Planning Committee Report **LA01/2019/0132/F**	**26th February 2020**
PLANNING COMMITTEE	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Assets
Outcome	Pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough
Lead Officer	Development Management & Enforcement Manager
Cost: (If applicable)	N/A

App No: **LA01/2019/0132/F** **Ward: Garvagh**

App Type: **Full**

Address: **Proposed 110/33kv substation approximately 230m North West of 10a Drumbane Road, Garvagh and two proposed overhead line connections to the existing 110kv overhead line at Brockaghboy Wind Farm, South of Dowlins Bridge, Drumbane Road, Garvagh. All proposed infrastructure to be located within the townland of Brockaghboy.**

Proposal: **Full application for construction of a new 110/33kv cluster substation and associated site works. Substation access road, visibility splays, drainage and alteration to watercourse and landscaping planting. Construction of two 110kv overhead electricity lines (1.62km & 1.68km in length) and support structures connecting in and out of the existing 110kv circuit to Brockaghboy Wind Farm. Associated temporary access tracks and working areas. Removal of 0.25km section of the existing 110kv Brockaghboy Wind Farm overhead line connection. (Submission of Outline Traffic Management Plan)**

Con Area: **N/A** **Valid Date: 7th February 2019**

Listed Building Grade: **N/A** **Target Date: 5th September 2019**

Applicant: **SONI Ltd**

Agent: **SONI Ltd**

Objections: **42** **Petitions of Objection:** **2**

Support: **23** **Petitions of Support:** **0**

Executive Summary

- This proposal is acceptable at this location having regarding to the Northern Area Plan 2016 and all other material considerations.
- The site is located approximately 0.5km to the south west of the settlement of Glenullin, between Drumbane Road and Glen Road.
- There has been 42 objections received and 23 letters of support to this application. No statutory consultee has raised any concerns with the proposal.
- The proposal relates to a proposed 33/110kv cluster substation and 2 110kv overhead electricity transmission lines which is considered to not have an adverse impact on:
    - public safety, public health and residential amenity;
    - biodiversity, and nature conservation
    - built heritage interests;
    - fluvial environment or
    - visual amenity & landscape character.
- The applicant has advised that the sub station is required to ensure the construction of and serve previously approved wind farms including the adjacent Brockaghboy Wind Farm.
- Alternative sites were considered within the site selection process to ensure limited adverse impact on the natural environment.
- The siting of the development was chosen to limit the visual impact on the environment and this appears to have been achieved.
- Issues raised by the objectors have been addressed within the report and there are no issues within this which would warrant a refusal in planning policy terms.

Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- www.planningni.gov.uk

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for recommendation set out in Section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **APPROVE** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in section 10.

2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site is located approximately 0.5km to the south west of the settlement of Glenullin, between Drumbane Road and Glen Road. The south east corner of the substation hardstand is approximately 230m northwest of no 10a Drumbane Road which is the closest dwelling to the site.

2.2 The area is rural in character. The site is currently an agricultural field and is accessed off the Drumbane Road. The site slopes up gently from the centre to the east and west. The site boundaries are currently defined by large mature conifer trees along the western and northern boundaries.

3 RELEVANT HISTORY

3.1 LA01/2018/0723/DETEIA - Proposed 33/110kv cluster substation and 2 110kv overhead electricity transmission lines, 300M North West of 10a Drumbane Road, Garvagh – Environmental Statement not required 5th September 2018.

4 THE APPLICATION

4.1 The proposal is for a 110/33 kV cluster substation to serve as a point for collection of wind energy, from a number of approved wind farm developments located approximately 10 to 15 km west of Garvagh including Smulgedon, Evishagaran and Craiggore.

4.2 In addition to the substation, two connecting overhead lines (OHLs), each of approximately 1.6km of 110kV OHL, are to be provided between the substation and the existing 110kV OHL

which connects Brockaghboy windfarm to the Rasharkin Cluster substation.

4.3 The cluster substation, which will consist of an outdoor 11kV switchgear compound and an associated indoor 33kV switchgear building, will be situated within a fenced compound measuring approximately 103m x 92m. The substation will be accessed from Drumbane Road by a 6m wide concrete road. The proposed development also includes drainage, water course realignment works, earthworks and landscape planting for screening.

4.4 The switchgear building will be approximately 40m by 9m with a height of 7m and will consist of smooth block construction walls (brick textured silver/grey) and a tiled pitch roof coloured black or slate grey. The compound fence is proposed to be a single 2.4m high palisade fence. Parking and turning for service vehicles is to be provided outside the compound adjacent to the building. A low level of sensor operated access lighting is proposed to allow safe access to the building and manually operated high level lighting is proposed during the hours of darkness to permit fault and emergency maintenance to plant and equipment.

Design & Access Statement

4.5 A Design & Access Statement is required under Article 6 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (NI) 2015 as the application is considered to be a major application.

4.6 The design and access statement is to provide details of the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

4.7 The report demonstrates that the applicant undertook significant consideration of the location and design of the proposal giving regard to the environmental/locational constraints, proximity to dwellings and health and safety considerations. This involved detailed assessment of the site, as well as consideration of alternative sites, and public consultations to provide an acceptable scheme prior to submission of an application.

4.8 It is accepted that due to the inherent design characteristics of an electricity substation and for health and safety that there will be no

requirement for access for those with disabilities onto the site. The Design and Access Statement is in compliance with Article 6 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (NI) 2015.

Environmental Impact Assessment

4.9 An environmental impact assessment was carried out under LA01/2018/0723/DETEIA. The applicant requested a determination to be carried out by the Council under Regulation 8(1)(a) of The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2017 as to whether the proposal would be an EIA development as defined by the same regulations. The Council determined that the proposal is not EIA development, and as such, this planning application was not required to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

4.10 The application was considered in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) by Shared Environmental Service on behalf of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Planning Authority.

4.11 Having considered the nature, scale, timing, duration and location of the project Shared Environmental Services concluded that the proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the features of any Special protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites,

5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS

External:

5.1 Community Consultation events were organised by the applicant SONI Ltd in line with the Pre-Application Notification LA01/2018/0741/PAN. 42 letters and 2 petitions of objection were received and 23 letters of support were received.

Internal:

5.2 **DETI Energy Branch:** No objection

DETI Geological Survey NI: No objection

DfC Historic Environment Division: No objection subject to conditions

DfI Rivers: No objection subject to conditions

DfI Roads: No objection subject to conditions

Environmental Health: No objection subject to conditions

NI Water: No objection

NIEA: No objection subject to conditions

Public Health Agency: No objection

RSPB: Concerns raised over breeding Curlew. However, NIEA, who are the competent authority are content with the mitigation measures proposed.

Shared Environmental Services (SES): No objection subject to conditions

Proposal of Application Notice

5.3 As this application is considered a major application it must comply with the Proposal of Application Notice and carry out community consultation at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of the application.

5.4 A Proposal of Application Notice was submitted on 15th June 2018 under LA01/2018/0741/PAN. The applicant advised that they intended to undertake the following forms of consultation:

- Hosting of 2 separate staffed public information events in the local area consisting of exhibition boards and project brochures and providing opportunity to fill in feedback forms.

