

# Responses to Feedback from Updated Grid Substation Consultation

## Freagairtean do Bheachdan bho Cho-chomhairleachadh an Fho-stèisean Grid Ùraichte



# Glossary Briathrachas

Term	Meaning
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Spiorad na Mara Limited (the Project owner)
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)</b>	The process of evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed project or development over and above the existing circumstances (or 'baseline').
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT (EIAR)</b>	The report prepared to assess the likely significant effects of the Project on the environment.
<b>IMPACT</b>	Change that is caused by an action; for example, land clearing (action) during construction which results in habitat loss (impact).
<b>LANDFALL</b>	This is the point at which the Project transitions from offshore to onshore. The infrastructure and installation methods associated with the landfall involve both onshore and offshore components.
<b>LANDFALL SUBSTATION</b>	The potential onshore substation located on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis. Includes the buildings and associated components which allow the voltage to be increased to meet onward transmission requirements.
<b>OFFSHORE CABLES</b>	Electrical and communication cables located within the Offshore Cable Area of Search and Array Area.
<b>ONSHORE APPLICATION</b>	The application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).
<b>ONSHORE CABLES</b>	Electrical and communication cables located within the Onshore Cable Corridor.
<b>ONSHORE CABLE CORRIDOR</b>	The area within which Onshore Cables and associated infrastructure will be located which is routed from the Transition Joint Bay (TJB) to the SSEN Lewis Hub.
<b>ONSHORE LANDFALL AREA</b>	The area which includes both the Landfall above Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) and Landfall Substation (as defined separately), cabling from the TJB to the Landfall Substation (if required) and construction-related compounds and working areas.
<b>ONSHORE TRANSMISSION WORKS (OTW)/ONSHORE PROJECT</b>	The onshore components of the Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm (the Project) located landward of Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS). The onshore components include all infrastructure and works within the Onshore Landfall Area, Landfall Substation, Onshore Cable Corridor, and Grid Substation.
<b>PROJECT</b>	The Spiorad na Mara offshore wind farm development. This term describes the whole development, including all offshore and onshore components.
<b>PROJECT DESIGN ENVELOPE (PDE)</b>	A description of the range of possible components that make up the Project design options under consideration when the exact engineering parameters are not yet known.
<b>SSEN LEWIS HUB</b>	This is the National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) interface. A transmission system operator substation into which the Project will connect for onward transmission through the existing grid network.

# Introduction

## Ro-ràdh

**The Updated Grid Substation Consultation for the proposed Spiorad na Mara offshore wind Project was carried out over a period of 2 weeks, from 30<sup>th</sup> September to 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

A total of 32 people attended the in-person public exhibitions held in Stornoway over the 30<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025. All consultation materials from the in-person exhibitions were made available on the Project website allowing anyone to review the updated information at any convenient time over the 2-week period. Participants in the consultation process were offered a number of ways to provide feedback, including physical feedback forms that were available at the in-person events or from the Project office in Stornoway, as well as online feedback forms and options to share feedback by email or verbally to a team member. A total of 49 pieces of feedback were recorded over the course of the consultation.

In this booklet, we have categorised and summarised all feedback received and provided responses in terms of how this feedback has been considered and addressed and/or how it will be addressed at a later stage.

As this consultation was focused solely on the updated Grid Substation and its associated infrastructure, any feedback received on the wider Project which has already been addressed in previous response documents of this kind has not been included here. However, it has been recorded and noted.

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What we heard from your feedback	How we have taken this into consideration
<b>Q1. What are your views on the preferred alternative grid substation location and associated cable route corridor, as presented in the information materials?</b>	
<p><b>Concerns about potential impacts to peatland</b></p> <p>A key concern raised was the potential degradation of peatland which is important for carbon storage and supporting biodiversity.</p>	<p>An Outline Soil and Peat Management Plan will be submitted as part of our planning application for the Onshore Transmission Works and a comprehensive plan will be developed and agreed with appropriate stakeholders prior to the start of construction. The final Soil and Peat Management Plan will be implemented during construction to manage impacts sensitively, and ensure placement and storage are carried out appropriately.</p> <p>The Project will also submit the following outline management plans as part of the planning application for the Onshore Transmission Works, each being later developed into more detailed plans prior to construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline Onshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) ;</li> <li>• Outline Biodiversity Restoration and Enhancement Plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Concern about potential pollution of nearby watercourses, particularly the River Creed</b></p> <p>Many raised their concern about potential pollution incidents impacting rivers, lochs and burns. The River Creed was specifically highlighted as an important habitat for salmon and sea trout. There was a suggestion to implement buffers to prevent run-off and pollution.</p>	<p>We are keenly aware of the importance of local watercourses and in particular the River Creed. The potential impacts to relevant watercourses and to freshwater fish habitats will be assessed, and a Peat Landslide Hazard Risk Assessment undertaken, as part of the EIA for the Onshore Transmission Works.</p> <p>The Project has implemented a buffer zone between the River Creed and Loch Cnoc a' Choilich to prevent run-off and pollution and has carried out a significant amount of peat probing in the area of the Grid Substation. The location and elongated design reflect the area of shallowest peat, thereby minimising the area of disturbance to deeper peat and reducing the risk of pollution incidents.</p> <p>In addition, all work in the vicinity of these watercourses will be managed through appropriate construction methodologies, the Construction Environment Management Plan and best practice environmental monitoring and auditing.</p>

**What we heard from your feedback**

**How we have taken this into consideration**

**Q1. What are your views on the preferred alternative grid substation location and associated cable route corridor, as presented in the information materials?**

**Concern about the scale of the Grid Substation and new roads**

Some feel the infrastructure is excessive and expressed frustration over a perceived expansion of the Project proposals.

