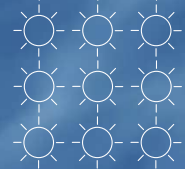




Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

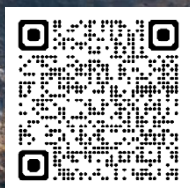
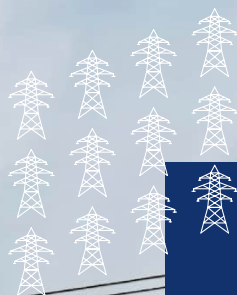
TRANSMISSION



Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400kV overhead line

Final Pre-Application (PAC) Events

February/March 2025



ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP

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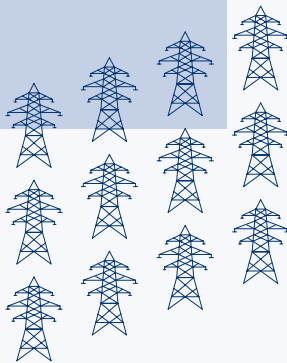
Today's event

These events are to present the proposed overhead line alignment for the Beaully to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400kV overhead line (OHL) project and our responses to feedback received at our last set of engagement events. Consultation has taken place at the corridor, route, refined route, and alignment stages, with feedback from these informing refinements. Before our Section 37 submission, at this stage we are not seeking further route refinements, but welcome comments on how we engage with you in the future.

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The consultation events will be taking place on:

Monday 17 February, 10–1pm Dallas Houldsworth Institute, Dallas	Wednesday 26 February, 3–7pm Baden Powell Centre, Turriff
Monday 17 February, 3–7pm Fornightly Hall, Fornightly	Thursday 27 February, 10–1pm Inchberry Hall, Fochabers
Tuesday 18 February, 3–7pm Culloden Visitor Centre, Culloden	Thursday 27 February, 3–7pm Longmore Community Hall, Keith
Tuesday 18 February, 3–7pm Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness	Monday 3 March, 3–7pm Maud Village Hall, Maud
Wednesday 19 February, 3–7pm Kiltarlity Village Hall, Kiltarlity	Tuesday 4 March, 1.30–5.30pm New Deer Public Hall, New Deer
Thursday 20 February, 2.30–6.30pm Phipps Hall, Beaully	Wednesday 5 March, 3–7pm Longside Parish Church, Longside
Monday 24 February, 3–7pm Stewarts Hall, Huntly	Thursday 6 March, 3–7pm Cuminstown Community Hall, Cuminstown
Tuesday 25 February, 3–7pm Cairnie Memorial Hall, Cairnie	



Powering change together



The time has come to further enhance Scotland's energy infrastructure, providing power for future generations as we move towards net zero.

The shift to a cleaner, more sustainable future is about more than climate change. It's about ensuring future generations have the same opportunities to thrive as we have all had.

Countries around the world are investing in their energy infrastructure to support the demands of modern economies and meet net zero targets. The UK is leading the way in building a modern, sustainable energy system for the future.

We all have a part to play

When it comes to net zero, we have to be in it together. The UK and Scottish governments have ambitious net zero targets, and we're playing our part in meeting them.

We work closely with the National Energy System Operator (NESO) (previously National Grid Electricity System Operator) to connect vast renewable energy resources—harnessed by solar, wind, hydro and marine generation—to areas of demand across the country. Scotland is playing a big role in meeting this demand, exporting two thirds of power generated in our network.

But there's more to be done. By 2050, the north of Scotland is predicted to contribute over 50GW of low carbon energy to help deliver net zero. Today, our region has around 9GW of renewable generation connected to the network.

At SSEN Transmission, it is our role to build the energy system of the future.

We're investing over £20 billion into our region's energy infrastructure this decade, with the potential for this to increase to over £30 billion. This investment will deliver a network capable of meeting 20% of the UK's Clean Power 2030 target and supporting up to 37,000 jobs, 17,500 of which will be here in Scotland.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to find out more about how these policies have been assessed and determined.

Who we are

We're responsible for maintaining and investing in the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland. We're part of SSE plc, one of the world's leading energy companies with a rich heritage in Scotland that dates back more than 80 years. We are also closely regulated by the GB energy regulator Ofgem, who determines how much revenue we are allowed to earn for constructing, maintaining and renovating our transmission network.

What we do

We manage the electricity network across our region which covers a quarter of the UK's land mass, crossing some of the country's most challenging terrain. We connect renewable energy sources to our network in the north of Scotland and then transport it to where it needs to be. From underground/subsea cables and overhead lines to electricity substations, our network keeps your lights on all year round.

Working with you

We understand that the work we do can have an impact on communities. So we're committed to minimising our impacts and maximising all the benefits that our developments can bring to your area. We're regularly assessed by global sustainability consultancy AccountAbility for how we engage with communities. That means we provide all the information you need to know about our plans and how they will impact communities like yours. The way we consult is also a two-way street. We want to hear people's views, concerns, or ideas and harness local knowledge so that our work benefits their communities: today and long into the future. You can share your views with us at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/talk-to-us/contact-us

The Pathway to 2030

Building the energy system of the future will require delivery of significant infrastructure over the next few years. In partnership with the UK and Scottish governments, we're committed to meeting our obligation of connecting new, renewable energy to where it's needed by 2030.

Achieving Net Zero

By 2030, both the UK and Scottish governments are targeting a big expansion in offshore wind generation of 50GW and 11GW respectively. The Scottish Government has also set ambitious targets for an additional 12GW of onshore wind by 2030.

Across Great Britain, including the north of Scotland, there needs to be a significant increase in the capacity of the onshore electricity transmission infrastructure to deliver these 2030 targets and a pathway to net zero.

Securing our energy future

And it's not just about net zero. It's also about building a homegrown energy system, so that geopolitical turmoil around the world doesn't severely impact the UK and push up energy prices.

The UK Government's British Energy Security Strategy further underlines the need for this infrastructure, setting out plans to accelerate homegrown power for greater energy independence. The strategy aims to reduce the UK's dependence on and price exposure to global gas wholesale markets through the deployment of homegrown low carbon electricity generation supported by robust electricity network infrastructure.

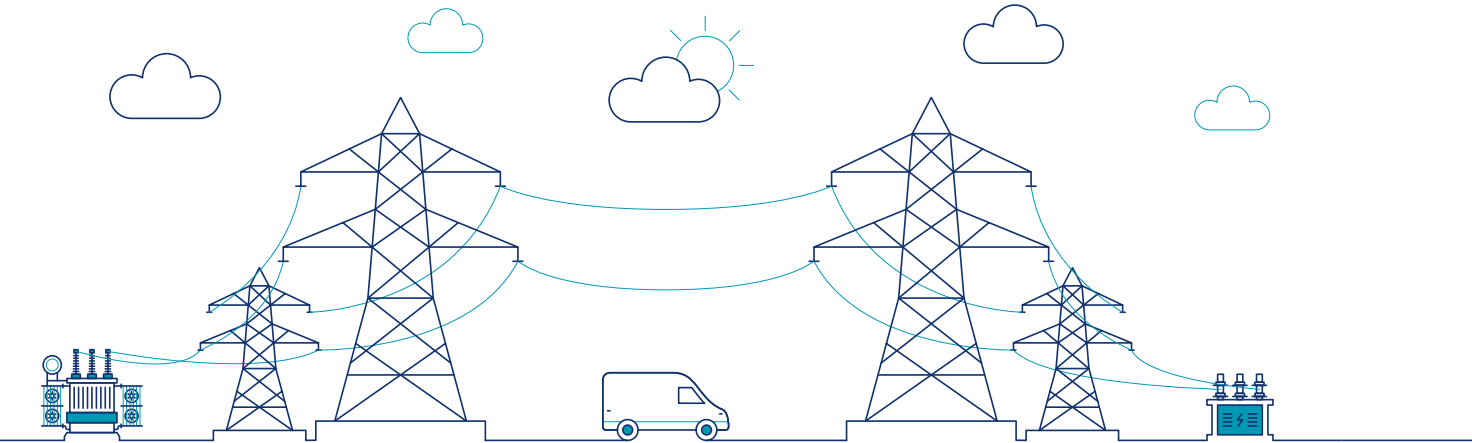
Meeting our 2030 targets

In July 2022, the National Energy System Operator (NESO), published the Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design (HND). This set out the blueprint for the onshore and offshore transmission infrastructure that's required to support the forecasted growth in the UK's renewable electricity. It's an ambitious plan that will help the UK achieve net zero.

