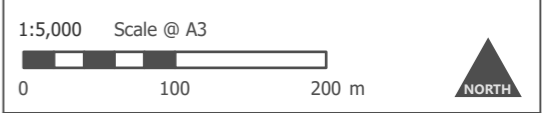
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Slope Map
Figure P.7

Craig Murrail
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment



-  Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
 Existing Access Track
Proposed Development:
 Town & Country Planning Boundary
 Proposed Permanent Access Track
 SUDs Inlet Pipeline
 SUDs Outfall Pipeline
 Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
 Proposed Substation Layout
 SUDs Pond
 Temporary Peat Storage Area
Associated Development:
 Proposed Tower Location
 OHL Downloads
 Temporary Access Track
 Temporary OHL Diversion
Factor of Safety
 Low Risk

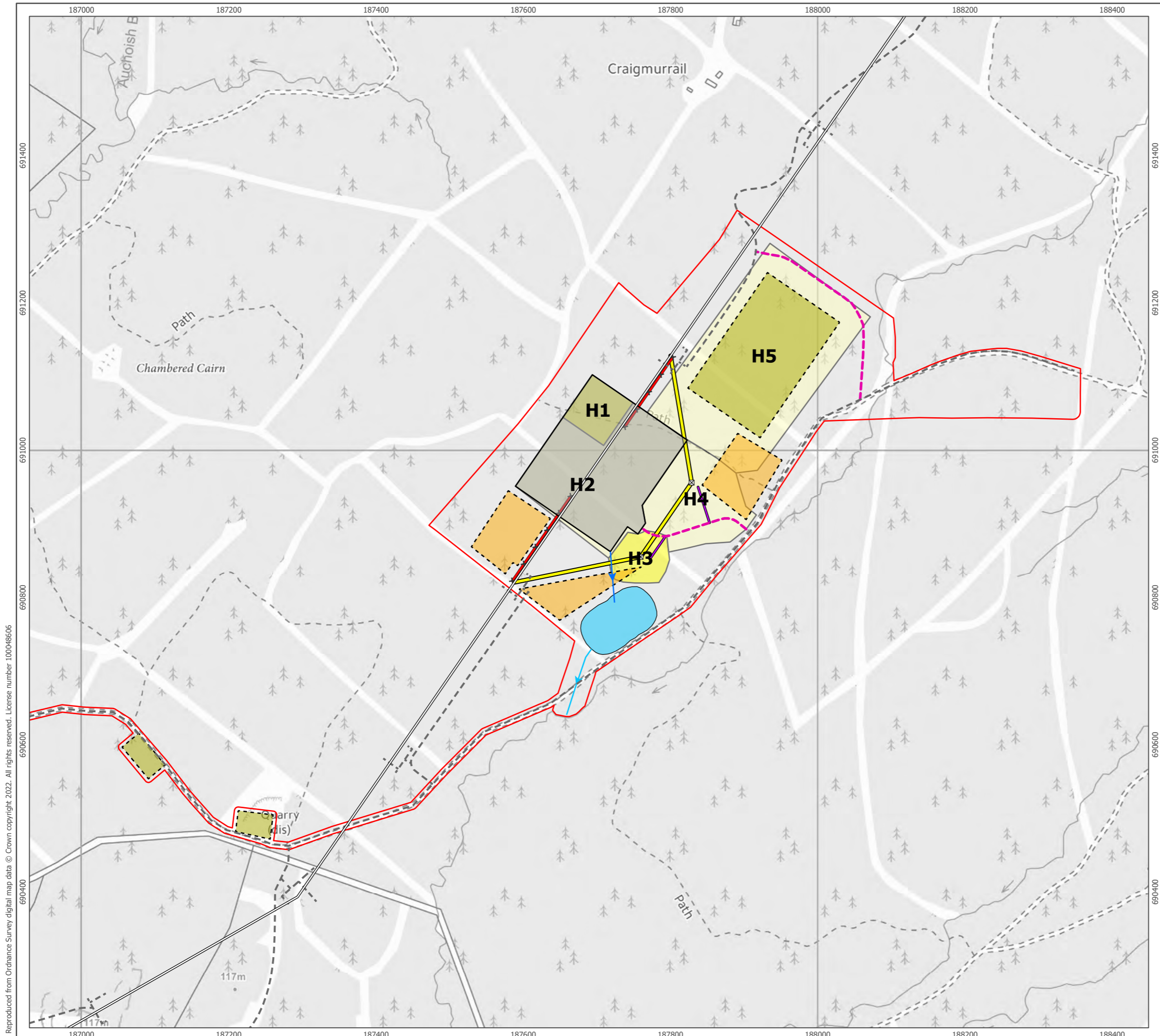


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Factor of Safety Plan
 Figure P.8

