



# Skye (Loch Pooltiel) – South Uist Network Upgrade: Subsea Cable Replacement

## Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution Pre-application Consultation Report

August 2025





PH003583

**Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution**

**Pre-application Consultation Report**

**Skye (Loch Pooltiel) – South Uist**

**Subsea Cable Installation**

**Applies to**

Distribution

Transmission



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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>Author</b>	Geraldine Higgins	Strategic Project Liaison Lead
<b>Checked by</b>	Alasdair Crawford Sheena Gallie	Lead Project Manager Marine Consents Manager
<b>Approved by</b>	Nicky Hufstetler	Engineering Design & Consents Manager, Large Capital Delivery



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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution plc (SHEPD) holds a licence under the Electricity Act 1989 for the distribution of electricity in the north of Scotland including the Islands. It has a statutory duty to provide an economic and efficient system for the distribution of electricity and to ensure that its assets are maintained to ensure a safe, secure and reliable supply to customers.
- 1.2 The wider project extends from Ardmore on Isle of Skye to South Uist with the aim of reinforcing the 33kV subsea network. This reinforcement will provide supply and redundancy for South Uist, delivering enhanced energy security and resilience to the Western Isles.
- 1.3 As part of this remit, SHEPD has identified a need to replace the existing subsea cable between Skye and South Uist based on routine inspection data. These works are essential to maintain network security.
- 1.4 SHEPD is proposing to replace the existing subsea cable between Skye - South Uist with a cable between Loch Pooltiel in Skye and South Uist. A complementary marine licence application is being submitted for a new subsea cable link between Ardmore and Loch Pooltiel on Skye. The cables will help to support SHEPD's ambition of a transition to net zero carbon emissions and will play an active role in delivering the UK and Scottish Governments' respective 2050 and 2045 targets.
- 1.5 SHEPD is proposing to bury the cable where possible. It is anticipated that the new cable will be surface laid on the seabed for approximately 20.6 km in length where burial is not feasible due to seabed conditions, e.g. boulder fields and bedrock. At each shore end, the addition of split pipe is proposed to provide protection to the cable which will amount to approximately 0.7 km in total.
- 1.6 SHEPD anticipate that it should be possible to bury approximately 12km of the cable by post-lay jetting. Rock placement may be used for cable protection and stabilisation, if required. Rock filter bags may also be utilised and spread along the cable route at intervals for stabilisation purposes.
- 1.7 According to SHEPD's vulnerability mapping tool, North-Skye (03) region has 159 properties on the Priority Service Register (PSR). The community has a lower resilience score of 1.2 and is within the highest decile for Distance to Health Services and Combined Distance to Services. Almost one third (33%) are over the age of 65, while 24% of the local population is in low-income employment. See Table 1 below.
- 1.8 This Pre-application Consultation Report has been prepared to accompany an application for a proposed licensable marine activity in accordance with the Marine Licensing (Pre-application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2013.



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- 1.9 As part of the marine licencing process, SHEPD has undertaken pre-application consultation (PAC) and engagement with the general public and interested stakeholders. This report demonstrates how information on the project has been shared and how views have been considered to influence this application.
- 1.10 The output of the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) model helps to demonstrate to stakeholders that the method(s) proposed for installing this submarine electricity cable justifies the expenditure and provides best value. We define best value as the method(s) of installation which satisfy all current legislation and provides a sustainable balance of economic, safety and wider social and economic impacts.
- 1.11 This document should be read in conjunction with the:
  - Marine Licence Application Forms
  - Project Description
  - Marine Environmental Appraisal
  - West Highland and Outer Hebrides Fishing Liaison and Mitigation Action Plans (covering all legitimate sea users)
  - Construction Environment Management Plan
  - Operation, Inspection, Maintenance and Decommissioning Strategy
  - Cost Benefit Analysis Report and Modelling

Table 1: Marine Social Indicator Data





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## 2 Proposed Licensable Marine Activity

- 2.1 SHEPD proposes to install one 33kV submarine electricity cable across the Sea of the Hebrides between Skye (Loch Pooltiel) - South Uist. This replacement submarine electricity cable is essential to deliver a more resilient network for our customers in a remote part of the Scottish Highlands.
- 2.2 The application for the Marine Licence is being submitted to permit the cable to be installed within a 500m wide corridor. More detail can be found in the Project Description supporting this application.

## 3 Applicant Details

- 3.1 Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution plc

Inveralmond House

200 Dunkeld Road

Perth

PH1 3AQ

Tel: 01738 342281

Email: [submarinecablesproject@sse.com](mailto:submarinecablesproject@sse.com)

- 3.2 Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution plc a company registered in Scotland under number SC213460.

## 4 Proposed Licensee Details

- 4.1 As per applicant details.

## 5 Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Event

- 5.1 In accordance with Marine Licensing (Pre-application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 ('the 2013 PAC Regulations') a Pre-Application Consultation must be held at a suitably accessible venue to allow members of the public to attend.



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- 5.2 SHEPD identified that a combination of online engagements and in person events would provide the most robust formats for stakeholders to engage with the Project Team. In addition to a series of online engagements with key stakeholders and consultees via Microsoft Teams, SHEPD also held two formal Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Events. The concurrent events were held at Glendale Community Hall on the Isle of Skye and The Dark Island Hotel, Benbecula from 12.00 pm to 7.00 pm on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025.
- 5.3 Both events were promoted via a public notice advert in The West Highland Free Press newspaper at least six weeks in advance, as required by Marine Scotland. The public notice was also followed by two full press advert three weeks before the event which featured in The Skye and Lochalsh Echo and The West Highland Free Press. A copy of the PAC event notice can be found in Appendix A: Pre-application Consultation Statutory Public Notice, and additional adverts in Appendix B.
- 5.3 The PAC event statutory public notice was published on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2025 in the local newspaper:
- The West Highland Free Press
- 5.4 To promote the PAC event to a wider audience and increase visibility of the event details, a further run of paper advert (ROP) was published on Thursday 12 June.
- The Skye and Lochalsh Echo
- 5.5 Radio advertising was also broadcast on the local commercial radio station, Radio Skye FM from 30<sup>th</sup> June to 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025.
- 5.6 Promotional postcards *Appendix B: Pre-application event promotion*<sup>1</sup> advertising the PAC event were distributed to over 500 households via Royal Mail drop service including Northwest Skye and South Uist. A further 70 promotional posters were distributed to local businesses, including local shops, restaurants, the Glendale Community Trust and the Dunvegan Community Trust. Email invitations were also issued to local community councils and key stakeholders including fisheries representatives, local authority planning and consultees.
- 5.9 The Pre-application events took place on 15th July 2025 in person providing attendees with:
- Clear presentation area
  - Access to the project team, including Engineering Design, Consents and Project Management specialists
  - Opportunity to ask questions

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<sup>1</sup> Copy of Promotional Postcard Appendix B Section 5.



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- Contact information for follow up engagement
- Stakeholder feedback form

5.9 The main presentation element included slides covering the following areas:

- Location of the existing cables to be replaced
- The corridor in which it is proposed to lay the replacement cables
- Methods of cable installation and protection suited to the location of the cables
- Environmental and Marine Environment considerations
- How stakeholders could provide comments and the expected date for final submission of the marine licence application pack to MD-LOT.
- How the Cost Benefit Analysis model works and how it will form part of the evidence to be used in the licence application to balance stakeholder views and inform the cable installation and protection designs

## 6 Pre-Application Consultation Stakeholder/Consultee Meetings

6.1 A series of stakeholder meetings and email exchanges took place in parallel with the planning and delivery of the PAC events, as detailed below in Table 2: *Stakeholder Project Consultation Meetings* and Table 3 *Stakeholder Email Engagements*.

6.2 These regular online meetings were held to enable interested organisations, particularly consultees, to comment on our proposed cable replacement programme. Meetings were targeted at statutory consultees, legitimate sea user organisations, environmental organisations, marine bodies, and non-governmental organisations.



