

Brechin to Tealing 132 kV Overhead Line
Report on Consultation
May 2021

REF: LT225





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Figure 1: Preferred Route

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Alignment	A centre line of an overhead line OHL, along with location of key angle structures.
Amenity	The natural environment, cultural heritage, landscape and visual quality. Also includes the impact of SSEN Transmission plc's works on communities, such as the effects of noise and disturbance from construction activities.
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a process which leaves nature in a better state than it started.
Conductor	A metallic wire strung from structure to structure, to carry electric current.
Consultation	The dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups, based on a genuine exchange of views and, normally, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action.
Corridor	A linear area which allows a continuous connection between the defined connection points. The corridor may vary in width along its length; in unconstrained areas it may be many kilometres wide.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	Environmental Impact Assessment. A formal process codified by EU directive 2011/92/EU, and subsequently amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. The national regulations are set out in The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. The EIA process is set out in Regulation 4(1) of the regulations and includes the preparation of an EIA Report by the developer to systematically identify, predict, assess and report on the likely significant environmental impacts of a proposed project or development.
Habitat	Term most accurately meaning the place in which a species lives, but also used to describe plant communities or agglomerations of plant communities.
Kilovolt (kV)	One thousand volts.
Listed Building	Building included on the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest and afforded statutory protection under the 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997' and other planning legislation. Classified categories A – C(s).
Micrositing	The process of positioning individual structures to avoid localised environmental or technical constraints.
Mitigation	Term used to indicate avoidance, remediation or alleviation of adverse impacts.
Overhead line (OHL)	An electric line installed above ground, usually supported by lattice steel towers or poles.
Plantation Woodland	Woodland of any age that obviously originated from planting.
Riparian Woodland	Natural home for plants and animals occurring in a thin strip of land bordering a stream or river.
Route	A linear area of approximately 1 km width (although this may be narrower/wider in specific locations in response to identified pinch points / constraints), which provides a continuous connection between defined connection points.
Routeing	The work undertaken which leads to the selection of a proposed alignment, capable of being taken forward into the consenting process under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.



Term	Definition
Scheduled Monument	A monument which has been scheduled by the Scottish Ministers as being of national importance under the terms of the 'Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979'.
Semi-natural Woodland	Woodland that does not obviously originate from planting. The distribution of species will generally reflect the variations in the site and the soil. Planted trees must account for less than 30% of the canopy composition
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Areas of national importance. The aim of the SSSI network is to maintain an adequate representation of all natural and semi-natural habitats and native species across Britain.
Span	The section of overhead line between two structures.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	An area designated under the EC Habitats Directive to ensure that rare, endangered or vulnerable habitats or species of community interest are either maintained at or restored to a favourable conservation status.
Stakeholders	Organisations and individuals who can affect or are affected by SSEN Transmission plc works.
Study Area	The area within which the corridor, route and alignment study takes place.
The National Grid	The electricity transmission network in the Great Britain.
Volts	The international unit of electric potential and electromotive force.
Wayleave	A voluntary agreement entered into between a landowner upon whose land an overhead line is to be constructed and SSEN Transmission plc.



PREFACE

This Report on Consultation has been prepared by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission plc (SSEN Transmission plc) with input by ASH Design and Assessment Ltd. to provide a summary of the responses received from key stakeholders (including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents) during consultation between October 2020 and March 2021 in response to the preferred route identified for a new 132 kV overhead line (OHL) between Brechin substation and Tealing substation¹.

Under normal circumstances, consultation on the project would involve public engagement events held in the local area. However, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic such events could not be held.

To continue engagement on the project SSEN Transmission plc developed an online consultation tool, to enable the local community to experience the full exhibition from home on a computer, tablet or mobile device. The online exhibition was designed to look and feel like a real consultation in a community hall, with exhibition boards, maps, and the opportunity to share views on the proposals.

Visitors were able to engage directly with the project team, via a live chat function, where they could ask any questions they might have about the project and share their feedback on the current proposals.

The virtual consultation events took place via the project website <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/east-coast-132kv-upgrade/> at the following times:

- 25 February 2021 from **1pm – 3pm** and from **5pm – 7pm**.

This Report on Consultation also provides a summary of how SSEN Transmission plc have responded to comments received by stakeholders on the preferred route, and details the actions that will be taken as the project progresses through to the alignment stage.

¹ SSEN Transmission plc (February 2021) Brechin to Tealing 132kV Overhead Line Consultation Document



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current Overhead line (OHL) between Brechin substation and Tealing substation constructed in 1951, is proposed to be replaced via the construction and operation of a new 132 kV double circuit OHL. Consent for a proposed OHL is anticipated to be submitted in Autumn 2022.

This Report on Consultation documents the consultation process which has been undertaken for the project during the route options stage between October 2020 and March 2021. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents in order to invite feedback on the rationale for and approach to, the selection of the preferred route.

This report describes the key responses received and provides detail on the actions proposed in response to the issues raised. The consultation process has confirmed that **Route Option 2** is the preferred route, widened through Montreathmont Forest to include Route Option 1A, to ensure flexibility in the consideration of alignment options. The preferred route follows a similar route to the existing OHL and has been selected on the basis that it is considered to provide an optimum balance of environmental, technical and economic factors. Following review of consultation responses, the preferred route will become the proposed route to take forward to the alignment stage of this project.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Purpose of Document

- 1.1.1 Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission plc (SSEN Transmission plc) (operating under licence as SHE Transmission plc) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the SSE plc group of companies. SSEN Transmission plc owns and maintains the electricity transmission network across the north of Scotland, and holds a license under the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.
- 1.1.2 SSEN Transmission plc is proposing to construct a new 132 kV overhead line between Brechin substation and Tealing substation. The project would see the construction and operation of a new 132 kV double circuit OHL to replace the existing 132 kV OHL. The preferred route option has been selected to provide an optimum balance of environmental, technical and economic factors.
- 1.1.3 This Report on Consultation documents the consultation process for the project between October 2020 and March 2021, during the route option stage of the project. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents in order to invite feedback on the rationale for and approach to, the selection of the preferred route².
- 1.1.4 The report describes the key responses received and details the actions taken in response to the issues raised.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 The objectives of this report are:
- To document the consultation process between October 2020 and March 2021;
 - To summarise feedback received from stakeholders;
 - To document actions undertaken in response to feedback where relevant; and
 - To clearly set out how the preferred route has been informed by the consultation process.