- Press notice of the public event and where further information could be obtained.

- Production of a dedicated project webpage on SONI's website containing key information

- Notification letters to affected Landowners, those who provided contact details at previous events, local elected representatives and the local community group.

Community Consultation Report

5.5 The community consultation report (CCR) was submitted as part of the planning application, received on 7th February 2019, which is more than 12 weeks after the Proposal of Application Notice was received, as required by the legislation.

5.6 The CCR contained the methods of consultation carried out and the comments and feedback from this exercise. The report demonstrates that the consultation was carried out as agreed in the Proposal of Application Notice.

5.7 SONI hosted three separate pre-application community consultation events prior to the submission of the PAN in 2017. A further round of events was carried out on 3rd & 10th May 2018based on the proposals within the PAN.

5.8 The events were advertised in six local newspapers, and advertisements and notifications were placed in a number of local centres in Garvagh. The applicant directly contacted landowners and sent invitations to those whose land was effected by the proposal. They also invited those who had provided their details at the first round of consultation in 2017. Councillors and MLAs were directly.

5.9 The event was staffed by SONI representatives, engineers, wayleave officers, and environmental consultants. Detailed maps and plans were available for more detailed discussion with stakeholders and landowners as required. The attendance across these events was approximately 75 attendees.

5.10 A total of 53 feedback forms were completed. The main areas of concern raised by the attendees focused on the visual impact of the proposal, planning, project methodology. The applicant has provided consideration of the issues raised in the forms and outlined the discussion points during the exhibition event and identified actions to be undertaken by SONI for future events. The applicant has demonstrated that the issues raised in the forms had been addressed during the event.

5.11 The CCR demonstrates that adequate community consultation has taken place and the key issues of concern have been considered. There have been no changes made to the proposal in response to the community consultation.

6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The development plan is the Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP).

6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.

6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as both a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.

6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.

6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

7.1 Northern Area Plan 2016

Strategic Planning Policy Statement for NI (SPPS)

Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

Planning Policy Statement 2 (PPS2) – Natural Heritage

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3) – Access, Movement and Parking

Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6) – Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage

Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS 15) - Planning and Flood Risk

Planning Policy Statement 18 (PPS 18) – Renewable Energy

Planning Policy Statement 18 (PPS 18) – Best Practice Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 21 (PPS 21) – Sustainable Development in the Countryside

8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to:

- the principle of the proposed development;
- public safety, public health and residential amenity;
- biodiversity, and nature conservation
- built heritage interests;
- fluvial environment
- visual amenity & landscape character.

8.2 The proposal must be considered having regard to the SPPS, PPS policy documents and supplementary planning guidance specified above.

Principle of Development

8.3 The site is located within the rural area as defined by NAP 2016.

8.4 The principle of the type and scale of development proposed must be considered having regard to the policy documents specified above.

8.5 The SPPS in paragraph 6.250 requires the development of new power lines to comply with the 1998 International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). They should also have regard to potential impact on amenity and should avoid areas of landscape sensitivity such as AONBs. In general terms the SPPS at paragraph 6.70 requires that all development in the countryside must integrate into its setting, respect the rural character and be appropriately designed.

8.6 Policy CTY 1 of PPS 21 states that there are a range of types of non-residential development that may be acceptable in principle in the countryside, e.g. certain utilities or telecommunications development. Proposals for such development will be considered in accordance with existing published planning policies. This substation and associated development is considered to be a utility project.

8.7 Policy PSU 2 considers major projects and the necessity to strike a balance between economic growth and protection of environment. This policy requires that account is taken of the contribution of the proposal to the national or regional economy or to meeting national regional needs.

8.8 In this case the ability to physically connect approved wind farms to the grid helps NI meet its renewable energy targets and as such this contributes to regional needs. This position is set out in the Environmental Report which accompanied the application.

8.9 Policy PSU 2 underlines the importance of assessing the environmental effects of the proposal. As outlined at para 4.9 above, a DETEIA was carried out and the proposal did not require an Environmental Statement. Notwithstanding this, the application was accompanied by a detailed Environmental Report.

8.10 The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland is the primary policy for new infrastructure (PSU 8) and overhead cables (PSU 11).

8.11 Policies PSU 2 and PSU 8 require that the need for new infrastructure be balanced against the objective to conserve the environment and protect amenity. Policy PSU 8 states that development should normally be sited so as to minimise the environmental effects and alternative sites should be considered. This policy also states that the following 6 criteria are of importance to the consideration: need for the facility, impact on the environment, impact on existing communities, impact on natural or man-made heritage, existence of alternative sites of routes and provision to mitigate adverse effects. These are dealt with below.

8.12 The applicant has advised that the facility is needed to connect renewable generation to the transmission system in Northern Ireland in accordance with Directive 2009/28/EC and the Electricity

(Northern Ireland) Order 1992. The cluster substation will enable the connection of a number of windfarms to a single clustering point, reducing the need for multiple individual connections, minimising the infrastructure required and therefore reducing any potential environmental impacts. The windfarms proposed to be connected include the existing Brockaghboy windfarm and the approved Evishagaran, Craiggore and Smulgedon windfarms.

8.13 SONI have provided information on alternatives sites which were considered and they state that the proposed site was chosen to avoid certain environmental and other constraints in accordance with the requirement of policy PSU 2.

8.14 The alternative sites that were considered were at a zone on Temple Road and a zone on Drumbane Road as shown in the Options Report, Appendix 3.1, Volume II. Temple Road zone was discounted due to amount of OHL required to connect with Brockaghboy Wind Farm. A portion of the area also contained a low land valley, the Glenullin River, SLNCIs and areas of peatland.

8.15 Within the Drumbane zone 5 sites were evaluated through a scoring methodology which considered geology and soils, slope, proximity to receptors, visual impact, accessibility, flora and fauna, architectural and archaeological heritage and water environment. Ultimately 2 sites ranked 1st equally and 2 further sites ranked 2nd equally. The applicant advises that there is relatively little distinction between the scoring of site when considered against environmental constraints.

8.16 The proposed site was one of those that was ranked 2nd. However, this site was selected after further consideration was undertaken to take account of technical and access requirements, earthworks, drainage and ground conditions, landscape screening requirements and availability of lands. Targeted environmental studies were also undertaken to further inform site suitability.

8.17 Policy RE 1 of PPS 18 states that proposals will be expected to be located at, or as close to, the source of the resource needed for that particular technology to ensure integration into the landscape. This requirement is further supported by 1.2.23 and 1.2.14 of the Best Practice Guidance to PPS 18. The proposed substation is located close to Brockaghboy windfarm to which it is to be

connected whilst avoiding the sensitive upland environment of the AONB.

8.18 NIEA and SES have assessed the proposal and an EIA determination and HRA screening have been carried out. This has determined that there are no significant environmental effects.

8.19 PSU 11 requires that the siting of electricity power lines be controlled in terms of visual impact on the environment with particular reference being given to designated areas of landscape or townscape value.

