Redshaw 400kV Substation

Planning Statement

May 2025

Land & Planning

Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction

Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement (PS) has been prepared by LUC on behalf of Scottish Power Transmission plc (SPT) (the Applicant) to accompany the submission of the planning application under Section 32 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended[1], to construct and keep installed, a new 400 kilovolt (kV) / 132kV substation (the 'Proposed Development') to meet the requirement for future expansion and accommodation of planned renewable energy projects and their associated grid connections in the area.

1.2 The following structure has been adopted in this Planning Statement:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** (this chapter) provides background detail relating to the Applicant, the background and need for the Proposed Development and the statutory decision-making framework, .
- **Chapter 2: The Proposed Development** provides details of the Site (i.e. the area delineated by the 'red line' application boundary on all figures) and surrounding area, details of the Proposed Development components proposed on the Site and the design principles used to reach the application design. Chapter 2 also provides details of the integrated/embedded mitigation and overall benefits of the Proposed Development.
- **Chapter 3: Planning Policy Appraisal** covers the key national and local planning policy considerations relevant to the planning appraisal of the Proposed Development, including those which should be given considerable weight in the overall planning balance. Drawing on the conclusions of the EIA Report and supporting documentation, it sets out a high-level appraisal of the Proposed Development against the relevant policies of the statutory Development Plan (National Planning Framework 4[2] and South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2[3]).
- **Chapter 4: Conclusions** provides a conclusion on the balance of issues in respect of the planning case for the Proposed Development, considering the national need for the Proposed Development as well as its alignment with national and local planning policy, as laid out in Chapter 3.

The Applicant

1.3 Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) owns and operates the electricity transmission and distribution networks in Southern and Central Scotland through its wholly-owned subsidiaries, SPT (the Applicant) and SP Distribution plc (SPD). SPT is the holder of a transmission licence. SPEN's transmission network is the backbone of the electricity system within its area, carrying large amounts of electricity at high voltages from generating sources such as wind farms, power stations and various other utilities across long distances to connect homes and businesses. The transmission network consists of approximately 4,000km of OHLs and over 600km of underground cables. The electricity is then delivered via the distribution network which has over 150 substations and in excess of 100 grid supply points which serves approximately two million customers in Southern and Central Scotland.

[1] Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended (see: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/contents)
[2] Scottish Government (2023) National Planning Framework 4 (see: https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/)
[3] South Lanarkshire Council (2021) Local Development Plan 2 (see: https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/developmentplan2)

1.4 SPEN is required to identify electrical connections that meet the technical requirements of the electricity system, which are economically viable and cause on balance, the least disturbance to both the environment and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

The Proposed Development

1.5 The Proposed Development involves the construction of new electrical infrastructure designed to strengthen and future-proof the transmission network in this part of Scotland. Key components include 400kV and 132kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation buildings, a 33kV Grid Supply Point (GSP) substation, grid transformers, access infrastructure, fencing, drainage, landscaping and temporary construction areas. Once operational, the development is expected to facilitate the connection of up to two gigawatts (GW) of planned renewable energy development, enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the transmission network in the region.

Background and Need for Development

1.6 As the electricity transmission and distribution license holder for central and southern Scotland, SPEN has a legal duty to develop and maintain a technically feasible and economically viable transmission and distribution system.

1.7 The existing transmission grid infrastructure in the South of Scotland will, in the next few years, be operating at full capacity and will therefore no longer be able to accommodate the planned and potential new generation in the area. To ensure sufficient capacity for electricity that needs to be transmitted throughout the area, SPEN's proposal is to construct the new Redshaw substation close to the existing 400kV electricity transmission line (ZV route), be able to accommodate a new 400kV overhead line connection from Glenmuckloch substation and other connections in the future. The Proposed Development will ensure a more reliable fit for purpose and economical transmission network.

1.8 LUC on behalf of SPEN conducted an initial strategic optioneering study in 2019 to identify potential substation search areas based on technical and environmental considerations. The results identified search areas which were taken forward for a substation siting study (Redshaw 400kV Substation Siting Study[4]) undertaken in March 2023 and a further technical review and an appraisal (Redshaw 400kV Substation Appraisal Supplementary Report[5]) undertaken in May 2023. Out of all proposed options which were subject to detailed technical, environmental and economic assessment, the site emerging as the Proposed Development Site was taken forward through to the EIA process including Scoping.

Statutory Framework

1.9 This Planning Statement support an application for planning permission submitted to South Lanarkshire Council, to be determined under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended). Sections 25 and 37(2) of the 1997 Act require that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan in this instance is National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (SLLDP2).

1.10 Whilst the Development Plan is the starting point for the decision-making process, it must also be considered in the context of the policy hierarchy (governed by Scottish Government policy) which in turn is informed by the wider suite of Scottish, UK and international policy and law relating to renewable energy development and climate change. The Proposed Development is afforded high level support from national renewable energy and climate change policy, by virtue of the role it plays in facilitating the delivery of

[4] A document which outlines the methodology and findings of the siting study which has been undertaken to inform consultation, as well as the details of the public consultation process (2023).(see: https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/11980_Redshaw%20400kV_Substation_%20Siting%20Study_03_04_23_inc_Figures_pdfcompressed.pdf)
[5] A supplementary document that details the methodology and findings relating to the identification of Substation Siting Area 4 (SS4) (2023). (see: https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/Redshaw_400kV_Appraisal_Report_Supplementary_Report.pdf)

renewable energy projects (i.e. the Proposed Development will allow for renewable energy projects to connect to the national grid).

1.11 The Proposed Development falls within the category of National Developments, as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009[6] and NPF4 Part 3 – Annex A. The Proposed Development comprises 'Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure' (National Development 3) by virtue of it constituting *"new and/or upgraded infrastructure directly supporting on and offshore high voltage electricity lines, cables and interconnectors including convertor stations, switching stations and substations"*.

1.12 With regard to this, the application is accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report and Design and Access Statement (DAS) in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013[7].

Supporting Information

1.13 9 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the plans, drawings and technical information which has been submitted in support of the Proposed Development. This includes the following:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, which has been prepared to accompany the application, in accordance with the Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017[8]. The content of the EIA Report was informed by the Scoping Opinion, received on 9th February 2024. Further details of the Scoping and EIA process can be found in **Chapter 1** of the EIA Report.
- Ecological Appraisal
- Biodiversity Net Gain Report
- Transport Statement and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CMTP)
- Design and Access Statement (DAS)
- Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report
- Supporting technical appendices, drawings and visualisations.

[6] Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (see: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/51/contents/made)
[7] Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (see: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/155/contents)
[8] Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (see: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/102/contents)

Chapter 2
The Proposed Development

Proposed Development

2.1 The Proposed Development comprises the following:

- 400kV and 132kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation buildings;
- A small distribution 33kV Grid Supply Point (GSP) substation building;
- Grid transformers;
- Access tracks, roads and parking provision;
- Fencing;
- Drainage works
- Landscaping works; and
- Temporary construction compound, laydown areas and associated temporary construction works.