1.3 Document Structure

- 1.3.1 This Report on Consultation is structured as follows:

Part 1: Introduction - setting out the purpose of the Report on Consultation;

Part 2: Project Overview – outlines the background to the project and provides a description of the key elements;

Part 3: Consideration of Route Options – describes how the preferred route was identified;

Part 4: The Consultation Process – describes the framework for consultation and methods which have been employed;

Part 5: Consultation Responses from Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultees - summarises the responses from these bodies;

Part 6: Community Consultation Responses from the Virtual Public Exhibition – summarises the range of responses and key comments and issues arising through the consultation process;

Part 7: Project Responses to Consultation – describes how the comments and issues raised during consultation will be addressed; and

Part 8: Conclusions and Next Steps – summarises the conclusions reached and actions going forward.

² Identified within the Brechin to Tealing 132kV Overhead Line Consultation Document (February 2021), produced by SSEN Transmission plc

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

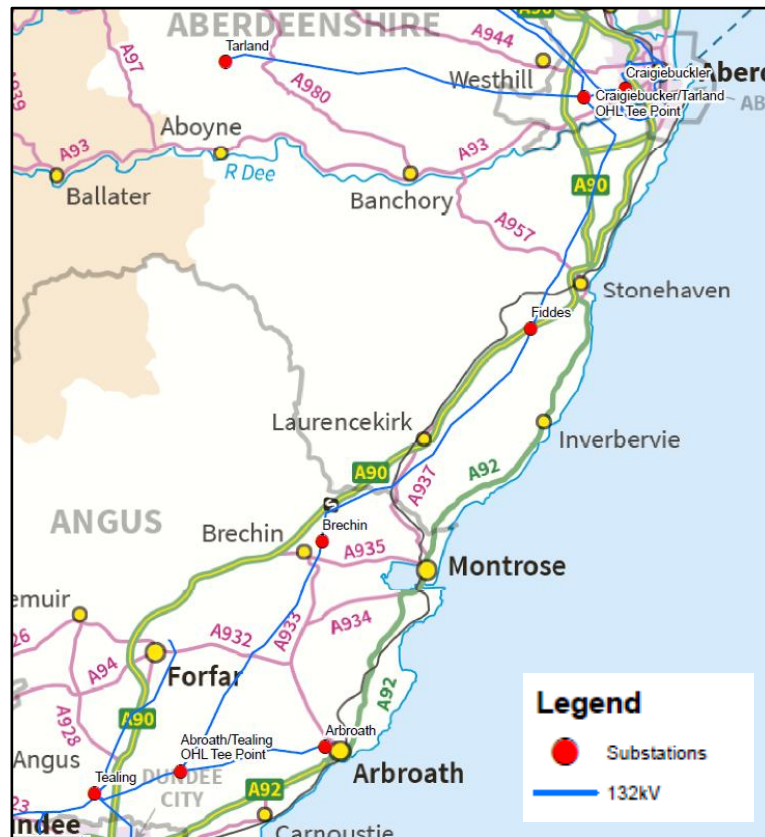
2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The project comprises the replacement of the existing single circuit wood pole 132 kV OHL between Brechin substation and the Arbroath to Tealing OHL Tee point, and the existing double circuit steel lattice 132 kV OHL between the Tee point and Tealing substation, with a new double circuit 132 kV steel lattice OHL.

2.2 The Need for the Project

2.2.1 The primary driver for this reinforcement is the request for connection of a number of new renewable generation schemes, including onshore wind and battery systems, to the North East of Scotland. This has triggered the need for an upgrade to the East Coast 132 kV transmission network between Craigiebuckler / Tarland OHL Tee point, west of Aberdeen, and the Tealing substation, north of Dundee. **Plate 2.1** illustrates the 132 kV transmission network in this area.

Plate 2.1: 132 kV Transmission Network



2.2.2 In addition to the load driver, the asset health of this OHL provides a secondary driver for this project. The circuit was constructed in 1951 and re-conducted in 1981/2. Recent asset condition assessments recommend that the existing wood pole OHL circuit will need to be replaced in the next five to ten years. For clarity, this does not include the Tealing to Arbroath / Tealing Tee section of OHL.

2.3 Preferred Technology Solution

2.3.1 The preferred solution is a new 132 kV double circuit OHL supported on a steel lattice tower.

2.4 Alternative Options Considered

- 2.4.1 A “do-nothing” scenario would result in a significant network capacity deficit, as would a Like for Like replacement. This would not support SSEN Transmission plc’s ability to meet their licence requirements, in respect of the planning and operation criteria.
- 2.4.2 An option to re-conductor the existing OHL was considered. However, the existing wood pole structures between Brechin to Arbroath/Tealing Tee and the existing steel lattice towers between Arbroath/Tealing Tee and Tealing are not suitable for the heavier conductor proposed to meet the increased transmission capacity. This, together with the asset condition assessments recommending that the existing Brechin to Arbroath /Tealing Tee structures need replaced in the next 5 to 10 years, has resulted in the option to re-conductor the existing OHL to be discounted in favour of the new 132 kV double circuit OHL.