8.20 The proposal meets the policy requirements as it avoids sites and areas of nature conservation or archaeological interest. It also minimalises visual intrusion by following the natural features of the landscape.

Public Safety/ Public Health/Residential Amenity

8.21 PSU 11 requires consideration of the potential impact on amenity and PSU 8 requires consideration of the potential impact on existing communities. Policy RE 1 of PPS 18 also requires consideration of the impact of the proposal on public safety, human health and residential amenity.

8.22 Residents were concerned about the impact of electromagnetic fields on health. Para 6.249 of the SPPS deals specifically with telecommunications and other utilities. Proposals for the development of new power lines are required to ensure that exposures to power line Electro Magnetic Fields (EMFs) should comply with the 1998 International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Guidelines in line with current Government policy.

8.23 Public Health Agency have advised that there should be no concerns regarding adverse health effects relating to this facility provided the guideline levels are not exceeded. SONI have submitted an ICNIRP declaration of conformity confirming that the proposal complies with the guidelines.

8.24 With regard to noise, a noise and vibration report was submitted as part of the application. The report acknowledges that both the construction phase and the operational phase have potential to

exceed background noise levels. However, mitigation measures have been proposed and Environmental Health (EHO) is content provided conditions are imposed on any approval. This is also required under paragraphs 4.11 and 4.12 of the SPPS to safeguard residential environs.

8.25 Several properties will be impacted during the construction phase, however, this period will only last for a limited period of time. SONI have confirmed that the construction period will be approximately. 18 months with works significantly tailing off in the last 6 months at which point only a small number of site personnel will be present on site performing site testing/commissioning activities.

8.26 EHO recommended restricting Saturday working hours from 08:00 to 13:00, however, SONI have advised that this would extend the construction period. It is considered that to allow Saturday working between the 08:00 and 17:00 would have a lesser impact on residents with regard to noise as it would shorten the construction period when there is likely to be the greatest impact.

8.27 The impact of the proposal on visual amenity is discussed below under Visual Amenity & Landscape Character. It is not considered that the proposal will have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding communities or dwellings.

8.28 The nearest occupied dwelling to the site is 10a Drumbane Road which is approximately 230m southeast of the proposed substation. Views of the substation and the steel towers and OHLs from this property will be partially screened by intervening field boundary vegetation and the proposed landscaping as shown by the photomontage provided by the applicant. It is not considered that the visual impact of the proposal on this property in terms of its outlook will be significant. Views from any other properties in proximity to the site will also be screened by existing field boundaries and the topography of the surrounding area.

8.29 With regard to road safety, paragraph 6.303 of the SPPS and policy AMP 2 of PPS 3 states that permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access onto a public road where it will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. DfI Roads have no objection to the proposal in terms of road safety.

Biodiversity, Nature Conservation

Impact on the Environment

8.30 Policies PSU 2 and PSU 8 requires consideration of the proposal on the environment and on the natural or man-made heritage. Policy RE 1 also requires consideration of the impact of the proposal on biodiversity, nature conservation and built heritage interests.

International Designations

8.31 Para 6.175 of the SPPS and Policy NH 1 of PPS 2 require the impact of the proposal on International designations such as European and Ramsar Sites to be considered. Development proposals are restricted where they are likely to impact upon the integrity of European (SPA, SAC and SCI) or Ramsar (listed or proposed) sites as these are afforded the highest form of statutory protection.

8.32 The site is not within or adjacent to any European designated sites however, the site is hydrologically linked to the Bann Estuary SAC and the Skerries and Causeway SAC. These SACs are more than 10km away.

8.33 Shared Environmental Services (SES) requested under the DETEIA application that a shadow HRA be carried out. SES has reviewed the shadow HRA and state that the potential impact of this proposal on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). The proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the features of any European site.

8.34 NIEA also stated in the response that no European site would be adversely impacted by the proposal.

Protected Species

8.35 Para 6.180 of the SPPS and Policy NH 2 require the impacts of the proposal on protected species to be considered. Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species or any other statutorily protected species. SONI have demonstrated that no protected species will be impacted.

8.36 Bats are an internationally protected species. A survey carried out on behalf of SONI found that none of the larger trees within the OHL wayleave were found to support potential bat roosts. NIEA NED have no concerns.

8.37 Certain breeds of birds in Northern Ireland also benefit from international protection. NIEA NED is content that the proposed works can be carried out without significant risk to local bird populations provided the mitigation measures presented in section 9.9 of the Environmental Report are fully implemented.

8.38 NIEA NED are also satisfied that the project, fully mitigated, will not add significantly to the cumulative impact of wind energy projects in the wider area upon regional bird populations.

8.39 RSPB raised concerns about the OHL increasing the risk of predation to Curlew and recommended burying a section of the line underground and moving a section of the line to follow the road. However, NED, who are the statutory consultee, are content with the proposal.

8.40 Badgers are a nationally protected species. No badger setts were found within 25m of the proposed substation site, OHL infrastructure or temporary access roads, therefore, no significant negative effect is predicted on any badger family.

8.41 Otters are a species of international importance. There was no evidence of otters within the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey area.

8.42 Smooth newts are a nationally protected species. No suitable waterbodies were recorded in the vicinity of the proposal and extended survey area that would support smooth newts.

8.43 NIEA NED have no concerns that any protected species are likely to be impacted.

National Designations

8.44 Paras 6.183 to 6.188 of the SPPS and policies NH3 and NH 6 of PPS 2 require the impacts of the proposal on national designations to be considered. Policy NH 6 deals specifically with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Planning permission will only

be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of a national designation such as an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) or an AONB.

8.45 The proposal is not within an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) but is hydrologically linked to Errigal Glen ASSI. NIEA NED has considered the impacts of the proposal on the ASSI and advise that the proposal is not connected with, or necessary for, the conservation management of the ASSI. NIEA NED has no concerns subject to conditions being applied should the proposal be approved.

8.46 NH 6 of PPS 2 requires that the proposal, in terms of its siting, scale and materials, is sympathetic to the special character of the AONB in general and of the particular locality. The character of the Sperrins AONB at this location has already been altered by the existing Brockaghboy windfarm and the existing OHL. For the most part, the proposed OHL will be viewed in context with the existing windfarm. Furthermore, the proposed line and structures will be located on the eastern side of the hills on the edge of the AONB, therefore, due to the scale and location of the OHL and structures, views will be limited across the extensive AONB landscape. The proposal, therefore, will have no significant impact and will not change the character further.

8.47 NIEA have not raised any concerns over any potential impacts on sensitive landscapes and an EIA determination has not raised any significant concerns.

<u>Other habitats, species or features of Natural Heritage importance</u>

8.48 Other habitats, species or features of Natural Heritage importance which must be considered under para. 6.192 of the SPPS and NH 5 of PPS 2 include priority habitats, priority species, active peatland, wetlands, trees and woodland.

8.49 NIEA NED have indicated that the proposal contains Northern Ireland priority habitats (NIPH), namely grassland, hedgerows, streams and woodland. The grasslands were noted to be species poor and could not be considered to be NIPH. The hedgerows were also noted to be species poor and replanting is proposed.