What does this mean for the North East of Scotland?

The HND confirmed the requirement for an onshore 400kV connection from Beaully to Blackhillock to New Deer and on to Peterhead. This will enable the significant power transfer capability needed to take power from large scale renewable generation connecting from the Western Isles and from connections north of Beaully to the east at Peterhead and then transport this power to where it is required.

The connection points near Blackhillock and New Deer are needed to pick up power from additional large scale onshore and offshore low carbon renewable generation required to connect into the north-east of Scotland for onward transportation to demand centres.

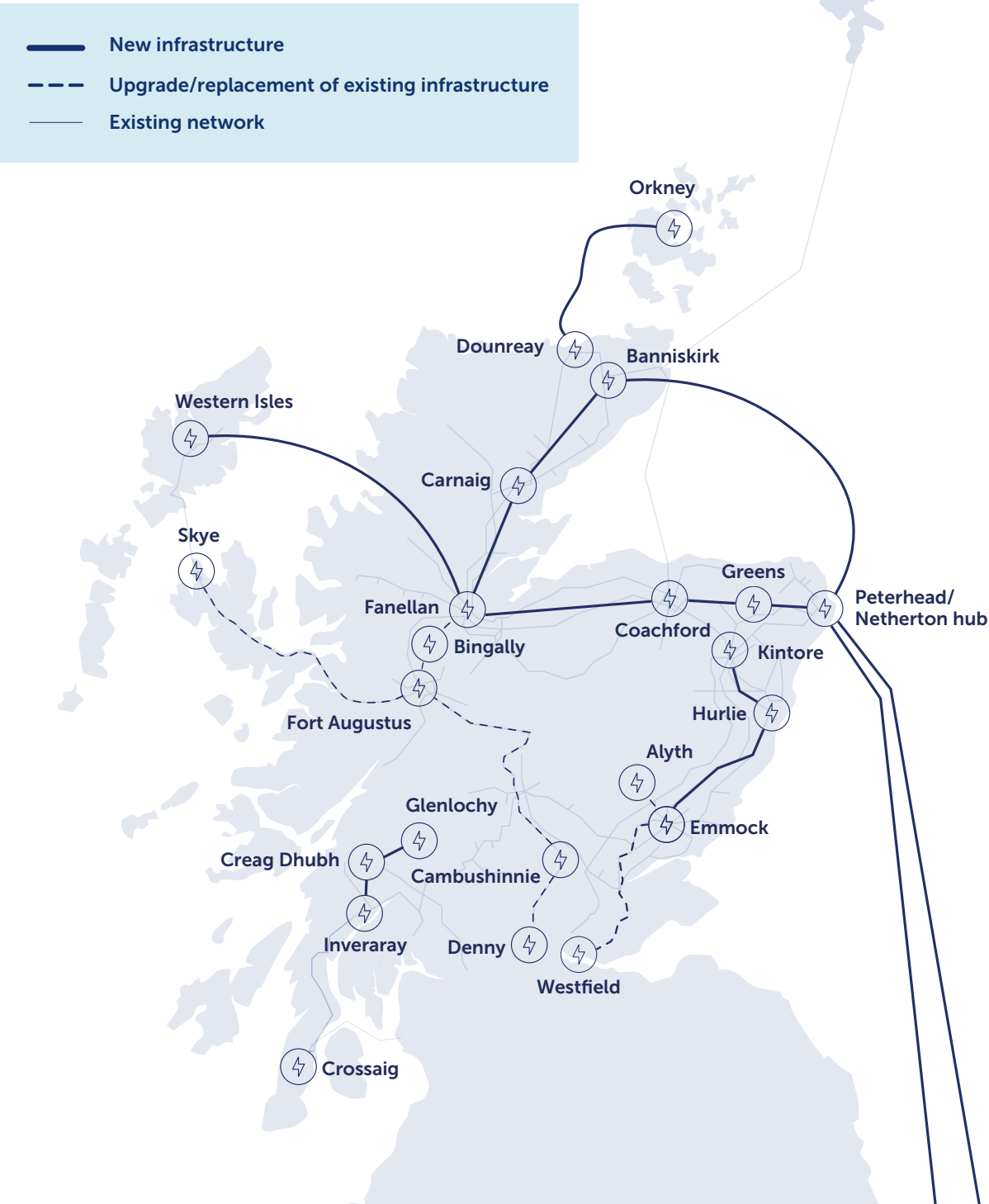


Future network investment requirements

To deliver energy security and net zero, further additional investment in new low carbon electricity generation and the enabling electricity transmission network infrastructure will be required across Great Britain, including the north of Scotland.

These additional investments will soon be subject to extensive public consultation and engagement to help inform their development, with early consultation and engagement expected to take place during 2025.

In March 2024, the independent National Energy System Operator's (NESO) published its 'Beyond 2030' report, which confirmed the need for several new, replacement and upgraded transmission infrastructure projects in the north of Scotland. In December 2024, Ofgem approved the next phase of regulatory funding to take these projects through the development phase.



Project overview

We’re leading on the delivery of critical infrastructure projects to power change in the UK and Scotland. To support the delivery of 2030 offshore wind targets set by the UK and Scottish Governments, and to power local communities, we need to upgrade our existing network. In some key areas, we need to develop entirely new infrastructure.



Beaully to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400kV overhead line

This project spans a significant length of the northeast of Scotland and will involve the construction of a new 400kV overhead line (OHL) between new proposed substations near Beaully, Blackhillock, New Deer and Peterhead. The connection will be delivered via an overhead line of steel lattice towers (commonly referred to as pylons) likely to average around 57m in height, with the overhead line spanning a total length of approx. 185km. Since the project was first consulted upon in September 2022, our project team have been working to refine our proposals, considering feedback from local stakeholders and we are now able to share our Proposed Alignment which will be taken forward in our consent application. The project also includes the permanent diversion of the existing Blackhillock to Rothienorman 400kV OHL into the proposed Coachford substation site. We have now developed our final Proposed Alignment for the Coachford OHL diversions, which will be included in our consent application. Additionally, following construction of the proposed 400kV overhead line, the existing 132kV OHL between Beaully substation and Knocknagael substation will be removed.

New 400kV substations and HVDC converter stations

Alongside the new overhead line, new 400kV substations and HVDC converter stations required to facilitate the project are as follows:

- A new 400kV substation and HVDC converter station located near Beaully called Fanellan.
- A new 400kV substation near Blackhillock, called Coachford.
- A new 400kV substation near New Deer, called Greens.
- A number of new substation, converter station and switching station components near Peterhead, called the Netherton Hub.



