



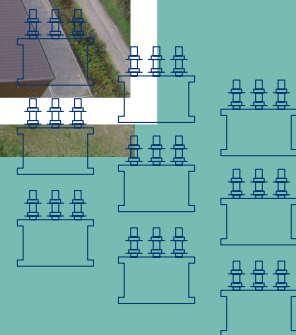
Scottish & Southern  
Electricity Networks

TRANSMISSION

# New Fiddes 132kV substation

Site Selection Consultation Event

June 2026

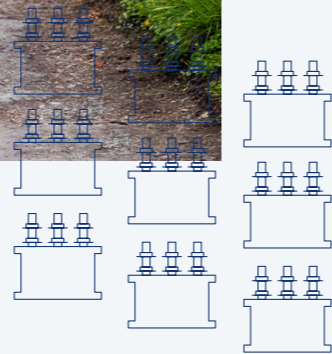


[ssen-transmission.co.uk/newfiddes132](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/newfiddes132)

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**The consultation event will be taking place on:**  
**Tuesday 30 June 2026, 3-7pm**  
**Drumlithie Bowling Club, Station Rd, Drumlithie AB39 3YT**



# Powering change together



**If we want to deliver on clean power and energy security targets and provide power for future generations, upgrade to Scotland’s electricity transmission infrastructure is needed.**

The shift to a cleaner, more sustainable future is about more than tackling the impact of climate change, it’s about ensuring that future generations can thrive.

Countries around the world are investing in their energy infrastructure to support increasing electricity demands and to deliver on clean power targets and the UK is leading the way in building a modern, sustainable energy system for the future.

## We all have a part to play

The UK and Scottish governments have set ambitious energy security and clean power targets, and we all have a part to play in delivering them.

At SSEN Transmission, we work closely with the National Energy System Operator (NESO) to connect vast renewable energy resources - like solar, wind, hydro and marine generation – to areas of demand across the country. Scotland will play a particularly big role in meeting increasing electricity demand.

**But there is more to be done. By 2050, the north of Scotland is expected to contribute more than 50GW of low carbon power to the GB energy system. Today, the region has around 11GW of renewable generation connected to the network.**

At SSEN Transmission, it is our role to build the energy system of the future. To do that, we are planning to invest around **£29 billion** in the coming years to upgrade the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland. It’s an investment that will unlock cleaner, more secure energy for homes and businesses now, and for generations to come. **By 2050, annual electricity demand is expected to at least double** - our investment will support the connection of more clean power to meet that demand to the GB electricity network, supporting up to **17,500 jobs in Scotland**, with more than **8,000** of those in the north of Scotland, along the way.

## Who we are

We are responsible for maintaining and investing in the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland. We are 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 and we are committed to minimising our impacts and maximising all the benefits that our developments can bring to your area. To do that 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 and we want to hear people’s views, concerns, or ideas—and harness local knowledge—so that our work benefits communities today and long into the future. You can share your views with us at: [szen-transmission.co.uk/talk-to-us/contact-us/](https://szen-transmission.co.uk/talk-to-us/contact-us/)

# Project overview

The New Fiddes 132kV Substation and East Coast future connections projects are required to enable the removal of over 82km of existing 132kV OHL throughout Aberdeenshire and Angus.

The proposed new Fiddes Grid Supply Point (GSP) will connect into the existing Fetteresso Substation via approximately 5km of Overhead line (OHL), linking the new substation efficiently into the wider electricity transmission system.

This development forms part of wider East coast future transmission projects required to reconnect Fiddes and Bridge of Dun to other parts of the network so that older East Coast infrastructure, which is reaching the end of its operational life, can be removed. The existing 132kV overhead line between Craigeibuckler and Arbroath Tee must remain in service while the new infrastructure is developed, as it is critical to the current electricity supply in the East Coast area. Once the wider works are complete, that older line can then be removed.

The construction of the new Fiddes GSP and its connection to Fetteresso Substation will enable a significant rationalisation of the existing network. This includes the decommissioning and removal of approximately 82km of the existing East Coast 132kV overhead line between Aberdeenshire and Angus, which is approaching the end of its operational life.