2.5 Proposals Overview

- 2.5.1 The steel lattice towers would have a nominal height of approximately 26 - 27 m (including insulators and support). The structure selection process is ongoing and current models under consideration are the L7c and L4m steel lattice towers. The spacing between towers would vary depending on topography and altitude. The specific distances would be determined after a detailed line survey, but would be approximately 250 m apart. A photograph showing a typical steel lattice tower is shown in **Plate 2.2** below.

Plate 2.2: Typical Steel Lattice Tower (L7c)



2.6 Access during Construction

- 2.6.1 Vehicle access is required to each tower location during construction to allow excavation and creation of foundations and tower installation. Existing tracks would be used where possible. Preference will be given to lower impact access solutions including the use of low pressure tracked personnel vehicles and temporary track solutions in boggy / soft ground areas to reduce any damage to, and compaction of, the ground. These journeys would be kept to a minimum to minimise disruption to habitats along the route. However, stone tracks (both temporary and permanent) may be necessary in some areas depending on existing access conditions, terrain and altitude.

3. CONSIDERATION OF ROUTE OPTIONS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The approach to route selection was informed by SSEN Transmission plc's guidance 'Procedures for Routing Overhead Lines and Underground Cables of 132 kV and above' (September 2020). The guidance sets out SSEN Transmission plc's approach to selecting a route for an OHL. This document helps SSEN Transmission plc to meet its obligations under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989, which requires transmission license holders:

- to have a regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interests; and
- to do what they reasonably can to mitigate any effect that the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.

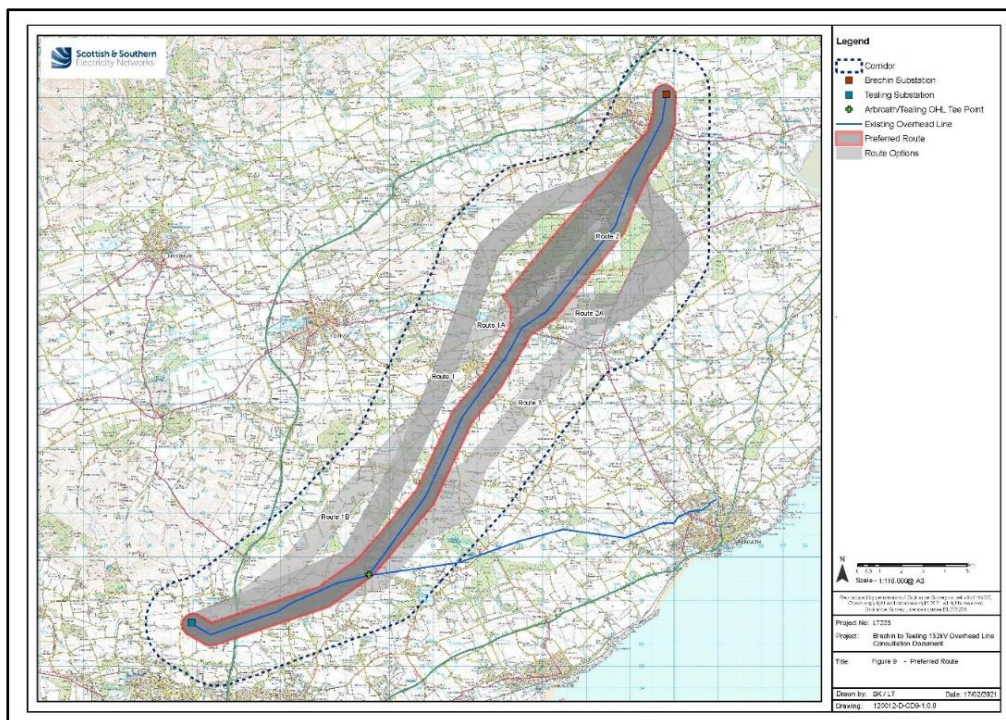
3.1.2 In line with the principles outlined in the guidance document, the method of identifying a preferred route has involved the following 4 key tasks:

- Identification of the baseline situation;
- Identification of alternative route options;
- Environmental, technical and economic analysis of route options; and
- Identification of a preferred route.

3.2 Identification of Preferred Route

3.2.1 The preferred route has been selected on the basis that it is considered to provide an optimum balance of environmental, technical and economic factors. The preferred route is shown in **Plate 3.1** (see also Figure 1).

Plate 3.1: Preferred Route





- 3.2.2 The preferred route would require careful consideration during the alignment selection stage of the project to achieve an acceptable alignment with minimal environmental effects. Should further site and desk-based analysis at the alignment selection stage identify a particular constraint, a further review of route or alignment options may be required prior to the identification of a preferred alignment.

4. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 In accordance with SSEN Transmission plc's guidance³, a process of consultation on the preferred route has been undertaken.

4.2 Methods for Consultation

4.2.1 The following methods were used to consult on the preferred route, as set out below.

Consultation Document

4.2.2 The Brechin to Tealing 132 kV Overhead Line Consultation Document (February 2021) was produced detailing the selection process for the preferred route, taking account of environmental, economic and technical factors. The Consultation Document was made available for download on 22 February 2021 from <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/east-coast-132kv-upgrade/>.

4.2.3 Table 4.1 details the stakeholders in receipt of the Consultation Document or otherwise informed of the website details⁴:

Table 4-1: List of Stakeholders

Stakeholders	
Statutory Consultees	
Angus Council	Energy Consents Unit
Historic Environment Scotland	NatureScot
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	
Non-Statutory Consultees	
Arbuthnott Community Council	Braeside & Mannofield Community Council
Craigiebuckler & Seafield Community Council	Cults, Bielside & Milltimber Community Council
Inverarity Whigstreet and Gateside Community Council	Mearns Community Council
North Kincardine Rural Community Council	Scottish Forestry
Scottish Water	Stonehaven & District Community Council
Tealing Community Council	Woodland Trust

4.2.4 It had been intended to make the Consultation Document available in hard copy at publicly accessible locations along the route. However, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, this was not possible.