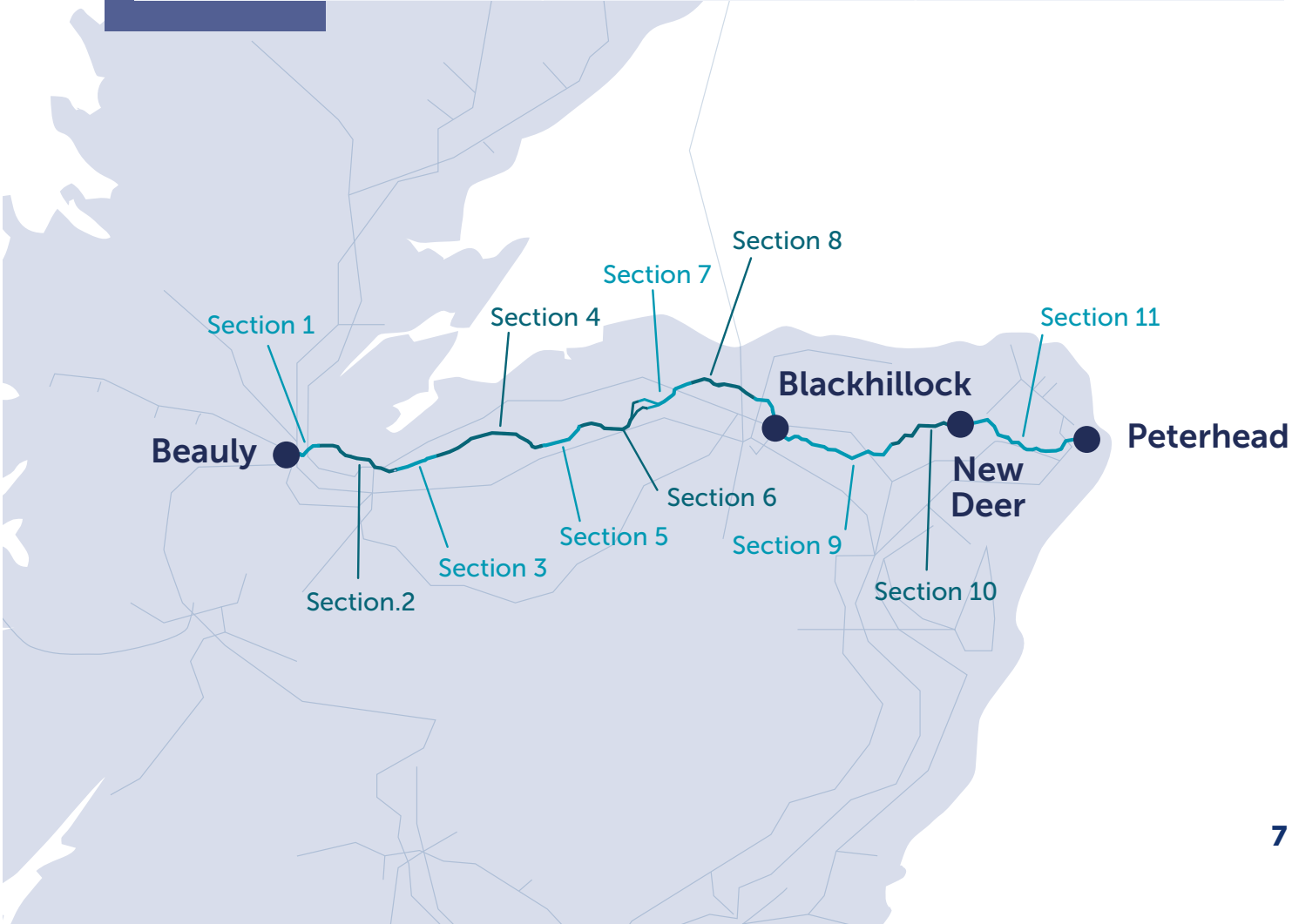
Consult our maps

We’ve split our maps into Sections so that you can refer to the areas of most interest to you in clearer detail. Copies will be available at the consultation to take away with you, or alternatively you can download the copies you need from our project webpage.

Project location

Our overhead line project spans around 185km, and as further refinement took place, we divided the project into 29 sections to allow for more design flexibility and to make it easier to view specific details.

Location	Route Stage Section	Alignment Stage Section
Fanellan substation to south of Beaully	Section 1	Sections 1 and 2
South of Beaully to south of Inverness	Section 2 (and Node 1)	Sections 4 to 6
A9 and River Nairn crossing	Section 3	Section 7
South of Culloden to Ferress	Section 4	Sections 8 to 11
Ferress to South of Forres	Section 5	Section 12
South of Forres to Kellas	Section 6	Sections 13 and 14
Kellas to Teindland	Section 7	Sections 15 and 16
Teindland to Keith	Section 8	Sections 17 and 18
Keith to south of Turriff	Section 9 (and Node 2 and Node 3)	Sections 19 to 24
South of Turriff to New Deer	Section 10	Section 25
New Deer to Peterhead	Section 11 (and Node 4)	Sections 26 to 29



The story so far

Sept 22



We first introduced this project in September 2022, consulting on route corridors for the overhead line.

Mid 23



After refining our proposals, we held further public consultation events regarding potential approx. 1km wide routes for the overhead line, requesting feedback on these potential routes. The consultation closed on 30 June 2023, with over **400** written responses received.

Dec 23



We published a Route Stage Report on Consultation, confirming our proposed route and showing how the options taken forward to the next stage had been informed by this process.

Feb — June 24



Throughout February and March 2024, we held another series of engagement events, sharing where we had further refined our route proposals and sought views. In May and June 2024, we then presented our potential alignment for the overhead line in a series of local events where we sought feedback on these proposals. The events were attended by over **2000** people and received over **290** pieces of written feedback.

Jan 25



Following consideration of the feedback received during our 2024 engagement and further studies and survey work, we published our Alignment Report on Consultation in January 2025. Within the Alignment Report on Consultation, we confirmed the proposed alignment that we will look to take forward in our consent application.

Why we're here today

We are at the alignment stage of the development of our Beauly to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400kV overhead line project, and have identified the Proposed Alignment we are taking forward to develop and submit as part of an application for consent. The Proposed Alignment has been refined from the various options that we investigated during project development.

We are implementing the Scottish Government's Best Practice Guidance for pre-application consultation with stakeholders who may be affected by our development proposals. The pre-application consultation comprises two consultation events that should be held in advance of applying for Section 37 consent.

Our first pre-application consultation was held in May/June 2024, where we presented Potential and Alternative Alignment options. Following that, we considered stakeholder feedback, completed further survey and review, and identified the Proposed Alignment, which we intend to take forward to a Section 37 application.

This second event presents further detail on the Proposed Alignment and provides feedback to stakeholders in respect of comments they provided on proposals. This feedback is also provided in detail in the Alignment Selection Report on Consultation.

Prior to the pre-application consultations, we held consultations (during 2022, 2023 and 2024) on the corridor and route stages of our project. These were in addition to the pre-application consultation events and the feedback received has been fundamental in shaping the design of the Proposed Alignment we are now presenting.

We will provide updated 3D visualisations and maps to show what the proposed overhead line will look like and where it will be located. These are available to view and download from our project website: ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP

We want to know if you have any further comments in relation to how we have responded to feedback and how you'd like us to best engage with you in the future, prior to the submission of our Section 37 application.

It should be noted that our alignment proposals presented at this consultation are the result of extensive engagement and project design, as such, there is very limited scope to make material changes at this stage.

Working with you

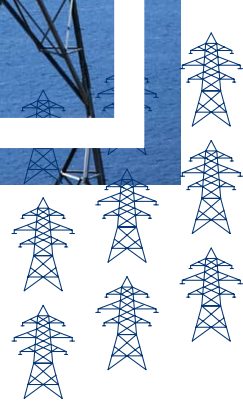
The work we have planned is significant and has the potential to deliver wide ranging benefits in your community, Scotland, and beyond. We know that delivering our projects will require a lot of work that has the potential to impact on you. That's why we want to work with you at every step of the way throughout the planning and delivery stages of these essential works. We are committed to ensuring a meaningful engagement process that actively seeks the views of everyone affected by our plans. That means making our plans clear and easily accessible, so that you can give us input throughout each stage of the development process. We appreciate all feedback received to date which has been analysed by the project team. All comments have been considered and actioned where constraints allow.

A more detailed appraisal of feedback regarding our alignment, can be accessed via our Alignment Report on Consultation, published on our website: ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP



Download Our Report on Consultation (ROC)

A detailed appraisal of feedback received in response to our alignment can be accessed via our Alignment Report on Consultation, January 2025.



Selecting an alignment

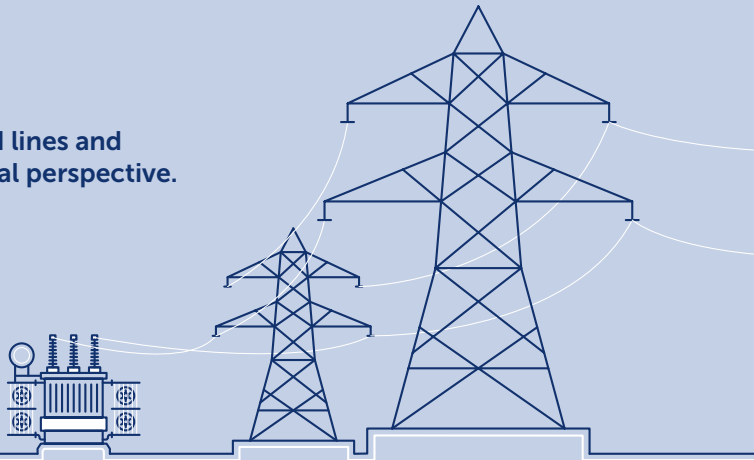
The consideration of alignment options and design solutions brings together work by four main disciplines:

Engineering Team

Who identify engineering constraints and where overhead lines and cables can be installed from a construction and operational perspective.

Key considerations include:

- Infrastructure crossings
- Environmental design
- Ground conditions
- Accessibility
- Proximity to existing infrastructure and properties



Communities Team

Who work with communities and make sure that their feedback during the consultation process is closely considered during project refinement.

