

Chapter 11

Summary of Significant Effects

11.1 Chapters 6 to 10 of the EIA Report present the findings of the assessments of the likely effects of the proposed EDM Project on a topic by topic basis. The significance of these effects has been assessed using criteria defined in the topic chapters. Where appropriate, the significance of effects has been categorised as **major**, **moderate**, **minor** or **none**. In the context of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations'), effects assessed as being of 'major' or 'moderate' significance are considered to be **significant** effects.

11.2 In accordance with Schedule 4 of the EIA regulations, PAN 1/2013 and other relevant EIA guidance, the EIA Report has focused on identifying likely significant environmental effects (both positive and negative) of the proposed EDM Project, during construction and operation (including cumulatively with other developments). Design changes made as a consequence of the key constraints to route design are considered to be mitigation which is 'embedded' in the design. Further details of the design strategy and the economic, technical and environmental constraints that have informed the design can be found in **Chapter 3: Routeing Process and Design Strategy**. The assessments have been undertaken taking account of the embedded and good practice construction measures to avoid and/or minimise effects and, where required, the application of committed additional mitigation measures to determine the level of significance of the residual effect.

Summary of Significant Effects

11.3 Table 11.1 presents the predicted likely significant effects of the proposed EDM Project prior to the implementation of the additional mitigation measures, where relevant. Only effects which are considered to be significant prior to mitigation are presented in Table 11.1. All other effects are considered to be not significant prior to mitigation and are therefore not presented.

11.4 Prior to committed additional mitigation, significant effects are predicted in relation to:

- Landscape and Visual Amenity (LVIA); and
- Forestry.

11.5 Prior to committed additional mitigation, significant effects are not predicted in relation to the following topics and these are therefore not discussed further in this chapter.

- Hydrology, Geology, Hydrogeology, Water Resources and Peat;
- Ecology and Ornithology;
- Cultural Heritage; and
- Other Issues.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

11.6 As outlined in Chapter 3, and within the LVIA Chapter (Chapter 6), avoidance and/or minimisation of landscape and visual effects has been a key objective of the routeing and design process for the proposed EDM Project, and as such, no additional mitigation measures are proposed.

11.7 Significant effects on views are predicted at three of the 11 representative viewpoints and three Core Paths located within the 3km Study Area during the construction of the New 132kV OHL. **Moderate (significant)** effects are predicted from Viewpoint 5: B789, Viewpoint 6: Gallahill Road, Viewpoint 9: Devol Road and from Core Paths LAN/13, LAN/14 and LAN/15. Viewpoint 5 represents a view from the southern extents of Core Path LAN/15 and sequential views travelling south on the B789. From Gallahill Road Viewpoint 6 represents sequential views from the minor roads and Core Path network north and above the Dargarvel Burn. Viewpoint 9 represents sequential views for recreational users of the Core Path network when travelling south from Port Glasgow and recreational users within the southern extents of Port Glasgow Golf Club. Core Paths LAN/13 and LAN/14 follow the minor roads to the southwest and southeast of Barscube Hill, whilst Core Path LAN/15 links Old Greenock Road to the B789.

11.8 Significant effects on views are predicted at three of the 11 representative viewpoints and three core paths located within the 3km Study Area during the operation of the New 132kV OHL. **Moderate (significant)** effects are predicted from Viewpoint 2: B815 Motorway overbridge, Viewpoint 5: B789, Viewpoint 6: Gallahill Road and from Core Paths LAN/13, LAN/14 and LAN/15. From Viewpoint 2 the direction of effect is considered to be **positive** due to the removal of the Existing 132kV OHL steel towers seen in close proximity views from the northern edge of Bishopton.

11.9 There are no significant cumulative visual effects predicted.

11.10 There are no significant landscape effects predicted.

Forestry

11.11 One of the key objectives of the routeing and design process has been to minimise the extent of felling required, with wooded areas and individual trees being avoided where possible, when balancing with other technical and environmental objectives. Where trees could not be avoided, good practice mitigation measures in the form of crowning/pruning is proposed where possible to avoid the need for felling.

