



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

**Fanellan Hub 400 kV Substation and
Converter Station
Environmental Impact Assessment Report
Volume 2 | EIA Report
Chapter 7 – Energy Policy and Context
February 2025**





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7. PLANNING AND ENERGY POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This Chapter of the EIA Report describes the legislative and policy background relevant to the Proposed Development. It refers to national energy and planning policy at a national and local level. It provides an objective summary of the energy and planning policy considerations that have been taken into account in the preparation of the EIA Report in order to ensure that it provides the appropriate information for the consideration of the application made under the 1997 Act.

7.1.2 This Chapter does not include an assessment of the accordance of the Proposed Development against planning policy. A separate Planning Statement has been prepared to support the application and should be referred to for a detailed planning policy appraisal.

7.2 The Statutory Framework

7.2.1 The Applicant has submitted an application for planning permission under the 1997 Act for consent to construct and operate a new strategic transmission hub.

7.2.2 The Proposed Development is a National Development under Section 3A of the 1997 Act and is of a type that would fall within National Development 3 – Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure, in NPF4⁵.

7.3 Renewable Energy Policy: Summary

7.3.1 In recent years the United Kingdom (UK) and Scottish Government policies have focussed increasingly on concerns about climate change. Each tier of Government has developed targets, policies and actions to achieve targets to deal with the climate crisis and generate more renewable energy and electricity.

7.3.2 The UK Government retains responsibility for the overall direction of energy policy, although some elements are devolved to the Scottish Government. The UK Government has published a series of policy documents setting out how targets can be achieved. Renewable energy generation in Scotland, is identified as an important component to achieve these various goals. These include:

- The Climate Change Act (2008);
- The UK Energy White Paper (December 2020);
- The UK Net Zero Strategy (October 2021);
- The British Energy Security Strategy (April 2022);
- Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan (2023); and
- Climate Change Committee ('CCC')- Report to Parliament 2023 and CCC Report on COP28 (January 2024).

7.3.3 The Scottish Government has published a number of policy documents and its own targets. The most relevant policy, legislative documents and more recent statements published by the Scottish Government include:

- The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 setting legally binding net zero target for 2045 and interim targets for 2030 and 2040¹;
- The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets)(Scotland) Act 2024;
- Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)²;

¹ Scottish Parliament (2019). Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/15/contents> [Accessed June 2024].

² The Scottish Government (2023). Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan/> [Accessed June 2024].

- Scottish Energy Strategy (December 2017)³;
- The Scottish Energy Strategy (2017)⁴;
- The Onshore Wind Policy Statement (2022)⁵; and
- The Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)⁶.

- 7.3.4 The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 requires that the Scottish Ministers must ensure that the net Scottish emissions account for the net-zero emissions target year is at least 100% lower than the baseline (the target is known as the “net-zero emissions target”). The target year is 2045 and the Act also sets out challenging interim targets. It requires that:
- “The Scottish Ministers must ensure that the net Scottish emissions account for the year:
 - (a) 2020 is at least 56% lower than the baseline,
 - (b) 2030 is at least 75% lower than the baseline, and
 - (c) 2040 is at least 90% lower than the baseline.”
- 7.3.5 In April 2024 and in response to concerns raised by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) in their Progress in Reducing Emissions in Scotland - 2023 Report to Parliament (March 2024)⁷, the Scottish Government announced that the interim 2030 target of a 75% reduction on the baseline 1990 levels would not be achievable.
- 7.3.6 New legislation is set to be introduced with regard to the ongoing management and monitoring of carbon emissions to 2045, but at present the net zero 2045 target remains in place. In a statement to the Scottish Parliament in April 2024, Energy Secretary Mairi McAllan confirmed that the government must act to chart a course to 2045 at a pace and scale which was “feasible, fair and just”.
- 7.3.7 The Proposed Development relates to the reinforcement of the grid transmission network and the need for asset replacement which would enable the increase in generation of electricity from renewable energy sources and comes as a direct response to national planning and energy policy objectives.
- 7.3.8 The Proposed Development would therefore enable a growing contribution to the attainment of emissions reduction, renewable energy and electricity targets at both the Scottish and UK levels. Detailed reference to the

³ The Scottish Government (2017). Scottish Energy Strategy: The future of energy in Scotland. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-energy-strategy-future-energy-scotland-9781788515276/> [Accessed June 2024].

