

March 2025

Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro

Environmental Impact Assessment Report

Volume 5: Appendices
Appendix 16.1: Outline Access Management Plan

Glen Earrach Energy Ltd

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
John Daly	Niamh Sheehy	Gayle Adams	Victoria Deacon
Associate Director	Senior Planner	Technical Director	Principal Environmental Scientist

Issue History

Issue	Issue date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
1	March 2025	Submission	DL	David Lee	Technical Director – Renewable Energy

© 2025 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) for sole use of our Client (Glen Earrach Energy Limited) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM

Table of Contents

1. Outline Access Management Plan 1

1.1 Introduction..... 1

1.2 Objectives..... 1

1.3 Legislation and Guidance 1

1.4 Baseline..... 2

1.5 Impacted Recreation Routes 3

1. Outline Access Management Plan

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Outline Access Management Plan (OAMP) provides an outline of the access management measures that will be implemented during the Pre-Construction and Enabling, Construction and Operational Phases of the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2 The OAMP has been prepared following the NatureScot guidance “A Brief Guide to Preparing an Outdoor Access Plan”. It should be read in conjunction with **Chapter 16: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report)** of the EIAR.
- 1.1.3 The OAMP is an outline plan which has been prepared for submission with the Section 36 Application. A detailed Access Management Plan (AMP) will be prepared post-consent following consultation with:
- The Highland Council;
 - NatureScot;
 - Forestry and Land Scotland; and
 - Scottish Canals.
- 1.1.4 The detailed AMP will be submitted to The Highland Council prior to the commencement of development.
- 1.1.5 All necessary traffic management measures proposed to maintain safe access on the public highway have been set out within **Chapter 13: Access, Traffic and Transport (Volume 2: Main Report)**. This OAMP therefore focuses on access for recreational users, including walkers, cyclists, horse riders and water based recreational activities within the Proposed Development Site.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The objectives of this OAMP are to demonstrate that:
- Safe and appropriate access will be maintained for recreational users of the existing recreation routes within the Proposed Development Site.
 - New recreational opportunities within the Proposed Development Site will be provided at the Operational Phase.

1.3 Legislation and Guidance

- 1.3.1 The access related legislation and guidance below has been considered in developing this OAMP.
- 1.3.2 The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003¹, which provides the public a right of responsible access over most land in Scotland. It also sets out a duty on landowners to manage land in a way which respects access rights.
- 1.3.3 The Scottish Outdoor Access Code² provides detailed guidance for users to follow when enjoying the outdoors and for owners or managers of land and water to follow to respect the public’s statutory access rights. The Code notes that access rights do not apply in building, civil engineering or demolition sites, which would include the Pre-Construction and Enabling, and Construction Phases of the Proposed Development. However, it also notes that in terms of managing access to land and water, restrictions should be kept to the minimum area. Effective communication with the public will be very important.

¹ Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. [Online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2003/2/contents>

² Scotland Outdoor Access Code (2005). [Online] Available at: [Publication 2005 - Scottish Outdoor Access Code.pdf \(nature.scot\)](https://www.nature.scot/publication/2005-scottish-outdoor-access-code.pdf)

- 1.3.4 The Guide to Hydropower Construction Good Practice³, published by NatureScot, SEPA and Scottish Renewables, outlines in relation to construction works that:
- Management arrangements should be flexible to take reasonable account of public access requirements and adapt as the site develops;
 - Access controls should be focused on where actual risks are present to ensure limitations on access are seen to be proportionate and credible;
 - Effective communication with the public will be very important.
 - A range of mechanisms to manage access during construction, include:
 - informal, proportionate and short-term limitations on access; and
 - sign-posted alternative routes and active management of access where work is underway; and
 - It will be helpful to identify and advertise a key point of contact for members of the public regarding access issues.
- 1.3.5 The Guide notes for the Operational Phase that:
- Any new access infrastructure will require periodic maintenance, but access management is unlikely to have other long-term implications. Public access will often share vehicular tracks with maintenance traffic, which is common to a wide range of tracks used for forestry and upland estate management.

