



Planning and Renewable Energy Statement Update

**Cruach Clenamacrie Wind
Farm**

**Grid Connection
Assessment**

Voltalia UK Ltd

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ReAmp Consultancy Limited

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
1989 Act	Electricity Act 1989
1997 Act	Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
ABC	Argyll and Bute Council
ABLDP	Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
ECU	Energy Consents Unit
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIA Regulations	Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
EIA Report	Environmental Impact Assessment Report
FEI	Further Environmental Information
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GW	Gigawatt
IGCC	Indicative Grid Connection Corridor
km	Kilometre
kV	Kilovolt
MW	Megawatt
NESO	National Energy System Operator
NPF4	National Planning Framework 4
OWPS	Onshore Wind Policy Statement
PRES	Planning and Renewable Energy Statement
SSEN	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

Executive Summary

Voltalia UK Ltd. is seeking consent from the Scottish Ministers under the terms of Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and deemed planning permission under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to construct and operate the Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm (the Proposed Development).

The Proposed Development is located in Argyll approximately 7km east of Oban. It covers an area of approximately 363 hectares. The Proposed Development will comprise six wind turbines, with a maximum tip height of 200m. Based on the current turbine unit capacity of 7.2MW, the combined generating capacity of the turbines will be up to 45MW. The Proposed Development includes a Battery Energy Storage System with an output capacity of up to 20MW, giving a total generation output capacity in the region of 65MW.

It is expected that the Proposed Development will be connected to the national electricity grid network by way of an underground cable which would link the Proposed Development to an existing substation at Taynuilt. This document contains a planning assessment of the proposed grid connection. It is concluded that the proposed grid connection is considered to be consentable and does not introduce any matters which mean consent should not be granted for the Proposed Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Voltalia UK Ltd (the Applicant) submitted an application to the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended) (the 1989 Act) to construct, operate and decommission the Cruach Clenamacrie Wind Farm project (the Proposed Development) in November 2024 (ECU00004841) (the Application). The application seeks deemed planning permission under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the 1997 Act). The Proposed Development is located approximately 7 km east of Oban and directly adjacent to Fearnoch Forest (the Site).
- 1.2 The Proposed Development comprises six wind turbines of 200m to tip height with a combined generating capacity of approximately 45MW and a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) of up to 20MW, giving a total site capacity of 65MW.
- 1.3 The Proposed Development is located within the Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) administrative area.
- 1.4 The capacity of the Proposed Development would exceed 50MW, and it is considered likely that it will have significant impacts on the environment. Therefore the Proposed Development constitutes a Schedule 2 development as provided for by the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations).
- 1.5 Where legislation referenced in this Planning and Renewable Energy Statement (PRES) has been amended, reference is made to the legislation as amended and in force as at the date of this PRES.
- 1.6 Following *Raeshaw Farms v Scottish Ministers and Energiekontor* [2026] CSIH 10 (The Raeshaw case) the ECU have requested the submission of Further Environmental Information (FEI) in respect of the connection between the Proposed Development and the national grid network in order that the environmental impacts of the proposed grid connection can be considered in the determination of the Application. The grid connection does not form part of the application for the Proposed Development, but this Planning and Renewable Energy Statement (PRES) is submitted to provide an initial assessment of both options against current policy and considers how this issue can be addressed in terms of any consent granted for the Proposed Development. The PRES submitted with the Application (PRES 2024) provides an assessment of the Proposed Development and therefore this PRES only considers the proposed grid connection options. Both PRES documents should be read in considering the Application.

Purpose of this Planning and Renewable Energy Statement

- 1.7 The Applicant has prepared an assessment of two Indicative Grid Connection Corridors (IGCCs). This assessment has been based on information known at the time of writing (July 2026) and demonstrates that the likely effects of the IGCCs have been identified and understood insofar as is reasonably practicable and proportionate at this stage. The assessment is presented in the FEI dated August 2026 (FEI 2026).