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Table 2 – Stakeholder Project Consultation Meetings

Stakeholder Organisation	Meeting Date	Minutes Transmitted	
SFF & SWFPA	05/07/24	<a href="#">SFF &amp; SWFPA Stakeholder Engagement MoM 050724.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD provided an overview of the proposed survey corridors the Skye-South Uist project.</li> <li>SHEPD advised that scouting surveys had been completed, with route survey works likely to commence during July</li> <li>SHEPD confirmed that the Skye-South Uist route had been amended off the Northwest coast of Skye following stakeholder comment on scallop fishing grounds</li> </ul>
SFF & SWFPA	25/09/24	<a href="#">SFF &amp; SWFPA Stakeholder Engagement MoM 250924.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD confirmed initial geophysical survey work is complete, however geotechnical works are continuing due to a delay due to a winch repair on the vessel.</li> <li>SHEPD provided an update on community stakeholder engagement which took place in Glendale and Dunvegan as a follow up to initial engagement, June 2024. The proposed land scheme is a hybrid of overhead/underground and has received a more positive reaction from the community.</li> <li>SFF noted that fishing activity across The Minch continued successfully following the previous cable installation (Skye-Harris) as an indication of what to expect for the fishing community.</li> </ul>
SFF & SWFPA	03/12/24		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised survey works are ongoing. Initial geophysical survey work is complete, however geotechnical works are continuing due to a delay due to a winch repair on the vessel.</li> <li>SHEPD provided an update on community stakeholder engagement which took place in Glendale and Dunvegan as a follow up to initial engagement, June 2024. The updated proposed land scheme is a hybrid of overhead/underground and</li> </ul>



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				<p>has received a more positive reaction from the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SFF advised they have information on fishing activity in The Minch due to an existing subsea cable. Noted that fishing activity continued successfully once the cable was installed on previous project as an indication of what to expect.</li> <li>SHEPD advised that the expectation was that the new cable would be buried where ground conditions allowed for this.</li> </ul>
SFF & SWFPA		26/03/25	<p><a href="#">SFF &amp; SWFPA Stakeholder Engagement MoM 260325.docx</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD confirmed contractor has been appointed for Subsea works. Jan de Nul (JDN) is currently at the final stages of design, and a cable burial survey has been carried out, which indicates minimal burial will be possible with the proposed cable routes.</li> <li>Desire to bury it as much as possible. Awaiting further survey data to inform decisions.</li> <li>SHEPD advised marine licence application documentation will progress with survey works progressing during Summer 2025 and Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) events taking place on Skye and South Uist on Tuesday 3 June (later changed to 15 July).</li> </ul>
NatureScot		19/09/24	<p><a href="#">NatureScot Stakeholder Engagement MoM 190924.docx</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised survey works are ongoing across Skye interlink.</li> <li>SHEPD advised the SSEN land team will also consult with Nature Scot for the overland works. Subsea will continue to consult regarding marine and landfalls scope.</li> <li>SHEPD confirmed Strategic Project Liaison engaged with local community in June to introduce the design concept. Additional engagement activity planned on land design, November.</li> <li>SHEPD land team to follow up on local NatureScot contact</li> </ul>



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NatureScot		21/11/24	<a href="#">NatureScot Stakeholder Engagement MoM 211124.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised route surveys (Ardmore – Loch Pooltiel and Loch Pootiel – South Uist) are ongoing. Aim is to complete by the end of November 2025.</li> <li>Installation is planned for 2026 subject to Ofgem funding approval.</li> <li>ACTION: SSEN with review Benthic data, taking this feedback into account and share with NS. Potential to consult Benthic specialist if required.</li> <li>SHEPD advised Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) will take place during Spring 2025</li> </ul>
NatureScot		16/01/25	<a href="#">NatureScot Stakeholder Engagement MoM 160125.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised landfall works extended surveys completed end of 2024 for the three landfall positions (Ardmore/Dunvegan and Glendale, potentially Loch Pooltiel). No designated sites.</li> <li>SHEPD liaising with Alex Turner at NS</li> <li>SHEPD advised extensive marine surveys completed before year end (2024). Results expected within the next few months.</li> <li>NatureScot advised they have been contacted by local divers near Skye regarding the presence of Maerl and how to mitigate/avoid disturbance to Maerl throughout the project.</li> <li>SHEPD advised early June for community engagement/PAC events with submission of marine licence applications in September/October.</li> <li>SHEPD advised the installation contractor has been appointed to deliver the subsea installation - Jan de Nul (JDN).</li> <li>NatureScot confirmed enquiries related to this project should go to Central Highland inbox.</li> </ul>
Nature Scot		20/03/25	<a href="#">NatureScot Stakeholder Engagement MoM 200325.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised Skye Uist Marine Licence application submissions for both routes in August.</li> <li>No updates for onshore works. Ecology surveys will take place in spring-summer 2025.</li> </ul>



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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD informed NS on proposed community drop in events on Skye/Uist - 3<sup>rd</sup> June (changed to 15<sup>th</sup> July) Glendale Community Hall, Skye and Dark Island Hotel, Benbecula. Email invite to follow.</li> </ul>
RSPB		12/07/24	<a href="#">RSPB Scotland MoM 120724.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD provided project overview was presented to the RSPB, SSEN advised landfall drone surveys for subsea cable were due to take place at the end of August 2024.</li> <li>Walkover surveys for the OHL (Loch Pooltiel to Dunvegan) have been postponed to late 2024.</li> <li>SHEPD advised that they have been liaising with the RSPB regarding Golden Eagle territory and have been looking at alternative cable routes which will avoid this habitat. Alternative routing would be the preferred option for the RSPB.</li> </ul>
RSPB		8/11/24	<a href="#">RSPB Scotland MoM 081124.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSEN advised BBS will be commissioned Spring 2025</li> </ul>
RSPB		10/01/25	<a href="#">RSPB Scotland MoM 100125.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSEN advised we are currently putting contract in place to carry out BBS surveys during summer 2025.</li> <li>SSEN noted Loch Pooltiel (land portion) of the project will also conduct BBS survey through summer 2025.</li> <li></li> </ul>
RSPB		11/0725	<a href="#">RSPB Scotland MoM 110725.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised breeding bird surveys have been completed. Grey heron and Greylag Goose found next to Holmer Bay cable pull in. SHEPD to share reports with RSPB.</li> <li>Further survey works scheduled for after late June 2026 when chicks have fledged.</li> </ul>



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Maritime and Coastguard Agency		14/05/24	<a href="#">MCA Engagement MoM 140524.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD informed MCA of Skye-Uist project including upcoming survey works.</li> <li>SHEPD advised that the fishing community had been communicated via Notes to Mariners (NtM) regarding survey works.</li> <li>SHEPD updated MCA on progress with Ofgem</li> <li>ACTION: SSEN to respond to MCA on why route wasn't engineered beyond TSS area</li> </ul>
Maritime and Coastguard Agency		19/03/25	<a href="#">MCA Engagement MoM 190325.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD informed MCA that route surveys are now complete and route design almost complete, and CBRA is now under review.</li> <li>SHEPD confirmed marine licensing consultants have been appointed with application submission planned for August 2025 ahead of installation in 2026.</li> <li>Discussion on the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) area concluded that routing the cable to the south of the charted area would face similar vessel traffic and require similar mitigation to the current route.</li> <li>ACTION: MCA to share standard TSS conditions and any pertinent guidance with SHEPD.</li> <li>SHEPD confirmed that the application for Skye-South Uist would be supported by a standalone NRA.</li> </ul>
Maritime and Coastguard Agency		09/07/25	<a href="#">MCA Engagement MoM 090725.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised of proposed cable routes from Ardmore (Skye) – Meanish Pier (Skye) – Loch Carnan (South Uist)</li> <li>Marine licence applications (one for each route above) will be submitted in August 2025, with installation planned for early Summer 2026.</li> <li>SHEPD advised PAC events are taking place on Skye and Benbecula on 15 July.</li> </ul>
Northern Lighthouse Board		11/04/24	<a href="#">NLB Stakeholder Engagement MoM 110424.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised of the proposed cable route from Ardmore to South Uist (Loch Carnan), with an</li> </ul>



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				<p>additional new cable connecting Ardmore to Loch Pooltiel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route survey planned for Spring 2025. NtM in advance of survey works progressing.</li> <li>SHEPD consulting with fisheries stakeholders via Blackhall &amp; Powis.</li> <li>NLB sharing contacts for the Harbour Masters on Lewis and Harris (both ex-fishermen) to support with keeping these stakeholders informed.</li> </ul>
Northern Lighthouse Board		13/06/24	<a href="#">NLB Stakeholder Engagement MoM 130624.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NLB have responded on geotechnical exemption.</li> <li>SHEPD carrying out survey work in July/August 2024 to inform marine licence application.</li> <li>SHEPD informed NLB of community engagement, June 2024</li> </ul>
Northern Lighthouse Board		14/11/24	<a href="#">NLB Stakeholder Engagement MoM 141124.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD conducts survey work across both routes to inform marine licence application. Updated NLB that this process is taking longer than usual due to weather.</li> <li>SHEPD informed NLB of an incident during geotechnical survey involving dropped object report.</li> <li>NLB advised SSEN to check requirements for the Traffic Management Area to ensure all requirements are being met (MCA). SHEPD updated NLB on recent (MCA) engagement with comments received regarding additional management measures.</li> <li>SHEPD informed licence application likely July 2025 for summer 2026 installation – subject to Ofgem approval.</li> </ul>
Northern Lighthouse Board		13/02/25	<a href="#">NLB Stakeholder Engagement MoM 130225.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised that survey work is now complete, and tenders for marine licensing support are currently under review.</li> <li>SHEPD informed NLB that recovery of a UXO surrogate is being planned for the next few weeks</li> </ul>