Key considerations include:

- Community engagement
- Consultation responses review
- Recreational areas and areas of local interest



Land Team

Who engage with landowners to identify key land use constraints.

Key considerations include:

- Landowner engagement
- Mitigating effects of infrastructure on land and properties
- Reaching land agreements



Striking a balance

When selecting an alignment, we need to carefully balance key considerations relating to engineering, environment, cost and social aspects, in each section of the overhead line route. We then consider the likely effect and level of impact of each consideration, which will vary from section to section. This can be based on how populated the area is, the outcomes of environmental and engineering surveys, stakeholder and community feedback, the presence of peat, the local water environment, if there is existing infrastructure we need to avoid, if the effects on land and property can be mitigated and if a constructable alignment can be identified.

You can download our Alignment Report on Consultation and Alignment Maps from our website: ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP

Ultimately, we need to balance a range of factors and present the solution we consider most viable, to then put forward for consultation. We consulted in Summer 2024 on our Potential Alignment, and have now confirmed the route we are taking forward as the Proposed Alignment within our Report on Consultation.

Our Alignment Report on Consultation details the consultation responses received as part of our Refined Route and Alignment Options consultation process for the project and where appropriate, shows how the alignment option being taken forward to consent has been informed by this process. This can be downloaded from the project webpage or viewed during the consultation events.

Proposed Alignment overview map



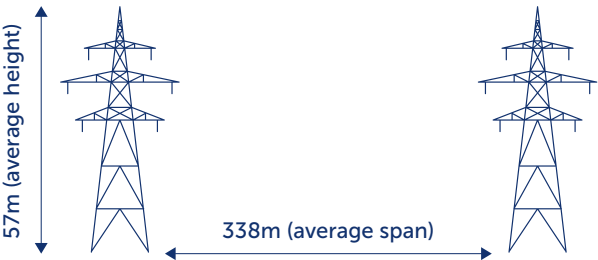
About the overhead line

400kV double circuit overhead line

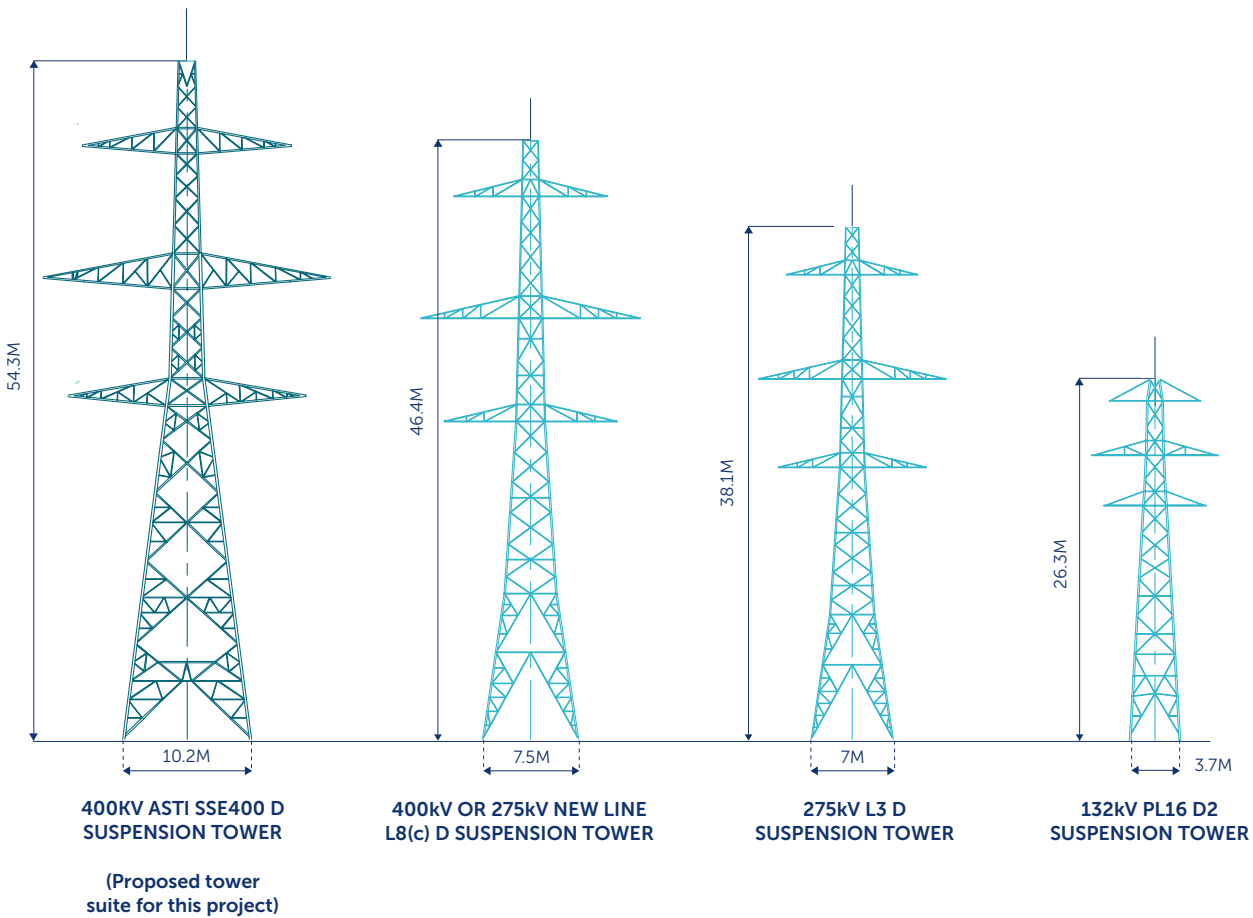
The required technology for the new 400kV link between Beaulieu to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead has been determined to be a new double circuit 400kV HVAC (High Voltage Alternating Current) overhead line.

The overhead line would consist of steel lattice towers with an average height of approx. 57m which would support six conductor bundles on six cross arms and an earth wire between the peaks for lightning protection. The average distance between towers is expected to be 338m. Tower height and the distance between them will vary dependent on several factors such as altitude, climatic conditions and topography.

This is similar to our Beaulieu—Denny line, where 80% of its 600-plus towers are below 57m, ranging from 42m to 65m in height.



Please note, this graphic is an indicative representation of the standard height and not average height of each tower type. This is because the average height depends on the specific topography encountered by each overhead line.



The challenges with undergrounding at 400kV

The environmental, technical, and operational constraints associated with undergrounding at 400kV make it extremely challenging to deliver in many areas of Scotland. For underground cables at this capacity, longer than 1-2km, additional substation infrastructure would also be needed, enlarging the project's footprint.

Underground cables at 400kV are estimated to be between 5 and 10 times more expensive than overhead lines, and since these costs are reflected in consumer bills, it's a factor that needs to be considered. To deliver the necessary capacity, up to 30 parallel cables will be required. To achieve the required spacing, a trench of over 40m wide would need to be excavated, typically between 1m and 7m deep. During construction, a working corridor of over 70m wide is required for cable installation. This can result in significant land use constraints, typically more so than overhead line construction activities, particularly for farming operations.

BETWEEN 5–10x
More expensive than overhead lines

UP TO 30
Parallel cables required

Trench of **OVER 40M WIDE AND 1–7M DEEP** would need to be excavated

OVER 70M WIDE working corridor, which can result in **significant land use constraints**

Why can't the development be placed offshore?

In its assessment of what is required to meet 2030 targets, the National Energy System Operator (NESO), concluded there is a need for both onshore and offshore projects.

Overhead lines can carry roughly three times more power than subsea cables, making them more efficient and cost effective for energy bill payers, whilst technical challenges and constraints limit the use of only offshore solutions.

Moreover, onshore energy infrastructure helps support local electricity needs and improves the network's reliability across northern Scotland.

Visit our Frequently Asked Questions page to find out more about our engineering and technology considerations including more details regarding underground and offshore cables: ssen-transmission.co.uk/2030faqs

Managing construction impacts

We are committed to minimising the impact of construction through avoiding potential issues by designing them out, undertaking thorough environmental assessments and working closely with the local community.

Our focus includes mitigating effects, for example to people, biodiversity, water, soil, and traffic disturbances. A Construction Environment Management Plan will be set up, to ensure mitigation is put in place and its effectiveness is monitored throughout the construction phase.