8.50 Four of the proposed poles will be located near to streams, however, the poles and infrastructure will not be closer than 5m and water pollution control measures are proposed to minimise impacts to these watercourses. With regard to the woodland, only a small corner covering 0.04ha will be felled.

8.51 NED is content that, provided the proposed mitigation measures are implemented, no NIPH is likely to be significantly impacted.to conditions.

8.52 The extended habitat survey shows that Devil's-bit Scabious, which is the larval food plant of the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly, a Northern Ireland Priority Species (NIPS), does not occur in the vicinity of the proposed substation or along the proposed OHL. Therefore it is considered that the project will have no significant effect on this NIPS.

8.53 Curlew, which is a NIPS, were also identified within 100m of the proposed OHL route. NIEA NED is content that the proposed works can be carried out without significant risk to breeding Curlew provided the mitigation measures proposed are fully implemented.

8.54 Certain species of fish, such as the North Atlantic Salmon and Brown Trout, which breed in the Rivers of Northern Ireland, are NIPS. NIEA Inland Fisheries are content with the proposal provided proposed mitigation is implemented.

<u>Local Natural Resources, such as air quality or water quality</u>

8.55 The development does not appear to affect any significant designations or zonings. Due to the nature of the proposal it is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on local natural resources. The consultees were content that there would be no adverse impact on air or water quality.

Built Heritage Interests

8.56 The application site is located adjacent to the site of a scheduled rath (LDY 026:050) which is afforded statutory protection under the provisions of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. Paragraphs 6.9 and 6.10 of the SPPS and Policy BH 1 of PPS 6 operates a presumption against proposals which would damage or destroy such remains, or which would have an adverse impact on their setting. DfC Historic Environment Division

(HED) is content that there will be no adverse impact on the rath or any other archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposal.

Fluvial Environment

8.57 SONI proposes to realign a section of an undesignated watercourse and culvert another section of this watercourse to provide access to the site. Policy FLD 4 of PPS 15 states that the planning authority will only permit the artificial modification of a watercourse, including culverting in certain exceptional circumstances. SONI have demonstrated that they meet one of the exceptional circumstances as a short section of the waterway needs to be realigned and culverted to provide access to the substation site. None of the consultees have raised any concerns over the realignment or culverting of the watercourse.

8.58 DfI Rivers is content that the proposal meets the requirements of policy PPS 15.

8.59 Policy RE 1 requires consideration of the impact of the proposal on water quality. NIEA Water Management Unit are content that there will be no significant impact on surface water provided mitigation measures are implemented. NI Water have not raised any issues regarding the impact on drinking water supply in the area and are content with the proposal.

Visual Amenity & Landscape Character

8.60 PSU 8 and RE 1 require consideration of the visual impact of the proposal. This is also considered by CTY1, CTY13 and CTY14 of PPS21, Part of the proposed line is within the Sperrin AONB, including 23 structures, 10 of which are metal towers and 13 are wooden poles.

8.61 The SPPS at para 6.250 states that proposals for new power lines should avoid areas of landscape sensitivity, including AONBs. PSU 11 of a Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland also seeks to reduce the impact of proposals on the visual amenity of the AONB. Neither policy prohibits the erection of power lines within an AONB but require careful consideration to be given.

8.62 As discussed above, this part of the AONB has already been altered by the construction of Brockaghboy Windfarm and the Brockaghboy overhead power line. The cable and its support

structures, for the most part, will be viewed along with the much larger turbines of the windfarm which will have a greater impact. When viewed in this context, the proposal will not be prominent in the landscape and will not have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the AONB.

8.63 It is proposed to underground the connections to the other windfarms served by the substation, however, the connection to Brockaghboy Windfarm is constrained by the sensitive environment of the AONB including the NIPH peatland. Undergrounding in this area has the potential to adversely affect peatland which is not acceptable.

8.64 NIEA have not raised any concerns over any potential impacts on sensitive landscapes and an EIA determination has not raised any significant concerns.

8.65 With regard to the remaining part of the line and the substation, it has been visually assessed on site. The proposal will not have a significant impact on the landscape. The line follows the natural contours of the landscape for the most part, choosing the lowest areas possible so as to not appear prominent in the landscape.

8.66 The substation compound will be well screened from public viewpoints due to the existing extensive tree belt along the northern and western boundaries and proposed tree planting along the eastern and part of the southern boundaries. The only critical view of the site will be from Drumbane Road along the length of the site due to the low existing hedge and limited planting. It is not considered that the substation will have a significant visual impact on any of the residents in the vicinity of the proposal.

8.67 As for the substation building, CTY 13 of PPS 21 requires any building and ancillary works to be visually integrated into the surrounding landscape and to be of an appropriate design. As discussed above the substation compound, which includes a single building, will be well screened by existing and proposed trees on the site boundaries.

8.68 The design of the building, which is single storey and rendered with silver/grey brick with a grey concrete tile roof, is acceptable in the countryside and it visually integrates.

8.69 Given that the building is of an acceptable design and will be well screened from public views, it will not cause a detrimental change to, or further erode the rural character of an area in accordance with CTY 14 of PPS 21.

Issues raised in letters of representation

8.70 There are currently 42 letters of objection from 36 individuals and 2 petitions of objection to the proposal and there are 23 letters of support from 23 individuals. The letters raised the following points which have been considered:

Objections

8.71 *Landowner does not give consent for overhead power lines to run through his property or for SONI to access his lands* – This is a civil matter, if approval is granted, the applicant needs to ensure they have permission to access the lands required.

8.72 *The draft NAP 2016 clearly noted this site as within the Sperrins AONB as does the map being used by the Causeway Coast and Glens as part of their Sperrins Future Search Programme / SONI misinformed the public that the site was outside the AONB but in the Landscape Character Area assessment they agree that it is within the AONB* – SONI did not misinform the public as the substation site is located outside the AONB as per the adopted NAP 2016 which takes precedence over the draft plan. The OHL is mostly within the AONB which is confirmed by SONI. The AONB designation as per the adopted NAP 2016 is correct and is based on the NIEA designation (received digitally from NIEA). The draft NAP 2016 was published in 2005, before the official designation of the Sperrin AONB in 2008, therefore the draft NAP 2016 AONB indication was for info only, as marked on the map. The Sperrin Future search project was carried out by Mid-Ulster council not CCGBC. The impact of the development on the AONB has been considered in the report.

8.73 *Further energy development will hinder the community* – No specifics were given as to how the community would be hindered and no evidence has provided. The impact of the development on public safety and residential amenity has been considered in the report.

8.74 *Visual amenity and landscape character / skyline site, AONB, landscape character, north Sperrins scenic route* – The visual impact of the proposal is considered in the report.

8.75 *Impact on natural heritage and wildlife including protected species, Irish Hare, curlew, Buzzard, bats, cuckoo, corncrake, pheasants and rabbits / Impact on sensitive environments / Impact of diverting the stream onsite will affect animals which live alongside it / Risk of release to Drumbane Stream and impact on fish stock* – The consultation to NIEA highlighted objectors concerns regarding particular species. The impact of the proposal on wildlife and habitats has been assessed by NIEA who have no objection to the proposal. There are no records of priority species on site and the site has not been identified as a priority habitat.

