

Case Manager
Energy Consents Unit
The Scottish Government
4th Floor
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc
Inveralmond House
200 Dunkeld Road
Perth
PH1 3AQ

26 September 2025

Our ref: Beaulay-Blackhillock-New Deer-Peterhead OHL_S37

Your ref: ECU00005165

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 to install, operate and keep installed approximately 186 km of new 400 kilovolt (kV) double circuit steel structure overhead transmission line (OHL), including downleads, to connect into new substation sites at Fanellan (NH 48321 42717) in the area of Beaulay, Greens (NJ 81960 47587) in the area of New Deer and Netherton (NK 05761 45576) in the area of Peterhead. The Proposed Development also includes crossing works, temporary diversions and permanent realignment works to existing 132 kV and 275 kV OHLs, of approximately 14.7 km in total, and ancillary development and associated works.

In total, the Proposed Development would comprise approximately 200.7 km of new OHL infrastructure.

The Proposed Development is known as the Beaulay to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV OHL Project and it will pass through the local planning authority areas of Highland, Moray, and Aberdeenshire.

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (the Applicant), operating and known as Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), owns, operates and develops the high voltage electricity transmission system in the north of Scotland and the islands and holds a license under the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.

SSEN Transmission submits this application for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 for the installation and operation of the proposed Beaulay to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400 kV Overhead Line (OHL) Project (*the Proposed Development*).

The Applicant also seeks a direction under section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 that planning permission for the development be deemed to be granted.

Development for which Section 37 Consent and deemed planning permission is sought

The Proposed Development would include the following works, for which Section 37 consent under the 1989 Act and deemed planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 ('the Planning Act') is sought to install, operate and keep installed:

- o approximately 186 kilometres (km) of new 400 kV double circuit OHL between new substation sites proposed at Beauly (Fanellan 400 kV substation), New Deer (Greens 400 kV substation) and Peterhead (Netherton Hub), including downloads into the substations;
- o realignment of approximately 2.6 km section of the existing 275 kV OHL south of Ferness;
- o approximately 6.3 km in total of permanent modifications to existing OHLs at six locations where the Proposed Development crosses existing transmission infrastructure; and
- o approximately 5.8 km in total of temporary OHL diversions to facilitate the permanent modifications to existing OHLs required to construct the Proposed Development.

In addition, the Applicant also seeks consent under Section 37 of the 1989 Act and deemed planning permission under the Planning Act to install, operate and keep installed an alternative alignment ('the Kellas Alternative Alignment'). In this particular location, the alignment of the Proposed Development passes through an area which is within the application boundary for the proposed Kellas Drum Wind Farm, for which an application for consent under section 36 of the 1989 Act has been submitted to the Scottish Government (application reference ECU00005054). If the windfarm application were to be consented¹, then the Kellas Alternative Alignment, which passes to the north of the proposed windfarm, would be constructed. The Kellas Alternative Alignment is approximately 8.8 km in length and, if constructed, would change the total length of new 400 kV OHL to 187.5 km.

For further details please refer to Volume 2 Chapter 3: Project Description.

Ancillary Development for which Deemed Planning Permission is sought

The following works would be required as part of the Proposed Development, or to facilitate its construction and operation:

- o removal of approximately 16.9 km of the existing 132 kV OHL and approximately 1 km of underground cable from Beauly to Knocknagael substations;
- o removal of the redundant section of the existing 275 kV OHL south of Ferness, following its realignment;
- o the upgrade of existing, or creation of new, 'bellmouths' at public road access points;
- o the formation of access tracks (permanent, temporary, and upgrades to existing tracks) and the installation of bridges and culverts to facilitate access;
- o working areas around infrastructure to facilitate construction;
- o formation of flat areas from which the conductor will be pulled during construction, which will contain earthed metal working surfaces referred to as Equipotential Zones (EPZs);
- o vegetation clearance and management;
- o other temporary measures required during construction, such as measures to protect existing infrastructure and water crossings during construction (scaffolding etc.); and
- o public road improvements (PRI) which would be required in some areas to facilitate construction traffic.

¹ There may be other circumstances associated with the status of the application for consent of the proposed Kellas Drum Wind Farm where the Kellas Alternative Alignment would be constructed.

For further details please refer to Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description.

The Applicant has also included a list of other associated works that are expected to be required to facilitate the Proposed Development; for further details please refer to Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description.