1.8 This PRES sets out the background, policy and planning considerations relevant to the IGCCs and assesses the IGCCs against the relevant policy. It is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 includes the introduction to the PRES.
- Chapter 2 sets out the history of the Application to date.
- Chapter 3 provides a brief description of the proposed grid connection.
- Chapter 4 outlines the statutory framework in so far as it relates to the Raeshaw case.
- Chapter 5 updates the renewable energy framework and the renewable energy targets set in law and the progress towards the targets in Scotland.
- Chapter 6 updates the relevant planning policy, including national policy, and the Development Plan.
- Chapter 7 provides an assessment of the proposed grid connection options against the relevant policy set out in Chapter 6.
- Chapter 8 provides the conclusions of the PRES.

2. THE APPLICATION HISTORY

- 2.1 The Application for the Proposed Development was submitted to the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the 1989 Act in November 2024. The Applicant, by way of the Section 36 process, requested that the Scottish Ministers issue a Section 36 Consent in respect of the Proposed Development, together with a Direction under Section 57(2) of the Scotland) Act 1997 (the 1997 Act) that planning permission is deemed to be granted for the Proposed Development.
- 2.2 The Application was submitted with an EIA Report in accordance with the EIA Regulations.
- 2.3 Further Environmental Information (FEI) was prepared by the Applicant in respect of the Application in September 2025 (FEI 2025). This was submitted to the ECU. The FEI 2025 addressed revisions to the internal access tracks and provided responses to a number of consultees. The FEI 2025 contained a planning summary. The details of the FEI 2025 are not repeated here.

3. THE PROPOSED GRID ROUTE

- 3.1 The details of the Proposed Development have been set out in the EIA Report and the FEI 2025 and are not repeated here. The following text describes the proposed connection of the Proposed Development to the national grid network.
- 3.2 The FEI 2026 assumes that the point of connection will be Taynuilt Substation and the Proposed Development will connect to this facility via approximately 10km of 33kV underground cable.
- 3.3 The FEI 2026 identifies two IGCCs which are illustrated on Figure 1. These IGCCs are assumed to be approximately 10 - 15m wide to allow for ground conditions, environmental constraints and potential access requirements.
- 3.4 The IGCC options have been devised on the assumption that the grid connection for the Proposed Development will be an underground cable. The routing and technology assumptions have been made following early discussions with Scottish and Southern Electricity Network (SSEN) and informed by knowledge of the surrounding environment from the Proposed Development survey and assessment work.
- 3.5 The two IGCC being considered are described as follows and illustrated on Figure 1:
 - IGCC option 1 leaves the Proposed Development substation heading north to the Site boundary. The route follows the edge of Fearnoch Forest along the field boundaries for approximately 1.3km where it would turn north-east towards Fearnoch and the A85 where the cable would largely follow road edges, with a few diversions where there is existing transmission network infrastructure.
 - IGCC option 2 leaves the Proposed Development substation and heads east, where it would follow the access track which forms part of the Proposed Development and make use of a number of existing forestry tracks. Route Option 2 would follow this route until it reaches the A85 at Dailnamac, where it would follow the same route as IGCC option 1.

4. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The PRES 2024, submitted with the Application, sets out the statutory framework in respect of the consideration of the Application and this is not repeated here. The following text sets out the statutory framework with respect to the 1989 Act, the EIA Regulations in so far as they are relevant to the consideration of the IGCCs. Whilst the consenting of the IGCC will be a matter for SSEN, it is likely that this would be consented under the 1997 Act.