4.2.5 Instead landowners, residents and local communities were made aware of the Consultation Document during advertising of virtual public engagement events (see Section 4.3). The Consultation Document was made available via the dedicated project website.

4.2.6 Feedback on the Consultation Document was requested by 12 March 2021. Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback through the following methods:

- A series of questions were asked within the Consultation Document requesting comments on specific aspects of the project as follows:
 - Have we explained the need for this Project adequately?

³ SSEN Transmission plc (September 2020), Procedures for Routeing Overhead Lines and Underground Cables of 132 kV and above

⁴ Preliminary feedback on route options and relevant environmental baseline information was also sought from statutory consultees in October 2020.

- Have we explained the approach taken to select the preferred route adequately?
- Are there any factors, or environmental features, that you consider may have been overlooked during the preferred route selection process?
- Do you feel, on balance, that the preferred route selected is the most appropriate for further consideration at the alignment selection stage?

4.2.7 A feedback form was also provided on the project webpage allowing users to submit comments.

4.3 Public Consultation Events

4.3.1 Under normal circumstances, consultation on the project would involve public engagement events held in the local area. However, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic such events could not be held.

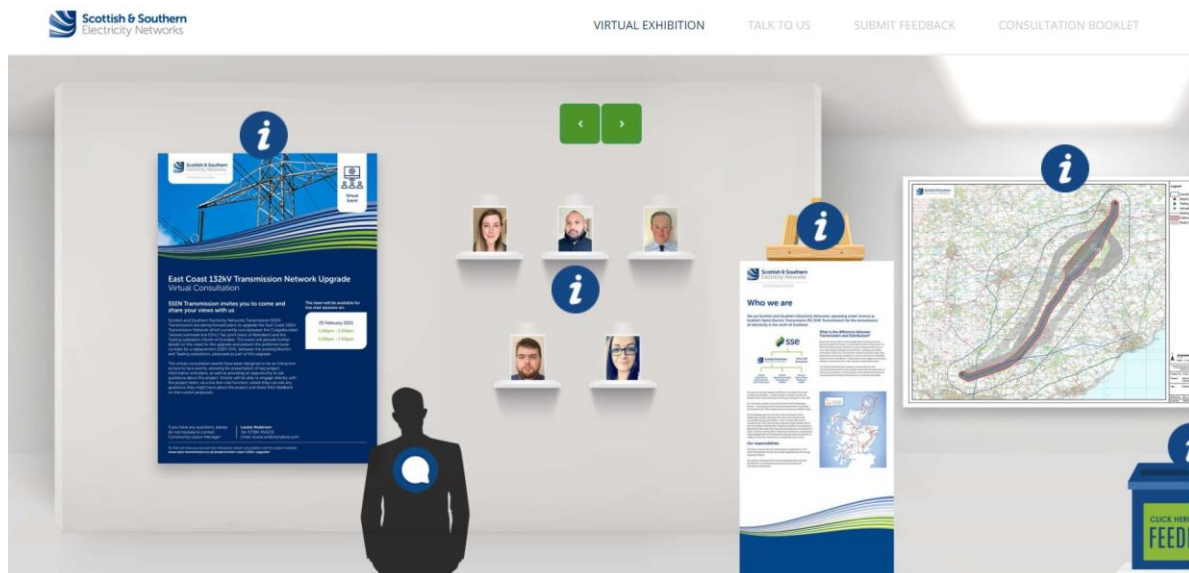
4.3.2 To continue engagement on the project SSEN Transmission plc developed an online consultation tool, to enable the local community to experience the full exhibition from home on a computer, tablet or mobile device. The online exhibition was designed to look and feel like a real consultation in a community hall, with exhibition boards, maps, and the opportunity to share views on the proposals as illustrated in Plate 4.1.

4.3.3 Visitors were able to engage directly with the project team, via a live text chat function, where they could ask any questions they might have about the project and share their feedback on the current proposals. A feedback form was provided on the portal and all visitors were invited to complete this.

4.3.4 The virtual consultation events took place via the project website <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/east-coast-132kv-upgrade/> at the following times:

- 25 February 2021 from **1pm – 3pm** and from **5pm – 7pm**.

Plate 4.1: Virtual Event Portal



4.3.5 The virtual consultation events were advertised in the local press, SSEN's social media channels, the dedicated project management website and through letters and consultation booklets posted to over 7,000 properties. Local Councillors, and Community Councils along the route were also informed. Adverts were placed in both The Courier and Press & Journal and ran for 5 days during week commencing 15 February 2021, as well as on Facebook & Twitter.

4.3.6 Visitor counts during the virtual consultation event recorded 100 unique users (individuals devices accessing the site) across the two interactive sessions. There were 41 chats initiated with the project team via the live text chat function with a total of 54 questions asked by visitors. A total of 96 forms or emails containing feedback were received by SSEN Transmission plc during or following the virtual consultation events. In addition to this,



137 emails were received specifically in relation to the potential impacts of Route Option 1 on Greenhillock Glamping, together with a 1,000 signature petition (see Section 6).

5. CONSULTATION RESPONSES FROM STATUTORY AND NON STATUTORY CONSULTEES

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Table 5.1 sets out a summary of the feedback received by statutory and non statutory consultees following the consultation period (October 2020 to March 2021). A response to the feedback is also provided by SSEN Transmission plc, together with confirmation of the action to be taken, where relevant.

