

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Report has been produced to accompany the Section 37 application submitted to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit by Scottish Power Transmission plc to install and keep installed a diversion to the existing overhead electricity transmission line 'AU Route' between existing tower AU004 and existing tower AU009 including ancillary development.

The need to divert the existing line has arisen from a requirement to remove the towers on the land south of Burnbrae Road which is currently owned by William Tracey Group. The re-routing strategy has therefore been designed to have minimal impact on existing landowners and future development. Given that the proposed works involve diverting an existing line within an established industrial area and that only one additional tower will be required which will not affect any existing local designations, it is considered that the development is compliant with the policy framework laid out in the Renfrewshire adopted Local Plan (March 2006) and the Proposed Local Development Plan (as amended June 2014).

The primary impacts will stem largely from construction work and it is therefore recommended that a Construction Method Statement/Environmental Management Plan outlining adequate mitigation and construction techniques is developed prior to any works commencing.

We would also recommend the following mitigation measures to ensure that any environmental impacts are minimised:

- Otter surveys are recommended particularly on the area of the south bank of the Black Cart which is vegetated with dense scrub. If otter refuges are located and clearance of this vegetation is required for the proposed OHL, the appropriate guidance and/or licenses should be sought from SNH.
- Further bat re-entry (dawn) survey on the mature lime tree within the semi-mature plantation north of Burnbrae Road, to be carried out immediately prior to felling.
- Clearance of all vegetation on site must be undertaken within the period September to February inclusive, to avoid the bird breeding season.
- As some of the work will be conducted near watercourses, the appropriate SEPA pollution prevention guidelines should be adhered to in order prevent pollution events affecting the local environment, the Black Cart and Inner Clyde SPAs and SSSIs downstream.
- The area of woodland adjacent to proposed tower AU6R is the only area of older woodland in the surrounding landscape and likely provides cover and foraging for many species of birds and mammals (such as otter and bats). It is accepted that re-location is not possible and that land available for compensatory planting is minimal. However, further extending the recently planted birch woodland north of the existing woodland may help to compensate somewhat for the loss of the mature wood.
- Invasive species of non-native plants were frequent across the site, namely Japanese knotweed, Giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam. Further spread of these plants would be damaging to ecosystems and structures locally and elsewhere, and is illegal under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is recommended that specialists are appointed to advise upon their removal and avoid the spread of these species within guidelines issued by SEPA.
- All relevant authorisations under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (as amended) should be obtained from SEPA prior to works commencing.
- In terms of contaminated land, best practice construction methods (i.e. hygiene facilities to protect workers and appropriate procedures for stockpiling materials to protect nearby water courses) should be employed to mitigate against any potential risks. In order to inform foundation design, a site investigation is in the process of being completed at the site. Samples of soil and groundwater are being collected as

part of these works and will be scheduled for laboratory analysis. The findings of the site investigation will be reported at a later date under separate cover.

- In terms of construction, SEPA advice and guidance should be adhered to, in particular the following Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPGs):
 - PPG 1 – General guide to pollution prevention;
 - PPG 5 – Works and maintenance in or near water;
 - PPG 6 – Working at Construction and demolition sites.