The Electricity Act 1989

- 4.2 The weight to be attached to the positive and negative impacts and effects of any proposed development is a matter for the decision maker. This PRES seeks to present the positive and negative impacts of the IGCCs and provides the information required to allow the decision maker to consider the weight to be attached to these matters.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 4.3 The Raeshaw case confirms the need for the environmental impact assessment process to identify the scope of a project and undertake an environmental assessment of the whole project.
- 4.4 When identifying the scope of the Project, the case of *R (Wingfield) v Canterbury City Council* [2020] (Wingfield) is relevant. In this case, the court set out a non-exhaustive list of factors which may indicate whether more than one proposed development in reality constitute a single project for EIA purposes. These were as follows:
- (a) Common ownership: Where two sites are owned or promoted by the same person;
 - (b) Simultaneous determinations: Where two applications are considered and determined by the same committee on the same day and subject to reports which cross refer to one another;
 - (c) Functional interdependence: Where one part of a development could not function without another; and
 - (d) Stand-alone projects: Where a development is justified on its own merits and would be pursued independently of another development.
- 4.5 As set out in Chapter 3 of this PRES, two likely IGCC scenarios have been identified.
- 4.6 In the case of the Proposed Development and its associated grid connection(s), the following is noted:
- The Proposed Development and the cable route will not be in common ownership. It is the case that the Proposed Development will be in the ownership of the Applicant, unless assigned otherwise. The grid connection would be in the ownership SSEN.
 - The development and consenting of the Proposed Development and the grid connection are being progressed on different timescales.

- It is acknowledged that both IGCC options would not be required without the Proposed Development, and the developments are considered to be functionally dependent.
- 4.7 It is a matter for the Scottish Ministers to reach a view on the scope of the Project for EIA purposes in the present case. The Applicant recognises that the wind farm and grid connection can be considered to be one project for the purpose of the EIA.
- 4.8 In this case there is some information available in respect of the way in which the Proposed Development could connect into the grid. The FEI 2026 contains an environmental assessment of the potential for significant environmental effects of the two IGCCs. The assessment considers the individual impacts of the IGCC options and the in-combination effects with the Proposed Development. It is submitted that this contains a reasonable assessment and evaluation of the grid connection route and its construction in the circumstances of the information available at this stage.
- 4.9 It is recognised that further information on the grid connection will become available as SSEN's design progresses. In recognition of the fact the design and delivery of the IGCC will be a matter for SSEN, it is requested that consent is granted subject to a suitable multi-stage Section 36 condition in terms of Regulations 4(5) and (6) of the EIA Regulations, requiring information on the likely effects of the project as a whole (to include updated information on the IGCC) to be taken into account before development of the wind farm commences.
- 4.10 It is expected that the detailed wording of such a condition would be the subject of discussion prior to any consent being granted. This is on the basis that the information provided is to the best of the Applicant's knowledge at this time.
- 4.11 It is concluded that the Scottish Ministers have, within the submitted information, all of the information required for them to make a decision in the context of Schedule 9 of the 1989 Act and the relevant Regulations in the EIA Regulations.

5. PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 There has been no change to the planning policy position since the submission of the application in 2024 and the FEI 2025.

6. ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The following text provides an assessment of the proposed grid route against the relevant planning policy. It follows the policies of NPF4, in the first instance, rather than the ABLDP as the matters which are raised in the ABLDP are largely the same as those in NPF4 Policy 11 with the exception of the reference to tourism and recreation on policy 30 of the ABLDP.

National Planning Policy 4

Policy 11 Energy

Location

- 6.2 NPF4 Policy 11, part d) requires that development proposals which impact on international or national designations are assessed in relation to Policy 4. The FEI 2026 contains an assessment of the IGCCs on designated areas.
- 6.3 It is concluded that the IGCCs would not have a significant effect on an international or national designation and therefore Policy 4 of NPF4 is not triggered by Policy 11 of NPF4. The location of the Proposed Development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Net Economic Impact

- 6.4 The information which is provided in the EIA Report submitted with the application in respect of net economic impact remains unchanged by the IGCC development. It remains the case that it is concluded that the Project has sought to maximise the potential for net economic benefit.

Environmental Matters to be Addressed

- 6.5 Table 7.1 considers the matters which are relevant considerations for all renewable energy development which are contained in Policy 11(e) of NPF4 and provides information on how the design and mitigation has addressed the potential impacts of the IGCC's.
- 6.6 The way in which the grids connection will be designed is a matter for SSSEN. Consideration has been paid to the potential for mitigation of likely significant effects, as a result of the Proposed Development as part of the design process in accordance with the principles of the mitigation hierarchy.
- 6.7 The contents of Table 6.1 draw on the FEI 2026.

