Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

FANELLAN HUB 400KV SWITCHING STATION AND HVDC CONVERTER STATION

Volume 4, Appendix 12.2 Transport Assessment - Appendix B

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Appendix B

SCOPING RESPONSE

Traffic and Transport

3.54 A Transport Assessment (TA), Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and an Abnormal Load Assessment will be required within the EIAR. The Transport Assessment Methodology below sets out what the Council requires, and further information is provided in our published Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments. When establishing a scope for the assessment consideration should be given to the use of the public roads in this area can be influenced significantly by tourist traffic.

Transport Assessment

3.55 The Highland Transport Planning Officer noted the intention to scope out the improvements required to the Black Bridge crossing of the River Beauly from the proposed assessment. Given that this is the only viable means of accessing this development for the development's construction and ongoing operation (see comments below), it should be noted that, if the subsequent permissions required for changes to Black Bridge are not accepted and delivered, prior to any approval being sought for the new substation and converter station, the Council would need to seek a suitably worded planning condition requiring the Black Bridge changes needing to be agreed, permitted and implemented prior to the main works commencing to construct the new substation and converter station facility. Owing to the potentially critical nature of this infrastructure the Planning Authority have requested the scope of this proposal to be assessed within the forthcoming EIAR.

3.56 The Transport Planning Officer also noted comments in Chapter 8 of the submitted scoping document suggesting that, due to the existing issues with the Black Bridge, it may be necessary for HGV's accessing this development to route from the A833 through Kiltarlity. The local public roads through Kiltarlity between the A833 and the development site are not suitable for such construction traffic, and as such, the Council will oppose any intention to make use of such routing for this development. The Council would also challenge the appropriateness of routing through the existing community at Kiltarlity when there is a more appropriate route from the A831 via the C1106. You are advised to focus on establishing appropriate improvements to the Black Bridge that will support their construction and ongoing operational access requirements.

3.57 As stated in our pre-application feedback, no abnormal load movements will be accepted across the Lovat Bridge carrying the A862 over the River Beauly without detailed inspections and assessments being undertaken and the findings accepted by our Structures Team. It is our understanding that such inspections will need to include diving surveys of the existing bridge piers and foundations within the river.

3.58 The Council Transport Planning Officer noted that the assessment of environmental impacts from the predicted traffic will follow the principles set out in the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement. However, this approach does not include any

requirement to assess the existing local public road networks condition and capability to accommodate the predicted traffic impacts physically and safely, whilst remaining safe for other road users. This will be for all construction and operational traffic, not just abnormal loads (AILs). This reinforces our pre-application feedback highlighting that an additional Transport Assessment (TA) will be required to do that assessment and clarify what physical road improvements and traffic management measures will be required.

3.59 The THC Transport Planning Officer specifically mention both physical changes to the road network and traffic management measures, as the submitted scoping report only makes reference to traffic management measures. The likely scale of impacts and the nature of local public roads in that area will require physical road improvements alongside traffic management measures. The scale and nature of such improvements will need to be determined when the proposed means of access and predicted impacts from the proposed development have been established. To be clear, The Council will not support any construction or ongoing operational access along the single-track section of the C1106 Fanellen Road without appropriate physical improvements to it.

3.60 Regarding quantifying the scale of traffic impacts and the intention in the EIA to use Rule 1 (30% increase in all and HGV traffic) and Rule 2 (10% increase in all and HGV traffic at high sensitivity locations) from the IEMA Guidelines, the Council will require any single-track roads with passing places to be identified as high sensitivity as defined by Rule 2. This reflects the sensitivity of such routes to changes in the quantum and nature of traffic flows along them.

3.61 Transport Planning note the intention to gather Annual Average Daily Flows (AADF) for existing routes and use that in the environmental assessment to compare changes as a result of the proposed development. Given that the proposed construction working hours for this development will, in most parts, be between 07:00 and 19:00, AADF information should not be used, and 12-hour average flows utilised for the period 07:00 – 19:00. Using AADF will simply lessen the scale of change that the development will be generating during the working day.

3.62 When calculating the predicted quantum and profile of construction traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development, this should also include the likely traffic generated by the felling and removal of trees referenced in the Scoping Report, as well as trips associated with other related development associate with the proposed substation, its connections and other proposed and consented major development projects affecting the road network.

3.63 Post construction, Transport Planning note the comments that operational traffic levels are predicted to be low and as such, no assessment of those likely impacts is deemed necessary. The Council will expect any submission to clarify the likely quantum and profile of operational traffic levels due to be generated by the finished development. That should include likely demands from the proposed offices and training facilities (see comments below). This information, along with the proposed lasting operational

capability of the local public road network, after being improved by this development, should be used to determine if the TA will need to include a formal assessment of the road networks capability to accommodate such operational traffic levels physically and safely.

