



Kintore Hydrogen Plant

Environmental Impact Assessment Report Chapter 5: Scoping and Consultation

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Environmental Impact Assessment Report

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Chapter 5

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Summary

This chapter summarises outcomes of the EIA scoping process and consultation undertaken concerning the proposed development. It documents the key issues raised in scoping and consultation and refers to where those have been addressed in the EIA.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this chapter

1.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) summarises the consultation undertaken concerning potential impacts of Kintore Hydrogen Plant. It refers to issues raised in the Scoping Opinion and subsequent further consultation, showing where these have been responded to in the EIAR.

1.2 Scoping

1.2.1 Scoping is the process of identifying the issues to be addressed during the environmental assessment process. A Scoping Report constitutes a request under Regulation 17(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) that the relevant planning authority, Aberdeenshire Council, adopts a Scoping Opinion within 35 days as prescribed in regulation 17(6).

1.2.2 While there is no formal requirement in the Regulations to seek a Scoping Opinion or produce a Scoping Report prior to the submission of an EIAR, it is recognised as good practice to do so. The EIA scoping stage where the main or significant likely effects are identified, is an important preliminary procedure and sets the context for the EIA process.

1.2.3 A request for a Scoping Opinion with accompanying Scoping Report was accepted by Aberdeenshire Council on 25 September 2023. The Scoping Opinion was provided on 1 November 2023.

1.2.4 In March 2024 an EIA Scoping Update Letter was sent to Aberdeenshire Council describing a design change to the proposed development with the introduction of the enclosed ground flare for hydrogen. This letter set out how the scope of the relevant assessments – in particular air quality, noise and visual impacts – would be amended to consider potential impacts from the flare.

1.2.5 At the time of finalising the EIAR, no response to the EIA Scoping Update Letter has been received, so the assessment has been undertaken as proposed to Aberdeenshire Council.

1.2.6 Engagement via further one-to-one correspondence and meetings with environmental consultees has been undertaken subsequent to issue of the Scoping Opinion to clarify and agree matters of approach to the EIAR where needed.

1.2.7 A summary of Scoping Opinion points, additional matters raised subsequently, and how each has been responded to in the EIAR is given in Section 2 of this chapter. Further details for each topic are given in the 'Consultation' section of each topic chapter in the EIAR.

1.3 Public consultation

1.3.1 Kintore Hydrogen Ltd has undertaken pre-application public consultation through two events held in Kintore on 24th April and 19th June 2024, an information website (<https://kintorehydrogen.co.uk/consultation>), direct contact with landowners and residents in the vicinity of the application site, leaflets to households and residences in the wider area of the development, and meetings with community councils, area councils and elected representatives.

1.3.2 This has been undertaken in line with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 and the guidance of Planning Circular 3/2022¹. The process and responses are detailed in the Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report accompanying the planning application.

1.3.3 The main themes and comments in responses to the consultation that are relevant to the EIA process are set out in Section 3 of this chapter, together with an explanation of how they have been addressed in the EIAR.

1.3.4 The planning authority, Aberdeenshire Council, will have further publicity and consultation duties once the application has been submitted, under Part 5 of the EIA Regulations.

2 EIA Scoping

2.1 Scoping request

2.1.1 As set out above, a request for a formal Scoping Opinion was made to Aberdeenshire Council in September 2023. This was based on an EIA Scoping Report, which set out the findings of the scoping process undertaken. The objectives of the EIA Scoping Report were to:

- identify potential environmental issues associated with the proposed development;
- identify those environmental issues which should be considered further in the final reports to accompany the planning application;
- provide a basis for consultation, where appropriate, with statutory and non-statutory consultees on the relevant environmental issues for the purposes of environmental assessment; and
- define the methods to be used to assess the environmental effects of the proposed development.

2.2 Environmental impact pathways

2.2.1 In accordance with Regulation 17(2), the EIA Scoping Report provided:

- a description of the location of the development, including a plan sufficient to identify the land;
- a brief description of the nature and purpose of the development and of its likely significant effects on the environment; and
- such other information or representations as the developer may wish to provide or make.