2.2 The Site's location is shown in **Figure 2.1** and proposed site layout shown in **Figure 2.2**.

The Site and surrounding area

2.3 The proposed site ("the Site") is located in proximity to the existing 400kV Scotland to England interconnector (ZV route) at Redshaw, approximately 3.5 kilometres (km) south-east of Douglas and wholly within South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) area. The Site area within the Site boundary covers approximately 20.65 hectares (ha).

2.4 The Site has been selected through the 2019 and 2023 optioneering and siting studies for a number of criteria below. **Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) Chapter 2** and **3** provide further detail of the Proposed Development, site selection and design process.

Economic

- The Site generally costs less to construct taking into account expected civil engineering, plant, equipment and labours costs. The discounted sites would have required significant earthworks and soil removal from site, resulting in significant transport movements and associated costs relative to the proposed Site. The topography of the Site allows for cut and fill without the need to transport surplus material offsite. Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) was chosen over an Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) solution, as AIS would have required a significantly larger land take that would not have been possible on all sites considered without significant additional earthworks and the need for soil removal from site.

Technical

- The Site meets the objective of being within proximity to the existing ZV route and can accommodate new proposed overhead line connections including 132kV connections into the substation and connection of a 400kV line from Glenmuckloch substation.
- The location was identified as a site which is located between towers ZV108 and ZV111, where it is considered that the existing tension towers would give the ability to divert the existing OHL circuits,

whilst two new terminal towers would be constructed in place of tower ZV110 to turn both circuits into the new site. The Site is located to the east of tower ZV110 to satisfy these technical requirements.

- The Site has minimum impact to the ZV route in terms of location. Easy 'loop-in and loop-out' (LILO) of the line would be possible. The location will minimise impact to the operation of ZV route, with planned outages being kept to 8 weeks in total (4 weeks for each circuit) and during the construction phase there will be fewer tower modifications required relative to other site locations.

Environmental

- The Site has a good landscape fit and the presence of existing landscape and infrastructure features to integrate and where possible screen the substation infrastructure.
- The Site has good transport links for access to the Site for construction and operation.
- The Site has the opportunity to minimise impacts to the environment by reducing cut and fill activities to minimise the earthworks required relative to other site locations.

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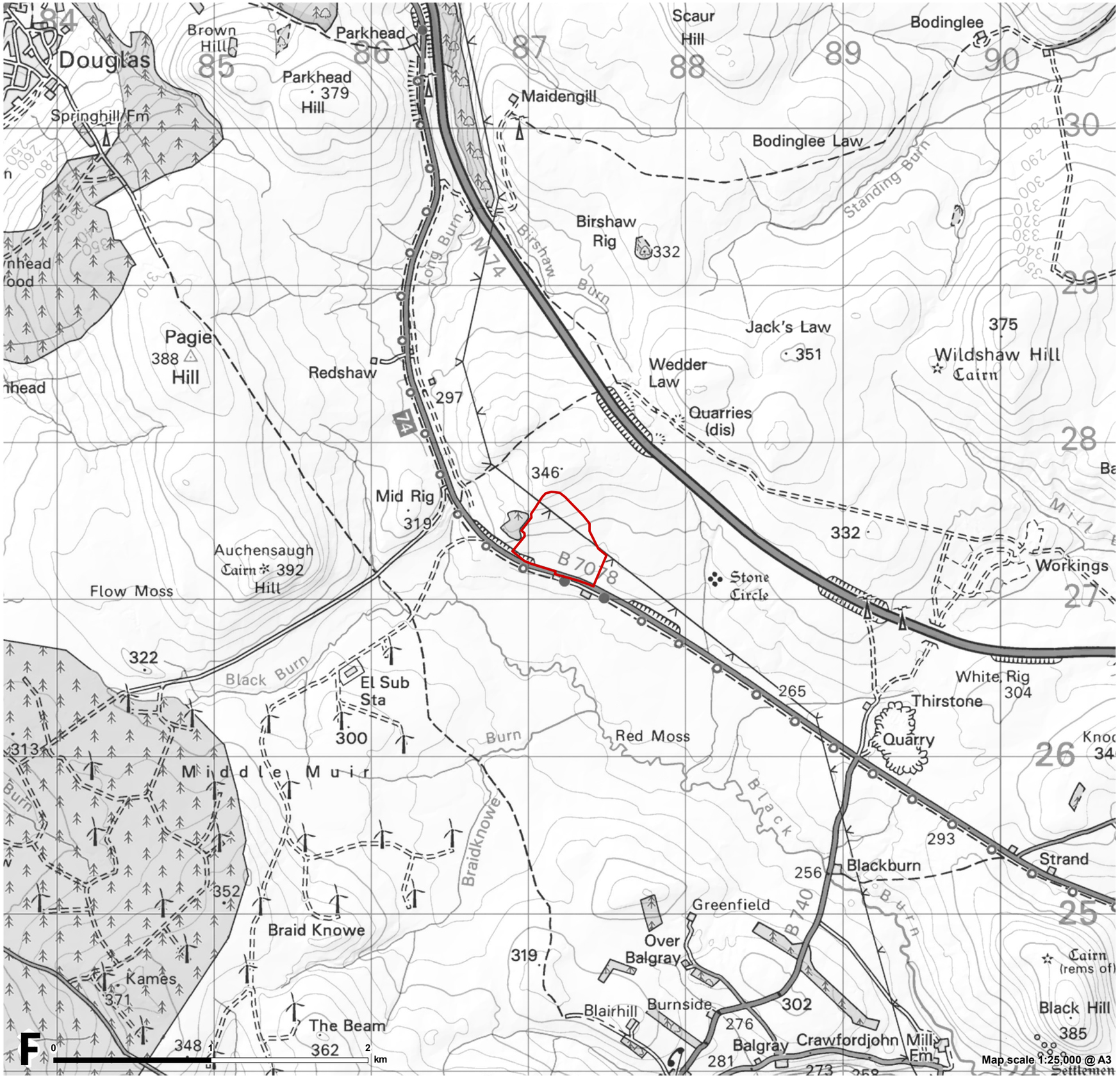
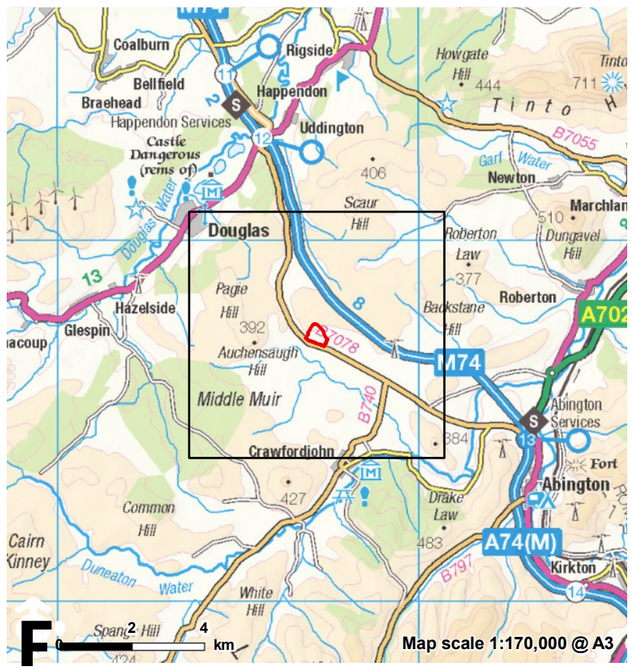
Figure 2.1: Location Plan