11.12 A **Major (significant)** effect is predicted due to the long term loss of local broadleaf woodland due to the construction and operation on the New 132kV OHL. 5.15ha will be lost of an estimated local resource of 3,223ha, with 2.54ha of this area designated as either Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland or sites identified by Native Woodland Survey of Scotland. This loss equates to 0.16% of the local broadleaf resource.

11.13 A **Moderate (significant)** effect is predicted to the local forest resource as a result of tree felling within the 70m wayleave corridor of the New 132kV OHL. This activity will result in a long-term loss of 5.34ha of 5,373ha of local forest resource, equating to a loss of 0.1% of the local forest resource.

11.14 There are no significant effects predicted to the temporary loss of local forest resource due to felling activity for access tracks and pulling areas.

11.15 There is scope to offset effects on long term forestry loss through the re-planting of certain sections within the 70m wayleave. However, this work does require the agreement of the landowner and as such cannot form committed mitigation for the EDM Project and has not been taken into account in reducing the significance of effects. The decommissioning of the Existing 132kV OHL will release 7.08ha of land within the associated 40m wayleave with the potential to replant or encourage natural regeneration of the corridor to native woodland. However, SPEN does not have direct control over the majority of this land and replanting in these areas has to be considered as potential non-committed offsetting or enhancement rather than committed mitigation.

Interrelated Effects

11.16 The EIA Regulations (Schedule 4, Paragraph 5) require that an EIA Report considers the interrelationships between aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a development. It is considered that the following effects are interrelated:

- There is some correlation between likely effects on hydrology and on ecology given that changes to hydrology resulting from the proposed EDM Project could result in indirect effect on ecological receptors, for example, excessive levels of suspended sediment in watercourses can have an indirect effect on fish and watercourse ecology and disruption of the hydrological patterns within groundwater dependent habitats. These are assessed in **Chapter 7: Hydrology, Geology, Hydrogeology, Water Resources and Peat** and **Chapter 8: Ecology and Ornithology**. No significant effects on hydrology and ecology/ornithology are considered likely.
- There is some correlation between likely effects on forestry and on hydrology given that changes to forestry felling resulting from the proposed EDM Project could result in effects on the water quality and sedimentation. In addition, there are links between effects on ecology and on forestry in relation to habitat loss and/or species disturbance and displacement as a result of felling. These effects are discussed in **Chapter 7: Hydrology, Geology, Hydrogeology and Water Resources**. There are also links between visual and forestry effects as a result of felling activity during the construction phases. These are considered in **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Amenity**.

Table 11.1: Summary of Likely Significant Effects

| Predicted Effect | Significance of Effect | Mitigation | Significance of Residual Effect |
|---|--|--|--|
| Landscape and Visual Amenity | | | |
| Construction Effects | | | |
| <i>Visual Receptors</i> | | | |
| Viewpoint 5: B789 | Moderate (Significant) | Mitigation embedded in the design of the EDM Project. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Viewpoint 6: Gallahill Road | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Viewpoint 9: Devol Road | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Core Path LAN/13 and LAN/14 | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Core Path LAN/15 | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Operational Effects | | | |
| <i>Visual Receptors</i> | | | |
| Viewpoint 2: B815 Motorway Overbridge | Moderate (Significant and positive) | As above. | Moderate (Significant and positive) |
| Viewpoint 5: B789 | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Viewpoint 6: Gallahill Road | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Core Path LAN/13 and LAN/14 | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Core Path LAN/15 | Moderate (Significant) | As above. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Forestry | | | |
| Construction and Operational Effects | | | |
| Long-term loss of local Forest Resources | Moderate (Significant) | Measures likely to be most successful in mitigating and/or offsetting the effects of felling are subject to landowner agreement. These measures do not form committed mitigation, and have not be taken into account in the residual effect. | Moderate (Significant) |
| Long-term loss of Local Broadleaf Woodland including Ancient Woodland and Native Woodland | Major (Significant) | As above. | Major (Significant) |