8.76 *Contrary to policy* – All the relevant policies have been assessed in report.

8.77 *Impact on human health and public safety / magnetic fields* – The proposal has been assessed by Environmental Health and the Public Health Agency, neither had any objection. SONI have also submitted an ICNIRP declaration confirming that the proposal is designed to be in full compliance with the requirements of the radiofrequency public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection.

8.78 *Impact on water supply from borehole as no mains water in area /contamination of water by toxic runoff* – This issue was raised in the consultation to NI Water. NI Water have no concerns and are content with the proposal. NIEA Water Management Unit are also content with the proposal provided mitigation measures are implemented.

8.79 *Impact on property value* – This is not a material planning consideration. Paragraph 2.3 of the SPPS states that the planning system operates in the public interest of local communities and the region as a whole, and encompasses the present as well as future needs of society. It does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against the activities of another.

8.80 *Impact on tourism / Drumbane Trail used by walkers* – Tourism NI advise that the judgement of acceptability based on landscape protection should provide adequate protection for tourism assets.

The visual impact on the landscape has been considered in the report.

8.81 *Other locations more suitable which would have minimal additional effect i.e. close to Brockaghboy windfarm or other windfarm sites in Drumsurn where substations have already been approved / the substation should be located closer to Drumsurn as per RE 1 of PPS 18* - This is the site which falls to be considered. Alternative sites were considered by SONI and the reasons for discounting those site/choosing this site have been provided.

8.82 *Noise from existing wind farm* – This is not an issue for this application as the existing windfarm has approval and does not form part of this application.

8.83 *Interference with electronics in home* – The relevant consultees have not raised any concerns. There is no evidence that a substation will have any impact on the use of electronics.

8.84 *Inadequate community consultation with regard to visuals provided by SONI* – The community consultation carried out by SONI was considered to be adequate in accordance with section 27 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. A visual of what the substation would look like on site was provided in the Agivey Cluster Project Information Brochure (May 2018). Further visuals were provided at the Public Consultation events held in December 2018.

8.85 *Lack of Environmental Statement / Negative EIA determination is an oversight* – An EIA determination was carried out in consultation with consultees who are experts in various fields. It was determined that an Environmental statement was not required as it was considered that the proposal will not have any significant environmental effects.

8.86 *Impact on traffic /roads* – The impact of proposal on traffic and roads has been assessed by DfI Roads who have no objection to the proposal subject to conditions.

8.87 *Impact on ombrotrophic raised bog / Impact on Lowland bog* – Both NIEA and GSNI have assessed the proposal and have no objection.

8.88 *Impact on Glenullin LLPA* – The site is not within Glenullin LLPA. Notwithstanding this, NIEA have assessed the proposal and have no objection.

8.89 *Lit up at night and will be seen from Country Antrim* – The site will be well screened by existing vegetation and proposed planting. It is proposed to use a low level of sensor operated access lighting to allow safe access to the building during the hours of darkness, this access lighting will only be activated whenever persons are present at the site. It is also proposed to use manually operated high level lighting to permit fault and emergency maintenance, therefore, the site will only be lit up when maintenance works are being carried out.

8.90 *Applicant did not notify all adjoining land owners* – This is not a planning requirement. The applicant is only required by section 42 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 to serve notice on the land owner of the proposal site not any adjoining landowners.

8.91 *SONI did not meet residents or farmers to explore other options / SONI's farmer liaison officer did not write to or meet any of the local landowners to discuss their concerns during the consultation period / SONI refused to meet residents to discuss alternative sites / obligatory community engagement requirements not met* – SONI carried out adequate public consultation in accordance with section 27 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 where local landowners and residents could attend and discuss their concerns. The Council is content that alternative sites were considered by SONI. In their Community Consultation Report SONI state that they explained at the events why alternative sites were discounted i.e. due to planning and environmental constraints e.g. active peatland, protected species etc.

8.92 *Pylons on farming land limits farming practices and reduces options of diversification on land such as tree planting* – There is no evidence to support this. This is between SONI and the landowner.

8.93 *How will other windfarms be connected, this has not been established / More lines will be added in future from other approved windfarms*? – SONI/NIEA have stated in their environmental report that the connections to the other windfarms

will be undergrounded, therefore, there will be no visual impact from those lines.

8.94 *No benefit to local community i.e. no jobs* – This is not required by planning policy

8.95 *Refusal of planning permission for dwellings on site adjacent to substation site* – Dwellings are assessed under different planning policies and are therefore not comparable.

8.96 *Not the right site / Better alternative sites / Should be located at existing substation site (Brockaghboy)* – As discussed in the report, alternative sites were considered. The existing substation at Brockaghboy is within the AONB and is constrained by priority habitats, peatland and blanket bog. It would not be possible to underground any of the connections therefore to connect the other windfarms would require further overhead power lines in the AONB.

8.97 *Piecemeal development / consider cumulative impact to be considered* – Officials consider that this is not piecemeal development in that the windfarm approvals are not necessarily dependant on this approval and could be constructed without it. The construction of a substation is a response to the opportunity to provide a service to the approved wind farms. Officials are content that this is not a deliberate division of a large project to subvert the planning process.

8.98 *Proposal is being used to facilitate further development of windfarms / With the approval of this application this community will be surrounded with wind farms* – This application is not for a wind farm. The proposal is to connect four windfarms, one which has been constructed and three which have already been approved. The approved windfarms can still be built without the approval of this proposal. If this application were to be approved, it would not form part of the consideration for any other windfarm proposal. Each windfarm would be considered on its own merits with due regard to planning policy.

8.99 *Lack of consideration given to location /proximity to dwellings* – SONI have demonstrated that they have carefully and fully considered the location, including alternative sites, and have provided detailed information on site selection.

8.100 *Site is close to a Rath / site of historical interest* – Historic Environment Division have assessed the application and have no objection.

8.101 *Put the power lines underground* – Due to the sensitive nature of the AONB which contains blanket bog, it would not be possible to underground all the power lines.

8.102 *Diversion of watercourse* – No concerns were raised by Rivers Agency, NIEA Inland Fisheries or NI Water.

8.103 *Site huts and works on site prior to approval* – No permission is ever guaranteed, therefore, any works carried out by the applicant prior to gaining any permission is at their own risk. Unauthorised works are a matter for enforcement and is not a material consideration in determining an application.

8.104 *Planning Department have not addressed the concerns of the objectors / comments not given any relevance whereas developer gets to negotiate the development* – Due to the high volume of objections it is not the current practice to answer each individual letter of objection to any application. It is established practice that any issues raised by objectors are taken into consideration as part of the assessment. As it is the developer's application, they are allowed to submit further information in support of their application and to make any changes as may be required by the Planning Department.

8.105 *Impact on families during construction* – These will be limited to the construction period and any working hours will be limited by condition.