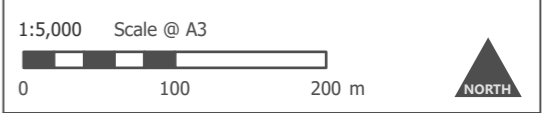
Craig Murrail
Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment

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- Existing Inveraray to Crossaig Overhead Line
- - - Existing Access Track
- Proposed Development:**
- ▭ Town & Country Planning Boundary
- ▭ Proposed Permanent Access Track
- SUDs Inlet Pipeline
- SUDs Outfall Pipeline
- ▭ Proposed Substation Temporary Works Area
- ▭ Proposed Substation Layout
- ▭ SUDs Pond
- ▭ Temporary Peat Storage Area
- Associated Development:**
- ⊠ Proposed Tower Location
- ✂ OHL Downloads
- ▭ Temporary Access Track
- ▭ Temporary OHL Diversion
- Hazard Rank Zonation**
- ▭ Negligible
- ▭ Low



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Hazard Rank Zonation Plan
Figure P.9

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Annex P: Peat Landslide
Hazard and Risk Assessment

APPENDIX B - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 – View west across proposed substation area



Photograph 2 – View east across proposed substation area



Photograph 3 – View south from northern site area



Photograph 4 – View north across proposed substation area



Photograph 5 – Culvert over drainage ditch in central Site area



Photograph 6 – Forestry plantation within southern site area



APPENDIX C – HAZARD RANK ASSESSMENT RECORDS

	2	4.0	2.0
	4	8.0	4.0
	8	15.0	6.0
	15	35.0	8.0
Peat depths		Co-eff.	
	0	0.5	1.0
	0.51	1.0	2.0
	1.01	3.0	3.0
	3.01	6.0	8.0
Substrate		Co-eff.	
G			1.0
H			1.5
C			2.0
not proven			2.0
slip material			5.0
Receptor		Co-eff	
Roads and Tracks			3.0
Minor Water Feature			6.0
Dwelling			6.0
Major Water Feature			8.0
Site Infrastructure			3.0
Important Habitat			8.0
Receptor Dist.		Co-eff.	
	0	10.0	4.0
	10	100.0	3.0
	100	1000.0	2.0
	1000	2000.0	1.0
Receptor Elev.		Co-eff.	
	0	10.0	1.0
	10	50.0	2.0
	50	100.0	3.0
	100	200.0	4.0
risk rating normalisation			
	0	5.0	1.0
	5	15.0	2.0
	15	31.0	3.0
	31	50.0	4.0
	50	100.0	5.0
Impact rating normalisation			
	0	10.0	1.0
	10	20.0	2.0
	20	30.0	3.0
	30	50.0	4.0
	50	100.0	5.0

APPENDIX D – PEAT CORING RECORDS



Background

Peat cores were obtained from selected locations at the proposed Craig Murrail Substation and associated infrastructure in February 2022. Cores were advanced in areas of the Site where peat probing had identified the presence of deep peat to characterise the properties of the peatland in accordance with the *Peatland Survey. Guidance on Developments on Peatland (2017)*. The document, which was published jointly by the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage (NatureScot) and SEPA, defines a consistent sampling methodology to quantify and qualify the peat material on site. It also provides advice on how to publish peat surveys as part of wider site investigations for development management applications, with a particular focus on wind farm developments.

The parameters used to determine the characteristics of the peat materials are outlined below.

i. Surface firmness estimation

An average man standing on one foot applies a pressure to the ground of between 5 and 6 lbs / p.s.i. and this fact is used to estimate the bearing capacity. The following symbols are used to denote the pressure the ground will stand.

Firmness of surface (P)

PO = Surface too soft to walk on

P1 = Surface just passable

P2 = Surface fairly firm

P3 = Surface firm

ii. Observations on the vegetation

The Site has been subject to commercial forestry at varying stages of development with a majority of the Proposed Development in a felled area where long grasses and shrubs now dominate.

iii. Observations on the peat

a. Botanical observations

Botanical observations of peat samples identified that *Carex* species are likely to make up a significant proportion of the organic material in the lower horizons where catotelmic peat is typically found.

b. Degree of humification - von POST SCALE

The degree of humification of peat samples is estimated in the field according to the method devised by the Swedish botanist L. von Post by squeezing a small amount of peat in the hand and the water and / or peat exuded indicates, by its colour and consistency, the degree to which the peat has undergone humification or, more correctly, a type of decomposition which includes breakdown under anaerobic conditions. The von Post scale ranges from 1 to 10, the higher the number the higher the degree of humification. The full scale is as follows:

Von Post Scale (H)	
H1	Completely undecomposed peat free of amorphous material. On squeezing, clear colourless water is pressed out.
H2	Nearly undecomposed peat, free of amorphous material, yielding only yellowish brown water on pressing.