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				<p>(currently notified as an alert on the Kingfisher Bulletin and by DROPOB1 form)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marine licence application likely July/August 2025 for summer 2026 installation.</li> </ul>
Northern Lighthouse Board		12/06/25	<a href="#">NLB Stakeholder Engagement MoM 120625.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD shared the proposed subsea cable routes from Millovaig – Meanish Peir and Meanish Peir to Loch Carnan (2 cables) requesting input on the position of AtoNs from NLB at Meanish Peir landfall.</li> <li>NLB agreed AtoN at the Meanish Pier landfall is sensible as long as local community are happy with this proposal.</li> <li>NLB advised the optimum position for AtoN at Loch Carnan would be facing due East from the promontory immediately to the South of Holmar Bay.</li> <li>Marine licence applications will be submitted August 2025 for both cables. Installation planned for Q2 2026.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment Scotland		27/06/24	<a href="#">HES Stakeholder Engagement 270624.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD confirmed two routes being surveyed. Ardmore to Loch Pooltiel and Loch Pooltiel to South Uist. Proposed cable route for Ardmore landfall is still looking to come into south side of Ardmore with detailed marine geophysical surveys planned over the summer. These should be able to identify any wreckage or debris related to the two recorded wrecks in the area. This survey will inform route micro siting to avoid interaction with any marine archaeology.</li> <li>SHEPD advised of fallen standing stone near Colbost which would be close to potential new overhead line route. HES advised that their standard advice for an unscheduled fallen standing stone is to speak to archaeological contractor or local Council archaeologist. They</li> </ul>



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				<p>would encourage the area around the standing stone to be treated with quite a lot of sensitivity as may be other burials around fallen stone. In terms of any buffer, HES wouldn't want OHL closer to Broch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHEPD confirmed they would check technical minimum separation distance between overhead lines and seek best possible route. Also advised that marine works are more advanced than onshore works and will continue engagement with HES.</li> <li>• HES confirmed that this project is likely to be the most challenging in terms of marine and onshore archaeology on the Skye side.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment Scotland		04/08/24	<a href="#">HES Stakeholder Engagement 040824.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHEPD provided high-level outline of proposed Skye-South network upgrade programme</li> </ul>
Historic Environment Scotland		27/09/24	<a href="#">HES Stakeholder Engagement 270924.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHEPD advised of community engagement event June 2024 aligned with Glendale AGM</li> <li>• SHEPD advised planned installation of submarine electricity cable planned summer 2026.</li> </ul>
Historic Environment Scotland		28/03/25	<a href="#">HES Stakeholder Engagement 280325.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHEPD confirmed HES were consulted regarding the IRIS wreck off the coast of Skye. No issues in relation to the proposed routes for subsea cables.</li> <li>• SHEPD confirmed CNES were consulted regarding non-designated assets that may be present within the corridor. CNES will advise on mitigations required.</li> <li>• HES noted that their remit still includes onshore designated areas and should remain a consultee on this basis.</li> </ul>



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Highland Council		25/03/24	<a href="#">Highland Council Stakeholder Engagement MoM 250324.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD updated THC on Skye-South Uist projects.</li> <li>SHEPD shared proposed offshore routes (Ardmore to Loch Pooltiel and Loch Pooltiel to South Uist)</li> <li>Landfall location at Loch Pooltiel is still under discussion but a location in proximity to the pier at Milovaig appeared possible for two cables.</li> <li>THC advised that the building at the pier is a listed structure.</li> <li>SHEPD advised doing route surveys on both offshore routes from April 2024</li> <li>THC advised of upgrades and improvements to pier at Milovaig</li> </ul>
Highland Council		04/02/25	<a href="#">Highland Council Stakeholder Engagement MoM 040225.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised this is a network resilience project due to load growth requirements on the network to support the Western Isles and shared a map of the cable routes with THC.</li> <li>ACTION: SHEPD will invite Phase 1, land PM and Consents Manager to join the next stakeholder call with THC to provide an overview of the onshore cable route from Glendale – Dunvegan.</li> <li>SHEPD advised we are applying for consent for offshore survey works to progress design Summer 2025.</li> <li></li> </ul>
Highland Council		28/07/25	<a href="#">Highland Council Stakeholder Engagement MoM 280725.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD confirmed documents are in advanced stage for Marine Licence submission. Route engineering completed.</li> <li>Local interest groups have raised concerns about impacts on biodiversity in the marine area. No Maerl was found on the cable route.</li> <li>Public Pre Application Consultation Events to support the Marine Licence application and overland cable route were held on 15<sup>th</sup> July at Glendale, Skye. It was well attended. The queries were mainly about</li> </ul>



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				<p>overland works, the switching station and marine biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All ecology and archaeology surveys have been completed. Hand dug archaeological excavations were carried out at Meanish Pier adjacent to ruined wool stores (listed buildings). An otter licence will be required for Meanish Pier, bat licence for Ardmore substation, and a written scheme of investigation for works at Meanish Pier.</li> <li>Land works for phase 1 (shore ends) will commence in April 2026, with the cable installation in summer 2026. A date has not been set for the overland cable.</li> </ul>
Marine Directorate		07/10/24	<u>Marine Directorate Engagement MoM 071024.docx</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD confirmed the West Highlands Geotechnical Exempt activity notice has been completed for Skye – South Uist surveys.</li> </ul>
Marine Directorate		19/12/24	<u>Marine Directorate Engagement MoM 191224.docx</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised Geotechnical information has been received and survey works for South – Uist completed (12 December)</li> </ul>
Marine Directorate		07/04/25	<u>Marine Directorate Engagement MoM 070425.docx</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised Marine licence application to be submitted in Aug 2025</li> <li>SHEPD advised PAC events taking place in early June at Dark Island Hotel and Glendale Community Centre.</li> </ul>
Marine Directorate		01/08/25	<u>Marine Directorate Engagement MoM 010825.docx</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised Marine licence applications (2 routes) to be submitted in Aug 2025 and confirmed that both PAC events took place in July.</li> </ul>



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CNES		20/05/24	<a href="#">CNES Stakeholder Engagement MoM 200524.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised marine survey work would start in July and run for a couple of months, with seabed samples thereafter.</li> <li>SHEPD informed CNES that good engagement had already taken place through fisheries consultant and shared on screen route map of land route.</li> <li>Survey work and licence application will progress in 2025 and installation in 2026/27.</li> <li>CNES asked about HOWSUM. SHEPD provided information from a subsea perspective.</li> <li>SHEPD provided information on survey vessel activity and the potential use of drones for land survey works</li> </ul>
CNES		01/11/24	<a href="#">CNES Stakeholder Engagement MoM 011124.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD shared information on the proposed shore end position at Holmer Bay and advised archeological survey has been carried out and conversations with local landowners are ongoing to help identify a final landfall position on Uist.</li> <li>SHEPD advised that the marine surveys are almost complete, and the subsea phase of the project is planned between May – August 2026.</li> </ul>
CNES			<a href="#">CNES Stakeholder Engagement MoM 010425.docx</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHEPD advised all survey works completed in December 2024 and route engineering is currently in progress.</li> <li>Marine Licence preparation is currently in progress with submission planned for August 2025, ahead of planned installation between May and August 2026.</li> <li>SHEPD advised that they have consulted with Kevin Murphy who has visited Holmer Bay and provided archaeological advice. Clyde Archaeology will be visiting the site to conduct walkover surveys between the TJP and power station in the next few weeks.</li> </ul>



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6.3 Following these meetings with stakeholders, minutes of these meetings were recorded and distributed to the participant organisations. This was to allow them to better distribute the messaging with their colleagues/members.

Table 3 – Company Fishing Liaison Officer (CFLO) Engagements

Stakeholder	Date	Engagement
Local fishermen, Skye and South Uist (via CFLO)	April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face-to-face engagement between the Company Fisheries Liaison Officer and local stakeholders. Crab/lobster/prawn creel fishing noted off Skye. One trawler skipper noted no conflict; another gave feedback on cable routes into Loch Carnan and West of Skye. There are a number of creel boats fishing for prawns off South Uist. Fishing is more likely to take place offshore (rather than inshore) May-July.</li> </ul>
Local fishermen, Skye and South Uist (via CFLO)	17/05/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email to CFLO consulting on alternative route West of Skye to avoid flagged scallop ground. Alternative route later incorporated into route engineering.</li> </ul>

6.4 The PAC Events held on 15th July 2025 used a standard slide deck to provide information on the project and also highlighting the range of stakeholders and consultees included in SHEPD Subsea Cables ongoing Stakeholder Engagement. Table 2 outlines the breadth of consultation undertaken beyond the advertised PAC events on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025. Table 3 further demonstrates additional engagement seeking expert comment and opinions on the proposed subsea cable installations.

## 7 Information Received by Prospective Applicant at 2024 Pre-Application Consultation Events

7.1 Information relevant to the marine licence application, received across all the Pre-application Consultation events and regular Stakeholder Engagement is summarised below:

### 7.2 Safety and Navigation

- In advance of the PAC Events on 15 July 2025, during a regular Stakeholder Engagement meeting between SHEPD and the Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB), an NLB representative advised that the location of an Aid to Navigation (AtoN) at Meanish Peir is required from a navigational perspective, assuming the local community will be properly consulted and agree the situation of the AtoN in principle.



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- Discussions with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) during a regular Stakeholder Engagement meeting with SHEPD resulted in a representative from MCA sharing standard Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) information and pertinent guidance with SHEPD.
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025, regular engagement with Scottish Fisheries Federation (SFF) involved discussion regarding the safety aspects of cable burial. SHEPD explained that the availability of geotechnical survey information had been delayed due to a dropped winch, which had to be recovered. However, SHEPD explained that the expectation would be to bury the cable where conditions allowed for burial and SFF were in agreement that this would be preferable from a navigational and safety perspective.