Table 5.1: Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultee Feedback

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
Angus Council	Angus Council suggest the route selection should be based on an iterative process that should be informed by a number of environmental factors.	This accords with SSEN Transmission plc's routeing guidance. Further environmental and engineering studies will be undertaken at the alignment stage to seek to find an acceptable alignment that minimises potential environmental effects.
	Angus Council also draw attention to potential landscape and visual impacts of the project. The Council suggest that the introduction of steel lattice towers along the route will introduce new vertical features into the landscape therefore the siting of such features should seek to minimise these impacts and also ensure that they are located to minimise potential impacts on existing landscape features.	The potential for landscape and visual impacts associated with the OHL will be given due consideration during the alignment stage of the project to seek to minimise potential effects.
	In preliminary feedback, Angus Council suggested that utilising the existing route would limit any additional impacts on natural and built heritage designations.	This comment is noted and a factor in determining the preferred route has been to minimise potential effects on natural and built heritage designations as far as practicable.
Arbuthnott Community Council	Arbuthnott Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Arbuthnott Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Braeside & Mannofield Community Council	Braeside & Mannofield Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Braeside & Mannofield Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Craigiebuckler & Seafield Community Council	Craigiebuckler & Seafield Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Craigiebuckler & Seafield Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Cults, Bielside & Milltimber Community Council	Cults, Bielside & Milltimber Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Cults, Bielside & Milltimber Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Energy Consents Unit (ECU)	No specific comments at this stage, although ECU wish to be kept up to date,	Ongoing consultation with ECU will be maintained.

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
	particularly at screening / scoping and application stages.	
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	<p>HES consider Route Option 2 to be the least impactful on heritage assets and would therefore be content with this option being chosen as the preferred route. However, HES wanted to reiterate that this route is in close proximity to a number of sensitive heritage assets which will require further consideration and assessment as the project progresses. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guthrie Castle GDL; • Brechin Castle GDL; and • Kinnaird Castle GDL • Ardvie House and Gagie House (Category A Listed Buildings) 	<p>This comment is noted and support for the preferred route is acknowledged.</p> <p>Further work to consider potential impacts on the historic environment will continue throughout the alignment stage of the project, so as to mitigate adverse effects on designated assets where possible.</p> <p>Ongoing consultation with HES will be maintained.</p>
Inverarity, Whigstreet and Gateside Community Council	<p>Inverarity, Whigstreet and Gateside Community Council shared concerns over Route 1 and Route 1B.</p> <p>Worry over local environmental amenities being adversely affected by Route 1/ 1B. One of these concerns was the route proximity to populated areas potentially resulting in issues of noise pollution, especially in wet weather, and health effects of high voltage cables are concerning.</p>	<p>These comments are acknowledged and preference against progressing Route 1 or 1B has been noted. These routes are not preferred.</p>
	<p>Concern was also raised in relation to tourism and local businesses.</p> <p>In particular, if Newton of Fotheringham (Bed and Breakfast and Newton Farm Tours) and Greenhillock Glamping businesses were to be adversely affected by Route 1 or Route 1B then the whole Community could suffer economically.</p>	<p>Whilst these route options are not preferred, engagement with local landowners and business owners is welcomed and will continue throughout the development stages of the project.</p>
Mearns Community Council	Mearns Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Mearns Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
NatureScot	NatureScot appreciate emphasis through the route options process of avoiding designated sites and support choice of preferred route.	This comment is noted and support for the preferred route is acknowledged.

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
	<p>NatureScot suggest that following the existing OHL alignment as opposed to introducing a new element into the landscape is likely to be preferred, albeit there is not enough information at this stage to make any meaningful comments on potential landscape and visual effects.</p>	<p>This comment is acknowledged. An aim of the alignment stage will be to minimise the potential for landscape and visual effects where possible. Further information on potential landscape and visual effects will be provided at the alignment stage.</p>
	<p>Across the area wintering geese and wintering waders and waterfowl are likely to be prevalent. Breeding waders and farmland birds are also likely to be prevalent.</p>	<p>These comments are noted and understood.</p> <p>Bird surveys will be undertaken at the alignment stage to further inform potential constraints and appropriate mitigation measures to minimise potential effects on bird species.</p>
	<p>In preliminary advice, Nature Scot also raised the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peatland and carbon-rich soils are unlikely to be an issue along the route options; - Protected species will be widespread across the options but the presence of animals and areas important for breeding and resting will be highly dependent upon the habitat types the route encounters/traverses; and - Ecological surveys will inform any mitigation required. Nature Scot's standing advice covers a lot of guidance for commonly encountered protected species. 	<p>These comments and environmental sensitivities are noted and understood.</p> <p>Further environmental studies will be undertaken at the alignment stage to seek to find an acceptable alignment that minimises potential environmental effects on habitats and protected species.</p> <p>In consultation with NatureScot, SSEN Transmission plc have developed Species Protection Plan guidance for many of the types of species with legal protection which will or could be encountered on this project. The Species Protection Plans set out guidance and agreed procedures for the protection of those species and their shelters during construction works. The species and their shelters would also be considered and protected during the operation and maintenance of the new line.</p>
	<p>Nature Scot appreciate the intention for no net loss of woodland and suggest that compensatory planting may offer the opportunity to create woodland in locations where it can provide community and biodiversity benefits.</p> <p>Nature Scot suggest that public consultation could assist in identifying areas where community woodlands may be lacking.</p>	<p>These comments are noted. Where practicable, opportunities for compensatory planting will be reviewed.</p>

