P626 Donich Water

Clarification Note – Access and LVIA

The effects of the proposed Donich Water hydroelectric scheme on the natural environment are outlined in the Supporting Environmental Information (SEI), submitted to the Planning Authority as part of the planning application. However, following several site visits and meetings, more information has been requested on a number of aspects of the scheme and this information is presented below.

New Forest Roads
The two new spurs of Forest Road are required for the hydro scheme, not for forestry operations. However, the locations and extents of the roads have been agreed with the Forestry Commission and the roads will be to the required specification such that the Commission can use them in the future.

Both stretches of new road will be approximately 250m long and will be built according to the attached Forestry Commission specification. No cutting will be required as the roads are not cutting across steep gradients. A small turning circle will be required at the bottom of the road to the pipeline and there is plenty of space for this on site.

Construction Corridor
None of the pipeline route is served with a permanent road (the link roads are only access points) therefore a temporary construction track will be built alongside the entire pipeline. The width of the temporary track will be in the order of 3-4m.

The construction corridors are specified as a worst case scenario – 18-20m for HPPE and 28-30m for GRP or Ductile Iron (which may be used in the lower section of the pipeline). This is the maximum width that the corridor will need to expand to and will only occur at certain locations – generally where there is storage of material and/or passing places. The general working corridor is much narrower – more in the order of 10-15m. In the case of the core path, clearly a 20m corridor is not going to be possible here so the corridor is likely to be in the order of 10m (as shown on Drawing No. P101 60006 Construction Corridor (sloped)). The presence of the existing bench created by the forest road will make construction easier as the machines can sit safely on this bench and dig the pipeline into the top side of the hill. Material will be stored and passing places will be created in areas where there is flat space on the downside of the bench. There are several areas where this will be possible along the route.

Following completion of the pipeline installation the footpath will be reinstated but made suitable for a quad-bike or similar vehicle to enable pipeline maintenance. The pipeline trench will be fully reinstated.

Existing Access to Residential Properties
A plan for alternative access to the residential properties is shown on Drawing No. P626 10114. However this road will only be closed for a short period of time whilst the tailrace is installed.

Powerhouse
Clearly the existing powerhouse site is not on level ground and the site will need to be levelled in order for the powerhouse to be constructed. Any material gained during the excavation of the powerhouse will be used for the upgrading of existing roads or the creation of the new roads or for finishing the powerhouse.

Intake
The Intake General Arrangement Drawing is not generic and is based on real survey of the area, hence the elevations are accurate. It is reattached for reference.

Tailrace
Please refer to the Tailrace Area Plan.

Core Footpath and Diversions
Please refer to the Pedestrian Access Management Plan.

Peat Management Plan
The condition suggested by SEPA is accepted.

Noise
This is dealt with in a separate Clarification Note – Noise.

Landscape
The photoset has been updated to provide a wider view at some of the viewpoints. Additional ZTVs have been created to represent a 'bare ground' analysis. The LVIA has been updated so that the visual impact of each scheme component is assessed in terms of the GLVIA.