### 7.3 Socio-economic

- Scottish Fisherman’s Federation (SFF) and Scottish White Fish Producers Association (SWFPA) requested information on how the process of compensating fishers during survey works would be managed. SHEPD referred to the published document *How Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution co-exists with other marine users* which details the claims process. In practice this is facilitated via the CFLO.
- SHEPD have engaged local fishermen, Skye and South Uist (via the CFLO) regarding fishing activity. One trawler skipper noted no conflict; another gave feedback on cable routing into Loch Carnan and West of Skye. A number of creel boats fishing for prawns were identified off South Uist, and Marine Consultant provided feedback indicating that fishing is more likely to take place offshore (rather than inshore) during May-July.
- Ross, Sutherland, Skye & Lochalsh Fishermen’s Association (RSSLA) and Western Isles Fishing Association (WIFA) were unable to attend the PAC events, however they have engaged via SFF, and an alternative route was later incorporated into route engineering to the West of Skye to avoid flagged scallop ground.

### 7.4 Environmental

- During a regular Stakeholder Engagement meeting between SHEPD and RSPB on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025 immediately before the community PAC events, SHEPD explained that breeding bird surveys covering the route revealed Grey Heron and Greylag Goose were breeding close to the Holmer Bay landfall position SHEPD. Additional surveys are to be instructed in June 2026 when chicks have fledged to avoid any unnecessary disturbance to breeding activity.
- SHEPD sought further guidance from RSPB on Golden Eagle territory in order to ensure alternative route options are explored to avoid Golden Eagle Territory, as per the advice from RSPB.
- Following discussions with RSPB, SHEPD instructed Breeding Birds surveys covering this area. Bird breeding season is between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August, although timings within this period will differ between species. Timing of works will consider data gathered during breeding bird surveys carried out during Summer 2025.
- SHEPD has identified breeding greylag geese and grey heron in proximity to the cable land fall. Based on guidance from the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECOW), survey works were consequently scheduled to take place after the end of June to allow the young to fledge and ensure breeding was not disturbed by SHEPD survey works.



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- SHEPD has recorded the presence of Otters at Meanish Pier and adjacent to the South Uist landfall. An application to NatureScot for Disturbance Licences for works in these areas has been submitted by SHEPD.
- SHEPD will also instruct an otter species protection plan, and pre-works checks will be carried out, establishing an appropriate buffer zone around the area where Otter couches have been identified. An Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) will also carry out checks during works.
- SHEPD has been liaising with Highland Council in order to obtain a written scheme of investigation which outlines our methods of works, as well as protection and mitigation measures which will need to be put in place to avoid disturbance to historic buildings and walls of former buildings at Meanish Pier.
- SHEPD consulted the CNES archaeologist regarding the South Uist landfall position, as the onshore cable route will pass through the remains of a former township. The archaeologist will produce a written scheme of investigation which outlines the methods of SHEPD works and any protection or mitigation measures we will have in place.
- Throughout the project SHEPD have had continual engagement meetings with NatureScot, RSPB, CNES and Highland Council to discuss environmental and cultural heritage constraints and necessary mitigation.

### 7.5 Wider engineering and economic

- During the 2024 survey works, the CFLO maintained contact with all affected fisheries stakeholders and compensation claims were processed in line with SHEPD’s published policy.
- Maritime & Coastguard Agency, Northern Lighthouse Board and NatureScot attended bi-monthly Pre-PAC Stakeholder Engagement Presentations providing details of the proposed route.
- During the regular Stakeholder Engagement meeting with the Western Isles Council (CNES), the local authority asked when SHEPD expected the proposed project to be completed.
- During stakeholder engagement meetings and the PAC event, SHEPD informed stakeholders that the new cable will be suitably routed to ensure cable protection, minimising the potential for damage to the cable with a view to maximising cable life.

### 7.6 Decommissioning

- The new cable installed will replace an existing subsea cable which is reaching the end of its operational and economic life. A decommissioning plan will be submitted for regulatory approval at the end of the cable's economic life or as required by regulatory requirements. There was no current discussion on the long-term removal of the existing cable, which remains a viable asset.

## 8. Explanation of Approach Taken Where, Following Comment, an Amendment Has Been Made

- During extensive pre-application consultation and engagement, no significant concerns or objections have been raised by stakeholders or regulatory bodies in relation to the proposed subsea cable route from Skye (Loch Pooltiel) to South Uist. However, following information provided by local Scallop fishermen on Skye and South



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Uist, an alternative proposed cable route West of Skye was considered and later incorporated into route engineering to avoid flagged scallop ground.

- The proposed location and design of landfalls and connections onto the existing network have been discussed with landowners and occupiers with an interest and designs developed and refined to take account of feedback where possible and practical to do so within the constraints of SHEPD’s operating licence and timescale for delivery of this project.

## 9. Sustainable Development and Cost Benefit Analysis

### 9.1 Cost Benefit Methodology

The output of SHEPD’s Cost Benefit Analysis Methodology<sup>2</sup> helps to demonstrate to stakeholders that the method(s) proposed for installing this submarine electricity cable justifies the expenditure and provides best-value. We define best value as the method(s) of installation which satisfies marine licence application by illustrating how we consider the cumulative impact of our engineering design. [extensive details of the CBA recommendations in this regard can be found in the Skye \(Loch Pooltiel\) Uist CBA Summary.](#)

### 9.2 Safety and Navigation

- The Cost Benefit Analysis methodology, used to model the impact of this cable, provides an overview of how SHEPD measure the impact of their cables on health and safety (human life). Based on the current Marine Accident Investigation Board evidence the rate of incidences is low; but the risk remains and so it is included within the Cost Benefit Analysis model as an impact. This means that SHEPD has considered the less serious, but more frequent, interactions with our cables and the socio-economic impact that this has for marine users.
- The shore end protection has been determined to be essential for the mechanical protection of the cable in prolonging cable life as well as the requirement to bury portions of the cable along the route, this is due to the risk of trawl fishing in this area and evidence of trawl scars on survey data.
- No works that reduce chart datum by greater than 5% will be undertaken without express agreement of Marine Scotland and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.
- The *Operation, Inspection, Maintenance and Decommissioning Strategy* commits to providing Route Position Lists (RPLs) of cables and landfall locations to the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) and Kingfisher Information Service Offshore Renewables and Cables Awareness (KIS-ORCA) in order that relevant charts are updated

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<sup>2</sup> Which we define as best balancing the health and safety, environmental, socio-economic, wider-engineering and economic considerations whilst meeting regulatory obligation.



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after cable installation and subsequent inspections. Where our inspection programme identifies that the cable has become a danger to navigation or protection of legitimate users of the sea, we will immediately inform Marine Scotland, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, UKHO, Northern Lighthouse Board, and KIS-ORCA to communicate the hazard to the maritime community.

- It is proposed that the contractor will carry out a post-lay survey within a period of six months after the completion of the planned installation to firstly ensure the installation meets the expectations of SHEPD internal standards and specifications and those of Marine Scotland but also to ensure the safety of navigation for legitimate users of the sea.

### 9.3 Socio-economic

- The final CBA recommendation is the preferred installation method, given the information available from the route surveys, route engineering consultants and when considering the National Marine Plan. Although the preferred option does not have the highest value to society against all other modelled options included for the burial and the installation of cable protection and stabilisation measures to meet the outputs of the route design studies to deliver the required asset life.
- The volume of vessel activity between Loch Pooltiel and South Uist was recorded using AIS data from Marine Scotland and individual scouting surveys in preparation of the works. This has been of significant consideration in the routing of this cable, with feedback confirming that it is broadly acceptable to all parties.
- Ofgem, as SHEPD's economic regulator, has the primary responsibility to ensure that SHEPD utilise bill payers' funds in an economic and efficient way. SHEPD continues to work with Ofgem to identify the best value solution that will balance the needs of all stakeholders, including marine users and our customer so that any investment in the distribution network is economic and efficient.
- SHEPD's approach to protection is to follow the Cables 2 policy of Scotland's National Marine Plan. Where burial is not demonstrated to be feasible, we will consider all other practicable protection solutions and compare them through our cost benefit analysis model to identify the one which delivers best value, along with considerations to the safety of other marine users.

### 9.4 Environmental

- Route engineering has been informed by extensive marine surveys and allowed recommendations on cable route and cable protection and stabilisation measures to take account of and minimise effects on intertidal and benthic habitats and species. Account has also been taken of mobile species and features of designated sites.
- Onshore works have been informed by extensive ecology surveys (habitats, sensitive and protected species, and breeding birds) to take account of and minimise effects on terrestrial habitats and species. Account has also been taken of mobile species and features of designated sites.

### 9.5 Wider economic and engineering



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- From site investigations it has been confirmed that split pipe protection on both shore ends will be installed. This will provide additional protection in the inshore area and minimise damage from abrasion. Additionally, this will increase cable stability.
- The CBA model considers the societal value of different installation methods for the Skye (Loch Pooltiel) - South Uist submarine electricity cable. It is understood that other externalities not modelled need to be considered. These include marine planning policy, final engineering design requirements including any requirements for shore end protection and the cumulative impact of our submarine electricity cables on other legitimate marine users.
- Although the preferred option does not have the highest value to society against all other modelled options it includes for the minimum installation of protection measures and cable burial to meet the outputs of the route design studies to deliver the required asset life. The shore end protection has been determined to be essential for the mechanical protection of the cable in prolonging cable life as well as the requirement to bury portions of the cable along the route, due to the risk of anchor strikes and trawl fishing in this area as evident from trawl scars on survey data. This solution also takes into consideration the views of stakeholders.
- The new submarine electricity cables will also contain embedded fibre optics within its construction which can assist with network management and monitoring of the cable condition. A “Network Provider” can request access to infrastructure under the Communications (Access to Infrastructure) Regulations 2016 to any “Infrastructure Operator” in this case the proposed SHEPD cable.



