

 Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks TRANSMISSION	Document reference	06102021
	Revision	FINAL
	Function	Major Projects

Meeting	Alyth Substation - Community Liaison Group
Date	6th October 2021
Time	6.00pm – 8.00pm

Alyth Substation CLG Attendees and Apologies:

Attendees	Position
Archie Munro (AM)	SSEN Transmission Lead Project Manager
Ewan Jelly (EJ)	SSEN Transmission Consents & Environment Manager
Louise Anderson (LA)	SSEN Transmission Community Liaison Manager
Frazer MacFarlane (FM)	Independent Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW)
Cllr Colin Stewart (CF)	P&K Council - Strathmore Ward
James MacMillan (JM)	Local Resident
Apologies	Position
Cllr Fiona Sarwar (FS)	Perth & Kinross Council - Strathmore Ward
Cllr Lewis Simpson (LS)	Perth & Kinross Council - Strathmore Ward
Provost Dennis Melloy (DM)	P&K Council - Strathmore Ward
Iain Donaldson (ID)	Alyth Community Council Representative
Edward Clayhills-Henderson (ECH)	Local Resident
Bob Ellis (BE)	Meigle and Ardler Community Council Representative
Adrian Ivory (AI)	Local Resident and Land Owner
Simon Montador (SM)	Alyth Development Trust Representative

Minutes

1.0	Introductions and apologies
1.1	LA introduced SSEN Transmission Consents and Environment Manager EJ and FM who is an independent ECoW on site to ensure Siemens BAM are complying with rules stipulated for environmental works by Perth & Kinross Council. Apologies from Cllr Sarwar, Cllr Simpson, Provost Melloy, Iain Donaldson, Bob Ellis, Adrian Ivory, Simon Montador and Edward Clayhills-Henderson.
2.0	Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
2.1	There were no matters arising and the previous minutes were accepted as a true record of the June meeting. The minutes were proposed by JM and seconded by CS.
3.0	Open Actions
3.1	Action 6 – NM followed up- with PKC Road Networks Engineer but they are not being forthcoming. AM advised that the road has been handed back over to the Council. SSEN Transmission are responsible for one year of maintenance from the date of handover then this returns back to the local authority. Cllr Stewart offered to raise this query at the upcoming Council road safety meeting, but SSEN Transmission can take this no further forward and the action is now closed.
3.2	Action 7 – NM visited AI to show where new pylons going. Action is now closed.
3.3	Action 8 – LA raised AI concerns with both the East Coast 400kV Project Manager and Land Manager. The project Land Manager has contacted AI direct and provided update on the future project works and provided his contact details for future queries/concerns pertaining to the East Coast 400kV project which is due to commence in 2023. Action is now closed.
3.4	Action 9 – LA shared the proposed planting and shrubbery plans with the draft minutes from the June CLG meeting. Action is now closed.