H3	Very slightly decomposed peat, containing a little amorphous material. On squeezing, muddy brown water but no peat passes between the fingers. Residue is not pasty.
H4	Slightly decomposed peat containing some amorphous material. Strongly muddy brown water but no peat passes between the fingers. Residue is somewhat pasty.
H5	Moderately decomposed peat containing a fair amount of amorphous material. Plant structure recognisable though somewhat vague. On squeezing, some peat but mainly muddy water issues. Residue is strongly pasty.
H6	Moderately decomposed peat with a fair amount of amorphous material and indistinct plant structure. On pressing, about one third of the peat passes between the fingers. Residue is strongly pasty, but shows the plant structure more distinctly than in unsqueezed peat.
H7	Strongly decomposed peat with much amorphous material and faintly recognisable plant structure. On squeezing, about one half of the peat is extruded. The water is very dark in colour.
H8	Strongly decomposed peat with much amorphous material and very indistinct plant structure. On squeezing, two thirds of the peat and some water passes between the fingers. Residue consists of plant tissues capable of resisting decomposition (roots, fibres, wood, etc.).
H9	Practically fully decomposed peat with almost no recognisable plant structure. Nearly all the peat squeezed between the fingers as a uniform paste.
H10	Completely decomposed peat with no discernible plant structure. On squeezing, all the peat, without water, passes between the fingers.

iv. Fibre

The fibre content of each peat sample is estimated visually and the amounts of the two types (classified 'fine' or 'coarse') are noted on a scale ranging from 0 to 3 as shown below.

Fine fibres, mainly derived from *Eriophorum spp.* (F)

- F0 = Nil
- F1 = Low content
- F2 = Moderate content
- F3 = High content

Coarse fibres, mainly rootlets (R)

- R0 = Nil
- R1 = Low content
- R2 = Moderate content
- R3 = High content

v. Wood

Wood remains, especially if they are large and resistant, may conceivably cause a certain amount of difficulty during the exploitation of a bog. An attempt is therefore made when sampling to assess the extent of wood. It is estimated on a scale ranging from 0 to 3 as detailed below.