During construction, expected short-term impacts may include noise and traffic disruptions. Before starting, we'll have a plan to manage these, including organising deliveries and travel to avoid busy times and sensitive areas.

We'll work closely with community groups and contractors to ensure adherence to mitigation measures. Typically, most project components will take around four years to complete, however these works will be phased across the length of the overhead line with bursts of activity and quiet periods.

Additional considerations

Permanent removal of the existing Beaully to Knocknagael 132kV overhead line

Following construction of the proposed 400kV overhead line, the existing 132kV overhead line between Beaully substation and Knocknagael substation will be dismantled and removed. Tower removal is typically completed by cutting the tower legs and felling the tower in a controlled manner. Access to tower locations for dismantling works will be taken using temporary trackway panels or all terrain vehicles. The operational corridor associated with the existing overhead line route will be returned to the landowner following reinstatement.

Permanent diversion of the existing Blackhillock to Rothienorman 400kV overhead line into Coachford substation

The proposed diversions of the existing Blackhillock to Rothienorman 400kV overhead line into and out of the proposed Coachford substation site will be constructed using the same tower design as the existing overhead line (the L8 tower design illustrated in the graphic on page 14). Following construction and energisation of the diversions, the section of the existing overhead line between the two diversions will be removed.

Permanent realignment of the existing Beaully to Blackhillock 275kV overhead line south of Ferness

A 2.6km section of the existing Beaully to Blackhillock 275kV overhead line south of Ferness needs to be realigned slightly further north, to allow space for the proposed 400kV overhead line to pass the consented Cairn Duhie Wind Farm turbine locations. The section of realigned overhead line will be constructed using a standard 275kV tower design, with an average height of 45m. Following construction and energisation of the realigned section of overhead line, the redundant section of the existing overhead line will be dismantled and removed.

Crossing existing overhead lines

Where the proposed 400kV overhead line crosses existing transmission infrastructure, either a 'diamond crossing' or 'duck under' tower arrangement will be used to allow the existing overhead line to pass underneath the proposed overhead line. For both types of crossing, the existing overhead line would be split into two single circuits, which would pass separately under the new overhead line using a flat formation (horizontal) tower.

Works will also be required to some existing distribution network infrastructure (voltages of 66kV and below) to facilitate safe working and operating conditions for the new overhead line. These works are likely to include short sections of undergrounding in the vicinity of the new overhead line, and will be undertaken by Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution (SHEPD).

Supporting development

Additional works that will also be required as part of the construction of the new overhead line include the following:

- Upgrade of existing and creation of new access tracks, described in more detail on pages 18-19;
- Vegetation clearance and management;
- Temporary working areas around the proposed tower locations to facilitate construction;
- At some tower locations, the formation of temporary flat areas from which the conductors (wires) will be pulled through during construction. These areas will contain earthed metal working surfaces referred to as Equipotential Zones (EPZs);
- Other temporary measures required during construction, such as measures to protect road, railway and water crossings during construction (e.g. scaffolding).
- Temporary construction compounds will also be required at locations along the overhead line route. The final location and design of temporary site compounds will be confirmed by our Contractor and separate planning consents will be sought as required.

Temporary overhead line diversions

A number of temporary overhead line diversions will also be needed to enable the changes to existing overhead lines (realignments, diversions and crossings), to allow for continued operation of the electricity network during the construction works. It is currently anticipated that 10 temporary diversions will be required along the route of the overhead line, the locations of which are illustrated on the maps provided. Temporary diversions will require the construction of temporary towers, onto which the existing overhead line conductors (wires) will be moved. Once the main construction works have been completed, the temporary towers will be dismantled and the surrounding areas reinstated.

Limits of deviation

The Limits of Deviation (LoD) define the maximum extent within which a development can be built. The location of the proposed tower positions, access tracks and associated temporary and permanent infrastructure (as illustrated on the maps provided) has been determined on the basis of environmental and technical considerations, including engineering analysis of ground conditions and suitability based on desk studies and site walkover surveys. Investigation of sub-surface and geotechnical conditions at the proposed tower locations has not yet been completed. It is therefore possible that individual tower locations, working areas and access tracks might need to be altered following completion of geotechnical investigations (referred to as micrositing). To strike a balance between providing certainty of the location of the proposed development and any environmental impacts, and the need for some flexibility over individual tower locations, horizontal and vertical LoD need to be defined within which the proposed development will be constructed. No towers or working areas would be located outside the LoD proposed.

As we continue to undertake our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and more detailed design work, we are working to identify the exact LoD required for the project, based on site-specific environmental constraints and engineering considerations. At this time, we have allowed for a horizontal LoD of up to 100m either side of the alignment centreline, extending to 145m through forestry and 200m around angle tower positions, where larger temporary working areas will be required. A vertical LoD of $\pm 9\text{m}$ is likely to be sought for the proposed tower heights, to ensure that minimum statutory ground clearances can be maintained once further engineering design work has been completed.

These LoDs will be further refined and confirmed within our consent application to the Energy Consents Unit of the Scottish Government.

Operational Corridor

The development of the proposed alignment has sought to avoid and minimise impacts on woodlands and forestry where possible, however due to the project area being heavily forested and challenging topography along the route, impacts on forestry are unavoidable.

Where the proposed overhead line alignment passes through areas of woodland and commercial forestry, an Operational Corridor is identified to ensure the safe operation of the overhead line. Trees are removed within the Operational Corridor to facilitate construction and ensure continued safe operation of the overhead line. The width of the operational corridor will vary depending on the type of woodland or forestry and local topography, but will typically require a width of 45m either side of the overhead line centreline in coniferous woodland. This may be reduced down to 30m either side in broadleaved woodland subject to site specific checks. The required operational corridor through each area of woodland will be confirmed within our consent application, following completion of ongoing woodland assessments.

In accordance with the Scottish Government's Control of Woodland Removal Policy, we are committed to providing appropriate compensatory planting for any net loss of woodland. The extent, location and composition of compensatory planting will be agreed with Scottish Forestry.



Our access strategy

Constructing and maintaining our overhead line

We are currently developing our access strategy, which considers access requirements for construction and maintenance of the overhead line. Access requirements have also informed the Proposed Alignment selection process, as a key engineering consideration. We have now determined our proposed access routes for each tower location and established which of these are planned to be upgrades to existing access or new temporary or permanent access tracks. These proposals are available to view at our consultation events. A detailed traffic and transport assessment will form part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, which assesses potential impacts of construction traffic and the capacity of local roads to accommodate this traffic. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be agreed with the local authorities prior to works commencing.

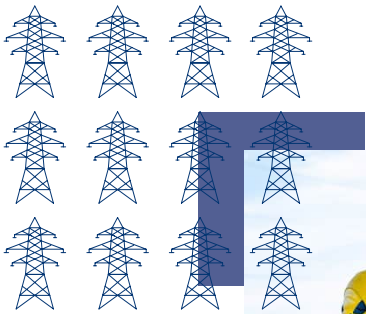
The table below explains the different types of tracks that are typically considered and what they are required for.

Type of access	What does it mean?
Construction Access	During construction, stone tracks would typically be used to gain access to each of the tower locations. This would normally be temporary except in locations where it is considered that it needs to be retained to maintain safe access for future operations and maintenance. There are different types of construction access tracks, these include cut tracks, surface tracks and floated roads. Each provide different benefits depending on the ground conditions in the area. A typical access track would be of a minimum 4m in width however this could be wider in areas where heavy plant require access.
Statutory Inspection and General Maintenance Access	When designing the overhead lines, we need to consider how our operational teams will get back to the locations in the future to carry out routine inspections and maintenance. Operational access would normally consist of an off-road 4x4 vehicle with a trailer being able to reach each tower. If we consider it not possible for a 4x4 to be capable of doing this, we would need to consider alternative access either by identifying a route where temporary track mats can be installed as and when required or through construction of a permanent track. In open fields with fair ground conditions and generally accessible terrain no additional permanent access would normally be required.
Demolition Access	At times we may need to consider access for future safe removal of an overhead line. This doesn't mean having access to every location to be able to dismantle the towers, but it should consider how we may take the access and what additional roads, panelling would be required if we were to do so.