1.4 Baseline

- 1.4.1 The existing recreation routes are shown in **Figure 16.2 (Sheets 1-4): Outline Access Management Plan Recreation Routes and Paths (Volume 3: Figures)** and are detailed in **Chapter 16: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report)**. The list of recreation routes which have been assessed in relation to the Proposed Development are included below.
- 1.4.2 The following recreation routes are located within the Proposed Development Site and follow or intersect with the route of the proposed main access:
- Affric Kintail Way;
 - Core Path 02.02: Forestry Commission car park to Shenval (low);
 - Core Path 02.03: Forestry Commission car park to Shenval (upper);
 - Core Path 13.01: Drumnadrochit to Balnain;
 - Core Path 13.02: Chnoc a Bhuachaille; and
 - Coiltie Loop Trail.
- 1.4.3 The following recreation routes are located within the wider Proposed Development Site:
- Great Glen Way;
 - Loch Ness 360;
 - Great Glen Canoe Trail; and
 - Meall Fuar–Mhonaidh summit and walking trail.
- 1.4.4 Additional recreation routes are found within the 5 km Study Area including Core Paths around Drumnadrochit, to the north of the Proposed Development Site and to the east of Loch Ness. These routes are detailed in **Appendix 16.2: Recreation and Tourism Features within 5 km of the Proposed Development Site (Volume 5: Appendices)**.

³ Guide to Hydropower Construction Good Practice (2019). [Online] Available at: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/34332/guide-to-hydropower-construction-phase-good-practice-guidance.pdf>

1.5 Impacted Recreation Routes

- 1.5.1 This section outlines the recreation routes which will be directly impacted by the Proposed Development at the Pre-Construction and Enabling, Construction and Operational Phases. Enhancement measures are also outlined for the Operational Phase.

Pre-Construction and Enabling, and Construction Phases

Recreation Routes

- 1.5.2 During the Pre-Construction and Enabling Works and Construction Phases access along the following recreation routes will be impacted:
- Affric Kintail Way;
 - Core Path 13.02 Cnoc a Bhuachaille;
 - Core Path 13.01 Drumnadrochit to Balnain; and
 - Coiltie Loop Trail.
- 1.5.3 For safety purposes and to maintain recreational access the above routes will be rerouted adjacent to the commercial forestry road, through Forestry and Land Scotland land. This will provide safe access for recreational users separated from construction traffic. The rerouted sections will be constructed to an appropriate standard to ensure a suitable level of amenity for recreational activities is maintained.
- 1.5.4 Following consultation with The Highland Council and Forestry and Land Scotland, the detailed AMP will confirm if any of the rerouted sections will be permanently retained for recreational purposes, if practicable to do so.
- 1.5.5 Recreational users on the Coiltie loop will be diverted to follow a diversion along the existing section of Core Path 13.02, which extends across commercial forestry land. Please refer to **Figure 2.30: Recreation Route Diversion (Volume 3: Figures)**.
- 1.5.6 Signage will be installed so recreational users have directional signage along the re-routed routes, and to Core Path 02.02 and Core Path 02.03 which intersect the main construction access and to the car park located on Core Path 02.02. Signage will include:
- Details of rerouting required on recreation routes and of crossing points;
 - Signage displayed on construction vehicle routes and access paths warning drivers, walkers and cyclists of upcoming intersection; and
 - Information on the programme of construction activities to be displayed on community information boards located in proximity to the recreation routes.

Other Recreation Routes

- 1.5.7 Given the distance, and in some cases the natural separation caused by topography and waterbodies, of the Great Glen Way, the Loch Ness 360 and the other recreation routes outlined in **Chapter 16: Socio-economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report)** the impact on these routes has been assessed to be **Not Significant**. In the event that construction works or traffic are required on these routes, access management measures will be developed to maintain safe access for recreational users.