Established Need for the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development is required due to technical and economic need as shown from: (i) a transmission system planning exercise encompassing the entire National Grid (considering the upgrades necessary to accommodate the UK generation and demand requirements); and (ii) the regulatory approval from Ofgem as part of its ongoing assessment process. Further details are outlined in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Project Need.

The Need for EIA

The Proposed Development is classified as Schedule 1 development under the *EIA Regulations* by virtue of it being classed as “construction of overhead electrical power lines with a voltage of 220 kilovolts or more and a length of more than 15 kilometres”.²

The Proposed Development was subject to a request to Scottish Ministers on 26 June 2024 for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion under Regulation 12 of The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. The EIA Report is therefore based on the Scoping Opinion issued by the Scottish Ministers on 2 October 2024 (ref: ECU00005065), including any information or assessment that was identified to the Applicant as being required by statutory consultees following the issue of the scoping opinion.

Accordingly, this application for consent is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report).

Additional Information supporting the application for consent

The Applicant has prepared a number of Supporting Documents which are submitted with the application for consent. These documents satisfy the requirement for information in relation to the pre-application consultation measures the Applicant has undertaken in advance of the submission of the application for consent, and also an assessment of the Proposed Development against the provisions of the relevant Development Plan. These documents take the form of a Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC Report) and Planning Statement respectively.

Following the UK's exit from the European Union, domestic legislation was amended to ensure that the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC³ continues to apply in Scotland. The Proposed Development passes over, or is within the zone of influence of, a number of European designated sites, formerly known in Scotland as Natura 2000 sites⁴. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to any European site's management for nature conservation. Therefore, under the Conservation Habitats and Species Regulations 2017⁵ ('the Habitats Regulations', the Proposed Development has been required to undergo a screening for likely significant effects on the European sites. This screening is the first stage of a Habitats Regulations

² [The Town and Country Planning \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2017](#)

³ European Commission (2019) Managing Natura Sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC. Available at:

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/11e4ee91-2a8a-11e9-8d04-01aa75ed71a1>

⁴ NatureScot and European Commission (n.d.). Managing and Protecting Natura 2000 sites. Available at: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/natura-2000/managing-and-protecting-natura-2000-sites_en

⁵ UK Government (2017). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents>

Appraisal (HRA) that is required to be carried out by the competent authority upon submission of a consent application. To inform the competent authority's HRA, an HRA has been provided alongside the EIA Report.

The Supporting Documents also include information that the Applicant considers to be of relevance to the Proposed Development but that relates to topics that were scoped out of the EIA Report. This includes an Aviation Risk Assessment Report, Electric and Magnetic Field Study Report, and a Socio-Economic Report.

In accordance with the Scottish Government's Priority Applications for Transmission Infrastructure guidance: Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989, this letter sets out below the measures taken by the Applicant and details the contents of the application (with references to specific locations within the EIA Report where relevant) to satisfy the requirements of the guidance and ensure that a complete application has been submitted. The information below is based on the list of requirements included in Section 7 of the above referenced guidance.

It is the Applicant's view that that all necessary environmental information has been submitted with the application to enable the Scottish Ministers to undertake an assessment of the Proposed Development and arrive at a determination of consent.

Priority Applications for Transmission Infrastructure guidance Requirement	Submission location reference
Location plan and Site plan, showing clearly and at appropriate scale the location of all infrastructure for which section 37 consent and deemed planning permission (where relevant) is sought, including towers or poles, and any ancillary development	The location of the Proposed Development and related substation proposals is included within the EIA Report at Volume 3, Figure 1.1: Site Location Overview. A Location Plan is also submitted with the application. A description of the Proposed Development is provided in Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description.
The entirety of the environmental information required in an EIA report, where the proposal is deemed to be EIA development	The information is contained within the <i>Beaully to Blackhillock to New Deer to Peterhead 400kV Project EIA Report</i> as listed in Annex 1 that accompanies this cover letter. The EIA Report has been informed by, and responds to matters raised within, the EIA Scoping Opinion issued by Scottish Ministers on 2 October 2024. A number of Supporting Documents are also submitted with the application; these documents provide information additional to that contained within the EIA Report. The Supporting Documents are also listed in Annex 1.