Type of access	What does it mean?
Heavy Maintenance Access (cont.)	This covers if any future refurbishment or modifications would be required for the line. For this we have to consider what locations heavy plant would need to be able to access and have plans on how they would get to these locations. Typically, the main focus here is access to the angle towers. At angle towers this is where the overhead line conductors get pulled onto the towers so additional access and space is needed in these locations during construction to carry this out. Where these locations cannot be easily accessed, we would look to retain permanent access so that if a conductor needed replaced in the future this could be carried out safely whilst minimising the timeframes required to perform the maintenance.
Helicopters	The use of helicopters for construction of steel lattice towers is feasible, however, the operational restrictions (e.g. weather, proximity to public roads and environmental factors), and the significant cost implications, for a project of this scale are key considerations. The use of helicopters is likely to be required in more remote sections of the project, and where particular environmental or geographical constraints necessitate their use. Where helicopters are used, construction plant would still require access to each tower location to facilitate construction and erection of towers. Helicopter landing zones would also require to be identified.

Public road improvements

Feedback recieved included questions about improvements to public roads. Public road improvements (PRI) will be required in some locations to facilitate construction traffic travelling along existing public roads. These works could include upgrades such as road widening, installation of temporary or permanent passing places, new or upgraded road junctions, and upgrades to or replacement of existing bridges. Further information on PRI works will be provided in the EIA as part of the application for s37 consent.



Addressing feedback

Consulting on the alignment

In May 2024 we launched our Alignment Consultation, seeking comments on the Potential Alignment identified for the new 400kV overhead line (OHL) proposed between new substation and HVDC converter station sites near Beaully (Fanellan), Blackhillock (Coachford), New Deer (Greens) and Peterhead (Netherton Hub).

We presented a Potential Alignment for the OHL, alongside identified alternatives which had also been considered. We sought comments from statutory authorities, key stakeholders, elected representatives, the public and landowners on the alignment selection process undertaken and the Potential Alignment.

Comments received then informed further consideration of the Potential Alignment with a view to confirming a **Proposed Alignment** to be taken forward to consent application.

Feedback

When we consulted on the Potential Alignment in Summer 2024, we held events in 15 locations along the length of the route, between 20 May and 20 June. A total of **1000** attendees attended.

During the 8 week feedback period which closed on 2 August 2024, **297** responses were received specific to this project. This feedback was then analysed and reviewed by the project team to determine where changes could be considered.



Our Report on Consultation (ROC)

A detailed appraisal of feedback received in response to our alignment can be accessed via our Alignment Report on Consultation, January 2025.



The following table has been created to illustrate some of the direct changes to the proposed alignment or deviations that have occurred based on feedback received:

Route Section 2 (Alignment Sections 3-6) – south of Beaully to south of Inverness

Feedback	Response
In Alignment Section 4, concerns were raised about potential impacts to the recently restored Cononbank wetland area and visual impacts along the A862 at Easter Moniak. Requests were also received for minor changes to the Potential Alignment to minimise impacts on existing land use.	Potential Alignment 4A has been refined slightly to reduce impacts to Cononbank wetland, to increase separation from the A862 at Easter Moniak and to accommodate landowner requests to reduce impacts to existing land use.

Route Section 6 (Alignment Sections 13-14) - South of Forres to Kellas

Feedback	Response
In Alignment Section 14, concerns were raised about impacts to native woodland, interaction with wind farm access tracks and impacts to emergency telecommunications links.	Changes have been made to the Proposed Alignment in Section 14 to increase distance from a residential property, reduce impacts to native woodland, avoid crossing the wind farm access route and avoid impacting on emergency telecommunications links.

Route Section 8 (Alignment Sections 17-18) – Teindland to Keith

Feedback	Response
Consultation feedback from Scottish Water highlighted concerns about the close proximity of the Potential Alignment (Alignment 17B) to public water supply.	Through further discussions with Scottish Water, an alternative alignment (Alignment 17D) was identified which moves the proposed development further from Scottish Water infrastructure. Following further assessments, Alignment 17D has been selected as the Proposed Alignment as it will reduce the potential for impacts on the public water supply. However, it is recognised that Alignment 17D may have increased landscape and visual impact in comparison to Alignment 17B, therefore we are exploring opportunities for undergrounding one of the existing transmission OHLs in this section. Further information is provided in the Alignment Report on Consultation.

Route Section 9 (Alignment Sections 19-24)

Feedback	Response
In Section 19, concerns were raised about landscape and visual impacts southeast of Keith, where the existing Blackhillock-Rothienorman 400kV OHL diversions near Coachford substation align closely with the Beaulieu-Blackhillock 400kV OHL Proposed Alignment.	In response to feedback, an alternative alignment for the diversion of the existing OHL into Coachford substation around the southeast side of the Balloch Hill has been assessed (Alignment B6). However, on balance this alignment will not be taken forward as it passes in closer proximity to more properties, and although reducing 'wirescaping' to the west of Balloch Wood, it increases 'wirescaping' around Glen of Coachford and Braehead. This alternative alignment also has the potential for cumulative effects on Auchenanchie Castle and would result in significant increased capital costs which do not outweigh the benefits relating to landscape fit and distance from Mill Wood SSSI. In recognition of the concerns raised, we have however reconsidered one of the previously assessed alignment options for the OHL diversion (Alignment B5), which passes through woodland on the lower slopes of Balloch Wood and behind a row of properties when compared to the Potential Alignment B1. Whilst Alignment B5 is more constrained due to proximity to public and private water supplies and increased forestry impacts, it does reduce the cumulative landscape and visual impact in this area for local residents, and on balance will therefore be taken forward as the Proposed Alignment. Further information is provided in the Alignment Report on Consultation.

Further information is provided within our recently published Alignment Report on Consultation and is available on the project webpage: ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP



FAQs

Since we first consulted on the project in Autumn 2022, the most common questions received have been regarding project need and technology choices. To fully address these questions and more, our Frequently Asked Questions webpage (ssen-transmission.co.uk/2030faqs) provides further explanation and additional documents addressing these questions. For ease, we've also included some information addressing the chosen technology on Page 15 of this booklet and information regarding the project requirement in the 'Pathway to 2030' pages.

In October, we hosted a webinar to outline the differences behind technology options regarding our Pathway to 2030 projects, titled '**Overground, underground, or subsea - how decisions are made on where electricity transmission lines go**'. The recording of the webinar can be accessed via the project webpage.

More recently, we've received some project specific questions in particular relating to the following topics, where we've looked to address as follows:

Question Theme	Response
Socio-economic Benefits	Our next business plan, which includes our Pathway to 2030 projects, will see us invest over £20bn in the north of Scotland's electricity grid, potentially increasing to over £30bn, with these investments key to support the UK Government's Clean Power 2030 target and to help deliver energy security. This investment will create a major economic opportunity for people and businesses within the UK, particularly in Scotland. Through our supply chain partners, hundreds of local businesses will be utilised to provide services to deliver these projects. We forecast that our investment could contribute up to £15bn of value the UK economy, £3bn of which in the north of Scotland. Furthermore, the plan will be a significant driver of employment, supporting up to 37,000 jobs across the UK, with over 8,000 specifically in the north of Scotland. With the launch of our Housing Strategy, we've also pledged to support the delivery of over 1,000 new homes across the north of Scotland, as we focus on finding workforce accommodation solutions that will provide a legacy for communities where the lack of housing for local people is a key issue. Alongside this, our Community Benefit Fund will allow a share of the benefits to go directly to communities where this new infrastructure is located as well as to projects benefitting communities across our Network region. You can read more about our socio-economic benefits at www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/2030faqs, or ask a member of staff for a leaflet about the benefits these projects are anticipated to bring. We're also keen to hear any suggestions you may have regarding leaving a lasting socio-economic legacy.

