

From:Mary Gibson
Sent:Mon, 11 Jan 2016 16:22:28 +0000
To:Graham Sharp;Epc
Cc:'Planning Dingwall';Jane Bridge;Nick Richards
Subject:RE: 12/02435/FUL - Additional Information for Uploading re Easan Dorcha

Thanks for forwarding the various documents

With regard to the Construction Method Statement (CMS) we are generally happy with those aspects relevant to our remit.

We are pleased to note that there will be monitoring and management over a three-year post construction period to ensure establishment takes place with remedial work carried out if required.

We noted in our response to the planning application that the upper section of pipeline, the section marked on the ground as chainage 0 to 400m, is in a more exposed location with thin soils and a predominance of exposed rock and boulders. We drew attention to the fact that these areas would be more difficult to reinstate successfully and therefore recommended that the width of the working corridor was restricted and any boulders and rock were repositioned weathered side up. We recommended that detailed working methods should be included in any final design plan and associated documentation.

Whilst the CMS includes generic information on different techniques that might be employed to construct the track there is no specific information on the treatment of individual sections. Further the methods set out for the construction of the pipeline underplay the need to excavate though exposed rock and boulders often on steep slopes.

In order to achieve the desired outcome we consider that it would be appropriate to set out in more detail how the upper sections will be tackled. It would be helpful if photographs could be taken prior to works commencing to record the location and nature of landforms and associated boulder fields. This information along with details of the required depth to which the pipe needs to be buried should be used to inform the approach to recreation of landforms and reinstatement of associated habitat and boulders.

We note that it is stated that ' 700m of new permanent tracks will be required to access Intake 5 and Intake 6. The track will be constructed as 3.5m wide construction tracks, similar to the powerhouse access, however it will be reduced to a 2.m wide ATV track with a central green strip of vegetation after

construction is completed'. We welcome the commitment to reduce the width of the access track however whilst the placement of vegetation maybe appropriate in the lower reaches it will be difficult to win and possibly not appropriate higher up in the more rocky/boulder sections (chainage 0 to 400m) referred to above.

We note that it is stated in 10.2 Method of Construction of Powerhouse and excavation of the powerhouse is likely to provide a large amount of rock and some turf. Given its location we do not consider this will be the case and it is likely that material from elsewhere will be needed to for access track formation. We also note that it is stated in 10.5 the ground around the powerhouse will be landscaped in such a way to ensure it is blended into the surrounding landscape. Given the location of the powerhouse within the Coulin Pinewoods SSSI the emphasis should be on habitat restoration so as to support efforts to secure natural regeneration in this area. We would be happy to advise further on this specific aspect.

We note that section 1.3 Access Track of the Easan Dorcha Hydro Scheme Tree Protection Plan & Method Statement refers to 1 Scots Pine close to the existing track which will require branches to be lopped.

There are a number of other large mature Scots Pine close to the track including a group of three trees, 2 below the track and 1 above just downstream of that illustrated. We would wish to see further information as to whether it will be possible to retain these or not.

I hope this response is helpful to you.

mary