8.106 *Objection to traffic management plan* – DfI Roads, the competent authority, have no objection to the proposal or to the traffic management plan.

8.107 *Vibrations from piling works can cause cracking and other building damage* – SONI have proposed mitigation measures. Environmental Health have assessed the information provided on noise and vibration and have no objection.

Letters of Support

8.108 *Economic benefits for the local area / community funds / employment during construction and maintenance / community funds provided by windfarms* – Whilst policy requires consideration of social benefits, the SPPS states at para 5.71 that social benefits in the form of community payments, shared ownership and in-kind benefits cannot be considered material considerations. Therefore, the community fund cannot be taken in to consideration in this case. No information has been provided in terms of local employment.

8.109 *Approval of the substation will enable 3 windfarms to be developed / Greener way of producing electricity / renewable energy equals reduction in fossil fuel use / meet renewable targets / fight global warming and climate change* – The approved windfarms can still be constructed without the approval of this proposal.

8.110 *Financial gain to the Council* – This is not a policy consideration.

8.111 *Use of cluster substation is most environmentally friendly way to connect the 3 windfarms* – The environmental impact of the substation has been considered in the report.

8.112 *Visual impact of the substation will be minimal* – visual impact has been assessed in the report and it is not considered the visual impact will be significant.

Benefits of this development far outweigh any drawbacks – Consultees are content that there will be no significant impacts.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 This proposal is considered acceptable in this location having regard to the Area Plan and other material considerations. It is considered that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on public safety, public health and residential amenity; biodiversity, and nature conservation; built heritage interests; fluvial environment or visual amenity & landscape character. Approval is recommended.

10 CONDITIONS

10.1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

10.2 No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work (POW) has been prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Council in consultation with Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities. The POW shall provide for:

- The identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site;
- Mitigation of the impacts of development through licensed excavation recording or by preservation of remains in-situ;
- Post-excavation analysis sufficient to prepare an archaeological report, to publication standard if necessary; and
- Preparation of the digital, documentary and material archive for deposition.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

10.3 No site works of any nature or development shall take place other than in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under condition 2 above.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

10.4 A programme of post-excavation analysis, preparation of an archaeological report, dissemination of results and preparation of the excavation archive shall be undertaken in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under condition

3 above. These measures shall be implemented and a final archaeological report shall be submitted to the Council within 12 months of the completion of archaeological site works, or as otherwise agreed in writing with the Council.
Reason: To ensure that the results of archaeological works are appropriately analysed and disseminated and the excavation archive is prepared to a suitable standard for deposition.

10.5 The vehicular access, including visibility splays and any forward sight distance, shall be provided in accordance with Drawing No.13 bearing the date stamp 7th February 2019, prior to the commencement of any other development hereby permitted. The area within the visibility splays and any forward sight line shall be cleared to provide a level surface no higher than 250mm above the level of the adjoining carriageway and such splays shall be retained and kept clear thereafter.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

10.6 The gradient of the access road shall not exceed 4% (1 in 25) over the first 10m outside the road boundary.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road user.

10.7 Gates or security barriers at the access shall be located at a distance from the edge of the public road that will allow the largest expected vehicle to stop clear of the public road when the gates or barriers are closed.

Reason: To ensure waiting vehicles do not encroach onto the carriageway.

10.8 Effective wheel washing facilities shall be installed and operated for the duration of the construction period and any repair or remedial work period thereafter.

Reason: To prevent the carry-over of mud or debris onto the public road in the interests of road safety and convenience of road users.

10.9 No part of the development hereby permitted shall be commenced until the works that may be necessary for the improvement of the public road i.e. the provision of passing bays (typically to allow

minimum 5.5m road width, minimum length 10m with 1:10 tapers), have been submitted to DfI Roads, approved in writing and carried out to the satisfaction of the Department.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

10.10 The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until any highway structure/retaining wall/culvert requiring Technical Approval, as specified in the Roads (NI) Order 1993, has been approved and constructed in accordance with BD2 Technical Approval of Highways Structures : Volume 1: Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

Reason: To ensure that the structure is designed and constructed in accordance with BD2 Technical Approval of Highways Structures: Volume 1: Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

10.11 A detailed programme of works and traffic management proposals shall be submitted to and agreed by DfI Roads, prior to the commencement of any element of the works.

Reason: To facilitate the convenient movement of all road users and the orderly progress of work in the interests of road safety.

10.12 Prior to the commencement of construction on site, the applicant shall carry out a condition survey of all haul routes and shall at the applicants expense carry out and provide a DVD detailing the condition of the existing public roads being considered as haul routes.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

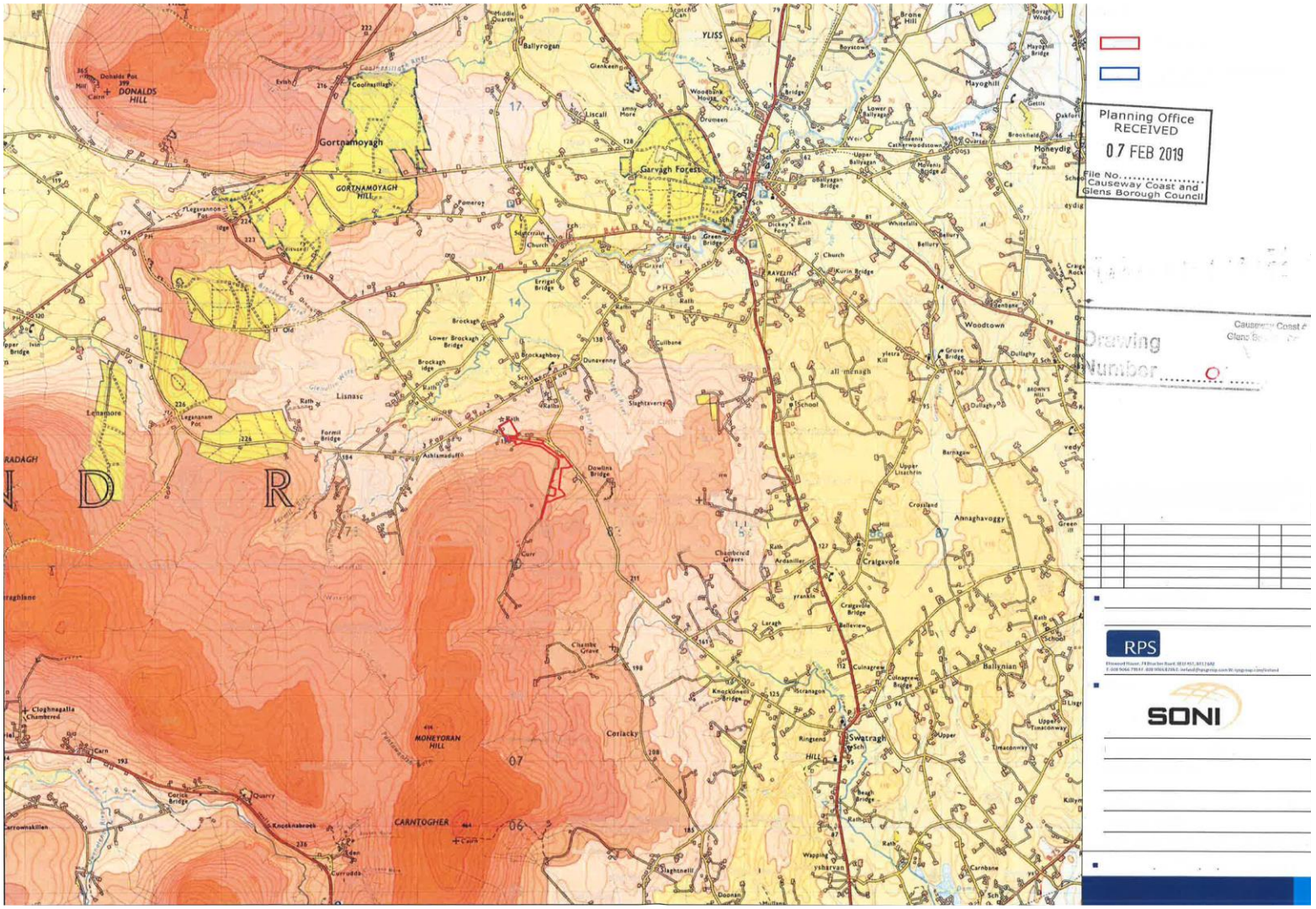
10.13 During construction works, the applicant shall carry out and record daily inspections of all haul routes and submit this information to the Council via the Department on a weekly basis.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