Further details of other planned works on the East Coast can be found in our recently published booklet: [ssen-transmission.co.uk/east-coast-future-projects](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/east-coast-future-projects)

## Project scope

The project will see construction of a new 132kV substation within close proximity of the existing Fiddes GSP.

The work will comprise of:

- Construction of a new 132/33kV Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) substation
- 2 x 132/33kV 120MVA Grid Transformers (GTs)
- Approx 5km OHL connection to Fetteresso Substation
- Construction of a transmission control building
- Construction of a 33kV distribution switchgear building for connecting renewable generation
- OHL cable sealing end compound approx 1km from the existing Fetteresso substation
- Approx 1km underground cable into the existing Fetteresso substation
- Modifications to existing Fiddes site

We have engaged with environmental consultants AECOM to assess the surrounding environment and landscape, and they have provided feedback on potential sites and associated scoring for each.



# Help shape our plans

The work we have planned has the potential to deliver benefits in your community, Scotland, and beyond. Yet we know that achieving our goals will require a lot of work that may impact your local community. That's why we want to work with you every step of the way throughout the planning and delivery stages of these essential works.

We're committed to delivering a meaningful consultation 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.

Throughout the consultation, we'll present our approach to developing the project, including changes made since we last consulted with you. We will also provide some visualisations and maps to show you where everything will be located.

We want you to share your thoughts and opinions on our plans, where you think we can make improvements, concerns about the impact of our work and as we develop the project, what you think of any changes and refinements we make.

By telling us what you think, you will help shape our proposals. We want to harness your local knowledge so that we spot any unforeseen challenges early and maximise the potential benefits and opportunities for your communities.

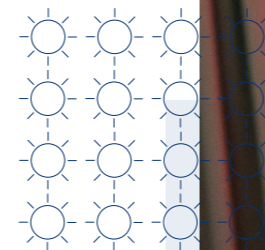
Because, ultimately, we want you to work with us to ensure that the energy infrastructure we build will be the best it can possibly be.

## What are we consulting on?

We want you to share your thoughts and opinions on our plans for the New Fiddes 132kV substation, where you think we can make improvements, concerns about the impact of our work and as we develop the project, what you think of any changes and refinements we make.

## Who are we consulting with?

As well as communities, we are keen to hear feedback from a broad range of other stakeholders such as landowners, businesses, non-statutory consultees and statutory consultees such as local authorities, NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS).



# Substations

## What is a substation?

An essential component in the UK's energy network, substations connect sources of generation, such as wind farms and power stations. They connect overhead and underground cables and can also connect nearby utility systems. The purpose of a substation is to manage the electricity flowing within the network. This can include connecting and disconnecting certain circuits to direct the flow of energy, increasing or decreasing voltage (e.g. from 132kV up to 275kV or from 400kV down to 275kV), managing the frequency of the electricity, and increasing the efficiency and reliability of the power supply.

## Other key substation functions

Substations are critical in maintaining an efficient and healthy energy network, as they monitor and report back to operators on statistics and events to provide live information on our network. This allows for the following functions:

- Fault monitoring and identification which allows for isolation to protect the network and allow repairs.
- Allow for redirection and disconnection of energy to allow for demand/maintenance.
- Provide data such as voltage, current and power flow to allow for efficient running and future predictions.

## Types of substation



### Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS)

An AIS substation is constructed with switchgear which relies on open air components, which can require large clearance areas for operation and safety, resulting in a bigger overall footprint than GIS.

**Pros:** Traditionally lower cost and typically less construction time with fewer components required and easier maintenance

**Cons:** Larger area of land required, exposed to elements, not recommended for coastal environments.



### Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS)

A GIS substation is constructed with switchgear with gaseous reliant components which allows operation and safety clearances to be reduced compared to AIS.