Table 6.1 Environmental Matters to be Addressed and Application Responses

Matter	Response
Impacts on communities and individual dwellings, including, residential amenity, visual impact, noise and shadow flicker.	As the proposed IGCCs would be underground it is concluded that there would be no visual impacts on residential amenity. Shadow flicker is not a relevant consideration to grid connections. The FEI 2026 concludes that there would be no significant effects on noise sensitive receptors as a result of the IGCCs.
Significant landscape and visual impacts, recognising that 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 to be acceptable.	The FEI 2026 concludes that neither of the IGCCs would give rise to any additional significant landscape or visual effects as compared to the Proposed Development.
Public access, including impact on long distance walking and cycling routes and scenic routes.	The FEI 2026 concludes that neither of the IGCCs would give rise to any additional significant effects on public access. .
Impacts on aviation and defence interests including seismological recording.	Aviation has been scoped out of the FEI 2026 on account of the fact that the cable would be underground.
Impacts on telecommunications and broadcasting installations, particularly ensuring that transmission links are not compromised.	Impacts on telecoms, and broadcasting installations has been scoped out of the FEI 2026 on account of the fact that the cable would be underground.
Impacts on road traffic and on adjacent trunk roads, including during construction.	The FEI 2026 concludes that neither of the IGCCs would give rise to significant effects on road traffic or trunk roads which would not occur from the Proposed Development.
Impacts on historic environment.	The FEI 2026 concludes that, following the application of mitigation, the IGCCs would be unlikely to give rise to significant effects on the historic environment.
Effects on hydrology, the water environment and flood risk.	It is concluded that, if best practice construction methods are used and mitigation as outlined in the 2024 EIA Report is adhered to, it is unlikely that impacts, on hydrology and the water environment, from IGCC option 2 would be significant when considered together with the Proposed Development. As a result of proximity of IGCC Option 1 to watercourses and sensitive designated sites, there is potential for it to give rise to

Matter	Response
	significant residual effects, even when best practice construction methods are employed throughout. It is however expected that SSEN would use mitigation through design to limit any such significant effects. The FEI 2026 advises that there is no change to the position in the EIA Report in respect of flood risk.
Biodiversity including impacts on birds.	FEI 2026 has considered the ecological and ornithological effects of both IGCC options using the defined design envelope and the information currently available. Taking account of the route-specific surveys, detailed design and mitigation measures that the applicant for the planning permission for the grid connection would be expected to incorporate through the subsequent consenting and design process, neither option is predicted to give rise to additional significant residual ecological or ornithological effects in EIA terms over and above those identified for the Proposed Development.
Impacts on trees, woods and forests.	The FEI 2026 concludes that there would be no net forestry loss as a result of the IGCC. Any forestry removal would be restocked and/or compensated in line with Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal policy.
Proposals for the decommissioning of developments, including ancillary infrastructure, and site restoration.	It is expected that this is a matter which would be the subject of a planning condition should consent be forthcoming.
The quality of site restoration plans including the measures in place to safeguard or guarantee availability of finances to effectively implement those plans.	It is expected that this is a matter which would be the subject of a planning condition should consent be forthcoming.
Cumulative impacts.	The cumulative impacts of the Proposed Development have been considered and there are no significant environmental effects identified when the Proposed Development is considered with the IGCC .

Contribution to Targets

- 6.8 The contribution of the Proposed Development to targets is not altered by either IGCC.

Summary

- 6.9 It is concluded that the location of the Project is supported by Policy 11 of NPF4. There is nothing in Policy 11 of NPF4 which means that the IGCCs should result in the refusal of the application for the Proposed Development.

Policy 1 Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises

- 6.10 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024, submitted with the Application, in respect of Policy 2 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 2 Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

- 6.11 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024, submitted with the Application, in respect of Policy 1 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 3 Biodiversity

- 6.12 The Project is for a development which is a National Development, as set out by NPF4. Therefore Policy 3(b) is relevant. The requirements of Policy 3(b) are set out in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Responses to Policy 3(b) of NPF4