Priority Applications for Transmission Infrastructure guidance Requirement	Submission location reference
An explanation of how all the scoping responses from statutory consultees have been addressed (for EIA developments)	An overview of the EIA Scoping Process is included in Volume 2, Chapter 6: Scope and Consultation. A detailed Scoping Matrix is appended to the EIA Report at Volume 5, Appendix 6.3: Scoping Response Matrix. This sets out how the Applicant has responded to all comments and issues raised by statutory consultees as part of the EIA Scoping process, and includes details of how the Scoping Opinion issued by Scottish Ministers 2 October 2024 has informed the scope and content of the EIA and supporting EIA Report. A list of the topics that were scoped out from the EIA, and a summary of the reasons for this, is also included at Volume 2, Chapter 6: Scope and Consultation.
Details of the established need for and of the anticipated benefits of the project	Details of the established need for the project are outlined in Volume 2, Chapter 2: Project Need.
A detailed explanation of all alternative options considered and why discounted	Details of alternative options considered by the Applicant for the project are outlined in Volume 2, Chapter 4: The Routeing Process and Alternatives.
A Pre-Application Consultation Report setting out the information provided to the public and procedures carried out, and how comments received from the public have been considered in formulating the final design of the proposal	A Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC Report) has been prepared by the Applicant; this details the public consultation and engagement conducted by the Applicant in advance of the submission of the application and summarises how feedback has been considered in the finalisation of the design of the proposal. The PAC Report is included as a Supporting Document to the application.
A Planning Statement	A Planning Statement has been prepared by the Applicant; this details an assessment of the Proposed Development against the relevant provisions of the Development Plan. The Planning Statement is included as a Supporting Document to the application.
A schedule of mitigation measures	The EIA Report includes suggested mitigation within each technical assessment included as part of the

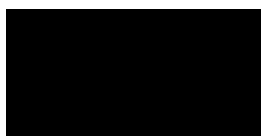
Priority Applications for Transmission Infrastructure guidance Requirement	Submission location reference
	overall report; this information is collated into a single Schedule of Mitigation at Volume 2, Chapter 18: Schedule of Mitigation.
A suggested set of conditions based on ECU 'model' section 37 conditions	A set of model conditions requires to be agreed between ECU and the Planning Authority; it is expected that this set of conditions will become available during the determination period of the application.
A statement confirming the Applicant's view that that all necessary environmental information has been submitted with the application, and that it does not anticipate the need to propose any substantive changes to the development	The Applicant confirms, by virtue of this cover letter, that in its view all necessary environmental information has been submitted with the application. At the point of application substantive changes are not anticipated.
A statement confirming whether all the required wayleaves have been agreed with the owners and occupiers of the land proposed to be crossed by the line and whether it is proposed that any applications may be made to the Scottish Ministers under paragraph 6 of schedule 4 to the Electricity Act 1989, or that an order is proposed to be made under schedule 3 to the Act	The Applicant has engaged in discussions with all identified landowners and occupiers over whose land the Proposed Development would be required to cross. All voluntary wayleaves and tenant consents for 400 kV infrastructure for the Proposed Development have now been issued and a number of agreements are in place. Following submission of the Section 37 application, 21-day statutory notices will be issued to any affected parties requiring consent who have not returned signed wayleaves or tenant consents. In the event agreement is not received from relevant parties within 21-days of notice issue, the Applicant will apply for a necessary wayleave / tenant consent under paragraph 6 of Schedule 4 of the Electricity Act 1989. For any third party-only access consents that are not received voluntarily, orders will be made under Schedule 3 of the Electricity Act 1989. It is the Applicant's intention to continue all voluntary discussions whilst any statutory processes take place.
All other supporting application documents including a cover letter which includes a description of all of the components of the development requiring consent and deemed planning permission (including the length of the	A list of all documentation submitted in support of this application is included as Annex 1 to this cover letter. This includes further details of the following elements of the EIA Report:-

Priority Applications for Transmission Infrastructure guidance Requirement	Submission location reference
proposed line and its nominal voltage), designed for inclusion in any consent decision	- Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary - Volume 2: Main Report - Volume 3: Figures - Volume 4: Visualisations - Volume 5: Appendices A list of Supporting Documents is also included in Annex 1.

The Applicant has separately submitted to the Energy Consents Unit an application fee in the sum of £360,000, based on a total length of 200.7 km of new OHL proposed to be installed.

Should you have any immediate queries on the application please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Heather Gray
Senior Consents and Environment Manager

ANNEX 1 LIST OF DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED WITH THIS APPLICATION FOR CONSENT

Location PlanEIA Report

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Planning Statement

Supporting Documents

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- Electric and Magnetic Field Study Report
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal
- MSS EIA Checklist Annex 1
- Pre-Application Consultation Report (PAC Report)
- Socio-Economic Report