10.14 Prior to the commencement of the development an Article 11 application for the haulage routes and any associated traffic

management proposals shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with DfI Roads.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.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Garvagh Forest
YLISS
Ballyrogan
Lisnasc
MONEYORAN HILL
CARNTOGHER
Swatragh
Annaghavoggy
Woodtown
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File No.
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Drawing Number
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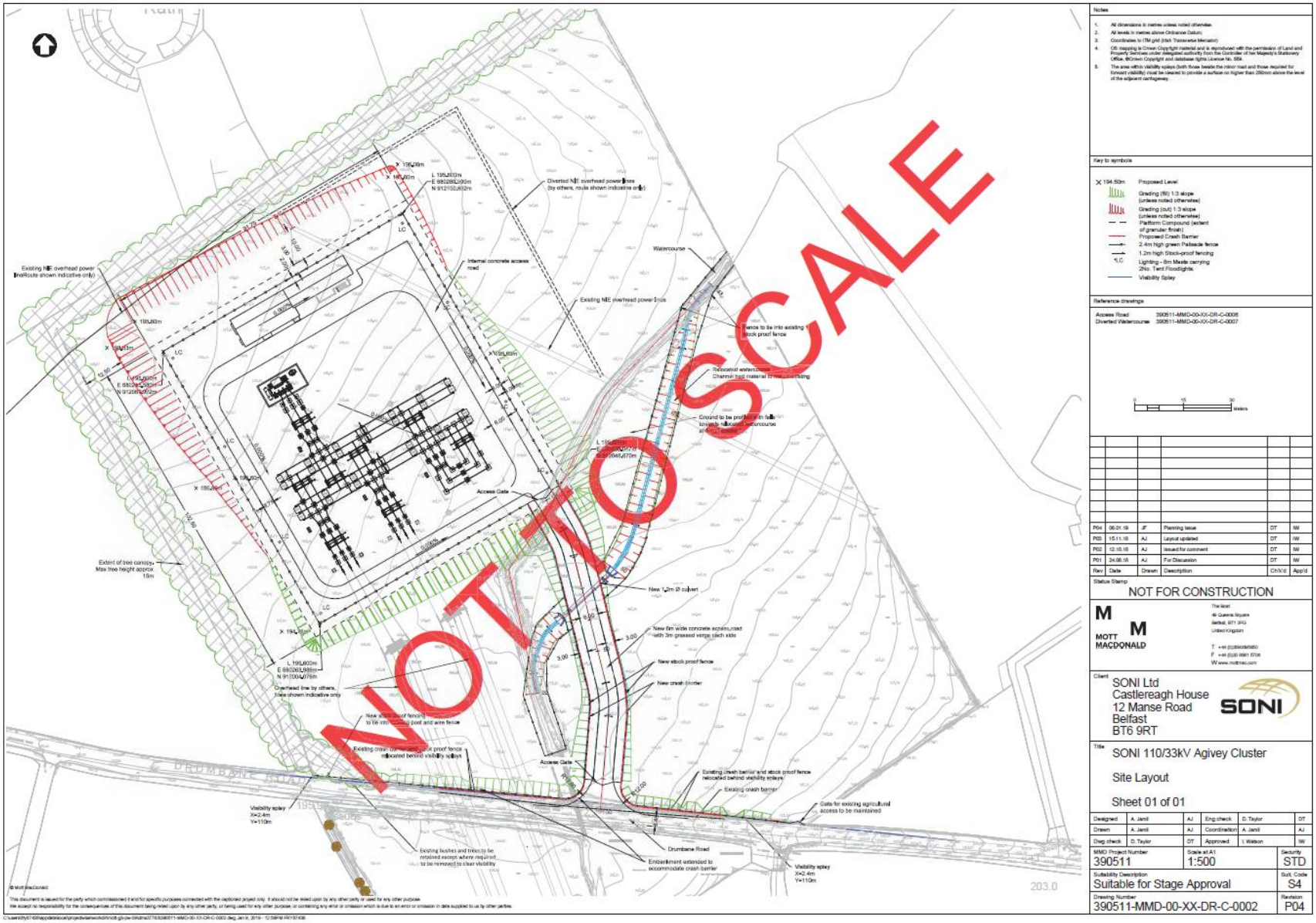
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Reference drawings
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MOTT MACDONALD
Client
SONI Ltd
Castlereagh House
12 Manse Road
Belfast
BT6 9RT
Title
SONI 110/33kV Agivey Cluster
Site Layout
Sheet 01 of 01
MMD Project Number
390511
Scale at A1
1:500
Security
STD
Suitability Description
Suitable for Stage Approval
Suit. Code
S4
Drawing Number
390511-MMD-00-XX-DR-C-0002
Revision
P04

Addendum
LA01/2019/0132/F

1.0 Update

1.1 Additional conditions are required regarding landscaping retention and provision, residential amenity and natural heritage.

10.15 No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed or have its roots damaged within the root protection area nor shall arboriculture work or tree surgery take place on any retained tree other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written consent of the Council.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees.

10.16 The existing natural screenings of the site, as indicated on approved drawing ref: 21, date stamped received 7 February 2019 shall be retained unless necessary to prevent danger to the public, in which case a full explanation along with a scheme for compensatory planting shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Council, prior to removal.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and in the interests of visual amenity and to ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the appearance of the locality.

10.17 All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the appropriate British Standard or other recognised Codes of Practise. The works shall be completed at the start of the first available planting season following the granting of planning permission and after site earthworks are compete.