3.5	Action 10 -Site visit for CLG members was held on 18 August. Action is now closed.
3.6	Action 11 – List of all different species of wildlife was presented at the CLG 3 meeting and is provided under point 5.6 in these minutes. Action is now closed.
4.0	Project Update
4.1	<p>AM advised the attendees that in the last quarter the substation Contractor, Siemens BAM have completed the installation of a 300mm cap across the entire site to protect the surface materials and this also gives a good working platform.</p> <p>AM also provided an update that piling works on the substation platform which consists of driving a number of precast concrete piles into the ground across the site are due to commence later this month. This is an essential part of the substation civil works, and the piling is needed in a number of areas across the site. Initially SSEN Transmission estimated these works were going to run throughout the Winter, lasting until the end of February 2022 but it has now been determined the piling scope has been significantly reduced (Approx. 50%) due to extensive ground investigation works so the works will now be complete prior to the site closing for the festive period.</p> <p>AM confirmed that there is no requirement for piling after Christmas unless it is decided to pile future bays, and this will be done ideally within the same visit/window of the original piling schedule.</p> <p>The overhead line (OHL) works being carried out by our Contractor, Balfour Beatty continue to progress well for the OHL tie-ins and remain on course to be completed to programme.</p>
4.2	<p>Upcoming works, for the next six months, were outlined by AM.</p> <p>At the substation, the focus will continue on ground improvement works. All being well, work on the new GIS (Gas Insulated Switchgear) building will start in late November 2021, overlapping with the programmed piling works.</p> <p>Balfour Beatty will complete the installation of the new towers on the south side of the substation, before then moving on to carry out the remaining re-profiling works on the rest of the line. This reprofiling work is required to enable the OHL to operate at a higher temperature and it is therefore able to carry more power along the same wires.</p> <p>The 3 new towers on the southern edge of the substation will be up by the festive break. The temporary towers are already up and starting on 8 October the Contractor will start to move conductors onto the temporary towers to allow the new permanent towers to be erected, the conductors will then be moved back once the permanent towers are in place and the temporary towers will be removed.</p>
4.3	<p>Works scheduled for between January to March 2022 will consist of continuing to focus on the GIS building, hopefully completing the building construction by March 2022. Work on the mechanical and electrical elements will progress in Spring and be the main focus moving through 2022. The target date for completion of all construction works remains Spring/Summer of 2023.</p> <p>On the OHL scope, the new towers will be in place and the temporary bypass will have been removed. Balfour Beatty will complete the remaining reprofiling works across the entire line. Any outstanding vegetation clearance will also be addressed in this period to ensure OHL clearances are to specification.</p>
5.0	Environment and Biodiversity Net Gain Update
5.1	<p>EJ shared the good news story on the success of 3 Osprey chicks successfully fledging this year, 3 chicks are the maximum number of chicks for Ospreys. A nesting platform was constructed by SSEN Transmission which is 25m in height in 2014, with 2 additional 8.5m perch posts installed in early 2021 as additional measures for the Ospreys. This required a planning application to Angus Council.</p> <p>FM along with an ornithologist and the Siemens BAM project site team monitored the Ospreys during all site activities to prevent disturbance and IKM Consulting Ltd monitored the Ospreys for the OHL associated works during all site activities to prevent disturbance. Balfour Beatty changed their work pattern to work at the tower furthest away first to allow the birds to get used to the activities. Both Contractors had an ornithologist team monitoring the breeding Osprey under species protection plans to prevent any possible impact on the breeding pair.</p> <p>Mitigation was developed with advice from Osprey expert Roy Dennis MBE. Roy was very satisfied that the construction work had been carried out without endangering the nesting activities and congratulated the various staff for maintaining high standards in order to minimise disturbance.</p> <p>The Ospreys stayed much longer in the area this year than usual; they usually leave the end of August, but they stayed until mid-September this year. A total of 14 chicks have been raised at the nesting platform since its installation in 2014.</p> <p>SSEN Transmission will be looking to engage with local schools for site visits to cover environmental aspects of the project.</p>
5.2	EJ then spoke about SSEN Transmission's biodiversity ambition. SSEN Transmission is committed to protecting and enhancing the environment by minimising the potential impacts from its construction and operational activities.