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## 10. Certification

10.1 Nicky Hufstetler

Engineering Design and Consents Manager, Large Capital Delivery Projects

Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution plc

Inveralmond House

200 Dunkeld Road

Perth

PH1 3AQ

10.2 I certify that I have complied with the legislative requirements relating to pre-application consultation and that the pre-application consultation has been undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements.

10.3 Signature

[Redacted]

10.4 Date: 26 August 2025





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## Appendix B: Pre-application Event Promotion

### 1. Additional Newspaper Advertisement

West Highland Free Press, 27 June 2025

editor@whfp.com news naidheachdan Friday 27 June 2025 5

John Lang (far left), Bob Dickson (in pink), and Peter Morrison piper from Peabing Fannies



## Party at the Duirinish Stone marks 25 years

BY KIRSTY WAT  
kirsty.wat@whfp.com

A quarter of a century later and the stone still stands... sunshine and festivities last Saturday 21st June saw the milestone.

The five-metre-high, five-stone Duirinish Stone, was raised by hand into its position on Drim as Craige, overlooking Loch Davaegon and the Dairnish parish, on the 26th June 2000.

To celebrate its 25th anniversary, friends and family were pegged up the steep slope to the stone by the Skye Youth Pipe Band. With everyone gathered under its towering presence, chair of Davaegon and District Community Council and organiser of Saturday's festivities, John Lang gave a short speech and Peter Morrison, of the Peabing Fannies, marked the occasion with a tune on the pipes.

John told the Free Press "It's about community, about getting people together to chat and enjoy a well-earned bit of entertainment. Hopefully the young ones here will say, 'well in 25 years time, let's do it again!'"

Off the hill and back at Davaegon Community Hall, home-baked afternoon tea, photos and archival information of the original raising of the stone awaited. Collier and other young musicians took to the stage and an English translation of "The Dairnish Stone", poem by Angus MacPhee was recited.

John said: "We have all of the community council, and many others in the community who have baked and produced all the goods, to thank. They always rally round for an event like this. So, thanks to everybody."

"It just shows you what can be done. Other areas in Skye have their own events, but this is a wee bit special for Davaegon and District."

The original idea for the Dairnish Stone was all thanks to Donald Budge who was unfortunately not well enough to attend Saturday's celebrations.

Bob Dickson from Milnavaig was involved with Donald in putting up the stone. He told the Free Press "Donald Budge spoke to me and said, 'I've got this crazy idea to put a standing stone up to mark the millennium. I said, 'well it is a crazy idea, but why not?' We spoke in more and more people and the job got bigger and bigger!"

Donald scoured Skye's coastline for a suitable stone and found one near Dun Rannul, Strathairn. With help from members of the Dairnish community and beyond, Donald and Bob removed the stone from the beach, floated it across to Torrin, crossed it onto a truck and transported it to Davaegon. The stone was then placed on a dolly, connected by the community, and pulled by a large tracked vehicle up the summit of Drim as Craige.

On the 26th June 2000, it was pulled upright by hand, into position, and celebrated with art, poetry and piping competitions and a day of music and dance. On the winter solstice of that year, a 1000 year time capsule containing strands of hair, photographs and a copy of the millennium Free Press, was buried up at the stone.

John and Bob both thank Donald for Dairnish's mighty stone, with John saying "It was all thanks to the fertile imagination of Donald Budge."

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## New council rangers

BY KIRSTY WAT  
kirsty.wat@whfp.com

In a bid to reduce visitor impact on the environment, new Highland Council seasonal access rangers started across Skye and Lochalsh last month.

North Skye (Waternish and Tainish), West Skye (Dairnish, Mairnish and Epi) and Lochalsh (and Skye) have each been assigned a ranger from the wider Highland Council's seasonal ranger access team to encourage responsible countryside use.

Highland Council's economy and infrastructure committee chair, Councillor Ken Gowans, said: "The council recognises the importance of supporting communities to manage the increase in visitors across the area, particularly along the NC100, Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross and Loch Ness."

"A key role for the rangers will be engaging with the public and raising awareness of the Outdoor Access Code and communicating to people that as individuals we all play an important role in ensuring that Highland's beautiful outdoor spaces are protected for all to enjoy for future generations."

The rangers will be in place until 30th October, developing relationships with communities and working with visitors, to educate, encourage and advise on good countryside practice through the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. They will also be responsible for maintenance of paths and visitor sites.

Seasonal Access Rangers were first implemented in Skye and Lochalsh in 2021 through the Highland Council's Visitor Management Plan, created to tackle the rapid increase in motorhomes and wild camping post-pandemic.

This year, a key focus for the rangers will be on ensuring responsible camping with many sites receiving a 'no fires' message. Even small fires can damage fragile, local ecosystems and may spread rapidly under the right conditions.

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code states: "Never light an open fire during prolonged dry periods or in areas such as forests, woods, heathland, or on peaty ground or near to buildings or in cultural heritage sites where damage can be easily caused. Keep all advice at times of high risk. Remove all traces of an open fire before you leave."

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## SKYE TO SOUTH UIST Subsea Cable Replacement Project

Pre Application Consultation Events

We're upgrading the local energy network as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' ongoing commitment to maintaining a reliable and secure electricity supply for the Western Isles.

We want to update you on our proposed solution for replacing the subsea electricity supply cables between Skye and South Uist.

Please join us at our upcoming consultation events:

- Glendale Community Hall, Glendale, 15 July, 12:00pm – 7:00pm
- The Dark Island Hotel, Lincalthe, 15 July, 12:00pm – 7:00pm

Website: [www.sen.co.uk/skye-uist](http://www.sen.co.uk/skye-uist)

Email: [submarinercables@sen.com](mailto:submarinercables@sen.com)

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks



Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution

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West Highland Free Press, 27 June 2025

editor@whfp.com

news  
naidheachdan

Friday 11 July 2025

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## Care home funding help from the friends

A new community association has been set up to help and support the residents of An Acairaid Care Home in Broadford on Skye.

Having recently been awarded charitable status, Friends of An Acairaid Care Home is ready to get under way.

The setting up of the group was sparked by a chance conversation between local businessman Angus Macphie and a member of the care home staff while he was visiting. He was told that staff sometimes felt compelled to buy paint etc themselves and go on to undertake work around the property in their own time, due to tight budgetary constraints.

Although well aware of the financial pressures faced by care homes in general, Mr Macphie was a bit taken aback and came up with the idea of forming a local association to help support the home. Everyone he spoke to within the community and beyond, including a number of members of the Friends of Broadford Hospital committee as well as a senior member of the Hospital staff, were hugely supportive of the idea.

He went on to approach a number of local people who very willingly threw their hats into the ring by agreeing to become founding trustees. It is anticipated others will join as the work develops, in the meantime those involved are Hamish Fraser (chair), Evelyn Campbell (secretary), Doreen Macphie

(treasurer), Adam MacDonald, Catherine Smith and Angus Macphie. Getting established has taken more time than initially anticipated as they were keen to get off on the right foot by introducing tight financial controls throughout, from the outset. As part of that the Scottish Charity Regulator will scrutinise and oversee their finances.

Mr Fraser said: "We need to encourage local involvement and input in what is a much loved and essential local asset, to help provide extra comfort for residents of the care home, while Adam (a local building contractor) is very optimistic the group will make a difference, not just with fundraising efforts. From the reaction he has had from others in the building trade, he is confident of support and practical hands-on help and input."

"Included in the initial tasks is weeding and cutting back bushes etc, the spreading and painting of outside garden furniture, plus the provision of a garden shed. The trustees are very grateful to those who have already donated as wood has proved as these funds have allowed them to make a start. All donations and practical support will be topped towards the benefit of the care home residents and their surroundings and will make a difference which will be very much appreciated."

See editorial, page 11



Some of the members of the new Friends of An Acairaid are pictured at the Broadford care home this week: Hamish Fraser, Catherine Smith and Evelyn Campbell.



## Kilmuir enterprise award

BY KIRSTY WHAT  
kirsty.what@whfp.com

absolutely delighted to award them a small portion of seed funding for their idea.

"They've since had a special place in our programme, not only did Kilmuir Primary provide a complete Gaelic proposal and pitch, but their social enterprise also directly talks to the subject we were aiming to emphasise, highlighting the Gaelic medium itself."

Unable to attend the Social Enterprise Academy's annual award ceremony in Edinburgh, the pupils were presented with their award at school by Mr MacLean.

He said: "It was a great visit to a wonderful school which is clearly hugely important to a vibrant local community. Personally, this has been one of the highlights of my year I came away feeling inspired."

The Social Enterprise Academy Schools programme began in Scotland in 2007, and since then has reached across the world with over 77,000 young people, giving them the opportunity to launch a social enterprise about an issue important to them.