Policy ref	Policy wording	Commentary
3(b)(i)	The proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats.	The assessment contained in the FEI 2026 is based on a sound understanding of the proposed IGCCs.
3(b)(ii)	Wherever feasible, nature-based solutions have been integrated and made best use of.	Nature based solutions will be employed where it is feasible to do so as part of the Project.
3(b)(iii)	An assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements.	The FEI 2026 provides an assessment of the IGCC such that consideration of the Project can be made. The information provided means that the decision maker can consider the negative effects of the Project in the consideration of the Proposed Development.
3(b)(iv)	Significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development, secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. Management arrangements for their long-term retention and monitoring should be included, wherever appropriate.	Delivery of biodiversity enhancement will be a matter for SSEN. It is anticipated the IGCC development will include biodiversity measures in common with SSEN's approach elsewhere.

3(b)(v)	Local community benefits of the biodiversity and/or nature networks have been considered.	There is no change to the conclusions of the PRES 2024 as a result of IGCC's.
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- 6.13 The potential adverse effects of the IGCCs, including cumulative effects, on biodiversity have been carefully considered as is reported in the FEI 2026.
- 6.14 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024 in respect of Policy 3 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 4 Natural Places

- 6.15 The proximity of the IGCCs to European designated sites means that policy 4 b) of NPF4 will be a consideration in the determination of the planning application for the grid connection.
- 6.16 The FEI 2026 is clear that when the route-specific surveys, detailed design and mitigation measures that would be required as part of the planning application for the grid connection are taken into account there would be no additional significant residual ecological or ornithological effects in EIA terms over and above those identified for the Proposed Development. There is, therefore, no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024 in respect of Policy 4 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 5 Soils

- 6.17 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024 in respect of Policy 5 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 6 Forestry Woodland and Trees

- 6.18 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024 in respect of Policy 6 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 7 Historic Assets and Places

- 6.19 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024 in respect of Policy 7 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Policy 22 Flood Risk and Water Management

- 6.20 There is no change to the position stated in the PRES 2024 in respect of Policy 22 of NPF4 as a result of the IGCCs.

Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 2024

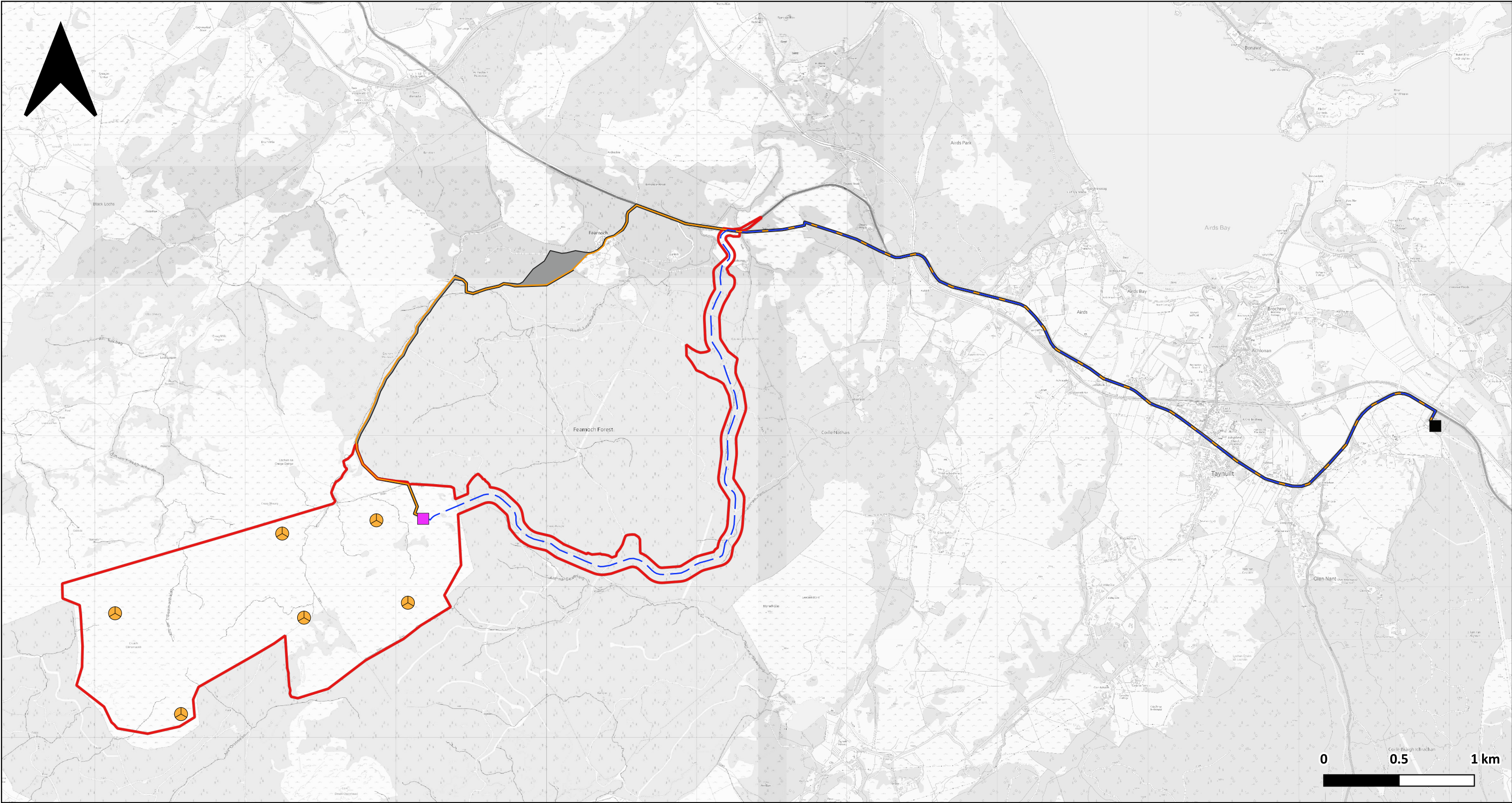
- 6.21 For the reasons provided in the context of NPF4 it is submitted that there are no changes to the conclusions in respect of the policy in the ABLDP as a result of the consideration of the IGCCs.