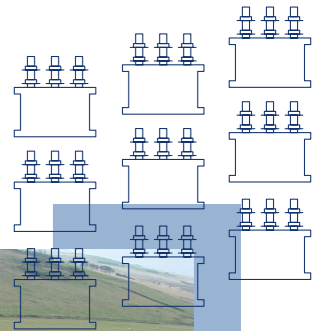
**Pros:** Reduced footprint requirements

**Cons:** High costs, specialised maintenance required, longer outage repair times.

# Fiddes GSP replacement

## Why is the substation needed?

The proposed Fiddes 132kV substation is required to ensure a safe, reliable, and resilient electricity supply for the local area, both now and in the future. Existing infrastructure in the region is reaching its capacity and was not designed to support the increasing demand for electricity, driven by population growth, new developments, and the transition to low-carbon technologies. The new substation will provide additional network capacity, improve system reliability, and support the connection of renewable energy sources, helping Scotland move towards its net zero targets. Without this investment, the network would become increasingly constrained, limiting future growth and reducing the overall resilience of electricity supplies in the area.



The project we are consulting on is proposing to construct a new 132kV AIS substation to create additional network capacity and resilience and facilitate the connection of renewable generation. The new substation platform footprint is expected to be a maximum of 200 metres in width and 200 metres in length. The proposed development will also include works to deliver any associated landscaping, biodiversity net gain and drainage requirements and the formation of a suitable access route to the site for construction and operation.



Existing Fiddes substation

## The existing substation

The existing Fiddes substation is located approximately 2km south of Drumlithie, just off the A90, and has served the local area for many years. However, the site is now operating at or close to its maximum capacity, and much of the existing equipment is approaching the end of its operational life. This limits its ability to support growing electricity demand and to accommodate new renewable energy connections.

While upgrades have been considered, the existing site is constrained by surrounding infrastructure and land use, which restricts the ability to extend or reconfigure the substation to meet future requirements.



Existing Fiddes substation

# Our site selection process

## Stage 0: Strategic options assessment

The initial high-level stages of site selection include requirements such as being in proximity to the existing 132kV network, and the existing Fiddes GSP substation, minimising the extent of new infrastructure required for the connection. The area must be large enough to accommodate the required substation footprint, together with associated landscaping, contractor compounds, and access tracks. Finally, the site must aim to avoid environmental designations and minimise the impacts on local environmental receptors.

| Performance     | Comparative appraisal  |
|-----------------|--|
| Most preferred  | Low potential for the development to be constrained          |
| ↓               | Intermediate potential for the development to be constrained |
|                 | High potential for the development to be constrained         |
| Least preferred |  |

## Stage 1: Initial site selection

10 different options were identified, all within 5km of the existing Fiddes GSP. These sites were assessed for suitability via Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA), Geographic Information System (GIS), site visits and desk studies. Of the 10 options, 8 were discounted due to space constraints, environmental impact, and/or stakeholder impact.

## Stage 2: Detailed site selection

Further appraisal and comparison of the shortlisted options resulted in options 4 and 6 being taken forward to Stage 2. Further details of the Stage 2 process can be found on the following pages.

## RAG Assessment Criteria

Stages 1 and 2 of the site selection process apply a Red Amber Green (RAG) risk assessment scoring for technical, environmental and economical aspects. The criteria used and the outcomes of the assessment are shown in the diagram on page 11.

## Stage 0: Strategic options assessment

**Site 1:** Site 1 was discounted prior to Stage 1 following an initial technical feasibility review. The site is constrained by the presence of existing gas pipelines and nearby overhead line infrastructure, which require significant stand-off distances to ensure safety and compliance with industry standards. These constraints would severely limit the available developable area and introduce substantial engineering complexity. As a result, it was not considered feasible to accommodate a substation extension at this location, and the site was not taken forward for further assessment.

**Site 5:** Site 5 was also discounted at an early stage due to its proximity to residential properties and surrounding land uses. The site is located close to existing dwellings and areas identified for potential future development, increasing the likelihood of significant impacts on local amenity, including visual effects and construction disturbance. In addition, the presence of nearby environmental and land use sensitivities would further constrain development. On this basis, Site 5 was not progressed, as alternative sites were identified that offered greater separation from receptors and a more suitable overall balance of environmental and technical considerations.

**Site 9:** Site 9 is located further from the existing substation and is adjacent to the residential area of Midtown of Barras, raising significant concerns about visual and community impacts. It is also close to watercourses, increasing the risk of hydrological constraints and potential pollution pathways. The site is on prime agricultural land and is near a Conservation Area and Local Landscape Area, which could further complicate planning and environmental acceptance. These factors, combined with less favourable access and greater distance from the existing network, resulted in its early elimination.