REASON: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

10.18 If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any tree, shrub or hedge, that tree, shrub or hedge is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes, in the opinion of the Council, seriously damaged or defective, another tree, shrub or hedge of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Council gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a high standard of landscape.

10.19 During the construction phase of the development hereby approved, including site clearance and installation of equipment at the substation, noise levels shall not be any greater than 65dB measured at the nearest dwellings.

Reason: To protect residential amenity

10.20 Noise levels at the nearest dwellings during the operational phase shall not exceed the day and night time background levels as stated within the noise impact report.

Reason: To protect residential amenity

10.21 Activities on site during the construction phase shall only take place between the hours of 07:00- 19:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 17:00 Saturday and no activity on a Sunday and Public Holidays.

Reason: To protect residential amenity

10.22 No development shall take place until a construction management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.

Reason: To protect residential amenity

10.23 No development shall take place until a final Construction Environmental Management Plan and finalised Site

Drainage Plan is submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. This should reflect and detail all the pollution prevention, mitigation and avoidance measures as outlined within the Appendix 1 Project Description (date stamped 07/02/2019), Chapters 13 and 16 of the Environmental Report (date published 22/03/2019) and Drainage Impact Assessment (date published 22/03/2019) and all additional submitted information.

Reason: To prevent damage to the features for which Errigal Glen ASSI has been designated.

10.24 There must be no direct discharges from the outfall of the septic tank. A suitable buffer of at least 10m must be maintained between the location of the septic tank and/or soakaway and all onsite watercourses.

Reason: To prevent damage to the features for which Errigal Glen ASSI has been designated.

11 Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee notes the contents of the Addendum and agrees with the recommendation to APPROVE, as set out in paragraph 10.1 of the Planning Committee Report.

Addendum 2
LA01/2019/0132/F

1.0 Update

1.1 A further letter of support has been submitted. The letter is from Maurice Bradley MLA and will be read out to the Planning Committee as requested in accordance with paragraph 6.5 of the Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee in lieu of him speaking.

1.2 The Planning Committee report states at para 8.28 that 10a Drumbane Road is the nearest occupied dwelling. No. 6 Drumbane Road is the nearest unoccupied dwelling to the sub-station site. No. 6 is currently unoccupied but benefits from recent planning permission for a replacement dwelling (Ref: LA01/2019/0412/O approved 06.09.2019).

1.3 The owner of no.6 objected to the proposal. No.6 has been included in the assessments carried out by SONI such as the impact of the proposal on the property in terms of noise and vibration.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee notes the contents of the Addendum and agrees with the recommendation to APPROVE, as set out in paragraph 10.1 of the Planning Committee Report.

Addendum 3
LA01/2019/0132/F

1.0 Update

1.1 At the Planning Committee on 22nd January 2020, Members sought clarification of the potential effects of radon gas and proximity of the development to dwellings (existing and consented). It was resolved to carry out further consultation with Environmental Health and Public Health Agency.

1.2 A consultation was issued to Environmental Health (EHO) regarding the impact of the proposal with regard to radon gas. On 3rd February 2020 EHO advised that "as the proposed substation is not a residence or building where personnel will stay for prolonged periods the risk of radon exposure to staff will be minimal and will wholly depend on what levels of radon gas are present within this area".

1.3 The UK Radon map available at www.ukradon.org/information/ukmaps shows that the site is in an area with a radon potential of 1 to 3%. This indicates that radon levels in the area are low and therefore it is unlikely that the proposal would have any impact on radon gas.

1.4 In an email of 7th February 2020 EHO confirm that the area in and around Drumbane Road is not a high radon area where action would need to be taken to protect residents/buildings from the ingress of radon. The officer states that to the best of their knowledge there is no link between the presence of overhead cables and the seepage of radon gas from the ground.

1.5 A consultation was issued to Public Health Agency specifically asking if the impact of electromagnetic waves on no. 6 Drumbane Road was considered and if the impact of

the overhead power lines on the residential properties was considered. In their response of 6th February 2020 Public Health agency has advised that "if the electromagnetic radiation at the site does not exceed the ICNIRP guidance level, it is unlikely that there will be adverse health effects on residents of nearby residential dwellings".

1.6 As stated in the original report at para 8.23, SONI have submitted an ICNIRP declaration confirming that the proposal is designed to be in full compliance with the requirements of the radiofrequency public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection. Therefore, it is unlikely that there will be any adverse health effects on residents.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee notes the contents of the Addendum and agrees with the recommendation to **APPROVE**, as set out in paragraph 10.1 of the Planning Committee Report.

Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council

SITE VISIT REPORT: Monday 20th January 2020

Committee Members:
Alderman Boyle, Duddy, Finlay, S McKillop and McKeown
Councillors Anderson, Baird, Dallat O'Driscoll, Hunter (Chair), McGurk, MA McKillop, McLaughlin (Vice Chair), McMullan, P McShane, Nicholl and Scott

TIME: 11.30AM

1. **LA01/2019/0132/F Proposed 110/33kv substation approximately 230m North West of 10a Drumbane Road Garvagh and two proposed overhead line connections to the existing 110kv overhead line at Brockaghboy Wind Farm south of Dowlins Bridge Drumbane Road Garvagh. All proposed infrastructure to be located within the townland of Brockaghboy.**

   App Type: Full application
   Proposal: Full application for construction of a new 110/33kv cluster substation and associated site works. Substation access road, visibility splays, drainage and alteration to watercourse and landscaping planting.Construction of two 110kv overhead electricity lines (1.62km & 1.68km in length) and support structures connecting in and out of the existing 110kv circuit to Brockaghboy Wind Farm. Associated temporary access tracks and working areas. Removal of 0.25km section of the existing 110kv Brockaghboy Wind Farm overhead line connection.

   Present: Alderman Boyle, Councillors Hunter, Baird, MA McKillop, McMullan, McShane and official Shane Mathers

   Comments: Viewpoint Locations map provided by SONI refers. From the site frontage of the substation, S Mathers explained the main elements of the proposal, how it would allow connection to other consented wind farms and how this would link into the grid system. S Mathers indicated the location of the substation compound relative to existing boundaries. The extent of the conifers on the field boundaries were observed. S Mathers showed members the landscaping plan. S Mathers pointed out the location of the parallel lines entering the substation site and that landscaping in this area was limited to a hedge. The existing, without landscaping and landscaping views at VP01 were shown.

Moving along to VP02, S Mathers displayed the existing, without landscaping and landscaping views at VP02. Members observed these. S Mathers pointed out the location of the overhead lines at this location and the existing strong hedge/ trees across the road which filter views. Members asked whether the occupants of No. 10A Drumbane Road had objected. S Mathers advised that the occupants did object and set out the main issues raised in their objection. A Member queried whether bird deflectors were to be fitted to the overhead lines. S Mathers stated that he would verify this and advise accordingly. Members asked whether the occupants of No. 12 had objected. S Mathers stated that he would verify this and advise accordingly.

Moving along to a mid-position between VP07 and VP08, S Mathers displayed the existing and proposed views for VP06, VP07, VP08 and VP09. Members observed these.

20/01/20