Kilmuir Primary School headteacher Christina MacFarlane said: "The project was a great success, and we are so proud of how well the pupils have done."

### SKYE TO SOUTH UIST

Subsea Cable Replacement Project

**Pre Application Consultation Events**

We're upgrading the local energy network as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' ongoing commitment to maintaining a reliable and secure electricity supply for the Western Isles.

We want to update you on our proposed solution for replacing the subsea electricity supply cables between Skye and South Uist.

Please join us at our upcoming consultation events:

- Glendale Community Hall, Glendale, 15 July, 12:00pm - 7:00pm
- The Dark Island Hotel, Lincalate, 15 July, 12:00pm - 7:00pm

Website

[esen.co.uk/skye-uist](https://esen.co.uk/skye-uist)

Email

[submarinecables@esen.com](mailto:submarinecables@esen.com)



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## 2. Newspaper Demographics

Readership statistics of West High Free Press and Skye & Lochalsh Echo Newspapers:

Average Issue Readership (AIR) by demographic group:

	Adults	Men	Women	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	ABC1	C2DE	AB	C1	C2	DE
8417	3969	4448	528	732	1029	1165	1599	1596	1769	4982	3435	2327	2656	1812	1623	
% profile	47.15%	52.85%	6.27%	8.7%	12.23%	13.84%	19%	18.96%	21.02%	59.19%	40.81%	27.65%	31.56%	21.53%	19.28%	
Index against area	96	104	59	83	99	92	97	112	140	93	112	89	97	112	111	
% reach	21.01%	22.58%	12.96%	18.04%	21.54%	20.08%	21.16%	24.46%	30.49%	20.32%	24.41%	19.37%	21.23%	24.53%	24.28%	

*\*Skye & Lochalsh Echo do not record readership statistics digitally. The publication currently distributes copies to 8,285 copies to households across the region.*

## 3. Additional Radio Advertisement

### Skye Radio (FM)

3,931 online listeners  
 16,304 analogue listeners  
 Opportunities to hear per listener  
 (OTH) 5.42  
 Campaign live 30 June – 15 July 2025



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## 4. Website and Social Media

**Skye – Uist Network Upgrade**  
The Skye to South Uist project represents a significant investment in the energy future of the Western Isles.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks / About us / Projects and live works / Skye – Uist Network Upgrade

**SSEN Distribution Large Capital Delivery team will be progressing this major infrastructure initiative aimed at strengthening and improving the reliability of the energy supply to the Uist Islands.**

**Location:** Skye – South Uist

**Status:** Construction planned 2025 – 2027

**Project Type:** Network upgrade

**Delivery:** SSEN Distribution

**Come along to our Pre Application Consultation Events:**  
- 15 July 12.00 pm - 7.00 pm.  
Glendale Community Hall, Glendale  
Isle of Skye IV55 8WJ

**What does the network upgrade involve?**  
This will involve the installation of a replacement submarine electricity cable between South Uist and Skye, delivering enhanced energy security and resilience to the Western Isles.

**What are the key environmental considerations?**  
This crucial project will develop the network to integrate the replacement cable with an onshore connection which is to be established at Milovaig and chart an appropriate route through Glendale to connect with the substation at Durvegan. By upgrading the network in this way, we are laying the groundwork for a more resilient, sustainable, and secure electricity supply that will benefit local communities for generations to come.

The project involves the installation of new 33kV cable between South Uist and Durvegan substation and associated upgrades to the existing network infrastructure to accommodate the improved infrastructure.

AAA

**LEARN MORE ABOUT  
OUR PLANS FOR AN  
ELECTRICITY  
NETWORK UPGRADE  
BETWEEN SOUTH  
UIST AND SKYE**

Scottish & Southern  
Electricity Networks



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## 5. Promotional Postcards



# SKYE TO SOUTH UIST

## Subsea Cable Replacement Project

**Pre Application Consultation Events**

We're upgrading the local energy network as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' ongoing commitment to maintaining a reliable and secure electricity supply for the Western Isles.

We want to update you on our proposed solution for replacing the subsea electricity supply cables between Skye and South Uist.




This critical upgrade involves replacing the subsea cables connecting Skye to South Uist and will ensure our customers in these communities have a safe and reliable power supply. The proposed works will take place from Ardmore, Skye via Meanish Pier to Loch Carnan on South Uist.

If you would like to find out more about the project, our Subsea Cables team will be hosting the following Pre Application Consultation Events:

Glendale Community Hall, 15 July, 12.00pm - 7.00pm  
 The Dark Island Hotel, Lincalate, 15 July, 12.00pm - 7.00pm

Website: [ssen.co.uk/skye-uist](http://ssen.co.uk/skye-uist) | Email: [submarinecables@sse.com](mailto:submarinecables@sse.com)



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## 6. Promotional Posters

**SKYE TO SOUTH UIST**  
Subsea Cable Replacement Project

**Pre Application Consultation Events**

We're upgrading the local energy network as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' ongoing commitment to maintaining a reliable and secure electricity supply for the Western Isles.

We want to update you on our proposed solution for replacing the subsea electricity supply cables between Skye and South Uist.

This critical upgrade involves replacing the subsea cables connecting Skye to South Uist and will ensure our customers in these communities have a safe and reliable power supply. The proposed works will take place from Ardmore, Skye via Meanish Pier to Loch Carnan on South Uist.

**Proposed Route**

If you would like to find out more about the project, our Subsea Cables team will be hosting the following Pre Application Consultation Events:

Glendale Community Hall,  
15 July, 12.00pm - 7.00pm

The Dark Island Hotel, Lincalate,  
15 July, 12.00pm - 7.00pm

Website: [ssea.co.uk/skye-uist](https://ssea.co.uk/skye-uist)

Email: [submarinecables@ssea.com](mailto:submarinecables@ssea.com)

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## 7. Stakeholder Feedback Form



# Your comments

We hope that you have found the information on our website useful. To help us record your views about our submarine electricity cable proposals, please take a moment to complete this short questionnaire.

### Consultation events

Did you attend one of our consultation events, if so how did you find out about it?

- |                 |                          |               |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Local newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> | SSEN website  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local website   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Letter          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Poster        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other           | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |                          |

Which event/s did you attend?

### Replacing the cable

The routing, installation and protection methods proposed for replacing this cable are acceptable.

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly disagree        | Disagree                 | Not sure                 | Agree                    | Strongly agree           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please include any further comments here:

### Our proposal

Do you support or object to these proposals as they stand?

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly object          | Object                   | Not sure                 | Support                  | Strongly support         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |

What cable are you referring to?

What could we do to improve the proposal?



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## 8. Public Consultee Feedback

*“We’re primarily concerned with the potential disruption at the Pier (Meanish Pier), the situation of the Switching Station and the disruption to road users. We would like to be kept updated regarding the situation of the Switching Station, and plans for the cable connecting into the network at Dunvegan” **Glendale Resident***

*“Concerned about the possibility of opening the area up to larger power lines/energy development project, renewable energy and battery storage via developments such as this. Our role as the Glendale Trust is to preserve the natural beauty of this land, which is largely unspoiled, so we feel a great sense of responsibility to ensure we uphold that role. **Glendale Trust***

*“Interested in understanding more about how we will export our local electricity. Is there a guarantee that the new cable (fibre optic cable) can export our electricity. Please provide a written response” **South Uist Resident***

**Response - issued by email 20 July 2025 from submarinecables@sse.com**

The new cable will be a 33kV 500mm<sup>2</sup> Double Wire Armoured Copper cable with a capacity rating of 35.5MVA. The new cable will more than double the current capacity of the existing cable which is a 33kV 95mm<sup>2</sup> Double Wire Armoured Copper cable rated at 16MVA.

However, due to a congested Transmission network on Skye from Ardmore back to Fort Augustus, the export capacity for new or additional generation export is limited. Exporting energy is not key a driver for this project. The main driver is for network resilience and security of supply, but the cable has been suitably rated to cover long term demand requirements out to 2050 based on DFES scenarios and uptake of LCTs on the Islands.



