

Balliemeanoch Pumped Storage Hydro

Environmental Impact Assessment
Report

Volume 5: Appendices
Appendix 16.1: Outline Access
Management Plan

ILI (Borders PSH) Ltd

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

The Outline Access Management Plan (AMP) provides an overview of the proposed management of recreation routes during the construction and operation phases of the Development. It is proposed that any management during the decommissioning phase will be covered by the Decommissioning Plan to be prepared at the appropriate time given the potential lifespan of the Development.

The Outline AMP has been prepared in keeping with the requirements set out in the Scottish Natural Heritage Guidance “A Brief Guide to Preparing an Outdoor Access Plan” (Scottish Natural Heritage, 2010) and should be read in conjunction with *Chapter 16: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report)*.

This document is an outline plan which has been prepared to be submitted with the Section 36 application. It demonstrates the commitment of the Applicant to maintain access through the Development Site during construction and operation of the proposed Development. A final AMP will be prepared post consent with the appointed Construction Contractor and agreed with Argyll and Bute Council and all other relevant stakeholders ahead of the commencement of any pre-construction works. It is assumed that an appropriately worded planning condition will be placed on the consent, and this will require the finalised AMP to be agreed and approved prior to development commencing.

All necessary traffic management measures proposed to maintain safe access on the public highway have been set out within *Chapter 14: Access, Traffic and Transport (Volume 2: Main Report)*. This Outline AMP therefore focuses on access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders within the Development Site.

2. Baseline

The existing recreation routes are shown in *Figure 16.2 Outline Access Management Plan Recreational Routes and Paths (Volume 3: Figures)* and are described in further detail in *Chapter 16: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report)*. The list of recreation routes includes:

- The Loch Lomond and Cowal Way; a long-distance footpath linking Portavadie in the south of Cowal with Inveruglas at Loch Lomond, approximately 16.5 km to the southeast of the Headpond;
- Argyll and Bute Core Path network; the proposed access routes at Inveraray cross the following Core Paths:
 - C200: Coille Bhraghad-Queens Drive;
 - C201: Dun Na Cuaiche; and
 - C203: Bealach an Fhuarain.
- National Cycle Network Route 78 to the west of Loch Awe;
- A number of core paths located on the west side of Loch Awe including C171; C173 (a, b, c, d, e); C175; C176; C199; C300; C305; C323; C324; C490; C523; and
- Long-distance walks including the summit of Ben Cruachan.

3. Impacts to Access

Table 1 summarises the status of the various recreation routes during both construction and operation and the proposed diversions where access will be impeded as a result of construction and operation activities. This summary relates to *Figure 16.2 Outline Access Management Plan Recreational Routes and Paths (Volume 3: Figures)*. It should be noted that any diversions will be shown on figures prepared as part of the finalised AMP.

The assessment of potential effects on recreation routes is included in *Table 16.8* of *Chapter 16: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report)*.

Table 1. Summary of Recreation Routes and Diversions during Construction and Operation

Route			Construction	Operation
Core Paths Outside Development Site Boundary				
C171: Kilmore – Loch Nan-Kilchrenan			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C171 from other recreation routes as usual.
C173 (a, b, c, d, e)			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C173 from other recreation routes as usual.
C175: Kilmelford to Loch Avich			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C175 from other recreation routes as usual.
C176: Loch Avich South (Two Lochs Trail)			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C176 from other recreation routes as usual.
C199: Furnace to Inveraray via Kenmore			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C199 from other recreation routes as usual.
C300: Kilchrenan to Taynult			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C300 from other recreation routes as usual.
C305: Dalavich to Barnaline Lodge			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C305 from other recreation routes as usual.
C323: Drissaig to Inverinan via Gleann Meisean			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C323 from other recreation routes as usual.
C324: Inverinan circular, Loch Awe side			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C324 from other recreation routes as usual.
C490: Dalavich, Loch Awe			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C490 from other recreation routes as usual.
C523: Loch Nant, Loch Awe side			No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access C523 from other recreation routes as usual.
Core Paths Within Development Site Boundary				
C200: Coille Bhraghaid-Queens Drive			A direct impact upon this Core Path is likely as a result of construction works. A new access route will be constructed within the site boundary south of Inveraray to facilitate the delivery of abnormal loads on site. A diversion of this Core Path will be necessary during construction. The specific details of this diversion will be determined post consent and will be set out in the finalised Access Management Plan.	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access C200 from recreation routes as usual.
C201: Dun Na Cuaiche			A direct impact upon this Core Path is likely as a result of construction works. A new access route will be constructed within the site boundary north of Inveraray. A diversion of this Core Path will be necessary during construction. The specific details of this diversion will be determined post consent and will be set out in the finalised Access Management Plan.	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access C201 from recreation routes as usual.
C203: Bealach an Fhuarain			A direct impact upon this Core Path is likely as a result of works associated with the construction of the new jetty proposed to the south of Inveraray. A diversion for this Core Path will be necessary during construction. The specific details of this diversion will be	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access C203 from recreation routes as usual.