Site boundary

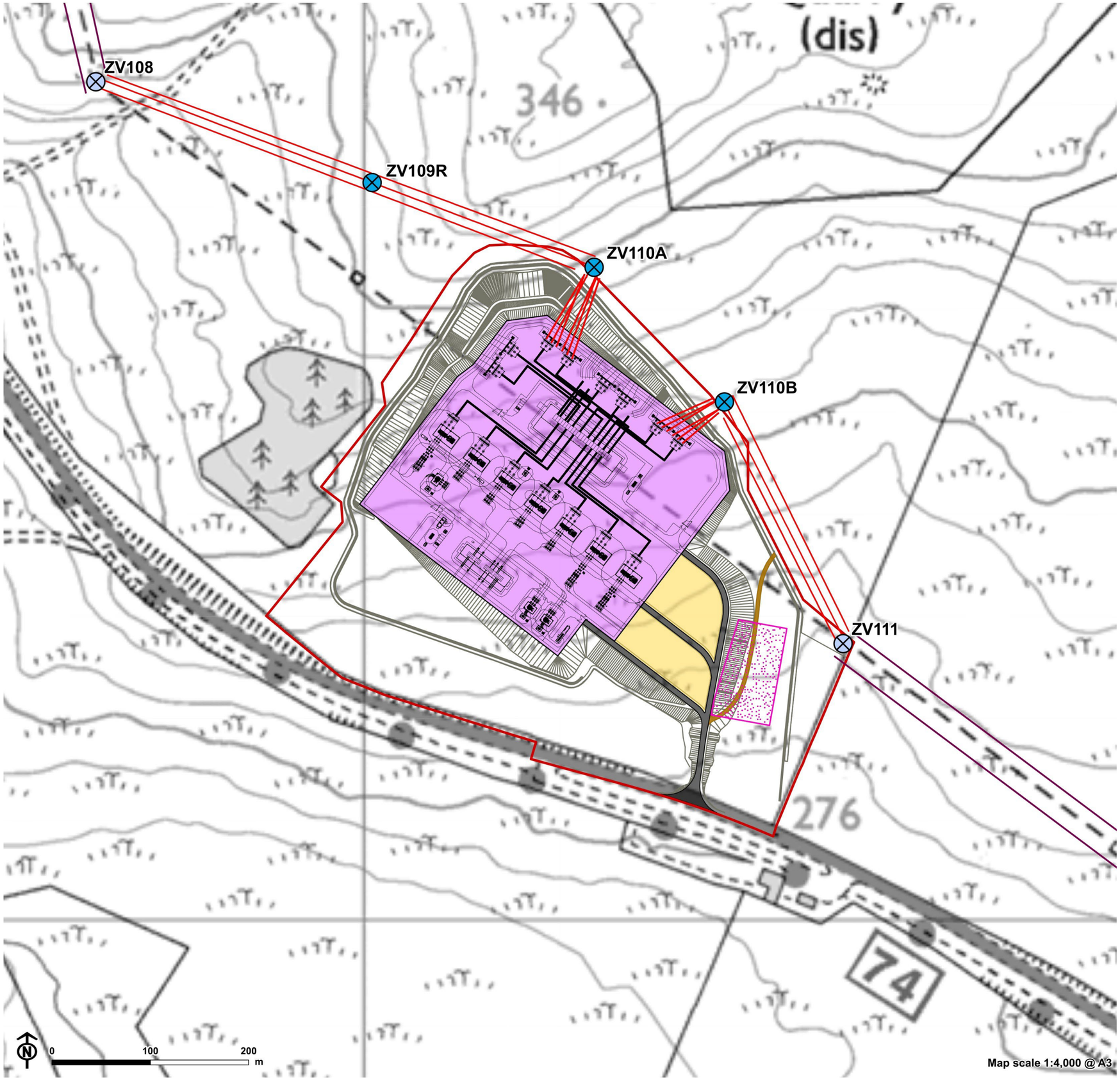




SP Energy Networks

LUC

Figure 2.2: Proposed site plan



c:::::J Site boundary

r=J Proposed Redshaw Substation

Proposed temporary compound

\- Proposed access road

\- Proposed farmer's access track

Proposed laydown space

Proposed platform earth works

Proposed electrical layout

Proposed ZV diversion tower (pending determination)

Proposed 400kV Overhead Line (OHL) ZV diversion (pending determination)

Q9 Existing tower

Existing 400kV Overhead Line (OHL) - ZV route

Note:
ZV diversion subject to a separate consenting process.

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Chapter 3
Planning Policy Appraisal

Introduction

3.1 This chapter provides an appraisal of the Proposed Development in the context of relevant national and local planning policy. It outlines the key policy documents that form the statutory Development Plan and provides an appraisal of the Proposed Development against the policies of relevance to the type of development proposed.

The Development Plan

3.2 The statutory Development Plan as it relates to this application for planning permission comprises the following documents:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023)[9]
- South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (SLLDP2) Volumes 1 and 2 (2021)[10].
- Supporting Planning Guidance: Renewable Energy (2021)[11].

3.3 While the Development Plan should be read as a whole, it follows that greater weight should be attributed to bespoke policies that are designed to address a specific development type. **Table 3.1** provides a policy appraisal of the Proposed Development against the relevant policies of NPF4. Of primary relevance to the Proposed Development, Policy 11 (Energy) is considered first and then other relevant policies in numerical order. **Table 3.2** sets out a policy appraisal of the Proposed Development against the relevant policies of SLLDP2.

[9] Scottish Government (2023) National Planning Framework 4 (see: https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/)
[10] South Lanarkshire Council (2021) Local Development Plan 2 (see: https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/developmentplan2)
[11] South Lanarkshire Council (2021) Supporting Planning Guidance: Renewable Energy (see: https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/12337/supporting_planning_guidance_renewable_energy.pdf)

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023)

3.4 NPF4 is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out the spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy. Decisions through the planning system must be responsive to the position introduced by NPF4, affording significant weight to the energy policy objectives outlined below.

