### Key Issues

Pre-application consultation to engage stakeholders and the community about the proposed extension to the Crystal Rig Substation.

Environmental appraisal of the site and surrounds to include landscape and visual, ecological, hydrological and archaeological and cultural heritage aspects.

Assessment of the condition of the public roads along the access route from the A1 to the wind farm access track via a Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD) analysis.

The site is located in the East Lothian Council Area and crosses over the boundary into the adjacent Scottish Borders Council Area.

Further substation developments, associated with the proposed Neart na Gaoithe (NnG) Wind Farm and Aikengall Wind Farm, are proposed immediately north and south respectively of the existing substation. Both are the subject of separate planning submissions.

### Purpose of the project

A Pre-application Consultation and Environmental Appraisal for the proposed extension to the existing 400 kV grid substation associated with Crystal Rig Wind Farm. Scottish Power Transmission Ltd. (SPT) as the transmission licence holder is obliged to provide a substation extension to accommodate the connection from the proposed NnG Offshore Wind Farm to Crystal Rig substation in order to allow connection into the National Grid.

### Description of the project

Crystal Rig substation is located in the Lammermuir Hills approximately 40 km east of Edinburgh and 10 km south of Dunbar in the Parish of Spott. The project involved pre-application consultations and environmental appraisals associated with extending the substation to include the construction of an earth bund graded into the existing ground level.
Lessons learnt
Early and extensive consultation with the local council planners, landscape architects, biodiversity officers and local community aided understanding of their point of view and concerns in the area. This helped to ensure that relevant topics of interest were explained and expanded upon where necessary, for example the requirement for a FWD analysis. In turn, this assisted in preventing programme and cost delays.

The team of local specialists and technical staff had knowledge of the proposal area and previous schemes and had worked with some of the statutory consultees in the area. This helped to inform the appraisal and ensure no delays affected the planning process from the developer’s side.

Some findings of the studies included:
- Low risk of flooding on or off site as a result of the proposals.
- Landscape and visual effects would be minimised by the low height of the extension, building into the hillside and an earthen mound.
- Minimal effects would be experienced following mitigation e.g. pollution prevention siltation traps during earthworks.

Lessons learnt cont.
The project fell within the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, and under the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 was classed as Major Development. However, the proposed substation extension did not fall within the scope of the Town & Country Planning (EIA)(Scotland) Regulations 2011 because the substation will not be involved in the production of electricity, but its transmission. Nevertheless the Environmental Appraisal was undertaken in accordance with EIA best practice.

The Crystal Rig planning application was approved in December 2013.

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