2.2.2 This enabled the relevant environmental impact pathways, with potential for likely significant effects, to be identified for agreement to scope in to the EIA. Equally, it enabled non-relevant pathways, or particular matters within them, to be agreed to be scoped out. The impact pathway descriptions are based on the matters listed in Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations.

Topics scoped into the EIA

2.2.3 Table 2.1 provides a list of topics that were proposed and have been agreed to be scoped into the EIA.

Table 2.1: Environmental topics considered in the EIA

Environmental topic	EIAR chapter
Landscape and Visual	6
Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	7
Ecology and Biodiversity	8
Transport and Access	9
Noise and Vibration	10
Air Quality	11
Climate Change	12
Soils, Geology and the Water Environment	13
Population and Health	14
Socio-Economics	15

Topics scoped out of the EIA

2.2.4 A separate assessment of the topic areas of heat, light and radiation has been scoped out of the EIA. This is because cooling system (managing heat) impacts and discharge water temperature have been assessed where applicable in the Climate Change, Noise and Vibration, Soils, Geology and the Water Environment, Ecology and Biodiversity and Landscape and Visual chapters. Lighting impacts have been assessed where applicable in the Landscape and Visual, Ecology and Biodiversity and Archaeology and Cultural Heritage chapters. The proposed development will not be a source of ionising radiation nor have tall structures or radio infrastructure that could cause electromagnetic interference. Non-ionising electric and magnetic fields have been assessed in the Population and Health chapter.

2.2.5 Transboundary effects have been scoped out of the EIA on the basis of there being no potential for effects on any EEA state.

2.2.6 Decommissioning effects have also been scoped out of all technical topics on the basis that a time-limited planning permission is not sought, and any future decommissioning activities are expected to give rise to types of potential impact that are similar to construction and which would be no greater in terms of magnitude or duration, and are sufficiently represented by the assessment of construction impacts.

2.3 Scoping Opinion

2.3.1 The Scoping Opinion was received in November 2023. The following bodies were formally consulted by Aberdeenshire Council as part of this process:

- Historic Environment Scotland
- NatureScot
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Scottish Water
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Archaeology
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Contaminated Land
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Environmental Health
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Environment Team (Natural Heritage)
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Flood Risk and Coastal Protection
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Roads Development
- Environment and Infrastructure Services – Transportation

2.3.2 Table 2.2 summarises points raised in the Scoping Opinion and sets out how and where these are addressed in the EIAR or through the development design.

Table 2.2: Applicant’s response to the Scoping Opinion

Consultee and topic	Scoping opinion comment	Response / comment
Aberdeenshire Council EIA General	<p>Environmental topics scoped in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape and visual • Archaeology and Cultural Heritage • Ecology and Biodiversity • Transport and Access • Noise and Vibration • Air Quality • Climate Change • Soils, Geology and the Water Environment • Population and Health • Socio-Economics <p>Environmental topics scoped out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat, light and radiation <p>The officer is generally in agreement with the stated approach to the EIA and the proposed scope of assessment. However, further engagement is anticipated in respect of viewpoint selection.</p>	<p>All assessments scoped in have been provided in the EIAR. Further engagement with HES with regard to visualisation details has been undertaken (see below).</p>

Consultee and topic	Scoping opinion comment	Response / comment
Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	HES have stated that the assessment should be undertaken by a suitably experienced heritage professional with an understanding of heritage issues.	The assessment has been undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced practitioners, whose details are given at the start of Chapter 7.
	The assessment should meet the requirements of National Planning Framework 4, the Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, and the HES Managing Change guidance note on Setting.	The policy requirements and guidance taken into account in the assessment are detailed in Chapter 7.
	Any potential physical impacts on the two scheduled monuments within the development boundary should be mitigated through design.	The proposed development has been designed to avoid temporary or permanent works impinging on the two Scheduled Monuments. The temporary construction compound is outside the area of the canal Scheduled Monument. The Landscape Management Plan for the electrolysis plant site incorporates a buffer to avoid disturbance to the standing stone Scheduled Monument.
	Potential indirect impacts to the scheduled monuments within the site boundary during the construction phase should be scoped in.	Impacts to the setting of the Scheduled Monuments have been assessed in Chapter 7.
	Heritage assets should be selected for detailed analysis using a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis. We expect all nationally designated assets within the ZTV to undergo an initial assessment to determine the potential for effects to their setting. This assessment should demonstrate a full appreciation of the setting of each heritage asset where potentially significant impacts are identified. This consideration should recognise that impacts may occur on views from, towards or across individual heritage assets as well as from potential changes to their experience.	The ZTV has been used to identify assets with theoretical visibility and to screen those in a wider study area for assessment, including additional visualisations where required. Further detail is set out in the response in Table 1.1 of Chapter 7.
	Impact magnitude and significance of effects terminology should be consistent with the EIA Approach methodology, or the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage chapter should include the addition of text that explains the reasoning for differences.	Criteria are described and justified in Section 2.6 of Chapter 7.