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
North Kincardine Rural Community Council	North Kincardine Rural Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with North Kincardine Rural Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Scottish Environment and Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific comments at this stage, albeit standard advice by SEPA in respect of pollution prevention, the water environment and natural resources would apply.	This is acknowledged and ongoing consultation with SEPA will be maintained.
Scottish Forestry	Scottish Forestry did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Scottish Forestry will be made as the project progresses.
Scottish Water	<p>Scottish Water has no objection to this project.</p> <p>Consideration should however be given to Scottish Water Assets as the project progresses. Low risk concern also highlighted in relation to project being partly located within a Drinking Water Protected Area.</p>	This comment is noted and potential impacts on drinking water catchments will be considered during the alignment stage of the project.
Stonehaven & District Community Council	Stonehaven & District Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Stonehaven & District Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Tealing Community Council	Tealing Community Council did not provide a response to the consultation.	Further contact with Tealing Community Council will be made as the project progresses.
Woodland Trust	<p>The Woodland Trust strongly oppose the proposed preferred option on the basis of potential damage and loss to a significant number of woodlands designated on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI).</p> <p>Key concerns raised include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct loss of ancient woodland; - Where powerlines may over sail ancient woods, wayleaves would need to be created. This could result in the loss of the ancient woodland habitat below the power lines; - The impacts of noise, light and dust pollution to woodland; - The fragmentation of semi-natural adjacent habitats to the ancient woodlands; 	<p>Comments from the Woodland Trust are acknowledged and SSEN Transmission plc will seek to ensure that potential impacts on woodlands designated on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) are minimised where practicable. Further detail will be provided at the alignment stage.</p> <p>As the Woodland Trust highlight, there are a number of areas mapped on the AWI throughout the area. Indeed, the existing OHL passes through Montreathmont Forest (mapped as Long-Established (of plantation origin)) and crosses three areas mapped in the AWI as Ancient Woodland (all mapped as 2a). All of the route options appraised would to some degree interact with woodland designated on the AWI. Taking other constraints into consideration, the preferred route is</p>



Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The potential for the trampling of sensitive ancient woodland flora and soils; and- One veteran tree which has high biodiversity, cultural and heritage value is within the route option.	considered to provide the optimum balance of environmental, technical and economic factors, albeit further environmental and engineering studies are required at the alignment stage to minimise potential environmental effects where practicable.

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Introduction

- 6.1.1 The following part of this Report on Consultation sets out the feedback received by the local community following the consultation period, including comments received during the live virtual consultation event. The tables also include responses by SSEN Transmission plc, setting out the action to be taken where relevant.

Table 6.1: Local Community Feedback by Topic

Summary of Feedback	Number of Stakeholders to Raise Topic ⁵	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
Of the 85 participants who submitted a feedback form, 48 support the preferred route. 22 do not support the preferred route, and 15 were unsure if they supported the preferred route or not.	N/A	This feedback is acknowledged and a majority support for the preferred route is noted.
<p>Feedback in Relation to Route Options 1 / 1A and 1B</p> <p>Where specific comments were made regarding Route Options 1 / 1A and 1B, the most common theme was in relation to wildlife (and recreational) interests at Balgavies and Rescobie Lochs SSSI (in particular osprey were noted) and Montreathmont Forest (red squirrel noted). Potential impact on woodland at Tulloes and Whigstreet also noted, which could result in impacts on the red squirrel, owl and deer populations.</p> <p>Proximity to homes and populated areas was mentioned, such as proximity to Dunnichen village, which is also a conservation area.</p> <p>A significant number of concerns were also raised for proximity to and potential impact on businesses such as Greenhillock Glamping, and Newton Farm Holidays impacting on visitors. Specifically in relation to Greenhillock Glamping, a total of 137 emails were received by SSEN Transmission plc, and a petition signed by 1,000 people, all citing concerns with the potential impact of Route Option 1 on the viability and recreational enjoyment of the glamping business, wildlife and their habitats.</p> <p>For historic sites, numerous comments received in relation to Route Option 1 / 1A and potential</p>	19	<p>These comments and environmental sensitivities are noted. A factor in determining the preferred route has been to minimise potential effects on natural and built heritage designations as far as practicable, which has included avoidance of Balgavies and Rescobie Lochs SSSI.</p> <p>Comments on proximity to homes, businesses and populated areas are also acknowledged and minimising proximity to and effects from properties and businesses will be a key consideration during the alignment stage of the project.</p> <p>Direct contact has been made with Greenhillock Glamping to discuss the concerns raised in relation to Route Option 1.</p>

⁵ It should be noted that the tally of stakeholders to raise a topic may not match the number of feedback forms submitted or comments listed in the Summary of Feedback column. This is because some stakeholders may have listed more than one issue, or raised several points about a single issue. Some stakeholder comments have also been combined where appropriate. However, where this has been done, care has been taken to identify the number of individuals to raise the topic.

Summary of Feedback	Number of Stakeholders to Raise Topic ⁵	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
<p>impact on pictish burial sites, from the battle of Nechtanesmere, located at Dunnichen Hill, to Craichie. Route Option 1/1B could also have implications on a historic Roman Camp.</p>		
<p>Feedback in Relation to Route Options 2 / 2A</p> <p>Where specific comments were made regarding Route Options 2 / 2A, the most common theme was in relation to proximity to homes, local businesses and populated areas. In particular, concerns were raised in respect of proximity to Guthrie village (particularly 2A) and the village of Letham.</p> <p>There are a number of heritage assets, particularly at Pitmuies, Guthrie and Balmadies that could be visually impacted by Route Options 2 / 2A.</p> <p>Some comments were received which stated that Route Option 2 is preferable given existing OHL and wayleave corridor through Montreathmont Forest, and would minimise impact on wildlife at Balgavies and Rescobie Lochs.</p> <p>The recreational use of Montreathmont Forest, the presence of native woodland and protected / sensitive species needs to be carefully considered, as well as the landscape and visual impacts of a new OHL.</p>	7	<p>These comments are acknowledged and minimising proximity to and effects from properties and businesses will be a key consideration during the alignment stage of the project.</p> <p>Further environmental studies will be undertaken at the alignment stage to seek to find an acceptable alignment that minimises potential effects where possible, in particular on natural heritage, people, landscape, visual and cultural heritage sites and assets.</p>
<p>Feedback in Relation to Route Option 3</p> <p>Where specific comments were made regarding Route Option 3, the most common theme was in relation to historic sites. There was concern for the historic settings of Gardyne Castle and Pitmuies house.</p> <p>Also concern for impact on nearby homes and the surrounding landscape if Route Option 3 progressed given no similar infrastructure in place.</p>	6	<p>These comments and environmental sensitivities are noted. A factor in determining the preferred route has been to minimise potential effects on cultural heritage assets as far as practicable, and the concentration of heritage assets within Route Option 3 has been considered.</p>
<p>There were a number of queries raised by stakeholders in relation to undergrounding the OHL, and why this is not being considered for this project, particularly given recent example of</p>	9	<p>Undergrounding the cable has been discounted for a number of reasons. The main reason is for the maintenance of the line in the future. In the event of a</p>