⁴ Scottish Government, (December 2017). Scottish Energy Strategy: The future of energy in Scotland. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2017/12/scottish-energy-strategy-future-energy-scotland-9781788515276/documents/00529523-pdf/00529523-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00529523.pdf>.

⁵ Scottish Government, (December 2022). Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2022/12/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/documents/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/govscot%3Adocument/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022.pdf>.

⁶ Scottish Government, (January 2023). Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan – delivering a fair and secure zero carbon energy system for Scotland. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/01/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan/documents/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan/govscot%3Adocument/draft-energy-strategy-transition-plan.pdf>.

⁷ Climate Change Commission, (March 2024). Progress in Reducing Emissions in Scotland - 2023 Report to Parliament. [Online] Available at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Progress-in-reducing-emissions-in-Scotland-2023-Report-to-Parliament.pdf>.

renewable energy policy context and the Needs Case is provided in the accompanying Planning Statement (see also **Volume 2: Chapter 2 – Project Need and Strategy** of this EIA Report).

7.4 National Planning Policy

National Planning Framework 4

- 7.4.1 National Planning Framework 4⁸ (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Government in February 2023 and is a long-term plan looking to 2045 that guides spatial development, sets out national planning policies, designates national developments and highlights national and regional spatial priorities.
- 7.4.2 In contrast to previous National Planning Frameworks, NPF4 places national policy at the heart of planning decision making as it is part of the statutory Development Plan along with Local Development Plans. Following the adoption of NPF4, Scottish Planning Policy and all Strategic Development Plans ceased to have any relevance to planning decision making in Scotland. NPF4 combines the National Planning Framework, and National Planning Policy in the same document for the first time.
- 7.4.3 NPF4 identifies a number of National Developments which are significant developments of national importance that will help to deliver the spatial strategy. Statements of need are set out in NPF4 that describe the development to be considered as a national development for consent handling purposes. Amongst the national developments identified is National Development 3: Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure which includes:
- new and/or replacement upgraded on and offshore high voltage electricity transmission lines, cables and interconnectors of 132 kV or more; and
 - new and/or upgraded Infrastructure directly supporting on and offshore high voltage electricity lines, cables and interconnectors including converter stations, switching stations and substations.
- 7.4.4 As stated above, NPF4 contains National Planning Policies, and these policy positions are to be taken into account in land use planning decision making. The NPF4 policies that are considered to be of most relevance to the Proposed Development are:
- **Policy 1 – Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises.** *“The intent is to encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis”.*
 - **Policy 2 – Climate Mitigation and Adaptation.** *“Development proposals will be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible” and “adapt to current and future risks from climate change”.*
 - **Policy 3 – Biodiversity.** Development proposals need to contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity and integrate nature based solutions. Proposals requiring an EIA will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity.
 - **Policy 4 – Natural Places.** *“Development proposals which by virtue of type, location or scale will have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment will not be supported. Development Proposals that are likely to have a significant effect on an existing or proposed European Site” and “are not directly connected with or necessary to their conservation management, are required to be subject to an appropriate assessment of the implications to conservation objectives”.* Development proposals will only be supported where they will not compromise the designation status/overall integrity of a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Natural Nature Reserve, local conservation site or local landscape area. *“Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on species protected by legislation will only be supported where the proposal meets the relevant statutory tests. If there is*

⁸ The Scottish Government (2023). National Planning Framework 4. Available at: National Planning Framework 4 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot). [Accessed June 2024].

reasonable evidence to suggest that a protected species is present on a site or may be affected by a proposed development, steps must be taken to establish its presence”.