Consultee and topic	Scoping opinion comment	Response / comment
	Where initial assessment identifies potential significant impacts on cultural heritage asset(s), we recommend that wireframe visualisations be produced to help analyse the impacts. If this exercise confirms the potential impacts as being significant, then photomontages should also be prepared for the relevant asset(s).	Wireline and photowire visualisations have been produced (shown in Figure 7.14 to Figure 7.20, in Volume 3) including additional visualisations agreed with HES in post-scoping consultation.
NatureScot Ecology and Biodiversity	NatureScot has requested that the impact upon qualifying features of Loch of Skene SPA and Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie & Meikle Loch SPA be scoped into the assessment. The qualifying features include the greylag geese and the pink-footed geese.	Assessment of these features and the two goose species has been undertaken in the shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment, in Appendix 8.11. Assessment of ecological impacts on the Loch of Skene SPA has been scoped in and is undertaken in Chapter 8. Assessment of impacts to the Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie & Meikle Loch SPA (other than for the shadow HRA) has been scoped out due to distance and lack of pathway for effects. Further detail is given in Chapter 8.
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)	The EIA submission must contain a scaled plan of sensitivities, for example proximity to watercourses, overlain with the proposed development.	Figures 1.3 and 1.4 in Chapter 2 give an overview of environmental sensitivities. The baseline study sections in each EIAR chapter, and appended survey reports with accompanying figures, show environmental sensitivities in more detail. Due to the large geographical area of the application boundary and the range of sensitivities, it is not practical to depict all of these fully on a single plan.
Soils, Geology and the Water Environment	SEPA have confirmed that a Flood Risk Assessment will be required, and will require confirmation that any proposed watercourse crossings are designed to accommodate the 1 in 200 year event plus allowance for climate change.	An FRA and conceptual drainage design to manage 1 in 200 year events plus climate change are set out in Chapter 13 and Appendix 13.2. At this stage of design for the Planning Permission in Principle application, details of crossing designs are not developed. The requirement for this design standard is noted in the FRA and conceptual drainage design in Appendix 13.2, to be carried forwards to detailed designs to be approved prior to construction.

Consultee and topic	Scoping opinion comment	Response / comment
	The site layout should be designed to minimise water crossings and avoid other direct impacts on water features. The submission must include a map showing all proposed temporary and permanent infrastructure overlain with all lochs and watercourses, with a minimum buffer of 50m around each loch or watercourse. If this minimum buffer cannot be achieved each breach must be numbered on a plan with an associated photograph of the location, dimensions of loch or watercourse and drawings of what is proposed in terms of engineering works. Measures should be put in place to protect any downstream sensitive receptors.	Watercourse and features and a 50 m buffer are shown on Figure 13.1 and discussed within Chapter 13. At this stage of design, for a planning permission in principle application, photographs and specific design drawings of works in the vicinity of watercourses cannot be provided. Potential impacts have been assessed on a maximum-case basis in Chapter 13 and this is a proportionate approach for the EIA. Designs of specific watercourse crossings and other works to or in the vicinity of watercourses can be subject to approval prior to construction. It is noted that the CAR licence application for works to the River Don includes and provides control over design details for those works.
	Where proposals are on peatland or carbon rich soils, a layout plan showing all permanent and temporary infrastructure, with extent of excavation required and mitigation hierarchy, should be submitted. These plans should be overlain on a peat depth survey, peatland condition mapping, and National Vegetation Classification survey (NVC) habitat mapping. Additionally, an outline Peat Management Plan and outline Habitat Management Plan will be required.	Priority peatland mapping published by NatureScot (shown on Figure 13.3 in Chapter 13) indicates that the Proposed Development is underlain by mineral soils (Class 0) which are not designated as priority peatland habitat. The site walkover survey also confirmed the absence of peat.
	The layout and design of the development must avoid impacts on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). A National Vegetation Classification survey and detailed site specific qualitative and/or quantitative risk assessment (for excavations within specified buffers of GWDTE) are required. A schedule of mitigation supported by site specific maps and plans must be submitted, including reference to best practice pollution prevention and construction techniques and regulatory requirements.	An NVC Survey is included at Appendix 8.10. The evidence with respect to presence of GWDTE is discussed in the baseline sections of Chapter 8 and Chapter 13, which conclude that GWDTE are not present. Best practice pollution prevention and construction techniques are set out in the Outline CEMP accompanying the planning application. Further detail with specific maps and plans would be incorporated, where required, into a detailed adopted CEMP subject to approval prior to construction.

