

15 Summary and Conclusions

15.1 Summary of Assessment

Central Scotland 400 kV Upgrade

- 15.1.1 SP Transmission is seeking planning permission from Fife Council for the construction of a new 400kV substation to be known as Kincardine North Substation (KINN). SP Transmission is also seeking consent from Scottish Ministers to upgrade and modify three existing overhead lines: proposed XL Route Upgrade, proposed ZCN Route Upgrade and proposed ZCS Route Upgrade (referred collectively to in this EIAR as ‘Overhead Line Works’). SP Distribution is seeking planning permission from Fife Council for the removal of existing 11kV wood pole overhead lines and replacement with 11kV underground cables and associated works (referred to in this EIAR as ‘Scottish Power Distribution Works’). These works taken together, are referred to, as the Central Scotland 400kV Upgrade or the Proposed Development.
- 15.1.2 The Proposed Development is located on agricultural land to the north of Kincardine, Fife. An EIA of the Proposed Development has been undertaken and results reported in this EIAR. Table 15-1 below provides a summary of the assessments, in particular highlighting whether a likely significant effect has been predicted for those environmental aspects scoped into the assessment when taking into account proposed mitigation measures i.e. it presents a summary of the residual effects.

Table 15-1 Summary of Assessment – Likely Significant Effects

Environmental Aspect	KINN Construction Effects	KINN Operational Effects	OHL Construction Effects	OHL Operational Effects	SPD Works Construction Effects	SPD Works Operational Effects	Combined Construction Effects	Combined Operational Effects	Cumulative Effects
Ecology	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Landscape and Visual Amenity	Likely significant effects*	Likely significant effects**	Likely significant effects*	Likely significant effects**	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	Likely significant effects*	Likely significant effects**	No likely significant effects
Cultural Heritage	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Water Environment	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Ground Conditions	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects
Traffic & Transport	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects
Construction & Operational Noise	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	n/a scoped out	n/a scoped out	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects
Other Environmental Aspects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects	No likely significant effects

* Some short term significant visual effects during construction on VP 4 National Cycle Route 76 near Hawkhill Farm and VP8 A876 Northbound Layby

** Some significant visual effects in year 1 of operation reducing to not significant by year 15 as landscape planting matures. Year 1 impacts are on VP2 Farmstead along National Cycle Route 76, VP3 National Cycle Route 76 at Canal Burn, VP4 National Cycle Route 76 near Hawkhill Farm, VP7 Kennet Pans/ Kennet Core Path, and VP8 A876 Northbound Layby. All impacts are not significant by year 15.

East Coast 400kV Upgrade

- 15.1.3 XL route forms part of a longer overhead line route that extends between Kintore in Aberdeenshire and Kincardine in Fife. At approximately Blairingone, which is located to the north of the boundary between Clackmannanshire Council (to the south) and Perth and Kinross Council (to the north), the overhead line crosses from SP Transmission's licence area into SHE Transmission's licence area. Each Transmission Owner (TO) is responsible for its section of the overhead line route; SP Transmission is responsible for uprating between Kincardine and Blairingone and SHE Transmission is responsible for uprating between Blairingone and Kintore.
- 15.1.4 SP Transmission have considered the likely significant effects from uprating XL route between Kincardine and Blairingone (as part of the Central Scotland 400kV Upgrade) within this EIAR, while SHE Transmission has considered the likely significant effects of uprating its section of the route, as well as other upgrade works (referred to as the East Coast 400kV Overhead Line Upgrade), in a separate EIAR¹ which accompanied its application for consent under section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. The East Coast 400kV Overhead Line Upgrade comprises approximately 32km of upgraded overhead line between Kintore substation and Fetteresso substation, 67km of upgraded overhead line between Fetteresso substation and Alyth substation; and approximately 69km of upgraded overhead line between Alyth substation and Blairingone. SHE Transmission made its application (reference ECU00002132) in November 2020 and obtained section 37 consent in September 2022.
- 15.1.5 For completeness, Appendix 15.1 summarises the residual effects reported in the SHE Transmission EIAR and considers the impacts of the uprating the overhead line between Kintore and Kincardine as a whole. This is to identify and assess any combined effects which may occur as a result of the Central Scotland 400kV Upgrade and East Coast 400kV Upgrade together i.e. likely significant effects on shared receptors, that may be affected by works undertaken by both SP Transmission and SHE Transmission.
- 15.1.6 Given the linear nature of the East Coast and Central Scotland Upgrades there is limited scope for impacts from both to combine to result in likely significant effects on common or shared receptors i.e. while they may impact on a watercourse or a badger, they are different receptors. In the immediate vicinity of Blairingone where the upgrades meet there would be some potential for combined effects to occur, however, as XL route in this section is capable of operating at 400kV with no physical works required, there is no pathway for a combined effect to occur. As a result the Central Scotland 400kV Upgrade is not predicted to result in likely significant effects when considered in combination with the East Coast 400kV Upgrade.

15.2 Conclusions

- 15.2.1 The results of the EIA ensure that the determining authorities, statutory consultees as well as other interested parties including local communities are aware of the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development and whether these may be significant or not. It is important to note that a significant adverse effect is not necessarily one that would make the Proposed Development unacceptable, nor is a significant beneficial effect necessarily one that would make the Proposed Development acceptable. The purpose of identifying the significant effects (adverse and beneficial) is to ensure that all parties are aware of the Proposed Development's environmental effects (in particular those which are likely to be

¹ <https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationDetails.aspx?cr=ECU00002132>

significant) so that they may be considered alongside other material considerations in determining the applications.

- 15.2.2 The EIA of the Proposed Development has identified and assessed the likely significant effects which would result from its construction and operation. Through careful siting and including mitigation within the design and construction of the Proposed Development, the majority of likely significant environmental effects have been prevented, avoided or reduced. While some significant effects have been identified these are limited to effects on visual amenity. These have been mitigated as far as possible through the inclusion of landscape planting within the design of the Proposed Development including extensive planting, however, due to the open nature of the landscape and views into the site some significant effects will remain during the initial operation of the Proposed Development reducing as landscape planting matures.