

Appendix 16.1: Sloy Pumped Hydro Storage Scheme: Draft Outdoor Access Management Plan

Appendix 16.1: Draft Outdoor Access Management Plan - Contents

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Figure 1: Draft Outdoor Access Management Plan

Appendix 16.1: Draft Outdoor Access Management Plan

1.1. Introduction

This Draft Outdoor Access Management Plan (OAMP) has been prepared to detail how existing public access would be managed during the construction of the Proposed Development.

As the operation of the Proposed Development would be an extension to what already exists at Sloy Hydroelectric Power Station, contained within the existing power station grounds, no effects are anticipated on outdoor access during the operation of Proposed Development, so this Draft OAMP focusses on how public access is managed during the construction period only.

1.2. Methodology

This Draft OAMP has been prepared in line with the requirements set out in the NatureScot (NS) guidance document 'A Brief Guide to Preparing an Outdoor Access Plan' (2010)¹.

1.3. Outdoor Access Baseline

The Proposed Development comprises the conversion of the existing Sloy Hydroelectric Power Station into pumped storage. Construction of the Proposed Development would be undertaken entirely within land owned by SSE and the majority of activities would take place within the existing Sloy Hydroelectric Power Station site itself. The Inveruglas Visitor Centre / cafe, coach / car park, picnic site and jetty, located to the east, on land leased to Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA), is a popular stopping off point, particularly during the summer months, and includes an overflow car park to the north.

There is a public road and a number of popular walking routes within close proximity to the Proposed Development Area (PDA) which have been identified with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development (see **Figure 1**), as follows:

- A82 public road;
- Cowal Way / Three Lochs Way, Ben Vane Mountain Route and Ben Vorlich Mountain Route which all follow the same route, in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. A section of the Inveruglas Core Path also overlaps with these routes, with an additional short section which forks to towards the north where the other paths turn to the south.

The walking routes begin within the Inveruglas Visitor Centre car park. All of these routes pass directly in front of the existing Sloy Hydroelectric Power Station, on the A82 pedestrian pavement.

In addition to the routes listed above, recreational users of the wider area including the seasonal ferry service which departs from Inveruglas, are also considered.

The West Highland Railway Line passes to the west of the Proposed Development and would be unaffected by it in both the short and longer term and is therefore scoped out of this Draft OAMP.

¹ <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2017-06/B639282%20-%20A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Preparing%20Outdoor%20Access%20Plans%20-%20Feb%202010.pdf> [Accessed: May 2024]

1.4. Potential Access Impacts

The anticipated impacts on access associated with the Proposed Development would be encountered during construction of the scheme only. The core construction period for the Proposed Development is anticipated to be 36 months.

The existing Sloy Hydroelectric Power Station is currently accessed from the A82 public road via two bellmouth junctions, one to the north and the other to the south of the existing power station. Construction traffic would utilise the existing access into the power station grounds from the A82 public road. Vehicular access along the A82 in the vicinity of the Proposed Development would be maintained throughout the construction period.

The walking routes described in Section 1.3 (Cowal Way / Three Lochs Way, Ben Vane Mountain Route and Ben Vorlich Mountain Route, which include a section of the Inveruglas Core Path), all follow the same route in the vicinity of the Proposed Development, beginning within the Inveruglas Visitor Centre car park.

Pedestrian access from Inveruglas Visitor Centre across the A82 to the walking routes to the southwest, would be maintained during the construction of the scheme, although there would be some interface with construction traffic where pedestrians walking along the A82 pavement cross the existing bellmouth junctions at Sloy Hydroelectric Power Station.

The Inveruglas Visitor Centre / cafe, coach / car park, picnic site and jetty would remain open for the duration of the construction of the Proposed Development. However, the overflow car park at Inveruglas Visitor Centre which is located within the LLTNPA camping management zone, would be temporarily closed to the public during construction, as it would be utilised as the secondary construction compound / site establishment area. Information on alternative parking and camping facilities in the vicinity would be provided, as detailed in Section 1.5 of this Draft OAMP. Any impacts on recreational access would be temporary, and the public would be informed of any restrictions, and provided with advice, as detailed in Section 1.5 of this draft OAMP.

The Inveruglas Visitor Centre car park is utilised as a drop off point for the Inversnaid ferry crossing from the pier located at Inveruglas Bay. The pier is also occasionally used for recreational users of the loch. Users of the main car park at Inveruglas Visitor Centre would not be affected by the construction of the Proposed Development, as construction traffic would be excluded from it.

1.5. General Access Arrangements

SSE is committed to enabling continuity of day-to-day access where the safety of the general public or construction staff is not compromised. During the construction phase, every effort would be made to ensure ease of access to existing routes are maintained. Furthermore, any construction effects are expected to be short-term and temporary. However, to ensure the safety of the public, some additional measures may be required.

Prior to commencement of the construction works, access arrangements, any alternative arrangements for camping and parking, as well as appropriate warnings, would be communicated to the local community via the community liaison group, project website, and information boards at Inveruglas Visitor Centre.

Where there is potential for interaction between construction staff and recreational users, warning signage would be erected to notify the both groups (see Plate 1). Signage would be placed in strategic locations and would be the responsibility of the appointed contractor. Training and briefing of all construction drivers to be aware of path users would also be undertaken. A safe crossing point across the A82 would also be identified for pedestrians.

Plate 1: Example Construction Staff Warning Sign



1.6. Conclusion

SSE aims to maintain access during construction of the Proposed Development and by implementing the management strategies set out in this Draft OAMP, it is believed that this can be achieved while ensuring the safety of the public and construction staff.

Figures