

August 2025

Glen Earrach Energy Pumped Storage Hydro Development

Additional Information

Glen Earrach Energy Ltd

6. Rights of Way Update

Quality information

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Issue History

Issue	Issue date	Authorised	Name	Position
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Figure 2: Extract 'Other Routes' Map from Scoping Opinion, Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro, December 2024.

Tables

Table 1: Significance Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In March 2025, Glen Earrach Energy Limited ("the Applicant") submitted an application for consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and deemed planning permission under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the "Section 36 Application") to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government.
- 1.1.2 The Section 36 Application sought consent for the construction and operation of a new pumped storage hydro scheme on the Balmacaan Estate, to be known as the Glen Earrach PSH (the "Proposed Development"). The Proposed Development would have a storage capacity of approximately 34,000 megawatt hours (MWh) subject to the final configuration of the Headpond, Loch nam Breac Dearga. It would have approximately 2,000 megawatts (MW) of installed electrical pumping capacity and 1,800 MW of installed electrical generating capacity (both subject to final pump-turbine selection).
- 1.1.3 An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) was provided with the application, detailing the results of a series of environmental studies undertaken to determine the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment under the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the "EIA Regulations").
- 1.1.4 The Highland Council (THC) Access Officer reviewed the submitted EIAR and provided comments on items to be clarified to THC Planning Officer by way of internal memo of 3 June 2025. The Access Officer has requested clarification on consideration of the following catalogue of routes (HI53, HI48, HI52, HI67) that were not included in the baseline assessment of **Chapter 16: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation** of the EIAR. The routes are shown in **Figure 1: Extract 'Rights of Way' Map from Scoping Opinion, Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro, December 2024** and **Figure 2: Extract 'Other Routes' Map from Scoping Opinion, Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro, December 2024**.
- 1.1.5 This document provides Additional Information in this regard and was not contained in the EIAR. The Additional Information does not change the overall conclusions as presented in the EIAR.

2. Consideration of Routes Identified by THC Access Officer

2.1 Rights of Way

HI/H148/1 (and HI/H149/1 as this is a connected path, see Figure 1)

- 2.1.1 These routes are not directly impacted by construction works of the Proposed Development. The nearest above ground construction activities will be located on the banks of Loch Ness, at a distance from both paths. They are not proposed for use as pre-construction, construction or operational access routes. It is not considered that there would be a permanent impact on these routes as a result of the Proposed Development. While there may be temporary impacts on recreational enjoyment these would be minimal due to the distance from construction activities.

HI/H167/1

- 2.1.2 This route is located on the western edge of the Proposed Development Site and will not be directly affected by construction activities. It is not proposed for use during pre-construction, construction or operation. It is not considered that there would be a permanent impact on these routes as a result of the Proposed Development. Any potential impacts on the enjoyment of recreational users from construction activities will be limited and from a distance.

2.2 Other Routes

- 2.2.1 HI/H152/1, HI/H153 and HI/H162/1 routes have been identified as an 'Other Route' by Scotways. These are paths which are recorded by Scotways, but do not appear to meet the criteria for a Right of Way

HI/H152/1

- 2.2.2 A section of this route located adjacent to Loch nam Breac Dearga will be lost due to the formation of the Headpond. However, the route does not appear on Strava heatmaps, which suggests limited use by individuals. While Strava data does not capture all users, it remains a valuable indicator of general usage and route popularity among digitally recorded outdoor activities.
- 2.2.3 A new access to the Headpond will be developed as part of the Proposed Development, alongside the additional new routes shown on EIAR **Figure 2.3 Above Ground Infrastructure**. These routes will be made available for recreational access with educational signage proposed to provide information on the Proposed Development, as detailed at paragraph 16.6.123 of **Chapter 16: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation**.

HI/H153/1 (and HI/H162/1 as this is a connected path, see Figure 2)

- 2.2.4 These routes partially overlap with the Coiltie Loop and Core Path 13.02. No significant impacts were identified for this section under the Coiltie Loop and Core Path 13.02, as detailed in EIAR **Chapter 16: Socioeconomics, Tourism and Recreation**.
- 2.2.5 HI/H153/1 continues across the northern section of the Proposed Development Site, away from construction works and compounds. It is not proposed for use as a pre-construction, construction or operational access route. Some impacts may occur on the enjoyment of recreational users; however, these would be limited due to the separation from construction activities.

3. Impact Assessment

3.1.1 Table 1 below provides a summary assessment of significance of impact of the Proposed Development in relation to the above routes.

Significance Assessment

Table 1.