3.5 NPF4 was laid before Scottish Parliament on 8th November 2022 and approved on the 11th January 2023. NPF4 came into force on the 13th February 2023, forming a key part of the development plan and superseding NPF3 and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).

3.6 A Chief Planner's Letter: 'Transitional Arrangements for NPF4' (dated 8th February 2023)[12] sets out that NPF3 and SPP no longer represent Scottish Ministers' planning policy and therefore will not be taken into account when determining planning applications on or after the 13th February 2023. It confirms that whether an LDP has been adopted prior to or after the adoption and publication of NPF4, legislation states that *'in the event of any incompatibility between a provision of NPF and a provision of an LDP, whichever of them is the later in date is to prevail'* (Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997; section 24(3)).

National Spatial Strategy

3.7 NPF4 sets out six overarching spatial principles that aim to provide an integrated strategy for the delivery of environmental, social and economic objectives. These are: Just transition, Conserving and recycling assets, Local living, Compact urban growth, Rebalanced development and Rural revitalisation. These six principles are designed to support the planning and delivery of:

- '***Sustainable places**, where we reduce emissions, restore and better connect biodiversity;*
- ***Liveable places**, where we can all live better, healthier lives; and,*
- ***Productive places**, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy'* (p.4).

3.8 The strategy sets out that every decision made about future development must contribute to making Scotland a sustainable place. This includes the expansion of renewable energy generation. Page 6 of NPF4 comments on the legislative basis for Scotland's net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2045 and highlights *that "we must make significant progress towards this by 2030"*. Page 7 further notes that *"every decision on our future development must contribute to make Scotland a more sustainable place"*, which includes encouraging the *"expansion of renewable energy generation".*

3.9 NPF4 includes 18 'National Developments', which are defined as *"significant developments of national importance*" (p.97) that will help to deliver the National Spatial Strategy. This includes **National Development 3: Strategic renewable energy generation and transmission infrastructure.** NPF4 Annex B sets out the statement of need for the 18 national developments, outlining their importance. For National Development 3, it states: *"The electricity transmission grid will need substantial reinforcement including the addition of new infrastructure to connect and transmit the output from new on and offshore capacity to consumers in Scotland, the rest of the UK and beyond … Additional electricity generation from renewables and electricity transmission capacity of scale is fundamental to achieving a net zero economy and supports improved network resilience in rural and island areas"* (p.103).

The Proposed Development would provide a meaningful contribution to Scotland's net zero targets within the key timescales for delivery, helping to reinforce the transmission network in the area, of which an anticipated two gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy will be connected into the Proposed Development in the future. As is set out by National Development 3, NPF4 provides clear high-level support for all forms of renewable energy development, including the infrastructure necessary to support it.

[12] Scottish Government (2023) Chief Planner's Letter: Transitional Arrangements for National Planning Framework 4.

Policy appraisal

3.10 'Part 2 – National Planning Policy' of NPF4, is structured around the three themes of delivering 'Sustainable Places', 'Liveable Places' and 'Productive Places'. Part 2 of NPF4 provides 33 national policies. Of primary relevance to the Proposed Development, Policy 11 will be considered first in **Table 3.1** below, and then other relevant policies in numerical order.

Table 3.1 NPF4 policy appraisal

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
Policy 11: Energy	
As electricity transmission infrastructure, Policy 11 is considered the central policy of relevance to the Proposed Development. The policy supports the development of all types of renewable energy projects, including energy generation, storage, transmission and distribution infrastructure, as well as emerging low-carbon technologies like hydrogen and carbon capture. The policy is broken down into sub-paragraphs, with those most relevant to the Proposed Development outlined below: ■ **Policy 11(a)** - supports all types of renewable, low-carbon and zero-emissions technologies. This includes wind farms (including repowering and life extension), grid infrastructure, energy storage, small-scale renewables, solar arrays, carbon capture and negative emissions technologies, as well as co-located developments combining these technologies. ■ **Policy 11(c)** – requires renewable energy proposals to demonstrate they maximise net economic benefits, particularly local and community socio-economic gains such as jobs, business opportunities and supply chain benefits. ■ **Policy 11(e)** – sets out the key impacts that renewable energy proposals must address through design and mitigation. These include effects on residential amenity, landscape and visual impacts, public access, aviation and telecommunications, traffic, the historic environment, water and flood risk, biodiversity, trees and woodlands, decommissioning and site restoration and cumulative impacts. Significant weight will be given to a proposal's contribution to renewable energy and emissions reduction targets.	The principle of the Proposed Development, as grid infrastructure, is supported by NPF4 Policy 11(a). Regarding Policy 11(c) – It Is considered that the local economy will have the capacity to benefit from the expenditure associated with the Proposed Development, estimated to be more than £100m. At peak construction time (during the earthworks) it is expected there will be in excess of 100 workers on site. The Proposed Development may create employment opportunities within the supply chain for companies providing services to contractors during construction. There will be further induced economic benefits to the local economy from workers spending their income in local businesses. Specialist construction workers may also utilise accommodation in the surrounding area during construction. SPEN has a strong track record of developing onshore energy infrastructure in Scotland, and experience from previous similar projects is that expenditure in local goods and services is widely spread and makes a difference to existing businesses. The Proposed Development will also facilitate the delivery of a number of renewable energy developments in the surrounding area (with an anticipated total capacity of two gigawatts (GW)), each of which will provide important economic benefits, including local jobs, business opportunities and supply chain benefits. The relevant environmental effects have been assessed as appropriate in the **EIA Report** and supporting documentation, in line with Policy 11(e). Landscape and visual, cultural heritage, hydrology and hydrogeology and noise are assessed within their respective **EIA Report** topic chapters (**Chapters 4 – 7**). The remaining topic areas were considered in detail during EIA Scoping process. Further information of the approach to EIA and individual topic areas is provided in **EIA Report Chapter 1**. Standalone **Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Net Gain Report, Transport Statement** and **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)** reports are provided to support this planning application. Each of the environmental considerations set out in **11(e)** have been considered in full and, where necessary, assessed within the EIAR. Adverse effects of the Proposed Development have been addressed through considered design and mitigation, to be minimised as far as possible. To ensure focused discussion, taking into account the EIA findings, detailed commentary below focuses only on the residual significant effects of the Proposed Development.