The size of the Grid Substation is based on the equipment needed to safely and efficiently connect to the grid. The new proposed location remains in an area where there are other large buildings and large-scale consented and proposed infrastructure (such as Stornoway Windfarm) and remains in reasonable proximity to the Lewis Hub.

The Project proposals have not expanded on what was previously presented. Our red line boundary (the area within which we will be seeking planning for all Onshore Transmission Works infrastructure and associated works) remains the same as that presented during our second phase of public consultation in June. While the layout of the Grid Substation has changed slightly in shape (more elongated than on the previously proposed site), the overall footprint of the compound remains largely unchanged (60,800m<sup>2</sup> now compared to 60,000m<sup>2</sup> previously). The cable corridor linking the Grid Substation of the SSEN Lewis Hub may change – still within the red line boundary – but will be shorter if it does. The access road into the substation will be designed to avoid areas of historic peatland restoration. The design retains the potential for shared use with the Lochside Arena and SSEN's future works.

It is also important to note that the PDE approach allows for flexibility, meaning the size and height of the Grid Substation could still be reduced prior to construction.

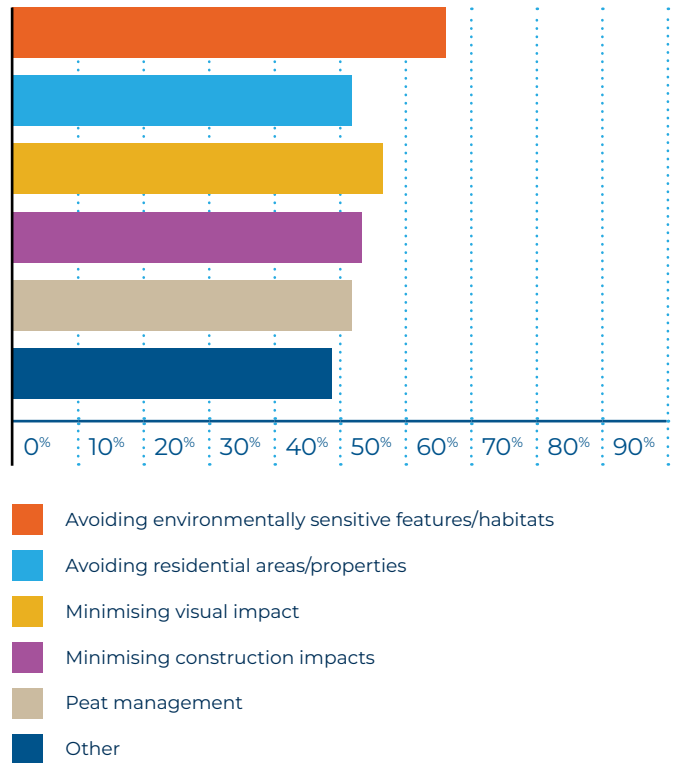
## Q2. What factors do you feel are most important as we progress our plans for the siting of this part of the proposed project?

In general, respondents felt that all factors listed were important to be considered as the Project progresses its plans for the Grid Substation.

The most important factor that was highlighted, however, by around 65% of the respondents, was 'Avoiding environmentally sensitive features/habitats'.

Respondents who selected 'Other' and left a comment also suggested that the following factors were important:

- Water Contamination Risk;
- Health and Safety Risk;
- Cultural Identity.



## How we have taken this into consideration:

This feedback is valuable and reaffirms the factors that were prioritised by the Project when considering potential Grid Substation locations. Among the reasons for the selection of the preferred site were the following:

- It avoids other existing, proposed and consented infrastructure, and environmental designations;
- It avoids excavating the Lewis Peat Works/Lewis Chemical Works (although some peatland restoration works may take place in this area);
- It avoids, to the maximum extent possible, land which is under common grazing or agricultural use;
- It avoids residential areas;
- It has the shallowest peat of all options considered, making it most suitable in terms of limiting peat disturbance.

Construction impacts will be managed carefully through a detailed Construction Environment Management Plan and visual impact – already minimised through the location of the site – will be assessed in the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which will form part of the Onshore EIA.

The risk of water contamination will be addressed as outlined above (*under Concern about potential pollution of nearby watercourses, particularly the River Creed*). Construction and operational health and safety considerations will be dealt with through appropriate health and safety procedures for those respective phases of work.

Whilst no cultural heritage features have been recorded in the Grid Substation location, a full assessment of the Grid Substation on the setting of nearby Scheduled Monuments will be included within the EIA.

**What we heard from your feedback**

**How we have taken this into consideration**

**Q3. Please provide any additional comments you wish to make about this aspect of the Project.**

**Highlighted previous pollution incident**

Some respondents shared information around a previous pollution incident near the proposed Grid Substation as a result of other works.

The Project is aware of this previous incident and it is being considered as part of the EIA process.

During construction, best practice construction methods will be implemented to minimise the risk of pollution incidents and a variety of construction management plans will be produced in order to meet all regulatory requirements in place at the time of construction.

In addition, local engagement will continue to be an important part of the Project during the construction phase and we will ensure that community input (including site-specific local knowledge, where relevant) is used to inform how construction work is undertaken in certain sensitive locations. Such engagement will also be emphasised to, and expected of, all contractors undertaking this work.

**Importance of the Lewis Chemical Works Site**

The Lewis Chemical Works were highlighted as an important archaeological, cultural and historical site.

The local history of the area is understood by the Project and was one of the considerations in the selection of the preferred Grid Substation location.

As above, ongoing community engagement and input from relevant local stakeholders will inform how any peat restoration and management in this area are undertaken, to ensure this important site is not negatively impacted.



If you have any questions or would like to arrange to speak to a member of our team, please contact:



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