**Site 10:** Site 10 is the most distant from the existing Fiddes substation and is surrounded by agricultural land and farm buildings. It is close to several watercourses and a Conservation Area, with potential for hydrological and ecological impacts. The site is also adjacent to residential properties and is within a landscape that is visually open, increasing the likelihood of significant visual effects. The combination of distance from the existing network, proximity to sensitive receptors, and planning/environmental constraints led to its discounting at Stage 1.

## Stage 2: detailed site selection

Reasons sites 7 and 8 aren't being considered:

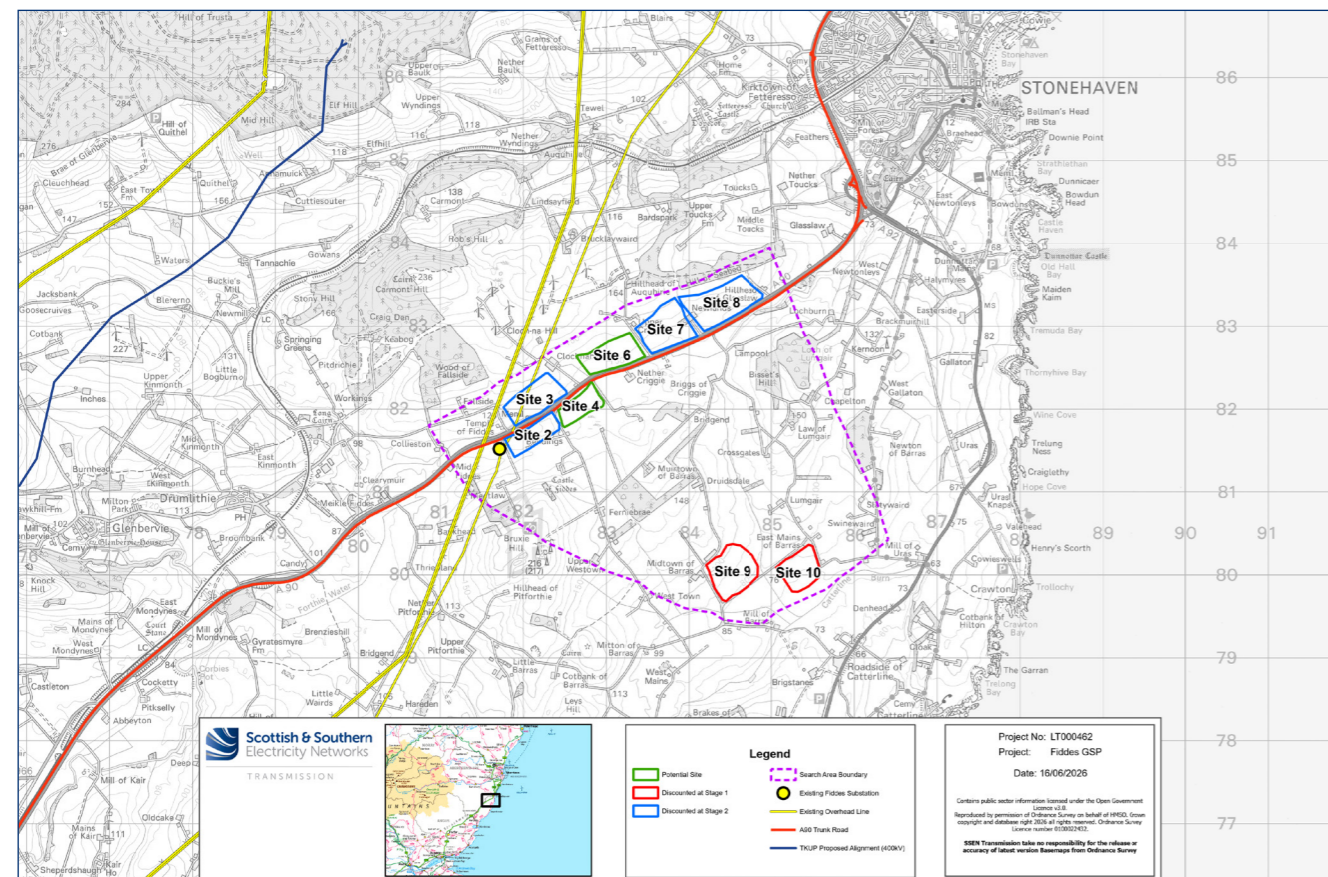
**Site 7:** Site 7 was assessed as part of the site selection process but was not taken forward due to a combination of environmental and engineering constraints when compared with other options. The site is more exposed within the surrounding landscape, offering limited opportunity for natural screening, which could result in greater visual impacts. In addition, access and connectivity to the existing electricity network were less favourable than at the shortlisted sites, meaning greater construction complexity and potential disruption. On balance, other sites were considered better able to meet the project's technical requirements while minimising impacts on the local area.