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
	Significant residual environmental effects have been identified for a small number of landscape and visual receptors and are assessed to be very localised (see **EIAR Chapter 4: Landscape and visual impact assessment**). As set out by Policy 11(e)(ii) *"such impacts are to be expected for some forms of renewable energy. Where impacts are localised and/or appropriate design mitigation has been applied, they will generally be considered acceptable".* In line with Policy 11, landscape and visual impacts for the Proposed Development are considered acceptable. In terms of design mitigation, the Site offers a good landscape fit, with existing features providing opportunities for integration and screening of the substation infrastructure in views from the wider landscape. The rising landform of Wildshaw Hill and the adjacent block of coniferous forestry will largely screen views of the Proposed Development from the north, east and west. An **Outline Landscape Mitigation and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (OLMBEP**) has been developed for the Proposed Development, integrating the form and scale of the Proposed development into the surrounding landscape as far as practicable. Significant residual cumulative effects are also identified regarding cumulative impacts on the setting of a small number of cultural heritage assets (three scheduled monuments and one non-statutory register (NSR) site), when assessing the Proposed Development in combination with cumulative developments. Consideration of the impacts of the Proposed Development with regard to historic assets is provided against NPF4 Policy 7 below. As stated by Policy 11(e), in considering these impacts, significant weight will be placed on the contribution to renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction targets. As such, significant weight should be placed on the contribution of the Proposed Development to facilitating the delivery of renewable energy and making important contributions to both aims. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with, and is afforded support, by NPF4 Policy 11. Further policy appraisal of the relevant environmental impacts is provided against the NPF4 policies below.
Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises	
Policy 1 of NPF4 gives significant weight to the global climate and nature crises in all development decisions. It requires planning proposals to be assessed in terms of their contribution (positive or negative) to addressing these crises. The Chief Planner's Letter (February 2023) clarifies that it is for the decision-maker to judge whether this significant weight tips	The Proposed Development will help to reinforce the transmission network. An anticipated two GW of renewable energy will be connected to the Proposed Development in the future. The Proposed Development will provide a more reliable, fit for purpose and economical transmission network and therefore makes important contributions in supporting greenhouse gas reduction targets, by facilitating the delivery of renewable energy.

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
the balance for or against a proposal, depending on its climate and nature impacts. Page 8 of NPF4 further reinforces Policy 1 by stating the policy ensures the climate emergency is prioritised in all planning plans and decisions.	Regarding the nature crisis, the Proposed Development will deliver biodiversity enhancement. This is considered further against NPF4 Policy 3 below. Overall, the Proposed Development is afforded signficiant support by NPF4 Policy 1.
Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation	
Policy 2 aims to encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change.	The Proposed Development supports the transmission network which is essential to facilitating climate mitigation (i.e. delivery of renewable energy proposals). The Proposed Development is appropriately sited and designed to adapt to the current and future impact of climate change. It is not considered to lead to significant effects on climate or the ability of receptors to adapt to climate change, however consideration of this topic is given within relevant chapters in the EIAR where applicable. This includes the identification of the likely consequences of climate change for baseline conditions/assessment findings and the resilience of proposed mitigation measures to any projected changes in extreme weather, including a heavy rainfall event. Further consideration is provided against Policy 22 regarding flood risk. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with NPF4 Policy 2.
Policy 3: Biodiversity	
Policy 3 aims to protect and enhance biodiversity, reverse its decline and strengthen nature networks through positive development outcomes. The policy is broken down into sub-paragraphs, with those most relevant to the Proposed Development outlined below: ■ **Policy 3(a)** – requires development proposals to enhance biodiversity, including restoring degraded habitats and strengthening nature networks and their connections where relevant. ■ **Policy 3(b)** – states that national and major developments, as well as those requiring EIA, will only be supported if they can demonstrate that they will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity and nature networks, leaving them in a clearly improved state. This must include long-term	A standalone **Ecological Appraisal** has been submitted alongside the application. No significant effects of the Proposed Development alone or cumulatively with other developments ecological receptors were identified. The Ecological Appraisal sets out embedded mitigation measures that will be adopted by the Proposed Development. Proposals for enhancement of biodiversity are outlined in the **Outline Landscape Mitigation and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (OLMBEP)** provided as **Figure 3.3** of the EIAR. Based on the limited likelihood of impacts on bird populations, taking into account the small area of habitat that will be lost (approximately 0.2km^2), ornithological impacts were scoped out of the EIA (see **EIAR Chapter 1** for further detail). An **OLMBEP** has been developed for the Proposed Development. This plan illustrates proposed mitigation that responds to the form and scale of the Proposed Development. The intention is to help to integrate the proposed substation into the existing landscape as far as practicable and deliver biodiversity enhancements proportionate to the scale of the Proposed Development in accordance with Policy 3(b). Measures proposed in the OLMBEP include retention of existing

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
management and be informed by best practice assessment methods. Proposals must meet the following criteria: – Be based on a clear understanding of the site's ecological context, including any irreplaceable habitats. – Incorporate nature-based solutions wherever feasible. – Fully mitigate any potential negative effects in line with the mitigation hierarchy before identifying enhancements. – Deliver significant biodiversity enhancements beyond mitigation, including improved habitat connectivity and long-term management. – Consider local community benefits associated with biodiversity and nature networks. NatureScot is currently undertaking work to develop a biodiversity metric for Scotland's planning system[13]. This will support the delivery of NPF4.	woodland, proposed woodland screening (mixed broadleaf and coniferous trees with some areas under seeded with meadow), as well as areas of wildflower/ native plant mix and proposed areas of low-level scrub vegetation. The Applicant is committed to delivering 'No Net Loss' (NNL)[14], thereby meeting Policy 3(b)'s requirements for biodiversity enhancement. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric has been developed to demonstrate this[15] and a standalone **BNG Report** and associated calculations have been produced for the Proposed Development. The Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) will achieve NNL via delivery of off-site habitat management and creation projects, in conjunction with partners, ensuring policy compliance with NPF4 Policy 3. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with the policy requirements of NPF4 Policy 3(a) and 3(b). Further consideration of designated sites and protected species is provided against Policy 4 below.
Policy 4: Natural places	
Policy 4 aims to protect, restore and enhance natural assets using nature-based solutions. It requires the assessment of impacts on nationally or locally designated landscapes and ecological areas. Key provisions include: ■ Proposals with unacceptable impacts on the natural environment will not be supported.	The EIA Report and supporting documents have fully considered the effects of the Proposed Development with regards to the natural assets outlined in NPF4 Policy 4. The Proposed Development is not located within any nationally or locally designated sites. Red Moss SSSI and SAC are located approximately 200m to the south of the Proposed Development. Chapter 5 of the standalone **Ecological Appraisal** report provides an appraisal of likely significant effects on the Favourable Conservation Status of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar Sites, in line with the Habitats Regulations Appraisal process[16]. There will be no direct habitat loss, disturbance, or fragmentation of