Route	Construction	Operation
	determined post consent and will be set out in the finalised Access Management Plan.	
Long Distance Routes		
The Loch Lomond and Cowal Way	No direct impact on the Loch Lomond and Cowal Way is expected during construction.	The Loch Lomond and Cowal Way will be accessible to users as usual during operation.
Summit of Ben Cruachan	No direct impact on the hiking route towards Ben Cruachan is expected during construction.	Ben Cruachan will be accessible to users as usual during operation.
Cycle Routes		
National Cycle Network Route 78 (The Caledonia Way)	No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	National Cycle Network Route 78 will be accessible to users as usual during operation.
Local Path Network		
Old Road to Inverinan	No direct impact as a result of construction activities.	No impact during operation. Users will be able to access the Old Road to Inverinan during operation.
Public Right of Way SA128	Access to Public Right of Way SA128 will be maintained during construction. Although it will be necessary for construction traffic to intersect this ProW (at X:208061, Y:720109) in order to access the Headpond, signage will be erected to warn drivers, walkers, cyclists and horse riders of the upcoming crossing. A minor impact is expected during construction however it is expected that the PRow will remain accessible for active travel users.	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access the SA128 during operation.
Upper Avenue	The Upper Avenue will be upgraded as part of the construction works to facilitate safe delivery of abnormal loads to the main Development Site. All upgrade works will be carried out sensitive to the local community and prioritising continued access for walkers and cyclists throughout construction. Where maintaining public access along this path may present a safety issue, a diversion will be implemented. Any necessary diversions will be determined post consent and will be set out in the finalised Access Management Plan.	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access the Upper Avenue during operation.
Bushang to Garden Cottage	The road to the north of Inveraray Castle will be upgraded to enable construction traffic to reach the main Development site. To ensure the safety of walkers and cyclists it is expected that a diversion will be implemented whilst construction works are underway to redirect active travel users. Any necessary diversions will be determined post consent and will be set out in the finalised Access Management Plan.	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access the route between Bushang and Garden Cottage throughout operation.
Various routes to the north of Inveraray Castle (including Sweetie Seat Walk; Woodland Walk and Dun na Cuaiche Walk)	The road to the north of Inveraray Castle will be upgraded to enable construction traffic to reach the main Development site. The existing local paths including the Sweetie Seat Walk and the intersection with the Dun na Cuaiche and Woodland Walks, will be impacted to a varying degree. To ensure the safety of walkers and cyclists it is expected that diversions will be implemented whilst construction works are underway to redirect active travel users. Any necessary diversions will be determined post consent and will be set out in the finalised Access Management Plan.	No impact during operation is expected. Users will be able to access the given routes around Inveraray Castle throughout operation.

4. Mitigation and Implementation

4.1. Introduction

At the time of writing, it is not possible to provide full details of the timing and sequence of the construction and the timing of the commissioning and subsequent operation of the Development. It is anticipated that these details will be included in the finalised AMP, informed and prepared by the contractor and operator of the Development post consent.

The Applicant acknowledges that some diversions will be in place for a significant amount of time during the construction stage and therefore the quality of the creation, reinstatement and upgrading of any affected recreational route will be included in the information provided on each diversion and reinstated route in the finalised AMP.

It is intended that excess material, unsuitable for use in the construction of the Headpond, will be utilised in creating diversions and the reinstatement of access routes.

Whilst it is intended that no access paths will be closed as a result of the construction works, should this be necessary, the following measures would be applied:

- For all affected routes regardless of being temporary or permanent, the following details will be set out in the finalised AMP:

Location and route (start and finish points including National Grid References) and when it is likely to be implemented;

Details of measures to alleviate issues of gradient, amenity and safety of its users;

The applicable standards to be implemented on the specific diversion or upgraded route, in line with their anticipated use. This is to ensure that these routes are appropriately constructed in line with their anticipated use; and

Details of any erosion control measures (such as cellular containment) where required and if any additional signage may be required for users.