Pre-Construction & Enabling				
Recreation Route	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Effect	Significance of Effect
HI/H148/1 and HI/H149/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H167/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H152/1	Negligible	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H153/1 and HI/H162/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
Construction				
Recreation Route	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Effect	Significance of Effect
HI/H148/1 and HI/H149/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H167/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H152/1	Negligible	Up to Medium	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H153/1 and HI/H162/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
Operation				
Recreation Route	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Effect	Significance of Effect
HI/H148/1 and HI/H149/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H167/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant
HI/H152/1 / New access route around the Headpond	Low	Medium	Minor Beneficial	Not Significant
HI/H153/1 and HI/H162/1	Low	Low	Negligible	Not Significant

Figure 1: Extract 'Rights of Way' Map from Scoping Opinion, Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro, December 2024

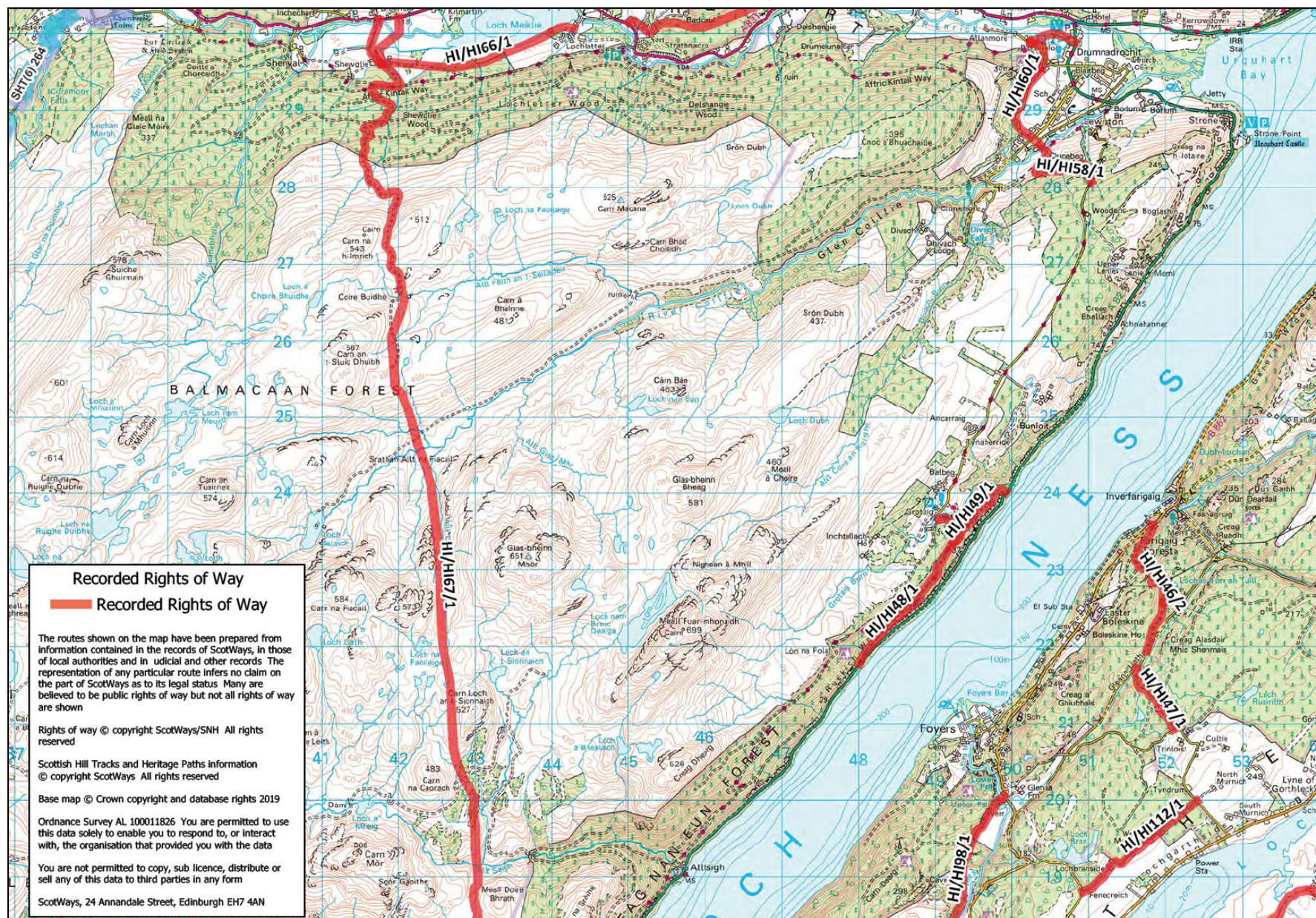


Figure 2: Extract 'Other Routes' Map from Scoping Opinion, Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro, December 2024