[13] NatureScot (2024) A Biodiversity Metric for Scotland's Planning System
[14] SPEN is committed to achieving NNL of biodiversity across all its projects at a business-wide level and to achieving BNG based on the relevant legislation and policy under which projects are delivered across its license areas in Scotland, England and Wales. To deliver this commitment, in 2022, SPEN reached agreement with Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN) to use the latter's Biodiversity Project Toolkit for projects being brought forward within the SPT license area.
[15] Full details of the Biodiversity Project Toolkit methodology and findings are provided in the BNG Report.
[16] The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
■ Proposals affecting European sites must undergo appropriate assessment unless they are essential for conservation. ■ Developments affecting nationally designated sites (e.g. National Parks, NSAs, SSSIs) will only be supported if their integrity is maintained or if national-level benefits clearly outweigh any significant adverse effects. ■ Local nature or landscape sites must not suffer significant adverse effects unless outweighed by benefits of at least local importance. ■ The precautionary principle must be applied. ■ Proposals affecting protected species must meet statutory requirements. ■ Development in wild land areas will only be supported if it contributes to renewable energy targets or supports small-scale rural businesses or fragile communities.	habitats within SAC/SSSI. Although there is a limited hydrological connection between the Proposed Development and the SAC, upon implementation of standard best practice and mitigation measures there will be no indirect effects as a result of the Proposed Development. Therefore, there will be no likely significant effects (in Habitat Regulations Assessment terms) on the integrity of Red Moss SAC as a result of the Proposed Development. Habitats within the ecological appraisal study area offered limited opportunities for protected species comprising bats, badger, and red squirrel. Low levels of badger and red squirrel activity were recorded within the conifer plantation in the west of the Study Area (outwith the Site). No signs of pine marten or water vole were noted, although some limited habitat potential is present. A series of embedded mitigation and good practice measures will be adopted within the design and construction to safeguard the conifer plantation and the low levels of protected species recorded within the Study Area (see **Ecological Appraisal** Chapter 4). In summary, the integrity and favourable conservation status of designated sites, habitats of conservation concern and protected species will be maintained as a result of the Proposed Development and legislative compliance met. Biodiversity enhancement, as described in relation to **Policy 3**, will support the protection and enhancement of important habitats and species through delivery of the final BEP, including suitable off-site projects. Overall, the Proposed Development aligns with the requirements of Policy 4.
Policy 5: Soils	
Policy 5 aims to protect carbon-rich soils and peatlands and minimise soil disturbance from development. It allows for renewable energy projects to potentially be located on prime agricultural land and peatland if they support greenhouse gas reduction targets. Developers must carry out detailed site-specific assessments to understand soil conditions, avoid and minimise impacts through careful design and best practices and prepare a peat management plan.	The Site is dominated by improved grassland, with a small area of marshy grassland present in the south-east corner. The Site does not comprise prime agricultural land. A **Peat Survey Report** was submitted with the Scoping Report, confirming that the Site contains no peat. On this basis the Proposed Development will not affect carbon rich soils and peatland. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with NPF4 Policy 5.
Policy 6: Forestry, woodland and trees	
Policy 6 aims to protect and enhance forests, woodlands and trees. Woodland removal will only be supported if it delivers significant, clearly defined public benefits, in line with Scottish Government policy and usually requires compensatory planting. Proposals on sites with existing or potential woodland must	A semi-mature coniferous plantation dominated by Norway Spruce, which is classified as a Long Established of Plantation Origin (LEPO) woodland in the Ancient Woodland Inventory is located outwith the western part of the Site boundary. Impacts on trees and woodland are considered within the standalone **Ecological Appraisal**.

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
incorporate woodland enhancement and new tree planting into the design, in line with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy.	No works are planned within, or adjacent to, this woodland. There will be no loss or fragmentation of this habitat during construction. Suitable root protection zones, in line with BS5837, will be implemented along the woodland edge, and standard pollution prevention controls and best practice will be in place during the construction phase to prevent indirect effects. With these measures in place, there will be no effect on the structural or functional integrity of the resource and no significant effects on this feature. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with NPF4 Policy 6.
Policy 7: Historic assets and places	
Policy 7 aims to protect and enhance historic assets and places, while supporting positive change that contributes to regeneration. ■ **Policy 7(a) –** requires assessment of development proposals with regards to historic assets and places, based on an understanding of cultural signficiant of the historic asset and/or place. ■ **Policy 7(h) -** regarding scheduled monuments, development is only supported where – *"i. direct impacts on the scheduled monument are avoided;* – *ii. significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the setting of a scheduled monument are avoided; or* – *iii. exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify the impact on a scheduled monument and its setting and impacts on the monument or its setting have been minimised."* ■ **Policy 7(o): -** sets out that non-designated historic assets and their settings should be preserved in situ, wherever feasible, and early archaeological evaluations are required where buried remains may exist.	In line with Policy 7(a), effects on the historic environment are considered within **EIAR Chapter 5: Heritage**. An archaeological and cultural heritage assessment was undertaken, detailing the results of a desk-based assessment and walkover field survey. Embedded design mitigation and additional construction mitigation measures ensure that, in all cases, no significant adverse effects on the heritage assets will result from the construction or operation of the Proposed Development. A detailed cumulative assessment was carried out, considering a future baseline with other consented, proposed or in-scoping schemes within 5km, including nearby wind farm proposals (such as the proposed Bodinglee Wind Farm and M74 Project) and the consented Duneaton Quarry. With regard to Policy 7(h)(i), direct impacts on scheduled monuments have been avoided. No significant effects on the setting of scheduled monuments arise from the Proposed Development alone. However, when considering the Proposed Development in combination with cumulative schemes, the assessment resulted in the identification of moderate cumulative effects on the settings of three scheduled monuments and one non-statutory register (NSR) site. With regard to Policy 7(h), cumulative effects are as follows: ■ **Thirstone, stone circle (SN 5094)** – The cumulative impact of the Proposed Development in combination with cumulative schemes are assessed as being moderate (significant in EIA terms). The close proximity of the proposed M74 Project would exercise the greater part of the cumulative impact. By contrast, the Proposed Development, given its minimal landscape presence relative to both the monument and the other cumulative developments, would contribute the lesser part of the combined effect. Overall, the cultural significance of the stone circle and its relationship within the immediate landscape would not be substantially diminished.