Summary of Feedback	Number of Stakeholders to Raise Topic ⁵	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
<p>underground cabling as part of the Seagreen project from Barry to Tealing.</p>		<p>fault on an OHL, the fault can usually be detected and rectified in a matter of days. Whereas a fault on an underground cable could potentially take months to fix.</p> <p>Furthermore, the footprint required to install the cables (2 numbers of 0.5m width and 1.5m deep trenches with 3m separation between trenches) would result in the potential for environmental and land use constraints. From a cost perspective and as a rough guide for a 132 kV circuit based on a kilometre of transmission OHL, typical cost difference would be between 4 and 8 times more expensive for an underground cable.</p>
<p>Comments were raised in relation to the cost of the OHL, in particular Route Options 1 and 1A as they seem to be more expensive than Route Option 2, given increased length.</p>	2	<p>The assumption that an increased length of OHL results in increased cost is generally correct. For this project though, all options are considered to have similar capital and operational costs.</p>
<p>Some comments were made relating to the design of the pylons, with the steel lattice OHL considered more unsightly in comparison to the existing OHL.</p> <p>Suggestions were made for more 'visually pleasing' pylons, for example green or brown pylons as an option, or wooden pylons or T-pylons.</p>	3	<p>Based on the options assessed, the preferred technology solution for the 132 kV double circuit OHL is a steel lattice tower.</p>
<p>Environmental concerns were raised in relation to wildlife, particularly in the Montreathmont forest area and around Balgavies and Rescobie Lochs. The presence of protected species such as red squirrel, pine marten, badger, osprey, goshawk and nightjar were noted.</p>	12	<p>These comments and environmental sensitivities are noted and understood. Further environmental studies will be undertaken at the alignment stage to seek to find an acceptable alignment that minimises potential environmental effects on wildlife.</p>
<p>Potential negative effects of OHLs on human health were noted by some stakeholders.</p> <p>There was concern raised that living near high voltage electrical pylons could potentially</p>	5	<p>SSEN Transmission plc will ensure that the OHL shall be designed as such to comply with public exposure limits as set by International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP)</p>

Summary of Feedback	Number of Stakeholders to Raise Topic ⁵	Response by SSEN Transmission plc
<p>increase the risk of contracting cancers as well as electromagnetic hypersensitivity.</p> <p>Risk of children could be playing near the pylons and trying to climb them were also raised as a concern.</p>		<p>which is adopted in the current Government policy on EMFs.</p>
<p>Flooding was raised as a concern, in relation to the Vinny Water for Route Option 3 and Nechtanesmere fields for Route Options 1 and 1A. These areas are said to often flood, potentially impeding construction and/or having the potential to cause damage.</p> <p>No flooding was mentioned in relation to Route Option 2 or 2A.</p>	2	<p>Flood risk will be considered during the alignment stage of the project.</p>
<p>Whilst some found the project documentation well presented and extensive, concerns were made about the information available during the consultation process, in particular, the readability of figures and maps provided in the consultation documents.</p> <p>There was also a desire noted for more open discussion sessions where the questions of other members of the community could be heard in real time.</p> <p>Suggestions that there should be more consultation activities, and the consultation period was too short. Also concern that the letters sent to local communities to inform them of the events were too vague and not easy to distinguish from junk mail.</p>	12	<p>SSEN Transmission plc is committed to continued engagement with the local community and further consultation events will be held in the local area as the project progresses, and in line with Government guidance in relation to Covid-19 at the time.</p> <p>Comments in relation to the presentation of information and information to advertise events will be taken on board for future consultations.</p>

7. PROJECT RESPONSES TO CONSULTATIONS

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 This part of the Report on Consultation summarises how the project has responded to the consultation responses arising from the preferred route set out within the Brechin to Tealing 132 kV Overhead Line Consultation Document. Responses to each of the points raised by stakeholders through the consultation process are included in Sections 5 and 6 above.

7.1.2 The consultation process for the project thus far has raised a number of comments requiring clarification or further assessment. These points include additional detail on the potential alignment, recommendations for continued consultation with stakeholders, and the importance of various surveys and assessments for protection of environmental aspects as the project evolves.

7.1.3 To address these points, the following actions are being undertaken:

- Further environmental survey and assessment work will be undertaken in parallel with engineering studies to enable a collaborative approach in seeking to identify an acceptable alignment through this landscape and environment. In particular, this will involve further survey effort and advice relating to landscape and visual, ecology, ornithology, hydrology, land use, forestry and cultural heritage matters. The results of these studies will be reported at Alignment Selection (Stage 3); and
- Further consultation will be organised with key statutory and non-statutory consultees, local councillors and local communities to provide updates on the project during the alignment stage. Formal consultation will be organised on completion of the alignment studies to enable comments to be sought on the preferred alignment identified.

7.1.4 All comments and considerations to date will be taken forward into the alignment stage, through which assessments will be carried out for all relevant environmental aspects. This process will remain inclusive, seeking further consultation where appropriate.