- Wood remains (W)
- W0 = Nil
- W1 = Low content
- W2 = Moderate content

Peat Coring Record



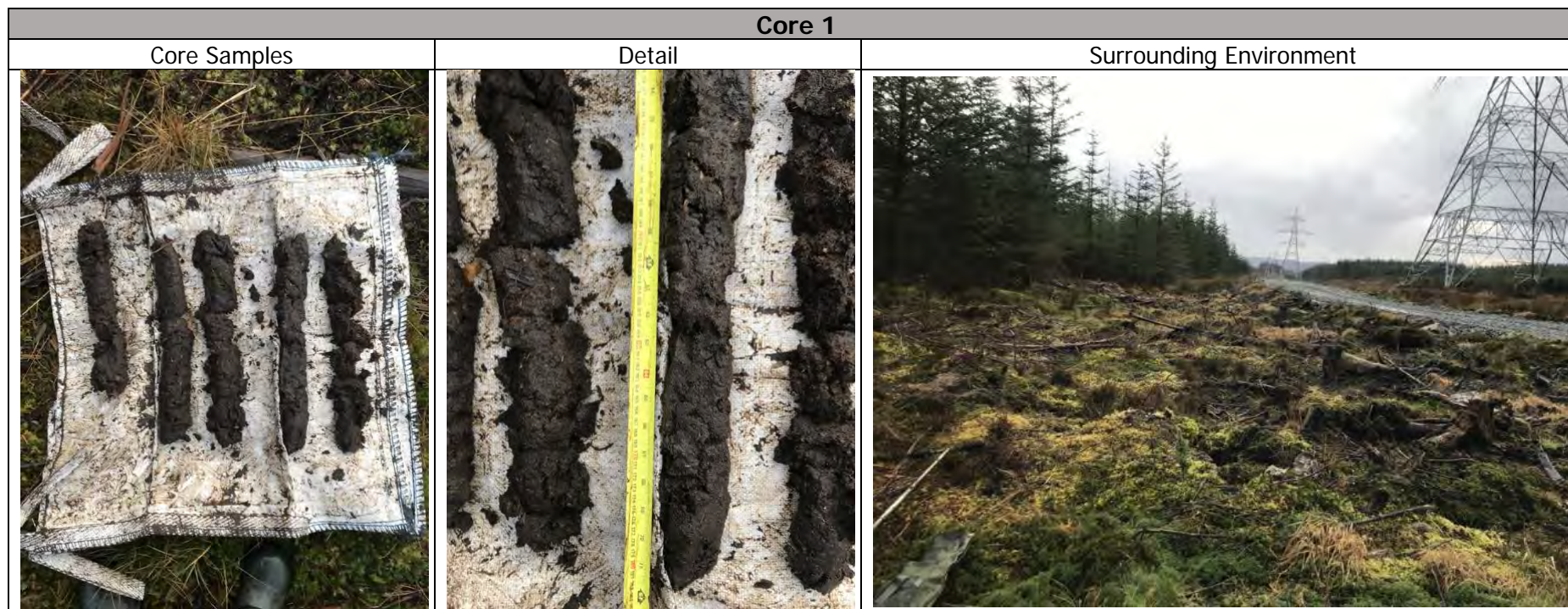
W3 = High content

vi. Other observations

When peat is freshly sampled and before it darkens by oxidation, note is taken of its colour, stratification, the presence of visible mineral matter and any other features of interest.

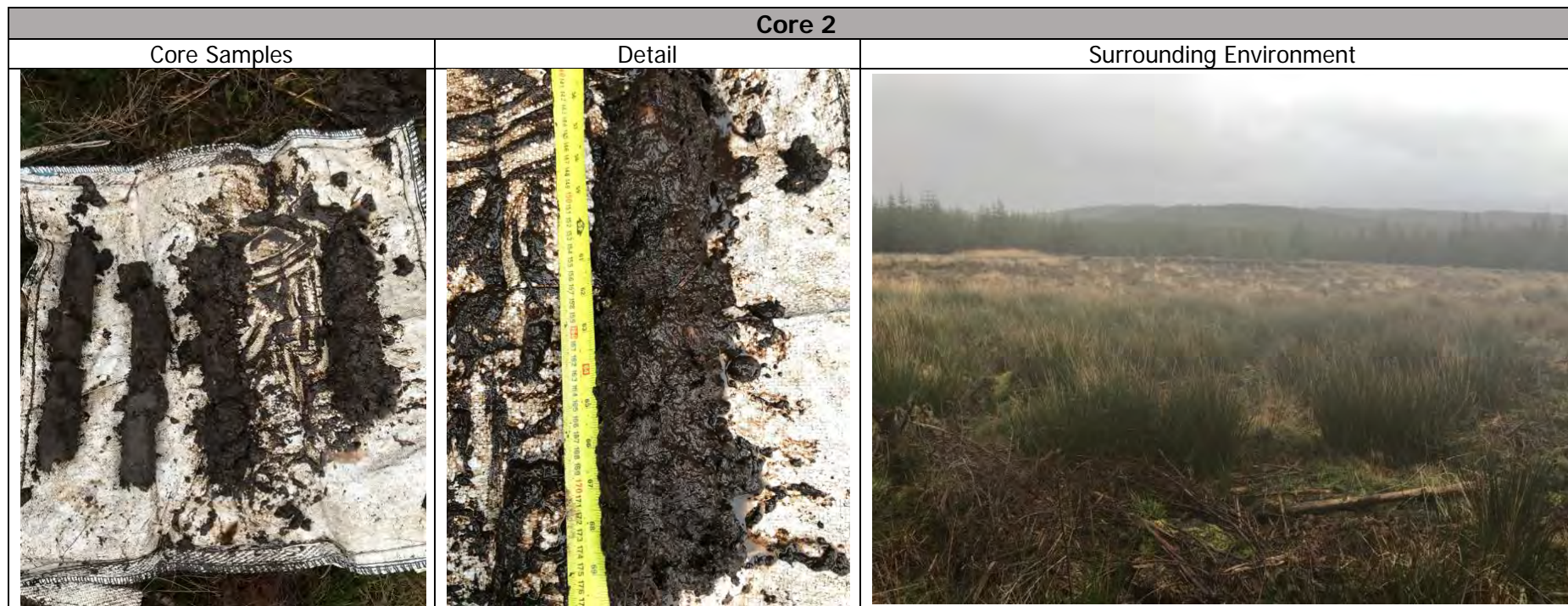
Photographs of the peat cores obtained from Craig Murrail along with information relating to the parameters outlined above are presented overleaf with a summary of the information gathered during the peat coring process presented in the main body of text of the Peat Landslide Hazard and Risk Assessment (PLHRA)