- For each temporary diversion or upgraded route the following details will be set out in the finalised AMP:

The responsibility of its maintenance and condition reports of temporary diversion;

Details of where any construction phase diversions are requested to be left in perpetuity as enhancement measures given the length of implementation; and

Details of how the temporary diversion will be reinstated including planting and removal of materials;

- For each permanent diversion the following details will be set out in the finalised AMP:

Details of how the permanent diversion will be left for users during the operational phase;

The responsibility and arrangements which have been implemented should be a permanent diversion or features in perpetuity.

The following standards will be considered when designing any temporary and permanent diversion in conjunction with details provided by the Argyll and Bute Council Access Management Officer:

- British Standard 5709:2006 "*Gaps, Gates and Stiles*";
- Highway Act 1980;
- Countryside Act 2000;
- Equestrian Access from BHS Scotland Highway Act 1980;
- British Horse Society's Advice for Surfaces and Horses; and
- Sustrans Handbook for Cycle Friendly Design.

The Applicant will explore opportunities for implementing signage around the Headpond to inform visitors of the pumped storage hydro scheme, explaining what it is, how it works and the benefits of such an energy storage scheme. The location and type of any recreational, cultural and educational signage will be highlighted on a plan, together with any details of its content.

Any additional enhancement measures or additional opportunities will be highlighted through the Community Liaison Group.

4.2. Construction

The construction contractor will ensure minimal impact upon the local community and users of localised recreational or permissive routes / facilities and cycle paths during construction through various mitigation measures. Opportunities will also be explored for any beneficial effects that can be delivered for the local community during construction. It is expected that the public will continue to be able to exercise their access rights along routes within the study area during construction.

During the construction phase it may be necessary to restrict access to the main construction area to maintain public health and safety. Any necessary restrictions will be designed to affect the minimum area of land required for the shortest time practicable. All contractors will be made aware of the public access routes present on site prior to beginning works and the requirement to pause works whilst walkers and riders pass areas where localised work is happening.

Mitigation measures that may be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Diversions posted for core paths and walking routes where high volumes of construction traffic may alter walkers, cyclists or horse riders' experience of the area.
- Signage erected on construction vehicle routes and access paths warning drivers, walkers and cyclists of upcoming intersection; and
- The Applicant, the appointed construction contractor and Community Liaison Officer will work with local communities and businesses within the village of Inveraray to ensure the phasing of the construction works is designed to minimise effects on the local community wherever reasonably practicable.

4.2.1. Access to water

The public's legal right of access to water will be upheld with Loch Awe and Loch Fyne remaining accessible for water sports during the construction phase. In the interest of public safety, access to the immediate area around the Tailpond inlet / outlet in Loch Awe will be restricted during construction. Signage will be erected in proximity to the loch, advising of the change in access arrangements.

The construction of the Headpond will introduce a new waterbody to the local area. Clear signage will be installed in proximity to the Headpond explaining the risk of swimming and forbidding access to this waterbody. It is also noted that this area is currently largely inaccessible to the public on account of the physical terrain.

4.2.2. Health and Safety

A Health and Safety Plan will be prepared by the construction contractor which will set out how all health and safety matters on site are to be managed and how risks are to be identified and managed in accordance with current good practice and legal requirements.

4.2.3. Communication

Prior to construction works the finalised AMP, including any diversions, will be communicated to the local community and the Community Liaison Group. Methods of communication will be determined post consent.

Appropriate signage will be used for both construction traffic routes and the recreation route network.

4.3. Operation

Prior to the operation phase, the finalised AMP, including operation phase diversions, will be communicated to the local community. Methods of communication will be determined post consent.

Whilst no routine diversions are expected during operation, in the event that high volumes of construction traffic are required for maintenance, diversions may be implemented. Any necessary diversions will be set out in the finalised AMP and communicated to the local community in advance.

New paths have been proposed within the Development Site boundary, introducing new opportunities for access and recreation to this previously inaccessible and remote area. These paths will provide links between existing routes, demonstrating a key benefit arising from the proposed Development as public access to the area improves. Care will be taken when designing access controls, such as gates and cattle grids, on such routes. All access controls will be designed in accordance with British Standard 5709:2006 “*Gaps, Gates and Stiles*”. Typical construction details for the new paths and access controls will be included on drawings prepared as part of the finalised AMP.

Appropriate signage will be used for the recreation route network to direct walkers and cyclists through the site. The type and location of any signage will be shown on the finalised AMP.

5. References

Scottish Natural Heritage (2010). A Brief Guide to Preparing an Outdoor Access Plan [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2017-06/B639282%20-%20A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Preparing%20Outdoor%20Access%20Plans%20-%20Feb%202010.pdf> [Accessed: 30/01/24]

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