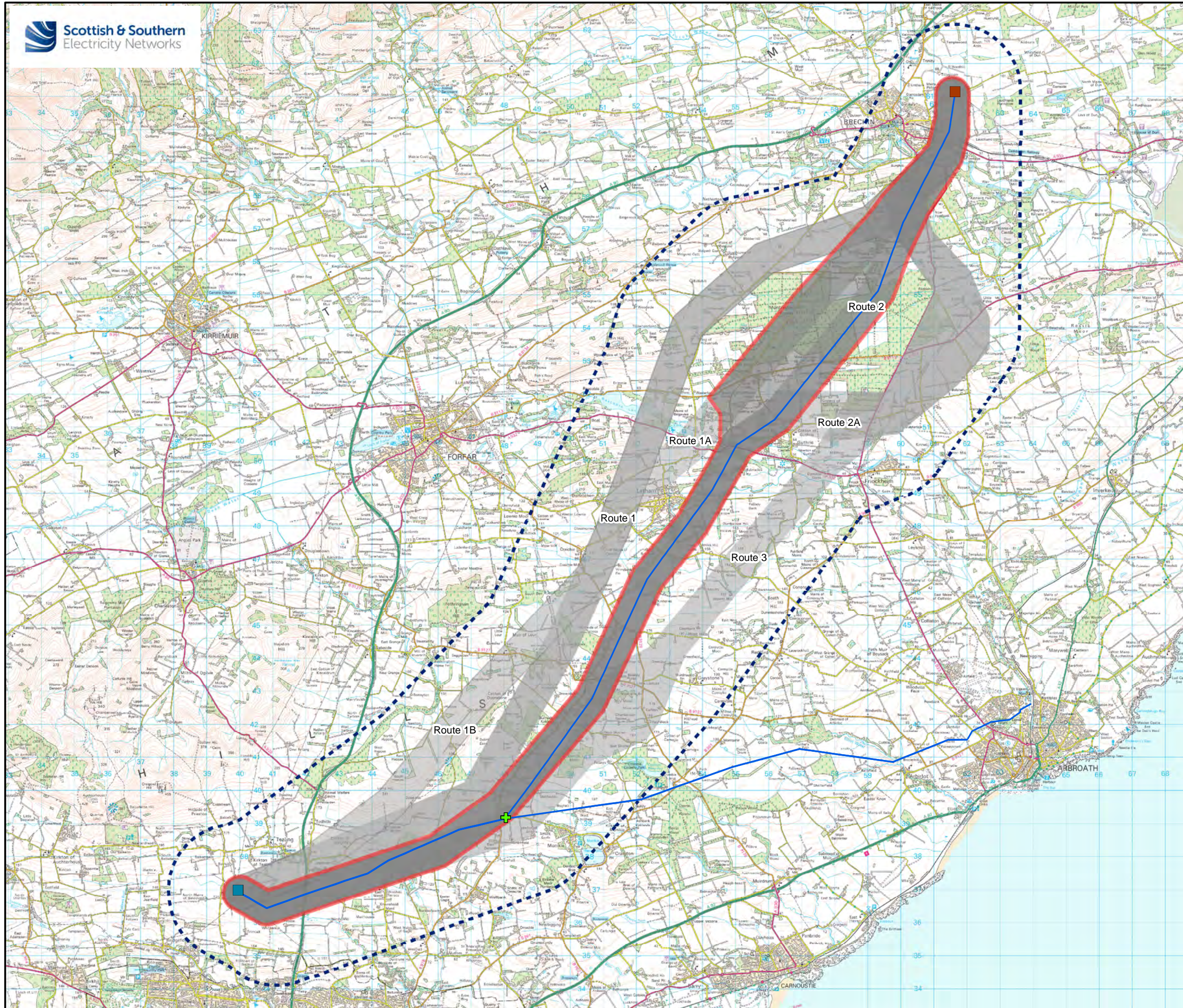
8. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

8.1 Conclusion

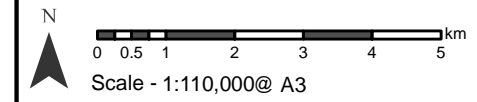
- 8.1.1 The current OHL between Brechin substation and Tealing substation constructed in 1951, is proposed to be replaced via the construction and operation of a new 132 kV double circuit OHL on steel lattice towers. Consent for a proposed route is anticipated to be submitted in Autumn 2022.
- 8.1.2 This Report on Consultation documents the consultation process which has been undertaken for the project between October 2020 and March 2021. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents in order to invite feedback on the rationale for and approach to, the selection of the preferred route option.
- 8.1.3 This report has described the key responses received and provides detail on the actions proposed in response to the issues raised. The consultation process has confirmed that **Route Option 2**, widened through Montreathmont Forest to include Route Option 1A, to ensure flexibility in the consideration of alignment options, should be taken forward as the preferred route within which to identify alignment options. This route was selected on the basis that it is considered to provide an optimum balance of environmental, technical and economic factors. Following this consultation exercise, the preferred route will become the proposed route taken forward to the alignment stage of this project.

8.2 Next Steps

- 8.2.1 The project will now be taken into Stage 3 (Alignment Selection), commencing with identification of alignment options within the preferred route. These will be informed by this and further consultation exercises, and through detailed surveys, which may identify any additional and/or currently unknown engineering, environmental or land use constraints.



- Legend**
- Corridor
 - Brechin Substation
 - Tealing Substation
 - Arbroath/Tealing OHL Tee Point
 - Existing Overhead Line
 - Preferred Route
 - Route Options



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Project No: LT225
Project: Brechin to Tealing 132kV Overhead Line
Report on Consultation

Title: Figure 1 - Preferred Route

Drawn by: SK / LT Date: 31/05/2021

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