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
	■ **Auchensaugh Hill, cairn (SM 4324**) – The cumulative impact of the Proposed Development in combination with cumulative schemes are assessed as being moderate (significant in EIA terms). The scale of the proposed M74 Project and the proposed Bodinglee Wind Farm would exercise the greater part of the cumulative impact. By contrast, the relative smaller scale of the Proposed Development when beheld from the monument, and particularly when seen alongside other the cumulative developments, would contribute the lesser part of the combined effect. Overall, the cultural significance of the cairn and its relationship within the immediate landscape would not be substantially diminished. ■ **Netherton, cairn (SM 4513) -** The cumulative impact of the Proposed Development in combination with cumulative schemes are assessed as being moderate (significant in EIA terms). Overall, the cultural significance of the cairn and its relationship within the immediate landscape would be appreciably diminished. However, the greater contribution to the cumulative impact would result from the introduction of turbines of the proposed M74 Project at a closer proximity to the monument, which would appear more immediate within its setting. By contrast, the Proposed Development would not challenge the prominence of the cairn within the landscape and would contribute the lesser part of the combined effect when seen alongside other cumulative developments. In each of the above cases, the Proposed Development would contribute significantly less to the cumulative impact than other cumulative schemes. Following Policy 7(h)(iii), exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated given that effects on historic assets have been avoided or minimised as far as possible within the parameters of the Proposed Development, with only residual significant cumulative effects outstanding. Regarding Policy 7(o), significant cumulative effects are identified on the setting of one NSR site, **Knock Leaven cairn (10454),** with the greater contribution to the cumulative impact resulting from the proposed M74 Project at a closer proximity to the monument. The Proposed Development would not interrupt views to or from the monument and would contribute the lesser part of the combined effect when seen alongside other cumulative developments. Overall, it complies with Policy 7(o). Further to this, with regards to Policy 11 (Energy), while there are residual cumulative effects on the setting of a small number of designated heritage assets, in considering impacts of the Proposed Development on the historic environment (Policy 11(e)(vii)), significant weight will be placed on the contribution of the proposal to renewable energy generation targets and on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. In the case of the Proposed Development, this means facilitating two GW of renewable energy development.

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
	Therefore, whilst there are residual cumulative significant effects on heritage assets, when the Proposed Development is considered cumulatively with other schemes, the overall benefits it delivers should be given appropriate weighting in the planning balance, in accordance with Policy 11(e).
Policy 13: Sustainable transport	
Policy 13 aims to encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable transport. It requires transport assessments are carried out for development proposals which will generate a signficiant increase in traffic.	A standalone **Trasport Assessment** and an outline **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)** have been provided to support the planning application. This report concludes that impact on the operation of the local and strategic transport network due to the Proposed Development will be negligible. Any impacts will be time-limited and will cease upon the completion of construction works. As such, in general no material interventions or specific mitigations have been proposed. The outline CTMP has been produced in line with industry-recognised good practice and will be adopted by the appointed contractor(s) to minimise local disruption and enhance safety for all road users. Once completed, activity at the site will be limited to occasional monitoring and maintenance activities. Overall, the Proposed Development is compliant with NPF4 Policy 13.
Policy 22: Flood risk and water management	
Policy 22 seeks to strengthen flood resilience by prioritising the avoidance of flood risk and reducing the vulnerability of both existing and future development to flooding.	**EIAR Chapter 6: Hydrology and hydrogeology** provides a detailed assessment of the Proposed Development with regards to the water environment and flood risk. Embedded design mitigation, good practice and additional mitigation measures set out in EIAR **Chapter 6**, ensure residual construction effects on the water environment are 'negligible' or 'none'. During operation, pollution prevention controls and permanent Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) ensure that there are negligible residual adverse effects with regards to the water environment and flood risk. This includes an assessment of the Proposed Development taking into account the implications of climate change, in line with current SEPA guidance. Overall, the Proposed Development fully complies with NPF4 Policy 22.
Policy 23: Health and safety	
Policy 23 aims to protect people and places from environmental harm, reduce risks from safety hazards and support	**EIAR Chapter 7: Noise and vibration** assesses the noise impacts of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. There is only one potential noise-sensitive

Policy overview	Policy appraisal
development that enhances health and wellbeing. This includes consideration of air quality and noise impacts.	receptor within 1km of the Site (the Red Moss Hotel, which is currently unoccupied). No likely significant effects were identified, during both construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Assessment of effects regarding air quality and dust during construction were considered at Scoping stage. Based on professional judgement it is considered that the number of vehicle movements anticipated to arise from construction, operation and decommissioning from the Proposed Development would not result in any exceedance of air quality standards either at the Site or within the wider area. Various risk management legislation will apply to the Proposed Development including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, The Electrical Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 and various design and technical specifications which require consideration of potential impacts. As part of the detailed project design, risk assessments will be undertaken and will consider maintenance and operational activities. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with the policy requires of Policy 23.

South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (2021)

3.11 The South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan (SLLDP2) was adopted on 9 April 2021. It sets out a vision for how the area will change and describes where development will take place and where it will not.

3.12 SLLDP2 is split between 'Volume 1', which sets out the overall spatial strategy and core policies and 'Volume 2', which contains further policy guidance to be used when assessing planning applications. The policies in Volume 2 provide detailed criteria against which development proposals should be considered. These additional policies are linked to specific land and topic-based policies contained within Volume 1 of the local development plan. Volume 2 also contains development management policies which apply to all forms of development which justify a specific policy response to assist applicants.

3.13 Volume 2 of SLLDP2 contains further policy guidance. It sets out that proposals for renewable energy development must take into account the considerations, criteria and guidance contained in the Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals, Supporting Planning Guidance, and other relevant LDP2 policies. These documents have been considered within the policy appraisal below.

Policy appraisal

3.14 An appraisal of the SLLDP2 policies of relevance to the Proposed Development is provided in **Table 3.2** below. Policies are organised thematically by relevant topic area. In the interest of brevity, wherever relevant, the NPF4 planning assessment provided in **Table 3.1** is cross referenced throughout.

Table 3.2 SSLDP2 policy appraisal

Policy overview	Planning appraisal
Strategic and Overarching Policies	
These policies set the foundation for decision-making and the vision of the SLLDP2: ■ **Volume 1 Policy 1: Spatial Strategy** – Promotes sustainable growth, low-carbon transition and protection of the natural and historic environment. Supports renewable energy in appropriate locations. ■ **Volume 1 Policy 2: Climate Change** – Supports proposals that help meet climate targets and reduce emissions. Requires consideration of guidance and checklists in Volume 2. ■ **Volume 1 Policy 5: Development Management and Placemaking** – Lists general development considerations including design quality and minimising adverse impacts	The careful design and siting of the Proposed Development has resulted in the minimisation of visibility and avoidance of significant environmental effects from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development as far as possible. The assessment of residual environmental effects has been considered against the policies of NPF4 above (see **Table 3.1**). The Proposed Development will support the delivery of renewable energy and help support national emissions reductions targets. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with the strategic policies of SLLDP2.
Renewable energy	
Policies specifically related to renewable energy development and its assessment: ■ **Volume 1 Policy 18: Renewable Energy** – Sets out the overall approach to assessing renewable energy proposals. Supported by spatial frameworks and checklists in Volume 2. ■ **Volume 2 Policy RE1: Renewable Energy** – Provides detailed criteria for renewable energy proposals and refers to the Assessment Checklist and relevant guidance. ■ **Volume 2: Renewable Energy Assessment Checklist** – A supporting tool for applicants to assess compliance with policy criteria. ■ **Supporting Planning Guidance: Renewable Energy (2021)**	As per NPF4 Policy 11 (see **Table 3.1**), the Proposed Development falls within the category of renewable energy enabling works (i.e. grid transmission and distribution infrastructure) and is afforded considerable high-level support by national and local planning policy. The relevant environmental considerations and policy tests have been applied. The Proposed Development complies with local planning policy for renewable energy proposals, taking into account all environmental considerations on the Volume 2 Renewable Energy Assessment Checklist.
Natural environment and landscape	
Policies guiding protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment:	The impacts of the Proposed Development with regards to natural and historic environment have been assessed in full through the EIA process with the findings