**Site 8:** Site 8 was also considered during the site selection process but was not selected as a preferred option as it presented increased constraints relative to the sites taken forward. These included less favourable ground conditions and proximity to environmental features, which could limit flexibility in design and construction. The site also offered fewer advantages in terms of network connection and access arrangements compared to other locations. As a result, Site 8 was not progressed further, as alternative sites were identified that better balanced technical feasibility with environmental and community considerations.

## Stage 1: Initial site selection

**Site 2:** Site 2 is located on prime agricultural land, directly adjacent to active farms. While it is close to the existing Fiddes substation and has good access, it is surrounded by residential properties and farm buildings, which would be visually sensitive to new infrastructure. The site also contains a possible prehistoric pit alignment and is near a Category A listed building (Castle of Fiddes), raising cultural heritage concerns. Hydrologically, it is within two Drinking Water Protected Areas, and although there are no major ecological constraints, the proximity to sensitive receptors and the potential for impacts on setting and archaeology made it less favourable compared to other options.

**Site 3:** Site 3 is also on prime agricultural land and is intersected by a water channel, increasing the risk of hydrological and ecological constraints. It contains several non-designated historic environment assets, including prehistoric features and a monument linked to the family of Robert Burns, which could be impacted by development. The site is close to residential properties and has limited screening, making visual impacts a concern. While not directly constrained by statutory designations, the combination of archaeological sensitivity, proximity to dwellings, and landscape openness led to its discounting at Stage 1.