Loch Ness and the Great Glen Canoe Trail

- 1.5.8 The public's legal right of access to water will be maintained with Loch Ness remaining largely accessible for recreational activities during the Construction Phase. In the interest of public safety, access to the immediate area around the Lower Control Works in Loch Ness will be restricted during construction.
- 1.5.9 A suite of safety measures, specific to the Lower Control Works, will be implemented to ensure public safety. This is expected to include temporary booms and markers to give a safe working zone around the work on Loch Ness.

- 1.5.10 Information will be displayed on local information boards in proximity to the Lower Control Works, on the Project website and on signage in locations to be agreed with Scottish Canals. The information to be displayed will advise of the change in access arrangements, safety requirements and will provide information on the programme of construction activities which will occur on Loch Ness.

Loch nam Breac Dearga

- 1.5.11 Loch nam Breac Dearga will no longer be accessible for fishing and other recreational activities from the Construction Phase onwards. Clear signage will be installed in proximity to the Headpond and in the surrounding area explaining that the Loch nam Breac Dearga will no longer be accessible.
- 1.5.12 Details of alternative lochs, which provide appropriate and safe opportunities for fishing and other recreational activities, will be identified following consultation with The Highland Council.

Health and Safety

- 1.5.13 During the construction phase, it will be necessary to restrict access to the main construction area to maintain public health and safety. Any necessary restrictions will be designed to impact the minimum area of land required for the shortest time reasonably practicable. These areas will be included in the detailed AMP but will include areas required for the construction of the Headpond, Lower Control Works, compounds and works associated with the below ground infrastructure, construction access tracks and the workers' accommodation compound.
- 1.5.14 A Health and Safety Plan will be prepared by the construction contractor, which will set out how all health and safety matters on the Proposed Development are to be managed and how risks are to be identified and managed in accordance with current good practice and legal requirements.
- 1.5.15 The Proposed Development will meet the safety requirements under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. This includes, ensuring that the perimeter of construction sites are identifiable by suitable signs and/or fenced off, so far as reasonably practicable and in accordance with the level of risk.
- 1.5.16 All contractors will be made aware of the recreation routes present on the Proposed Development Site prior to beginning works. In areas that recreation users are permitted contractors will pause works should recreation users pass areas where works are underway.

Communication

- 1.5.17 Prior to construction, the detailed AMP including any diversions, will be issued to The Highland Council, Forestry and Land Scotland and Scottish Canals. A copy will also be displayed on the project website.
- 1.5.18 Information on construction activities will be displayed on community information boards where possible.

Operational Phase

Existing Recreation Routes

- 1.5.19 Whilst no routine traffic diversions are expected on recreation routes during operation, access management measures will be implemented for operational and maintenance traffic. This will include displaying information on what to do if site traffic is encountered, displaying diversion signage (if required), applying speed limits for operational and maintenance traffic, and training workers to ensure safe access is provided for all recreational users.
- 1.5.20 During the Operational Phase, Loch nam Breac Dearga will not be accessible for water based recreational activities, as this will be used as the Headpond for the Proposed Development.
- 1.5.21 During operation, Loch Ness will remain accessible to recreational users. Restricted access to a small area around the Lower Control Works will be required to maintain public safety. Signage will be displayed in proximity to Loch Ness, advising of the restricted access.

New Access Paths

- 1.5.22 The retention of construction access tracks to provide operational access to the Proposed Development will also provide new opportunities for recreation access.
- 1.5.23 Opportunities to enhance the recreational experience will be provided on new access paths. Examples include signage to inform visitors of the Proposed Development, explaining what it is, how it works and

the benefits of such an energy storage scheme. The location and type of recreational, cultural and educational signage will be included in the detailed AMP. In line with The Highland Council's commitment to promote the increased use of Gaelic this signage will be written in English and Gaelic.