- **Policy 5 – Soils.** *“Development will only be supported if designed and constructed in accordance with mitigation hierarchy”, and “in a manner that protects soil from damage”. Development proposals on prime agricultural land, or land of lesser quality that is culturally or locally important for primary use (as identified by the LDP), peatland, carbon-rich soils, and priority peatland habitat, will only be supported where it is for essential infrastructure and there is a specific locational need and no other suitable site. Where development on peatland, carbon-rich soils or priority peatland habitat is proposed, a detailed site specific assessment will be required”.*
- **Policy 6 – Forestry, Woodland and Trees.** *“Development proposals that enhance, expand and improve woodland and tree cover will be supported. Development proposals will not be supported where they will result in any loss of ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition”, native woodlands, hedgerows, individual trees of high diversity value, or identified for protection”. Fragmenting or severing woodland habitat without appropriate mitigation will also not be supported. “Development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with relevant Scottish Government policy on woodland removal. Where woodland is removed, compensatory planting will most likely be expected to be delivered. Development proposals on sites which include an area of existing woodland or land identified in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy as being suitable for woodland creation will only be supported where the enhancement and improvement of woodlands and the planting of new trees on the site (in accordance with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy) are integrated into the design”.*
- **Policy 7 – Historic Assets and Places.** *“Development proposals with a potentially significant impact on historic assets or places will be accompanied by an assessment which is based on an understanding of the cultural significance of the historic asset and/or place. Development proposals in or affecting conservation areas will only be supported where the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting is preserved or enhanced”. Development affecting Scheduled Monuments will only be supported where direct and significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the setting are avoided, or exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the impact. “Development proposals affecting nationally important Gardens and Designed Landscapes will be supported where they protect, preserve or enhance their cultural significance, character and integrity and where proposals will not significantly impact on important views to, from and within the site, or its setting. Development proposals which sensitively repair, enhance and bring historic buildings, as identified as being at risk locally or on the national Buildings at Risk Register, back into beneficial use will be supported. Non-designated historic environment assets, places and their setting should be protected and preserved in situ wherever feasible. Where there is potential for non-designated buried archaeological remains to exist below a site, developers will provide an evaluation of the archaeological resource at an early stage so that planning authorities can assess impacts. Historic buildings may also have archaeological significance which is not understood and may require assessment”.*
- **Policy 11 – Energy.** *“To encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore”.*
- **Policy 13 – Sustainable Transport.** *Development proposals should “facilitate a transition towards more sustainable, lower emissions travel including active travel and public transport”.*
- **Policy 18 – Infrastructure First.** *The impacts of development proposals on infrastructure should be mitigated. Development proposals will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that provision is made to address the impacts on infrastructure.*
- **Policy 20 – Blue and Green Infrastructure.** *“Development proposals that result in fragmentation or net loss of existing blue and green infrastructure will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not result in or exacerbate a deficit in blue or green infrastructure. Development proposals which create, expand or enhance opportunities for natural flood risk management, including blue and green infrastructure, will be supported”.*

- **Policy 22 – Flood Risk and Water Management.** Development *"at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area will only be supported if they are for essential infrastructure"*. *"Developments will not increase the risk of surface water flooding"*, manage rain and surface water through sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), and *"seek to minimise the area of impermeable surface"*. *"Development proposals will be supported if they can be connected to the public water mains"*.
- **Policy 23 – Health and Safety** – The development proposal should show protection of *"health and wellbeing, including by ensuring that air and noise pollution are taken into account and should plan and manage the development to take hazards into account"*.
- **Policy 25 – Community Wealth Benefits** – *"Development proposals which contribute to the regional community wealth building strategies and are consistent with local economic priorities will be supported. Development proposals linked to community ownership and management of land will be supported"*.
- **Policy 33 – Minerals** – *"Development proposals that seek to explore, develop, and produce fossil fuels (excluding unconventional oil and gas) will not be supported other than in exceptional circumstances"*.

7.5 National Planning Advice

- 7.5.1 Planning Advice Notes (PANs), Specific Advice Sheets, and Planning Circulars set out detailed advice from the Scottish Government in relation to a number of planning issues. Relevant PANs and Specific Advice Sheets relevant to the Proposed Development are summarised in **Table 7.1** below.