Peat Coring Record



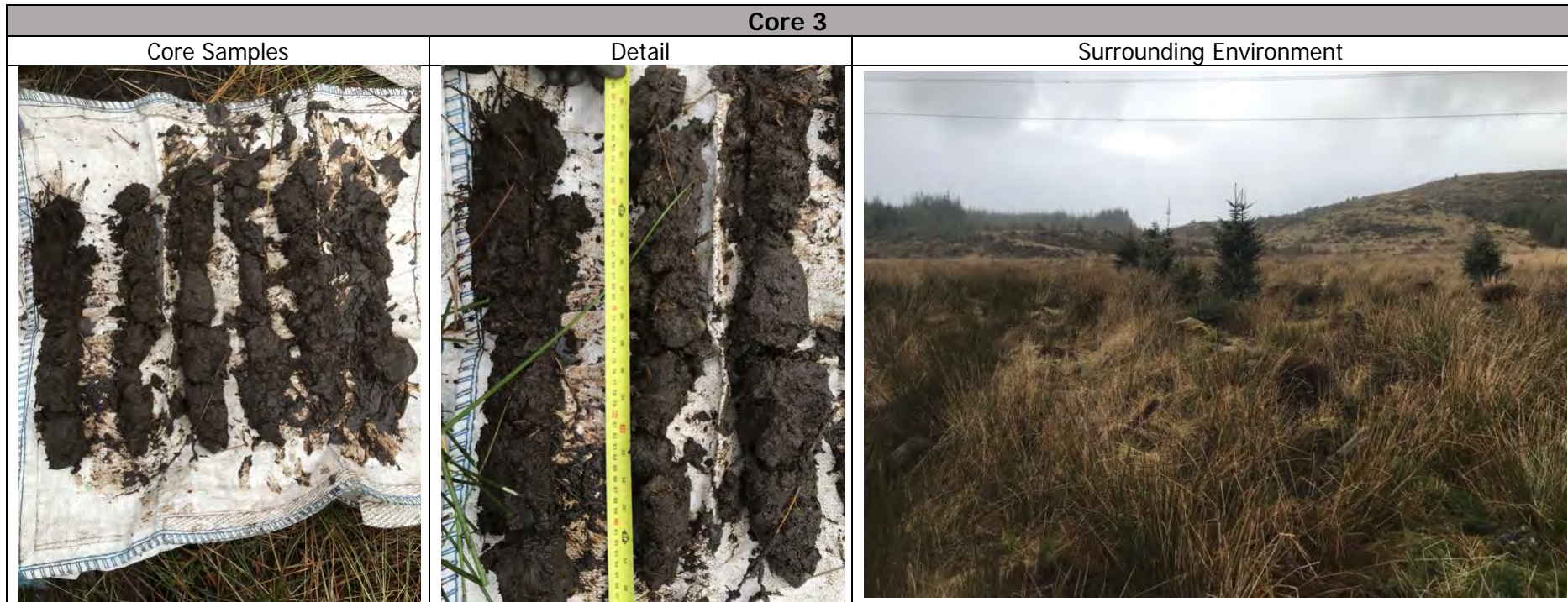
Location	Depth (m)	Firmness of Surface (P)	Von Post (H)	Fine Fibres (F)	Coarse Fibres (R)	Wood Remains (W)	Other Observations (Colour)
E 187888, N 691161	0.0-0.5	2	5	2	2	2	Light Brown
	0.5-1.0		5	3	2	2	Light Brown
	1.0-1.5		6	2	2	2	Brown
	1.5-2.0		7	1	1	1	Dark Brown
	2.0-2.5		7	1	0	1	Dark Brown

Peat Coring Record



Location	Depth (m)	Firmness of Surface (P)	Von Post (H)	Fine Fibres (F)	Coarse Fibres (R)	Wood Remains (W)	Other Observations (Colour)
E 187716, N 691083	0.0-0.5	2	3	1	2	3	Light Brown
	0.5-1.0		4	2	3	2	Light Brown
	1.0-1.5		6	1	2	2	Brown
	1.5-1.8		8	1	1	1	Dark Brown

Peat Coring Record



Location	Depth (m)	Firmness of Surface (P)	Von Post (H)	Fine Fibres (F)	Coarse Fibres (R)	Wood Remains (W)	Other Observations (Colour)
E 187726, N 690889	0.0-0.5	3	6	1	2	2	Dark Brown
	0.5-1.0		5	2	2	2	Brown
	1.0-1.5		6	2	2	2	Brown
	1.5-2.0		7	2	1	1	Dark Brown
	2.0-2.5		7	2	1	2	Dark Brown
	2.5-3.0		9	0	1	1	Black Brown