Question	Answer
Cumulative Impact	Communities highlighted the potential impact of further renewable developments in the areas as a result of the network upgrades. The concerns about the cumulative impact of both construction and operation as well as the visual impact of infrastructure was also included in feedback. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report will include an assessment of cumulative effects for each topic included within the report. This will include the effects of the Proposed Development in combination with other SSEN Transmission developments and those by other developers so that the full impact of development in the area can be understood. Developer Forums have been established for the Greens, New Deer and Peterhead areas, open to developers and asset owners with projects proposed to connect within these areas. The aim of these forums is to understand each other's plans, share information and ultimately reduce disruption to the local community and other affected stakeholders.
Property Prices	We understand that there are concerns about the potential impact of our proposed developments on properties within the vicinity of our proposed overhead line alignments and substations sites. We will look to mitigate impacts on residential properties as far as possible and these impacts will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessments that will accompany our applications for consent. Extensive surveys will be carried out at identified receptors, including selected residential properties so that we are able to model potential impacts on the wider area. Concerns in relation to impacts on property continue to be noted by our team however, as a regulated business, SSEN Transmission is obliged to follow a statutory legal framework under the Electricity Act 1989 and Land Compensation Act 1961. If you are entitled to compensation under the legal framework we will assess any claim on a case-by-case basis under the direction of this legal framework. If this is the case, we will recommend that you engage a professional adviser and we will generally meet reasonably incurred professional fees in these circumstances. However, for the avoidance of doubt, we should advise that we will not meet fees incurred in objecting to our proposed developments.
Mitigating Landscape and Visual Impacts	Throughout our engagement activities, residents have informed us of concerns relating to the visual impact of the proposed development. Where specific rationalisation of existing infrastructure requests have been made, some of these requests are under review by our system planning team to understand the constraints and opportunities in doing so. This involves detailed studies to assess the network performance impacts of introducing underground cables to this part of the network which must be assessed against any other areas of additional cable potentially required as part of the wider Pathway to 2030 projects. We will provide an update on this upon conclusion of the required studies.

Question	Answer
	Within feedback there was reference to considering other tower designs such as T-Pylon which has recently been developed for use in England and Wales. We don't consider it suitable for our projects in the north of Scotland for several reasons such as weather impact, material lifespan, transport and delivery, design flexibility and reliability and repair. Within our Section 37 application will be our limit of deviation which will define the maximum extent with which our development can be built. This will allow for tower 'micrositing' to minimise, where possible, the visual impacts on properties.
Environmental Impacts	We have received feedback regarding potential environmental impacts, particularly on local biodiversity. Recognizing that climate change poses one of the greatest risks to biodiversity, these projects are essential for addressing the climate emergency and achieving net zero emissions in Scotland and the UK. However, we acknowledge that delivering these projects may result in unavoidable impacts. We assure stakeholders that environmental responsibilities are taken seriously, with environmental factors integrated at every stage alongside technical and economic considerations. We follow a mitigation hierarchy: avoiding sensitive areas where possible, minimizing impacts, providing mitigation, and identifying restoration opportunities. All consent applications will include detailed environmental assessments by external specialists, addressing a wide range of environmental topics raised during consultations and proposing mitigation measures. Construction and operational impacts will be thoroughly assessed in the (EIA) Report stage. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), prepared and implemented by the Principal Contractor, will guide environmental management during construction. The CEMP will align with commitments in the EIA Report, statutory consents, and industry best practices, with oversight from a qualified Environmental Clerk of Works (EnvCoW) and support from other professionals. Beyond minimizing impacts, we are committed to achieving Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on all projects and compensatory planting with native species where possible. For unavoidable impacts on irreplaceable habitats, such as peatland or ancient woodland, we will restore more habitat than is affected.
Impact on Agricultural Land	We received feedback raising concerns over the potential impact of the Proposed Development on agricultural land across the area. In finalising tower positions where they may impact agricultural operations, we will work with landowners to minimise operational impacts where possible. We are committed to reinstating affected farmland to its original condition and any crop losses and any other compensatable losses will be assessed on a case-by case basis.

The consenting process

The legislation governing the consenting of overhead line (OHL) projects in Scotland is the Electricity Act 1989. Applications for consent to construct and operate new overhead lines are made under Section 37 of this Act and are referred to as “Section 37 Consents”.

The Section 37 application will be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, as well as standalone reports such as a planning statement, and detailed design drawings. A Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report will also be provided, and this will provide details of the public and stakeholder consultation undertaken, a summary of the feedback received, and our response to that feedback.

We plan to submit our Section 37 application to the Scottish Government’s Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in Spring 2025.

Once an application for consent has been submitted, all documents relating to the submission will be made publicly available on the ECU portal and our own website, printed copies will also be provided at publicly accessible locations.

Please note that feedback provided as part of this final pre-application consultation event are not formal representations to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU). Once an application for consent has been submitted, there will be an opportunity for the public to make formal representations to the ECU before it takes a decision.

We will update stakeholders once the application for consent has been submitted and we will also publish newspaper advertisements to inform local communities and the general public of the applications being made to Scottish Ministers.

Determining a Section 37 application and communicating outcomes

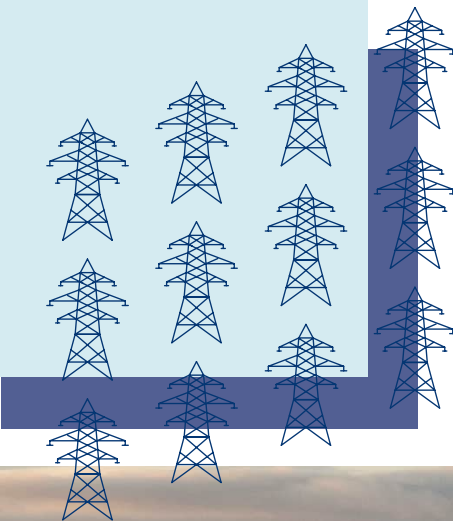
Section 37 applications are determined on a case-by-case basis by the Scottish Ministers.

We anticipate receiving a decision on the consent application within 12 months from the application date, however timescales may vary.

When a decision is made, the ECU will send us a decision notice, copying in the local planning authorities and other consultation bodies. The decision notice is a record of the reasons for the decision and, if consent is granted, it contains the conditions that must be satisfied in order to implement the consent.

The ECU and local planning authorities will publish the decision notice via their own channels, and we must publicise the outcome on our website, in the Edinburgh Gazette, and in a local newspaper. We’ll also communicate the decision by mainstream media and other various means, including email updates to Elected Members and those signed up to project updates, social media, and press releases.

Read more about the Section 37 process by scanning the QR code below or visit: ssen-transmission.co.uk/2030faqs



3D visualisations

We understand that local stakeholders need to be able to visualise what the development may look like in their local area. We've provided 3D visualisations which model the potential alignment into the local landscape to help understanding of the proposals in terms of the visual impact, distance and height.

The following are some images taken from the 3D model created for the Beaully to Peterhead overhead line from a range of different topographies.

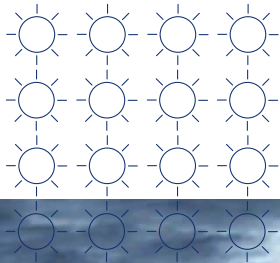


Overhead line through trees

To get a better sense of the proposals in full, a visualisation portal including flythrough video is also available to view from the project webpage and our consultants, 3D Webtech, will be assisting us at our consultation events with copies of the model that attendees can interact with during the events.

Photomontages

Photomontage visualisations will also be produced as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Once the EIA is completed, we'll ensure these photomontages are available to view.