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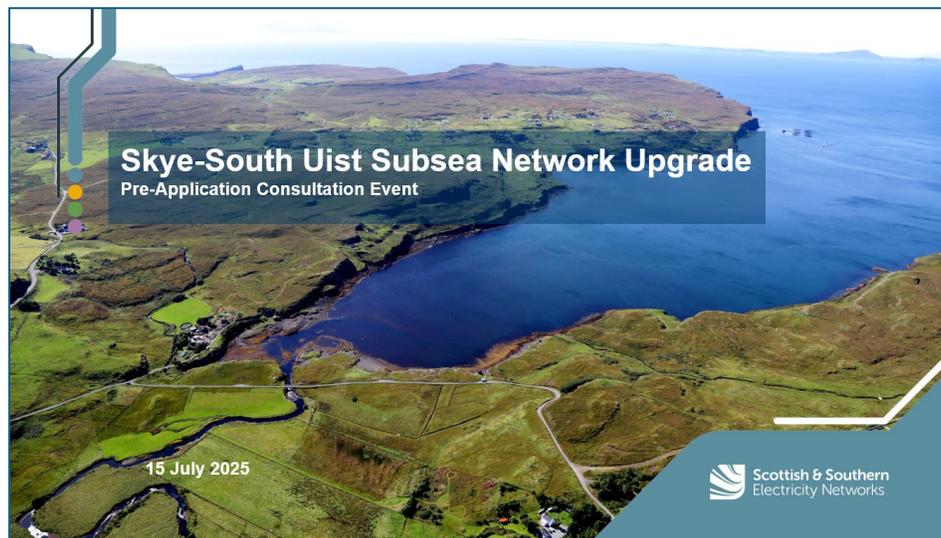
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## Appendix E: Pre-application Consultation Presentation

### 1. Pre-Application Consultation Event Presentation





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**SKYE – SOUTH UIST PROJECT**  
Key Drivers for Investment

- **Subsea Cable Maintenance** – SSEN have a responsibility to maintain the subsea network through maintenance and replacement.
- **Future Demand** – Insight from Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES) forecasts and a commissioned analysis from contractor Regen of future load growth on the Scottish island regions revealed the following drivers for demand:
  - Electrification of road transport, maritime vessels, and aviation
  - Decarbonisation – domestic (heating) and industry (fisheries, distilleries and tourism)
  - Development of renewable energy and battery storage.
- **Island Resilience** – installation and reinforcement of our network to reduce risk of outages and support the decarbonisation of the Scottish islands.
- **SSEN Decarbonisation** – phasing out the use of diesel generation (during outages) and the use of diesel.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

- Proactive planned replacement of the 33kV Skye to Uist submarine cable (installed in approx. 1990)
- Whole system analysis, electrical studies and justification of proposed solution completed 2023
- Desktop feasibility studies for subsea routes commenced 2023
- Marine and landfall survey works conducted during summer 2024
- Consultation, analysis and application preparation 2023-2025
- Target application submission to MD-LOT: August 2025
- Proposed installation: Summer 2026



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**SUBSEA ROUTE ENGINEERING**

- Feasibility review to identify possible landfall locations:
  - The west shoreline prior to coming into Loch Pooltiel was considered but ground conditions were not suitable
  - Loch Dunvegan was considered but there is an existing subsea BT cable
  - South of Skye and Milovaig Bay was not possible due to chartered wrecks and access for onshore infrastructure
- Survey Campaign:
  - Multi Beam Echo Sounder (MBES)
  - Side Scan Sonar (SSS)
  - Sub Bottom Profiling (SBP)
  - Magnetometer
  - Environmental seabed video footage, and grab samples
  - Geotechnical investigation of seabed
  - Land Surveys – topographic, thermal resistivity, geotech
- Route engineering to select the optimised cable route based on seabed conditions
- Submarine Cable Stability Assessment and Cable Burial Risk Assessment
- UXO Threat Assessment

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Figure 4.8 - Example of route section avoiding the bedrock



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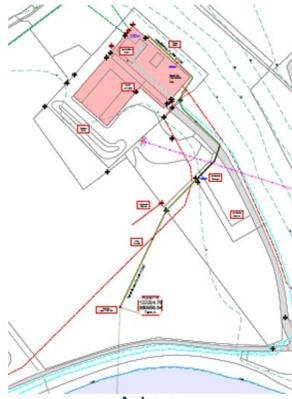
### LAND CABLING WORKS



**All Sites**  
The respective subsea cable(s) will be brought ashore and terminated in an underground joint box as part of subsea operations. The land team will then connect to these cable(s) within the joint box and install the underground land cables from this point.

**Loch Carnan**  
Install approximately 350m of 33kV cable and accompanying fibre optic from the landfall point in Holmar Bay into the existing Loch Carnan Substation.

**Ardmore**  
Install approximately 250m of 33kV cable and accompanying fibre optic from the landfall point at Trumpan Beach into the existing Ardmore Substation.



### LAND CABLING WORKS CONT.

**Meanish Pier / Milovaig**

At Meanish, the 2 incoming subsea cables (from Ardmore and Loch Carnan, South Uist) will be brought ashore and terminated in the underground joint bay as part of the subsea cable activities.

From this joint bay, the 2 cable circuits will be connected onto the land cables and the installation continued underground, to the proposed switching station location - where they will be joined together, to allow the line to be energised.

A further phase of works is planned, to construct a switching station building - to house the connection of the 2 cable circuits noted above - approximately 200m West of the landfall point. From here, there are further proposals to connect this line to Dunvegan Substation, via an underground cable that follows the public road.



**INDICATIVE ONLY**

**Legend**

- UNDESIRABLE SITUATIONS
- 33kV Rehabilitation
- Proposed 33kV Option 1
- Proposed 33kV Option 2
- Proposed 33kV Option 3
- Fibre optic cable will be placed open-trench configuration
- Classified/High Voltage/Overhead
- Existing 33kV 3-core
- Band 1 (Red)
- Band 2 (Green)
- Band 3 (Blue)

The above image is indicative of the cable route options from the approximate landfall towards the proposed Switching Station but is subject to survey, suitability and landowner consent.



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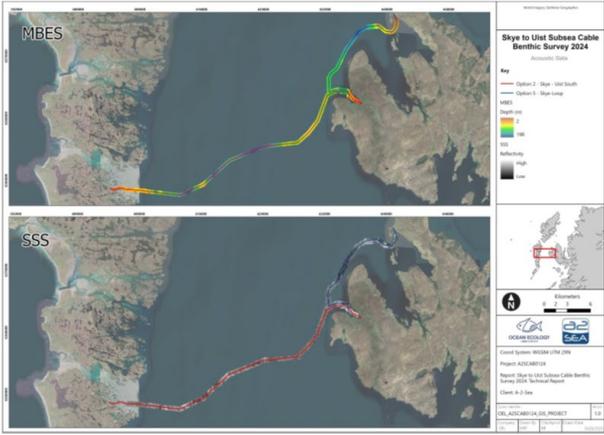
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**MARINE SURVEY**

- Survey included intertidal and subtidal habitats
- Broadscale habitat type determined from geophysical data
- Camera survey – for ground-truthing of broadscale habitat type
- Grab sampling for benthic infauna

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**MARINE SURVEY FINDINGS – GENERAL**



- Intertidal area predominantly rocky shore with seaweed communities
- Reef habitat present in intertidal and subtidal at Meanish
- Sandflats also present at Ardmore

- Subtidal area – large diversity of habitats found (see slides 9, 10, 11 for more detail).
- Annex 1 habitats – various reef types (predominantly low stony)
- PMF habitats – Burrowed mud, Deep sponge communities, Kelp and seaweed communities on sublittoral sediment, Northern sea fan and sponge communities, Offshore deep-sea muds, Offshore subtidal sands and gravels



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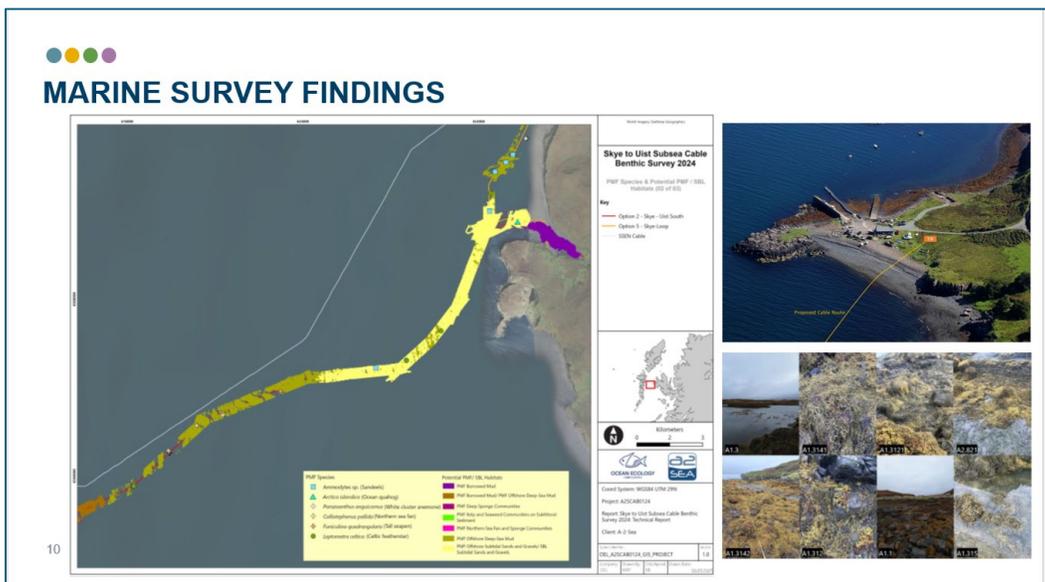
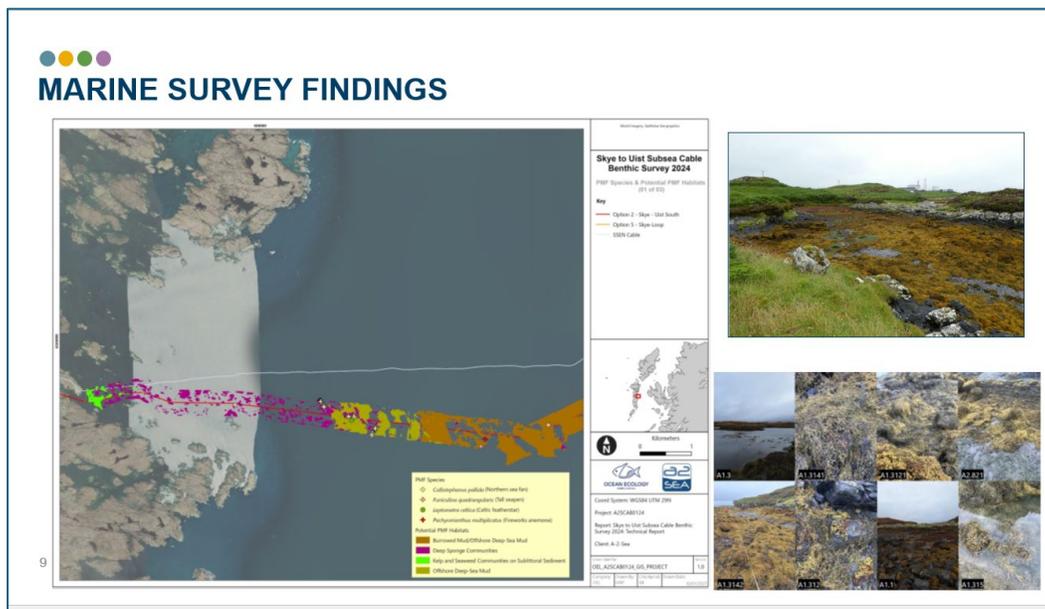