3.64 Transport Planning note the intention for this new development to include new offices and training facilities. The required TA will need to set out the likely travel and parking demands of such facilities and justify the adequacy of the developments ability to accommodate such demands. Also, current national policy looks for such facilities to be accessible by all and by sustainable means of travel. The TA will need to have assessed the accessibility of such facilities by non-car modes, including justifying the adequacy of any improvements deemed necessary. It will also need to ensure sufficient provision is made within the development site for cycle and disabled car parking facilities. The following is our generic template for the Transport Assessment Methodology, Abnormal Load Assessment, Construction Traffic Management Plan.

3.65 Transport Assessment Methodology

1. Identify all public roads affected by the development. In addition to transportation of all abnormal loads & vehicles (delivery of components) this should also include routes to be used by local suppliers and staff. It is expected that the developer submits a preferred access route for the development. All other access route options should be provided, having been investigated in order to establish their feasibility. This should clearly identify the pros and cons of all the route options and therefore provide a logical selection process to arrive at a preferred route.

2. Establish current condition of the roads. This work which should be undertaken by a consulting engineer acceptable to the Council and will involve an engineering appraisal of the routes including the following:

- assessment of structural strength of carriageway including construction depths and road formation where this is likely to be significant in respect of proposed impacts, including non-destructive testing and sampling as required;
- road surface condition and profile;
- assessment of structures and any weight restrictions;
- road widths, vertical and horizontal alignment, and provision of passing places; and
- details of adjacent communities.

3. Determine the traffic generation and distribution of the proposals throughout the construction and operation periods to provide accurate data resulting from the proposed development including:

- nos. of light and heavy vehicles including staff travel;

- abnormal loads; and
- duration of works.

4. Current traffic flows including use by public transport services, school buses, refuse vehicles, commercial users, pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians.

5. Impacts of proposed traffic including:

- impacts on carriageway, structures, verges etc.;
- impacts on other road users;
- impacts on adjacent communities;
- swept path and gradient analysis where it is envisaged that transportation of traffic could be problematic; and
- provision of Trial Runs to be carried out in order to prove the route is achievable and/or to establish the extent of works required to facilitate transportation.

6. Proposed mitigation measures to address impacts identified in five above, including:

- carriageway strengthening;
- strengthening of bridges and culverts;
- carriageway widening and/or edge strengthening;
- provision of passing places;
- road safety measures; and
- traffic management including measures to be taken to ensure that development traffic does not use routes other than the approved routes.

7. Details of residual effects.

Abnormal Load Assessment

3.66 The TA should include an Abnormal Load Assessment of the roads utilised to convent abnormal loads to the site. The assessment will need to confirm the proposed port of entry for AIL components and justify the adequacy of the route for transporting them to the site. Early discussion with the Council's abnormal loads team (the contact is Greg Otreba Grzegorz.Otreba@Highland.gov.uk) and the Council's structures team (the contact is Norman Smart Norman.Smart@Highland.gov.uk) is recommended.

Construction Traffic Management Plan

3.67 Owing to the likely scale of impacts and the nature of local public roads in the area, a combination of physical road improvements alongside traffic management measures will be required. The scale and nature of such improvements will need to be determined when the proposed means of access and predicted impacts from the proposed

development have been established. To be clear, the Council will not support any construction or ongoing operational access along the single-track section of the C1106 Fanellen Road without appropriate physical improvements to it.

3.68 Transport Planning require any application for planning permission associated with this proposal to submit a CTMP for the approval of the Planning Authority. A CTMP will normally detail the following issues, however this is not an exhaustive list and the CTMP should be tailored to reflect the issues pertinent to this development:

- Identification of all Council maintained roads likely to be affected by the various stages of the development,
- Predicted volume, type, and duration of construction traffic.
- Location of site compound, staff parking and visitor parking.
- Proposed measures to mitigate the impact of general construction traffic and abnormal loads on the local road network following detailed assessment of relevant roads.
- Details of any traffic management signage required for the duration of the construction period.
- Measures to ensure that all affected public roads are kept free of mud and debris arising from the development.
- The developer may also be requested to enter into a Section 96 agreement with the Highland Council to cover any abnormal wear and tear to the Council roads. This will include a requirement for pre and post construction surveys to be undertaken and agreed with the Council and for the provision of a suitable bond.

If the development involves any abnormal loads a detailed protocol, route and delivery programme will be required and agreed with any interested parties such as Highland Council, the Police, Transport Scotland, and community representatives. The protocol shall identify any requirement for convoy working and/or escorting of vehicles and include arrangements to provide advance notice of abnormal load movements in the local media.

Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreation,

3.69 A development of this scale and duration may result in potential significant effects (positive and/or negative). We consider that Socio-Economic, Tourism and Recreational impacts should have its own chapter in the EIAR to ensure that these matters are appropriately addressed. This assessment should be provided within the EIAR, irrespective if the project is an identified national development in NPF4 or otherwise. The EIAR should estimate who may be affected by the development, in all or in part, which may require individual households to be identified, local communities or a wider socio-economic grouping such as tourists and tourist related businesses, recreational groups, attractions and events, such as Belladrum - Tartan Heart Festival and any other

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