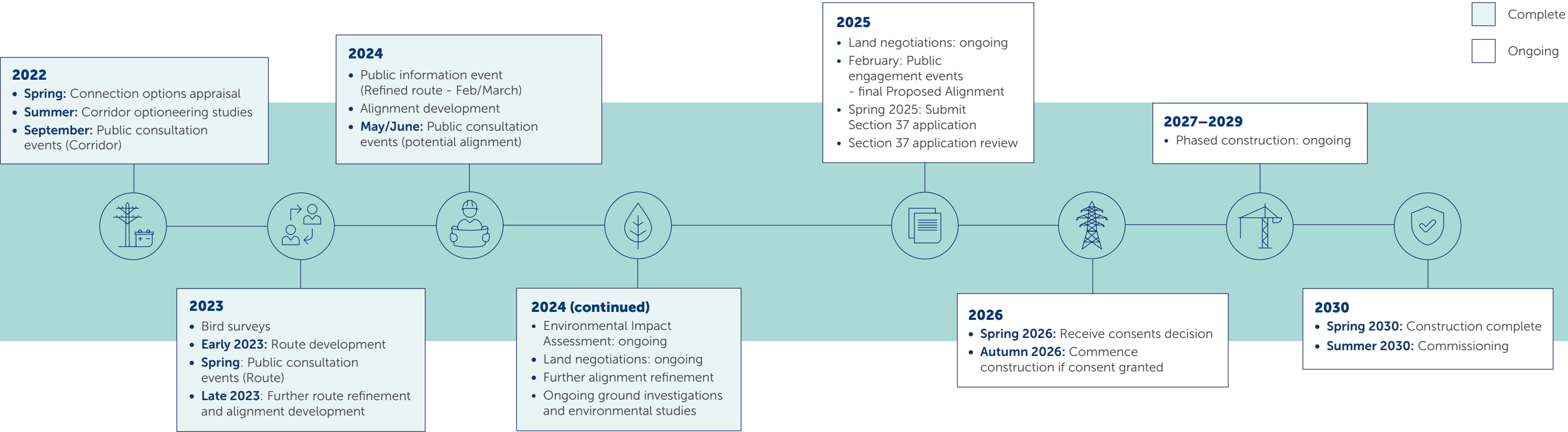


Overhead line river crossing

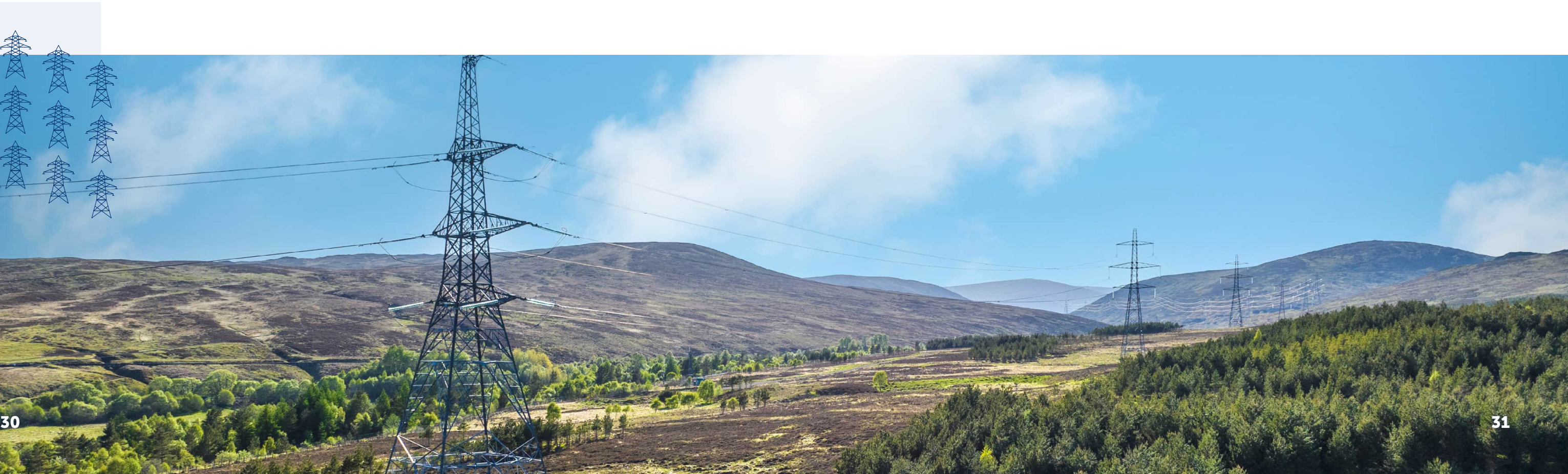


Overhead line in the distance via a viaduct

Project timeline



*Future dates are indicative and subject to change



Have your say

We value community and stakeholder feedback. Our alignment proposals are the result of extensive engagement with a wide range of different stakeholders and we believe the proposed alignment strikes a balance between the various different considerations that we must take into account.

As part of the Section 37 application process, we are expected to hold at least two pre-application consultation events prior to submitting the application. This is the second and final event providing the opportunity for members of the public to respond to the proposed alignment and consider our responses to the feedback we have received from our previous consultation events.

Earlier, additional public consultation was also undertaken at the corridor, route and route refinement, and potential alignment stages.

Submitting your final comments to us:

We intend to submit our application for consent in Spring 2025. Prior to this, you can submit your final formal comments to us before our feedback period closes on Friday 21st March. We welcome final comments from members of the public, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders regarding our proposals until such time as we submit our consent application.

Once an application for consent has been submitted, there will be an opportunity for the public to make formal representations directly to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit before it takes a decision.

What we're seeking views on

During our last public consultation events in May and June 2024, we wanted to know your thoughts on our potential and alternative alignments.

Now that we have selected our proposed alignment, we want to know if you have any further comments in relation to how we have responded to feedback and how you'd like us to best engage with you in the future, prior to the submission of our Section 37 application.

You can also follow us on social media:



How to provide feedback

Submit your feedback online by scanning the QR code on this page or via the form on our project webpage at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP

Email the feedback form to the Community Liaison Manager, or write to us enclosing the feedback format the back of this booklet.

Our Community Liaison team

Each project has a dedicated Community Liaison Manager who works closely with community members to make sure they are well informed of our proposals and that their views, concerns, questions, or suggestions are put to our project teams.

Throughout the life of our projects, you will hear from us regularly. We aim to establish strong working relationships by being accessible to key local stakeholders such as community councils, residents' associations, and development trusts, and regularly engage with interested individuals.

Community Liaison Manager Kirsty McNamara



Additional information:

The best way to keep up to date is to sign up to project updates via the project webpage:

ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP

Your feedback

Thank you for taking the time to read this consultation booklet. In order to record your views and improve the effectiveness of our consultation, please complete this short feedback form.

Please note that comments on this form are not formal representations to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU). Once an application for consent has been submitted, all documents relating to the submission will be made publicly available and there will be an opportunity for the public to make formal representations to the ECU before it takes a decision.

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS. (Please tick one box per question only)

Q1. Which consultation event did you attend? (Select all that apply)

☐ Maud	☐ Cuminestown	☐ Longside	☐ New Deer	☐ Turriff
☐ Cairnie	☐ Huntly	☐ Keith	☐ Fornightly	☐ Dallas
☐ Inchberry	☐ Culloden	☐ Inverness	☐ Kiltarlity	☐ Beaulieu
☐ Accessed information online	☐ None			

Q2. Is there a specific section of the overhead line alignment that you are interested in? (Please detail name of section(s) or closest settlement)

☐ Section 1	☐ Section 2	☐ Section 3	☐ Section 4	☐ Section 5	☐ Section 6
☐ Section 7	☐ Section 8	☐ Section 9	☐ Section 10	☐ Section 11	☐ Section 12
☐ Section 13	☐ Section 14	☐ Section 15	☐ Section 16	☐ Section 17	☐ Section 18
☐ Section 19	☐ Section 20	☐ Section 21	☐ Section 22	☐ Section 23	☐ Section 24
☐ Section 25	☐ Section 26	☐ Section 27	☐ Section 28	☐ Section 29	

Closest settlement:

Q3. Do you have any final comments regarding the alignment being proposed or concerns relating to the construction phase of the project?

Comments:

Q4. If consent is granted, we will continue to provide updates as the project develops and at key milestones. We continuously seek to identify the best methods of communication based on community needs. Please tell us how you would prefer to receive project updates so that we can consider this for future improvements (Select all that apply).

☐ Newsletter

☐ Email to a mailing list

☐ Text message

☐ Letter

☐ Public meetings

☐ Website updates

☐ Other (please state)

Q5. Our Community Benefit Fund will provide an opportunity for local groups and organisations to apply for community funding. Do you have any suggestions for local community benefits or local initiatives, such as volunteering, that we could support to leave a positive legacy in your area?

Comments:

Q6. We are committed to achieving biodiversity net gain as part of our proposals. Do you have any suggestions for nature projects that we could consider to leave a positive nature legacy in your area?

Comments:

Full name: **Email:**
Telephone: **Address:**

We would like to send you relevant communications via email such as invitations to stakeholder events, surveys, updates on projects, services and future developments from the Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks group listed below. If you are happy to receive email updates please opt in by ticking the box below. You can unsubscribe at any time by contacting us at stakeholder.admin@sse.com or by clicking on the unsubscribe link that will be at the end of each of our emails.

☐ If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project, please tick this box

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.
Please submit your completed form by one of the methods below:
Post: FAO Kirsty McNamara - SSEN Transmission, 10 Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1 1SN
Email: BBNP@sse.com **Online:** ssen-transmission.co.uk/BBNP

For information on how we collect and process your data please see our privacy notice available at today's event. This can also be obtained online at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/privacy

Comments forms and all the information from today's event will also be available to download from the project website.

We intend to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist our experienced teams in the analysis of your feedback, so we can categorise key points raised more quickly. You can learn more about how we're utilising AI at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/AIFAQ

Any information given on the feedback form can be used and published anonymously as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks consultation report. By completing this feedback form you consent to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks using feedback for this purpose.

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Notes