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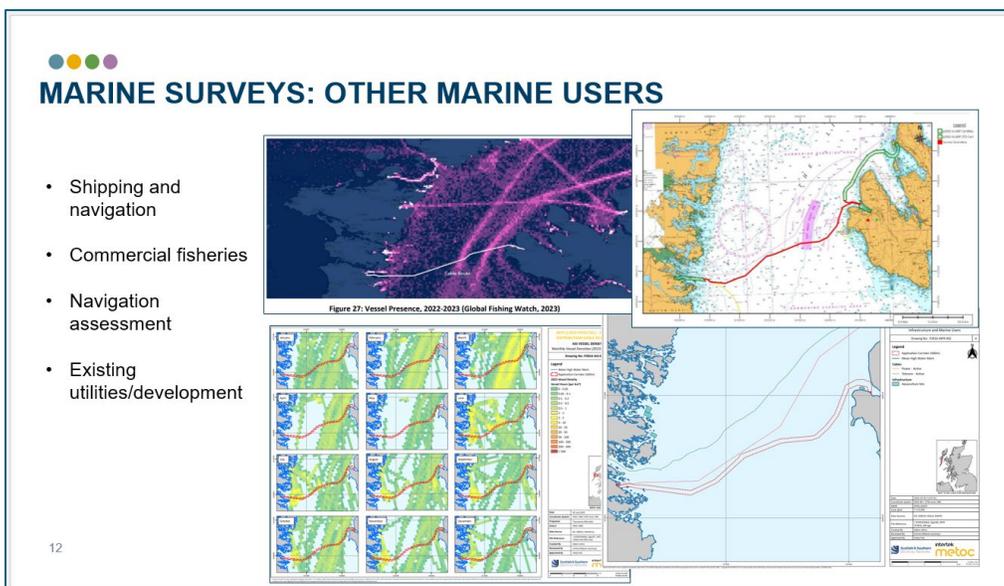
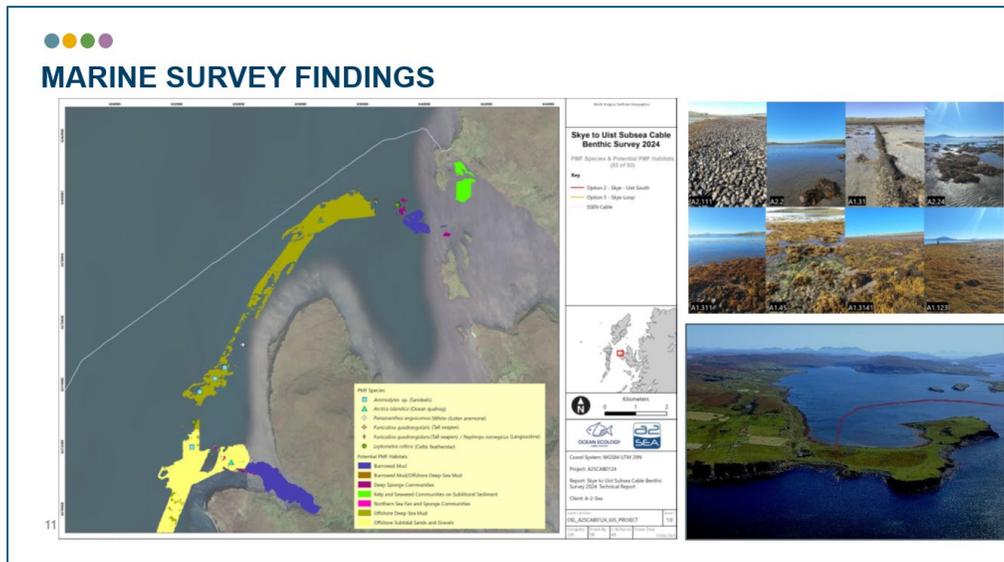


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## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Initial studies identified the following constraints and considerations:

- **Designations**
  - No environmental designations in area of works
  - Historic environment assets and Scheduled Monuments
- **Habitats**
  - Peatland
  - Waterbodies
- **Priority Species to Consider**
  - Otters
  - Golden Eagle
  - Water Voles
  - Freshwater Pearl Mussels

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### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Surveys are being carried out to identify any constraints:

- Environmental features
- Archaeological features
- Sensitive and protected species (otters, breeding birds, etc.)
- Habitats and protected plants
- Baseline for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) compliance
- Other site-specific sensitivities (peat etc.)

Surveys required are being progressed, with dates dependant on landowner consents and time of year.

Appointed specialist contractors have been appointed to carry out site surveys.

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### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Surveys carried out to date have identified following constraints and considerations:

- **Habitats**
  - Peatland
  - Waterbodies
- **Sensitive and protected species**
  - Otter – licences required for Meanish Pier and Holmar Bay
  - Breeding birds – works will be timed to avoid sensitive periods or buffer zones put in place
  - Bats – licence required for works at Ardmore
- **Archaeology**
  - Listed buildings and curtilage at Meanish Pier – exploratory trenches have been hand-dug to inform mitigation
  - Ruined township at Holmar Bay – underground cabling works will avoid walls

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## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

### Additional considerations and opportunities :

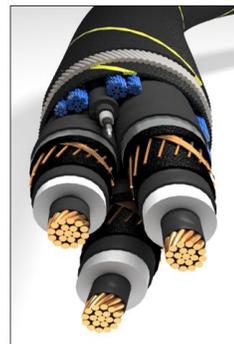
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan.
- Environmental management to reduce risk during key stages.
- Protection/mitigation of ecological and archaeological sensitivities.
- Assessment of opportunities to apply sustainable practice throughout project lifecycle.



## CABLE

Cable procurement is planned to commence July 2025. Indicative cable properties:

- 33kV 3x500mm<sup>2</sup> copper conductors
- 3 x Power Cores & 2 x Fibre Optic Cables (48 fibre)
- Double wire armour layer (galvanised steel)
- Weight in air = ~55kg/m
- Overall; Outer Diameter = ~150mm
- Cable will be buried on land down to low water where rock is not present, and nearshore locations will also be protected by steel/pipe splitpipe where required.



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### EQUIPMENT

Typical equipment expected on site:

- Small support vessels (i.e. RIBs)
- Possible use of divers
- Excavators
- Dumper & trailer
- Winches & cable drums
- Rollers & quadrants
- Welfare units

On the completion of works, all worksites will be cleared of equipment and reinstated to their as-found condition.



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### Stakeholder Engagement

- Marine Scotland
- NatureScot (MD-LOT)
- Highland Council
- Western Isles Council (CNES)
- RSPB
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Northern Lighthouse Board
- Maritime & Coastguard Agency
- Scottish Fisheries Federation
- Blackhall & Powis Marine Consultants
- Glendale and Dunvegan Community Trusts
- Various Landowners, Grantors, and Tenants





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**Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution**

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**Subsea Cable Installation**

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## MARINE LICENSING PROCESS

- **Marine Licence Applications**
  - Two separate applications will be made:
    - Ardmore-Loch Pooltiel
    - Skye (Loch Pooltiel) – South Uist
  - Will include:
    - Marine Construction Licence applications
    - Protected species licence applications (EPS and Basking Shark)
    - Marine Environmental Appraisals (MEAs) and protected species risk assessments
    - Marine Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs)
  - Marine Licence application submission planned for August 2025
  - Statutory consultees – NatureScot, NLB, MCA, SEPA, HES
  - Public notice will appear in local press
  - Full applications available to view on the Marine Scotland website: <https://marine.gov.scot/marine-licence-applications>



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# THANK YOU

E: [submarinecables@sse.com](mailto:submarinecables@sse.com)  
W: [ssen.com](http://ssen.com)





# CONTACT

GERALDINE HIGGINS  
SUBSEA PROJECTS LIAISON LEAD (NORTH)

[Redacted]