Policy overview	Planning appraisal
■ **Volume 1 Policy 14: Natural and Historic Environment** – Sets out the overall approach to protecting designated sites and refers to relevant guidance and assessments. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE16: Landscape** – Focuses on landscape protection, including Special Landscape Areas. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE8: National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest** – Details protections for SSSI / NNRs. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE9: Protected Species** – Outlines requirements for European Protected Species assessments. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE20: Biodiversity** – Promotes the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE12: Water Environment and Biodiversity** – Protects the water environment and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NH21: Geodiversity** – Requires consideration of local geodiversity features. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE11: Peatland and Carbon Rich Soils** – Protects these resources and requires CO_2 emissions assessment where affected. ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE13: Forestry and Woodland** – Sets out protections for trees and woodland and supports new woodland creation.	presented in the EIAR and supporting documents. This is evidenced within the planning appraisal of the Proposed Development against: ■ NPF4 Policy 3: Biodiversity, ■ Policy 4: Natural assets and places, ■ Policy 5: Soils, ■ Policy 6: Forestry, woodland and trees, ■ Policy 7: Historic assets and places; and ■ Policy 22: Flood risk and water management, all provided in **Table 3.1**. Overall, residual significant effects of the Proposed Development are limited to landscape and visual effects - which are to be expected for some types of energy development (as confirmed by NPF4 Policy 11(e)(ii)) - and effects on the setting of historic assets, when considered cumulatively with other schemes (see NPF4 Policy 7 appraisal). Overall, the Proposed Development complies with the relevant local planning policy considerations for these topic areas.
Water and flood risk	
Policies specifically addressing water environment and flood risk: ■ **Volume 1 Policy 16: Water Environment and Flooding** – Prevents development with unacceptable water environment impacts and sets out flood risk mitigation. ■ **Volume 2 Policy SDCC2: Flood Risk** – Supports Volume 1 Policy 16.	As set out against NPF4 Policy 22: Flood risk and water management (see **Table 3.1**), the Proposed Development will result in negligible effects during construction and operation, with regards to flood risk and impact on the water environment. This includes consideration of future climate change projections. The Proposed Development therefore complies with the relevant policies of SLLDP2.

Policy overview	Planning appraisal
■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE12: Water Environment and Biodiversity** – Protects the water environment and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive.	
Design and Supporting Information	
Policies guiding development design quality and information required for planning submission: ■ **Volume 2 Policy DM1: New Development Design** – Requires quality and sustainable layout in all new developments. ■ **Volume 2 Policy GBRA1: Rural Design and Development** – Provides criteria for development within the Green Belt and Rural Areas. ■ **Volume 2 Policy DM20: Supporting Information** – States that sufficient supporting information must accompany all applications.	Key design considerations and the design evolution of the Proposed Development are provided in full within **EIAR Chapter 2: Site selection and design strategy** and in the Design and Access Statement which accompanies the application. Overall, the Proposed Development represents a sustainable development which has been informed by all relevant technical and environmental constraints. It has considered all criteria for sustainable design, where relevant to the nature of the Proposed Development. Through demonstration of policy alignment with regards to landscape and visual impacts, including provision of appropriate landscape mitigation, SuDs and biodiversity enhancement, the Proposed Development complies with the relevant policies of SLLDP2. The information submitted to support this planning application is appropriate to the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, in line with Policy DM20. Overall, the Proposed Development complies with local planning policy regarding design quality and supporting information.
Access and recreation	
Policies that support sustainable transport and recreation: ■ **Volume 2 Policy NHE18: Walking, Cycling and Riding Routes** – Protects and promotes existing and proposed active travel routes.	As set out in **EIAR Chapter 1: Introduction**, impacts on recreational routes within 3km of the Proposed Development were considered at Scoping. Whilst temporary path diversions may be required during construction for safety purposed, construction works will be short in duration and impacts of diversions limited. Particular consideration is given to National Cycle Roue 74, which overlaps/intersects with construction access routes, in the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) which has been submitted as part of this planning application. All existing recreational paths will be open during operation of the Proposed Development

Chapter 4
Conclusion

4.1 The Proposed Development will help to reinforce the transmission network in the area. An anticipated two gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy will be connected to the Proposed Development in the future, representing a significant proportion of Scotland's future renewable energy pipeline and making important contributions to Scotland's renewable energy development and emissions reductions targets.

4.2 High level support is afforded to the Proposed Development as a *"significant development of national importance"* (NPF4 - National Development 3), which is fundamental to delivering renewable energy projects and achieving a net zero economy.

4.3 The EIA Report and supporting environmental reports submitted alongside the planning application present the findings of the assessment of the effects of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development on the environment. The findings of these assessments have been used to assess the compliance of the Proposed Development against the relevant Development Plan (comprising NPF4 and SLLDP2) policies, as set out in **Table 3.1** and **3.2** above.

4.4 The siting and design of the Proposed Development, as well as embedded mitigation and good practice, have been used to effectively avoid and mitigate adverse impacts as far as possible, and deliver biodiversity enhancement in line with policy requirements. In EIA terms, residual significant impacts for the Proposed Development have been identified in relation to landscape and visual terms and cumulative heritage impacts only:

- Residual landscape effects are assessed as being localised and minimised as far as possible through design mitigation. As set out in NPF4 Policy 11(e), landscape and visual impacts are to be expected for some types of renewable energy development and are considered acceptable in these cases.
- Direct and indirect significant impacts on historic assets from the Proposed Development have been avoided, and in the cases where moderate residual cumulative effects arise from the Proposed Development in combination with cumulative schemes, the Proposed Development contributes significantly less to the cumulative impact than other cumulative schemes.

4.5 In considering the environmental effects above, in line with NPF4 Policy 1 and Policy 11(e), significant weight should be afforded in the planning balance to the climate crisis and the contribution the Proposed Development makes to delivering renewable energy generation (supporting an anticipated two GW of renewable energy) and associated emissions reductions targets.

Overall, the Proposed Development aligns with the policy requirements of NPF4 and SLLDP2 and therefore accords with the statutory Development Plan when read as a whole.

Further to this, the Proposed Development has National Development status and is afforded considerable high-level support in its role in reinforcing the transmission network, facilitating the delivery of renewable energy and helping to deliver Scotland's energy transition to Net Zero.

As such, it is respectfully recommended that planning permission is granted for the Proposed Development.