Assessment Conclusions

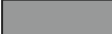
- 6.22 As set out in the PRES 2024 the planning policy sets out the matters that are to be addressed in the design and mitigation of a proposed development. It is submitted that, through the design evolution process and as demonstrated in the EIA Report, the design of the Proposed Development, along with the prescribed mitigation, which where appropriate would be secured by conditions, satisfactorily addresses the environmental impacts. An assessment has been undertaken of the IGCCs, and it is concluded that their consideration does not alter the overall acceptability of the Proposed Development.
- 6.23 It is clear that the Proposed Development will make a valuable contribution to meeting the renewable energy targets for the UK and Scotland. The environmental impacts of the Proposed Development together with the likely grid connection have been considered, along with the appropriate mitigation and enhancement. It is submitted that the Proposed Development is in accordance with NPF4, when read as a whole. There is nothing in the ABLDP which suggests that consent for the Proposed Development should not be forthcoming.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The conclusions provided in the PRES 2024 remain unchanged.
- 7.2 An assessment of potential grid connection options has been undertaken for the Proposed Development, and the options are presented in the FEI 2026. The potential routes have been identified having regard to the confirmed point of connection, technology as well as SSEN's statutory and licensing obligations and its approach to routing cables. Based on the information available, it is concluded that the grid connection will not result in additional significant adverse impacts.
- 7.3 Enough information is available within the FEI 2026 to allow the Scottish Ministers to make a decision on the Application.
- 7.4 This PRES and the PRES submitted with the Application have sought to consider and balance the relevant considerations, assess the weight to be given to each consideration and reach a view on where the planning and consenting balance falls. It is considered that the Proposed Development is supported by the relevant planning and renewable energy policy. On balance, it is concluded that the localised significant landscape and visual impacts of the Proposed Development are acceptable in the context of the positive benefits of the Proposed Development.



Key

-  Proposed Turbine Locations
-  Application Boundary
-  Taynuilt Substation
-  Proposed Development Substation
-  Working Corridor
-  Route Option 1
-  Route Option 2

Project Name: **Cruach Clenamacrie - Grid Connection Assessment**

Document Title: **Grid Route Plan Overview**

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