Consultee and topic	Scoping opinion comment	Response / comment
	The submission must include a map with the boundaries of where felling will take place and a description of what is proposed for this timber.	A Tree Survey Report is included at Appendix 8.17. As noted in that report, no extensive felling is proposed: wherever possible, trees are to be retained in the proposed development design. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been recommended for detailed design stage, providing details of trees to be retained, protective buffers, and any trees to be removed. This is expected to be subject to approval prior to construction and managed under the adopted CEMP.
Aberdeen Council – Archaeology Archaeology and Cultural Heritage	The proposed methodology and scope of the assessment is considered to be acceptable.	Noted.
Aberdeen Council – Contaminated Land Soils, Geology and the Water Environment	The officer notes several potentially contaminated sites in close proximity to the proposed southern water pipeline route, the proposed northern water pipeline and hydrogen pipeline route, and the hydrogen gas grid connection area. The EIA should include an assessment of the possible impacts of contaminative prior land use on the proposals and recommending further actions as required.	Assessment of the potential for contaminated land impacts is provided as part of the baseline environment section of Chapter 13.
Aberdeen Council – Environmental Health Noise and Vibration	Operational noise from the proposed development and the associated impact or cumulative impact should be assessed mainly using NR Curves inside receptors with a noise criteria of NR25 or NR20, depending on the location. The effects of other infrastructure development should also be considered in terms of the cumulative impact. The Scottish equivalent should be used when considering the significance of effects, rather than LOAEL or SOAEL. It is recommended that the BS4142 criteria is the main consideration in this respect.	NR Curves with a noise criteria of NR25 or NR20 have formed part of the assessment in Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration. The cumulative assessment is primarily qualitative, unless there is quantitative data from existing EIAs. BS4142 and Scottish equivalents have been used.
Aberdeen Council – Environment	Consideration of Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS) should be included within the EIA.	LNCS have been included in the baseline and assessment in Chapter 8.

Consultee and topic	Scoping opinion comment	Response / comment
Team (Natural Heritage) Ecology and Biodiversity	Consideration of important habitats/sites, to include SNH Ancient Woodland and Scottish Forestry Native Woodland Survey Scotland sites, should be included within the EIA. Also NESBiP habitat statement listed habitats and associated species should be included.	Ancient and Native Woodland and NESBiP habitats have been included in the baseline and assessment in Chapter 8.
	Aberdeen policy recognises Category 5 peatland habitats, so this should be included within the assessment in addition to Category 1 and 2.	Potential for category 5 as well as Category 1 and 2 peatland habitat has been considered in Chapters 8 and 13 but soil mapping and walkover site surveys have confirmed the absence of peat.
	A quality landscaping scheme using suitable locally native species is also required	The proposed landscaping and habitat creation design is set out in the Design Principles Statement accompanying the planning application and in the Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) in Appendix 8.18, which includes a suitable native species mix and diverse areas of habitat with input from the ecology team.
Aberdeen Council – Environment Team (Natural Heritage) Population and Health	As well as the consideration of core paths, please also consider other (informal) outdoor access routes and how these will be provided for during construction.	Impacts on informal recreation as well as Core Paths have been assessed in Chapter 14. Measures to manage impacts are included in the Outline CEMP submitted with the planning application.
Aberdeen Council – Roads Development Transport and Access	Advice in relation to the required standard of access for this development has been provided. The visibility splays must be clear of all permanent obstructions above adjacent carriageway level.	This is noted. Junction drawings showing visibility are provided in an annex to the Transport Assessment in Appendix 9.1.