Table 7.1 – Relevant PANs

Title	Summary of Content
PAN 1/2013 Environmental Impact Assessment	Provides information on the role local authorities and consultees play as part of the EIA process, and how the EIA can inform development management.
Planning Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment regulations	Provides guidance on The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
PAN 60 (2000) Planning for Natural Heritage	Advises developers on the importance of discussing their proposals with the planning authority and NatureScot and use of the EIA process to identify the environmental effects of development proposals and seek to prevent, reduce and offset any adverse effects in ecology and biodiversity.
PAN 61 (2001) Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	Good practice drainage guidance.
PAN 68 (2003) Design Statements	This PAN covers the importance of design statements, and provides flexible guidance on their preparation, structure, and content. The PAN also outlines the principles underpinning the production of design statements, as expected by the Scottish Government.
PAN 75 (2005) Planning for Transport	The objective of PAN 75 is to integrate development plans and transport strategies to optimise opportunities for sustainable development and create successful transport outcomes.
PAN 1/2011 Planning and Noise	This PAN provides advice on the role of the planning system in helping to prevent and/ or mitigate any potential adverse effects of noise. It promotes the principles of good acoustic design and promotes a sensitive approach to the location of new development.
PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology	The PAN is intended to inform local authorities and other organisations of how to process any archaeological scope of works within the planning process.
PAN 51 Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (Revised 2006)	Details the role of the planning system in relation to the environmental protection regimes.

7.6 Local Planning Policy

Development Plan Policies

- 7.6.1 Local Development Plans (LDP) cover all planning authority areas and provide detailed and site-specific planning policy for an area. The current development plan for The Highland Council administrative area is the Highland-wide LDP, April 2012⁹ (referred to as the HwLDP hereafter) and the Inner Moray Firth LDP¹⁰.

- 7.6.2 The HwLDP and Inner Moray Firth LDP lay out detailed policies which are used as a basis for determining planning applications on a local scale. As indicated above, NPF4 now forms a part of the Development Plan and has replaced a number of predecessor planning policy documents at various levels. This includes Strategic Development Plans.
- 7.6.3 The Highland-wide LDP 2012 predates the adoption of NPF4 and as such some policy positions stated may be inconsistent with those contained in NPF4. The 1997 Act makes it clear that where policy positions differ in this circumstance NPF4 policy positions will take priority.
- 7.6.4 Although the Proposed Development falls within Inner Moray Firth LDP, there are no directly relevant policies of note. Relevant policies from the HwLDP are summarised in **Table 7-2**.

Table 7-2 – Relevant Policies from the Local Development Plan

Policy	Key points relevant to this project
Policy 28 Sustainable Design	<p>The Council will support developments which promote and enhance the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of people of Highland. Proposed Developments will be assessed on the extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise energy efficiency in terms of location, layout and design, including the utilisation of renewable sources of energy and heat; • Are affected by physical constraints described in Physical Constraints on Development: Supplementary Guidance; • Demonstrate that they have sought to minimise the generation of waste during construction and operational phases. (This can be submitted through a Site Waste Management Plan); • Impact on non-renewable resources such as mineral deposits of potential commercial value, prime quality agricultural land, or approved routes for road and rail links; • Impact on the following resources; including pollution and discharges particularly within designed areas: • Habitats; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Freshwater system; ○ Species; ○ Marine systems; ○ Landscapes; ○ Cultural Heritage; ○ Scenery; and ○ Air quality. • Contribute to the economic and social development of the community.
Policy 29 Design Quality and Place-Making	<p>New development should be designed to make a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of the place in which it is located, where appropriate, and should consider the incorporation of public art as a means of creating a distinct sense of place and identity in line with the Council's Public</p>

⁹ The Highland Council (2012). Highland-wide Local Development Plan. Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/199/highland-wide_local_development_plan [Accessed: March 2024].

¹⁰ The Highland Council (2015). Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan. Available at: file:///C:/Users/UKBXH028/Downloads/NEW_IMFLDP_web.pdf. [Accessed: February 2024]