	<p>As part of this approach, SSEN Transmission have made a biodiversity commitment to achieving an overall 'no net loss' on new infrastructure projects gaining consent in 2020 onwards and achieving net gain on projects gaining consent in 2025 onwards.</p> <p>The proposed Landscape Mitigation Plan (LMP) for the Alyth substation includes the enhancement of existing mixed plantation woodland, broadleaved native woodland planting, native and wetland scrub planting, species rich grassland seeding of unplanted areas and installation of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) pond. The LMP will meet no net loss and net gain requirements and will result in a 92% net gain in biodiversity of non-irreplaceable habitat which is the highest rating for a site so far for SSEN Transmission.</p>
5.3	<p>The landscape and visual mitigation proposals were shared including the site planting schedule. There will be native scrub planting put along the top of the already installed bunds e.g., hazel, hawthorn, broom, blackthorn, elder and gorse. Existing mixed species tree belt is to be retained along the west of the site and thickened up with new native species planting.</p> <p>Wetland scrub planting will be put in along the proposed SuDS ponds to the east of the site. The SuDS ponds are designed to not have any sitting water.</p>
5.4	<p>An update on the onsite archaeological works was given by EJ. The substation site is adjacent to Haughend Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and under the planning consent SSEN Transmission had a requirement to undertake a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for approval of Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust and Perth & Kinross Council.</p> <p>Siemens BAM appointed CFA Archaeology Ltd to undertake a monitored topsoil strip, which was carried out in advance of the construction works. The monitored topsoil strip led to the identification of archaeological features dating from the Neolithic to the Roman period. Further post excavation research work is now going to be undertaken to further the understand of the find. This will take up to 12 months to finalise the study with techniques such as carbon dating and assessment of charcoal.</p> <p>A watching brief was also carried out for all excavation as well as ground-breaking activity being undertaken on the associated OHL works by CFA and Balfour Beatty. With planning condition to have a 10metre buffer placed around the SAM.</p>
5.5	<p>FM then gave an overview of his role on site. FM carries out weekly reporting which is sent to all of the site project team and Perth & Kinross Council as part of the planning conditions.</p> <p>FM also carries out water quality monitoring, air quality monitoring, site noise monitoring, monitoring mitigation from site construction activities, review against site construction environmental management plan, details of wildlife observations/possible impacts on scheduled works and provides environmental awareness to the substation site team.</p> <p>There will always be a ECoW on site during construction.</p>
5.6	<p>FM spoke about trying to teach the squirrels around site to stay out of the site work areas by placing the feeding perches around the perimeter fence. He has ascertained that there are 3 families of squirrels and installed trail cameras on the feeding perches, so the squirrels are not used to coming through the site. CS asked how data is received, FM explained this is via SD cards, he then filters through the observations. To date the following has been observed in the area:</p> <p>26 x Pied wagtails, 20 x Jackdaws, 15 x Carrion Crows, 18 x Rooks, 43 x Herring gulls, 14 x Great Black-backed gulls, 13 x Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 7 x Woodpeckers, 9 x Buzzards, 22 x Goldfinch, 10 x Wren, 11 x Blue Tit, 12 x Great Tit, 24 x Yellowhammers, 27 x Linnet, 1 x predated racing pigeon (likely by Peregrine Falcon or Sparrowhawk).</p> <p>Field to south of construction site observations included, 200+ Starling, 16 x Grey Partridge, 40+ Linnets, 40+ Yellowhammers, 2 x Mallard, 100+ Feral/Woodpigeons, 60+ Rooks, 2 x Kingfisher, abundant Skylark and Meadow Pipit frequently heard.</p> <p>Up to 8 red squirrels have been observed climbing Scots Pine opposite the site main entrance to breeding dreys by staff and ECoW and trail cameras. Otter territorial established presence on 7 September at the River Alyth. A Badger sett has been observed in the area and Beaver monitoring is ongoing from the River Isla to site.</p> <p>Fox, roe deer, rabbits and two brown hare leverets foraging outside the west perimeter fence in woodland belt have been identified too.</p>
6.0	Community Queries
6.1	<p>JM raised that the condition of the road outside of Gamekeepers Cottage along to the entrance of the substation has deteriorated with a number of potholes now being present. AM advised SSEN Transmission are currently looking to price up for road repairs for this section of the road.</p>
6.2	<p>JM asked how much noise is expected to be emitted once the substation is operational. This information is included within the planning application documentation. JM explained he has bad broadband issues so can't download the documents, LA advised the relevant documents can be posted out as hard copies.</p>

6.3	JM asked about issues with deliveries and had SSEN Transmission experienced any issues with the recent shortage of HGV drivers. AM advised there had been previous issues with concrete, but this is now resolved. JM then asked about the manufacturer of the piles and steelworks. AM confirmed that the piles are manufactured in UK. The sources of steelwork would be confirmed for the next meeting. The Statcom transformers are being manufactured in Germany and the Super Grid Transformers (SGTs) are coming from another SSEN Transmission site.
7.0	AoB
7.1	Nothing to report.
8.0	Date of next CLG
8.1	TBC

Actions.

Number	Action / Update	Owner	Open/Closed
6.	NM to follow up enquiry with Bill Fiskin (PKC Road Networks Engineer) once returned from annual leave in 2 weeks and copy in local CCs and the local councillors.	NM	Closed
7.	NM to visit his AI to see where new pylons are going to be placed to see how this changes the present view.	NM	Closed
8.	LA speak to the EC 400kV land manager and project manager regarding AI concerns on access to fields for this future project.	LA	Closed
9.	SSEN Transmission to share the detail on the proposed planting and shrubbery that will be used on bunds.	LA/AM	Closed
10.	LA to arrange a site visit for all CLG members for early-mid August.	LA	Closed
11.	NM to speak with SBAM Ornithologist Sam about obtaining a list of all the different species of wildlife in the area of the site.	NM	Closed
12.	LA to post out to JM relevant planning application documents referencing noise levels when site operational.	LA	Open
13.	SSEN Transmission to confirm the origin of the steelwork being used on site.	AM	Open