2.4 Further engagement with statutory consultees

- 2.4.1 Engagement via further one-to-one correspondence and meetings with environmental consultees has been undertaken subsequent to issue of the Scoping Opinion to clarify and agree matters of approach to the EIAR where needed. The main points discussed and matters agreed are set out in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Comments and responses to further statutory consultee engagement

Consultee	Matter raised and comment	Applicant's response
SEPA	Consultation with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has been undertaken during the application for (and the subsequent grant) of a Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR) authorisation for the abstraction of water from the River Don. The CAR authorisation for the abstraction for water from the River Don was granted by SEPA in June 2023 (ref. CAR/L/5004426).	Parameters specified in the CAR have been used as the basis for impact assessment in the EIAR.
SEPA	Meeting regarding abstraction and discharge from the River Don on 18 April 2024. Points discussed and agreed were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revision slightly eastwards of the abstraction / discharge location Requirement for amended or further CAR licence in due course for details of engineering works at river bank and bed Discharge temperature of up to 40°C in SEPA's guidance In due course for PPC application, further details of biocides and discharge quality will be required and managed through the PPC permit 	These are noted. The abstraction / discharge location and temperature parameter are those assessed in the EIA.
Aberdeen City Council Passenger Transport Unit (Public Transport)	Potential for use of park and ride facilities as part of a shuttle bus service to Kintore Hydrogen plant, provided by Kintore Hydrogen Ltd, for workers during construction and operation.	Support for this and feasibility in principle was noted. Correspondence is included as an annex to the Transport Assessment in Appendix 9.1.
HES	Further consultation letter 01 May 2024. Reiterated previous scoping advice that ZTV data should be used to identify designated heritage assets, including outside the proposed 5 km study area. Recommended two specific visualisation viewpoint locations and directions for standing stone SM 12350. Recommended further visualisations for three more Scheduled Monuments: SM 12438, SM12463 and SM 9245.	ZTV used, and a proportionate approach of screening of for impacts over a wider study area employed. Additional visualisations produced, save where one was already met by an existing visualisation. Further details in Table 1.1 of Chapter 7.
ACAS	Confirmed that visualisation locations were acceptable. Noted that the application boundary had been updated subsequent to scoping, and that the full routes of pipelines (as updated) should be assessed.	Noted. The full pipeline routes have been assessed in Chapter 7.

Consultee	Matter raised and comment	Applicant's response
NatureScot	15 December 2023 – email correspondence to agree desktop data sources for HRA.	A list of resources was provided to NatureScot which was agreed to be appropriate for undertaking the HRA and shadow Appropriate Assessment in Appendix 8.11.
Aberdeenshire Council – drainage	08 May 2024 – telephone conversation to confirm drainage design criteria should align to Sewers for Scotland standard.	This design standard is employed to inform the conceptual drainage design set out in Appendix 13.3.
Aberdeenshire Council – E&IS	09 May 2024 – pre-application consultation letter to propose and agree noise Rating Levels for the electrolysis plant site to avoid adverse effects	Response from Aberdeenshire Council not received at the time of writing, so approach proposed has been followed.
Aberdeenshire Council – E&IS	22 March 2024 – submission of EIA Scoping Update letter setting out the proposed approach to point-source air pollutant dispersion modelling and assessment for the enclosed hydrogen ground flare.	Response from Aberdeenshire Council not received at the time of writing, so approach proposed has been followed.
Aberdeenshire Council – E&IS	07 March 2024 – proposal of visualisation locations and LVIA study area for agreement.	Response from Aberdeenshire Council not received at the time of writing, so approach proposed has been followed.

3 Public and Stakeholder Consultation

3.1 Summary of consultation channels

3.1.1 The Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report accompanying the planning application provides details of the consultation that has been undertaken. In summary, the main channels of consultation have been through the following.