Policy	Key points relevant to this project
	Art Strategy for the Highlands. Applicants should demonstrate sensitivity and respect towards the local distinctiveness of the landscape, architecture, design and layouts in their proposals.
Policy 30 Physical Constraints	<p>Developers must consider whether their proposals would be located within areas of constraints as set out in Physical Constraints: Supplementary Guidance. The main principles of the guidance are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide developers with up to date information regarding physical constraints to development in Highland; and • To ensure proposed developments do not adversely affect human health and safety or pose risk to safeguarded sites.
Policy 31 Developer Contributions	For development proposals which create a need for new or improved public services, facilities or infrastructure, the Council will seek from the developer a fair and reasonable contribution in cash or kind towards these additional costs or requirements.
Policy 36 Development in the Wider Countryside	<p>Development proposals will be assessed for the extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are acceptable in terms of siting and design; • Are sympathetic to existing patterns of development in the area; • Are compatible with landscape character and capacity; • Avoid incremental expansion of one particular development type within a landscape whose distinct character relies on an intrinsic mix/distribution of a range of characteristics; • Avoid, where possible, the loss of locally important croft land; and • Would address drainage constraints and can otherwise be adequately serviced, particularly in terms of foul drainage, road access and water supply, without involving undue public expenditure or infrastructure that would be out of keeping with the rural character of the area.
Policy 42 Previously Used Land	<p>The Council will support development proposals that bring previously-used land back into beneficial use provided:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. site investigation and risk assessment are undertaken and demonstrate that the site is in, or is capable of being brought into, a condition suitable for the proposed development; and 2. the proposed development accords with all other relevant policies of this plan.
Policy 51 Trees and Development	<p>The Council will support development which promotes significant protection to existing hedges, trees and woodlands on and around development sites.</p> <p>The Council's Trees, Woodland and Development Supplementary Guidance will be adopted as statutory supplementary guidance. The guidance will identify the main principles for the protection and management of trees and woodland in relation to new development. It will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key relevant legislation and regulation; • Establish the key factors for assessment of development sites in relation to the presence of trees;

Policy	Key points relevant to this project
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give guidance on preparation of tree protection, management, planting and landscape plans; • For developments involving a significant element of woodland, give advice on the need for a woodland management plan; • Generally support well planned developments which are designed to create and coexist with significant areas of new woodland.
Policy 52 Principle of Development in Woodland	The applicant is expected to demonstrate the need to develop a wooded site and to show that the site has capacity to accommodate the development. The Council will maintain a strong presumption in favour of protecting woodland resources. Development proposals will only be supported where they offer clear and significant public benefit. Where this involves woodland removal, compensatory planting will usually be required.
Policy 54 Mineral Wastes	The Council will encourage the minimisation and positive re-use/recycling of mineral, construction and demolition wastes.
Policy 55 Peat and Soils	Requires proposals to demonstrate how they have avoided unnecessary disturbance, degradation or erosion of peat and soils. Unacceptable disturbance will not be accepted unless it is shown that the adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits arising from the proposals. Requirement for Peat Management Plans where development on peat is demonstrated as unavoidable in order to show how impacts have been minimised and mitigated.
Policy 56 Travel	<p>Development proposals that involve travel generation must include sufficient information with the application to enable the Council to consider any likely on- and off- site transport implications of the development and should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be well served by the most sustainable modes of travel available in the locality from the outset, providing opportunity for modal shift from private car to more sustainable transport modes wherever possible, having regard to key travel desire lines; • In particular, the Council will seek to ensure that opportunities for • encouraging walking and cycling are maximised; • Be designed for the safety and convenience of all potential users; • Incorporate appropriate mitigation on site and/or off site, provided through developer contributions where necessary, which might include improvements and enhancements to the walking/cycling network and public transport services, road improvements and new roads; and • Incorporate an appropriate level of parking provision, having regard to the travel modes and services which will be available and key travel desire lines and to the maximum parking standards laid out in Scottish Planning Policy or those set by the Council.
Policy 57 Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage	All development proposals will be assessed taking into account the level of important and type of heritage features, the form and scale of the development, and any impact on the feature and its setting, in the context of the policy framework detailed in Appendix 2 (to the Highland wide Local Development Plan). The following criteria will also apply:

Policy	Key points relevant to this project
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For features of local/regional importance we will allow developments if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that they will not have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment, amenity and heritage resource; and For features of national importance we will allow developments that can be shown not to compromise the natural environment, amenity and heritage resource. Where there may be any significant adverse effects, these must be clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of national importance. It must also be shown that the development will support communities in fragile areas who are having difficulties in keeping their population services.
Policy 58 Protected Species	<p>Where there is good reason to believe that a protected species may be present on site may be affected by a proposed development, we will require a survey to be carried out to establish any such presence and if necessary a mitigation plan to avoid or minimise impacts on the species, before determining the application.</p> <p>Development proposals should avoid adverse disturbance, including cumulatively, to badgers and badger setts, protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004).</p>
Policy 59 Other Important Species	<p>The Council will have regard to the presence and any adverse effects of development proposals, either individually and/or cumulatively, on the Other Important Species which are included in the lists below, if these are not already protected by other legislation or by nature site designations (Annexes II and V of EC Habitat Directive, Priority Species listed in the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and species included on the Scottish Biodiversity List).</p>
Policy 60 Other Important Habitats and Article 1 – Features	<p>The Council will seek to safeguard the integrity of features of the landscape which are of major importance because of their linear and continuous structure or combination as habitat “stepping stones” for the movement of wild fauna and flora. (Article 10 Features). The Council will also seek to create new habitats which are supportive of this concept.</p>
Policy 61 Landscape	<p>New developments should be designed to reflect the landscape characteristics and special qualities identified in the Landscape Character Assessment of the area in which they are proposed. This will include consideration of the appropriate scale, form, pattern and construction materials, as well as the potential cumulative effect of developments where this may be an issue.</p>
Policy 62 Geodiversity	<p>Development proposals that include measures to protect and enhance geodiversity interests of international, national and regional/local importance in the wider countryside, will be supported. The Council will also support improvement of accessibility and interpretation as an educational or geo-tourism resource, where it is possible to integrate sympathetically development, geodiversity and other existing interests.</p>
Policy 63 Water	<p>The Council will support proposals for development that do not compromise the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), aimed at the protection and improvement of Scotland’s water environment.</p>

Policy	Key points relevant to this project
Policy 64 Flood Risk	<p>Development proposals should avoid areas susceptible to flooding and promote sustainable flood management.</p> <p>Development proposals within or bordering medium to high flood risk areas, will need to demonstrate compliance with Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) through the submission of suitable information which may take the form of a Flood Risk Assessment.</p>
Policy 66 Surface Water Drainage	<p>All proposed development must be drained by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) designed in accordance with The SuDS Manual (CIRIA C697) and, where appropriate, the Sewers for Scotland Manual 2nd Edition. Planning applications should be submitted with information in accordance with Planning Advice Note 69:</p> <p>Planning and Building Standards Advice on Flooding paragraphs 23 and 24. Each drainage scheme design must be accompanied by particulars of proposals for ensuring long-term maintenance of the scheme.</p>
Policy 69 Electricity Transmission Infrastructure	<p>Proposals for overground, underground or sub-sea electricity transmission infrastructure (including lines and cables, pylons/ poles and vaults, transformers, switches and other plant) will be considered having regard to their level of strategic significance in transmitting electricity from areas of generation to areas of consumption. Subject to balancing with this consideration, and taking into account any proposed mitigation measures, the Council will support proposals which are assessed as not having an unacceptable significant impact on the environment, including natural, built and cultural heritage features.</p>
Policy 72 Pollution	<p>Proposals that may result in significant pollution such as noise (including aircraft noise), air, water and light will only be approved where a detailed assessment report on the levels, character and transmission and receiving environment of the potential pollution is provided by the applicant to show how the pollution can be appropriately avoided and if necessary mitigated.</p> <p>Where the Council applies conditions to any permission to deal with pollution matters these may include subsequent independent monitoring of pollution levels.</p> <p>Major Developments and developments that are subject of Environmental Impact Assessment will be expected to follow a robust project environmental management process, following the approach set out in the Council's Guidance Note "Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects" or a similar approach.</p>
Policy 78 Long Distance Routes	<p>The Council, with its partners, will safeguard and seek to enhance long distance routes, and their settings.</p>

Local Supplementary Guidance

7.6.5 THC has various Supplementary Guidance documents in force. Those which have been taken into account in the preparation of the EIA Report include the following:

- Highland Council Supplementary Guidance Developer Contributions (November 2018);
- Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (January 2013);
- Green Networks (January 2013);

- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (January 2013);
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013);
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy & Planning Guidelines (May 2006);
- Physical Constraints (March 2013);
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013);
- Special Landscape Area Citations (June 2011);
- Standards for Archaeological Work (March 2012);
- Sustainable Design Guide (January 2013); and
- Trees, Woodlands and Development (January 2013).

7.7 Conclusions

- 7.7.1 This Chapter has set out the legislative background, a summary of the national energy policy framework, and the national and local planning policies and guidance relevant to the consideration of the Proposed Development. It provides an objective summary of the energy and planning policy considerations that have been taken into account in the preparation of the EIA Report in order to ensure that it provides the appropriate information for the consideration of the planning application under the 1997 Act.
- 7.7.2 As noted, the policy appraisal for the Proposed Development is contained in a separate Planning Statement.