- Kintore Hydrogen information website (<https://kintorehydrogen.co.uk/consultation>)
- A letter and information leaflets with project and public exhibition details distributed to around 4,000 residents and businesses in the consultation area.
- Public exhibition event in Kintore from 2pm–8pm on 24 April 2024.
- Public exhibition event in Kintore from 2pm–8pm on 19 June 2024.
- Pre-application meetings, dialogue and email communications with Aberdeenshire Council planning officers, Local Ward Members, Community Councils, MPs and MSPs over the course of 2023 and 2024.
- Engagement with the River Don Trust.

3.2 Main themes and comments

3.2.1 Table 3.1 summarises the main environmental themes and comments raised, setting out how and where these are address in the EIAR or through the development design.

Table 3.1: Main environmental themes and comments raised during public and stakeholder consultation

Theme or comment raised	Response / comment
Concerns about existing speeding on the B977 and safety at the proposed development's access points during construction and operation. Requests for new traffic calming measures such as speed cameras.	<p>The operational access has been moved around 300 m east, towards the B977, to reduce travel along the unclassified road to Bogfold for access. The Chapter 9: Transport and Access chapter proposes extending the 40 mph limit (that currently ends at the B977 turn off) along this section of unclassified road. This would need to be approved and carried out by the highways authority, Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p>An additional traffic survey traffic speed along the B977 was carried out in 2024. During this survey, average speeds of between 38 mph and 42.5 mph were found, as reported in Chapter 9. Aberdeenshire Council has indicated that it only considers traffic calming measures where the average speed limit exceeds the 40mph limit by "10% + 2mph" (i.e. 46 mph), so the Council's policies do not support additional calming measures here.</p>

Theme or comment raised	Response / comment
The River Don Trust noted the value of the Don for fish species and the potential benefits if the project could contribute to river restoration or enhancement opportunities in the Kintore area of the river catchment. During public consultation, anglers discussed fishing lies in the River Don.	<p>A significant area of riparian habitat creation and enhancement on farm land on the left bank of the Don, south of Kintore, is now incorporated within the proposal. Details of this are in the Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan accompanying the planning application.</p> <p>The water abstraction and discharge point has been moved around 200 m east, which helps to avoid some productive fishing lies that were noted in consultation.</p>
Hydrogen safety and fire or explosion risk.	The proposed development would be regulated by the Health and Safety Executive and SEPA under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015 (COMAH), which includes approval of a major accident prevention policy (MAPP) prior to operation. The safety of hydrogen production has been included in Chapter 14: Population and Health as perceptions of risk and resulting anxiety is an aspect of health and wellbeing. As agreed via EIA Scoping, a further environmental assessment of major accident and disaster risks was scoped out due to the existing regulatory control and unlikelihood of significant effects.
Visual impact of the development	This has been assessed in Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual, including via photowire visualisations from locations representative of residences. Control of building heights (making best use of the site topography, earthworks and landscape planting) are incorporated as commitments to minimise visual impacts, as detailed in the Design Principles Statement accompanying the planning application.
Noise from the development	This has been assessed in Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration, which has determined a noise 'rating level' limit for the site in operation, as proposed to Aberdeenshire Council, to avoid significant noise disturbance or sleep disturbance effects at occupied residential and other sensitive receptors.
Use of agricultural land and impacts on habitats	<p>The majority of the application site is underlain by class 3.2 agricultural land which is defined as land capable of average production and where high yields of barley, oats and grass might be obtained. The soils, and their value, are not rare locally or regionally. Chapter 8: Ecology and Biodiversity assesses impacts on habitat and proposes mitigation via habitat enhancement and creation. The proposals for this are in the Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>Good practice measures for managing soils and restoring existing farming use following construction of the underground pipeline routes are set out in the Outline CEMP submitted with the planning application.</p>
Choice of location and scale of the development	The proposed development location, and the design of elements within its boundary, has been studied through the consideration of alternatives set out in Chapter 3: Alternatives.

References

¹ Scottish Government (2022): Planning circular 3/2022: development management procedures. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-circular-3-2022-development-management-procedures>, accessed 02/05/24