# Site options under consideration

## Site 4:

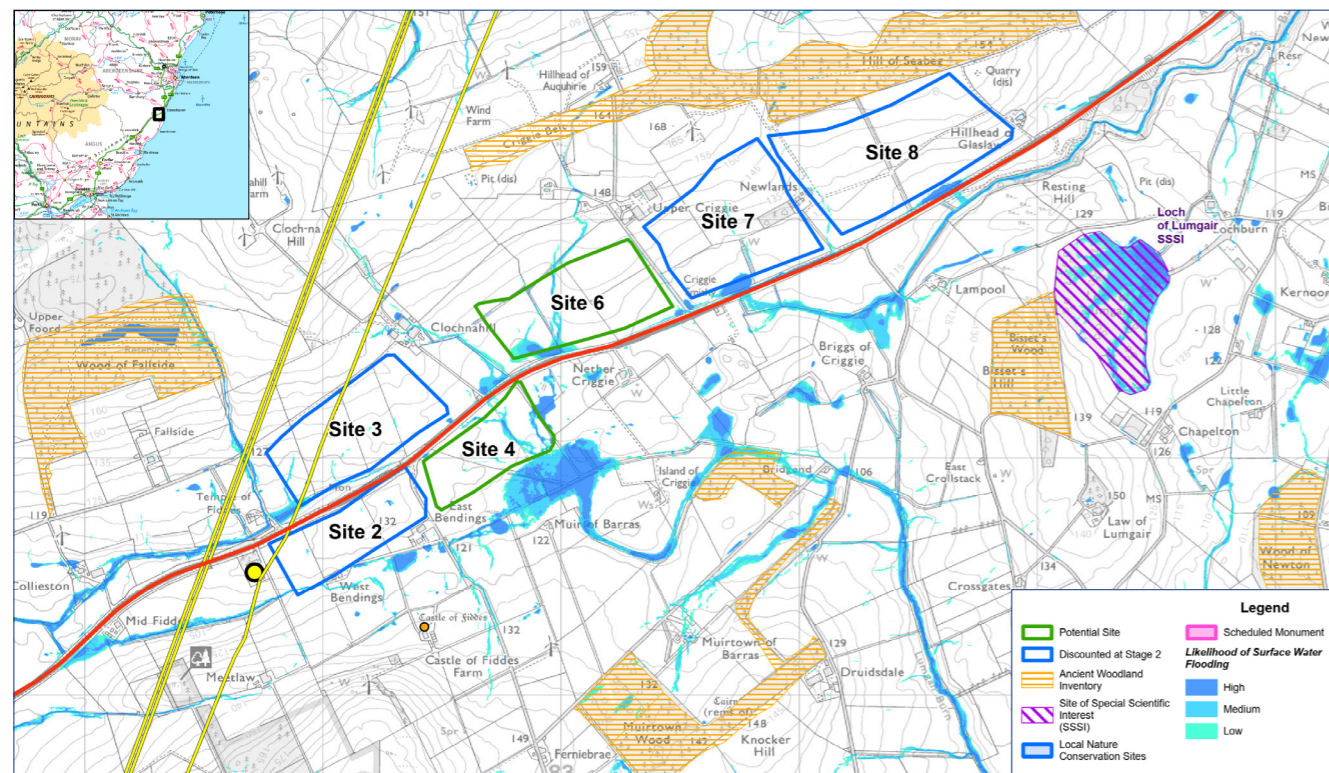
Site 4 was identified as a suitable option as it performs well against both engineering and environmental considerations when compared with other locations assessed. The site is located close to existing electricity infrastructure, allowing for a relatively straightforward connection to the wider transmission network and reducing the need for extensive overhead line diversions. This helps to minimise construction complexity, outage requirements, and disruption during delivery.

From an environmental and landscape perspective, Site 4 benefits from existing landform and boundary features that provide opportunities for natural screening, helping to reduce potential visual impacts on the surrounding area. The site is sufficiently separated from residential properties and key community receptors, lowering the potential for amenity effects. While the land is in agricultural use, the overall footprint can be accommodated in a way that limits impacts on land use and avoids more sensitive environmental constraints. On balance, Site 4 offers a strong combination of technical feasibility, environmental acceptability, and deliverability.

## Site 6:

Site 6 was also considered suitable to be taken forward due to its favourable engineering characteristics and its ability to accommodate the required substation infrastructure. The site offers good connectivity to the existing transmission network, enabling efficient integration with minimal additional infrastructure and supporting long term operational flexibility.

The site's location and topography are suitable for construction, with ground conditions that are expected to support development without significant engineering intervention. Access arrangements are achievable from the local road network, including for abnormal loads associated with transformer delivery, reducing the need for extensive road upgrades. In environmental terms, Site 6 avoids the most sensitive constraints identified elsewhere in the search area and provides opportunities to mitigate visual effects through careful layout and landscaping. These factors mean Site 6 represents a balanced option that meets technical requirements while seeking to minimise impacts on the local environment and community.



| Topic                           | Criteria  | Site 4 | Site 6 |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|--------|
| <b>Engineering</b>              |   |        |        |
| <b>Access and Connectivity</b>  | Construction Access                             | M      | M      |
|                                 | Operation and Maintenance                       | L      | L      |
|                                 | Existing Circuits/Networks                      | M      | L      |
|                                 | Future Development Possibilities                | L      | L      |
|                                 | Interface with SSEN Distribution and Generation | L      | M      |
| <b>Footprint Requirements</b>   | DNO Connection                                  | L      | L      |
|                                 | Technology                                      | L      | L      |
|                                 | Adjacent Land Use                               | L      | L      |
| <b>Hazards</b>                  | Space Availability                              | L      | L      |
|                                 | Unique Hazards                                  | M      | M      |
| <b>Ground Conditions</b>        | Existing Hazards                                | M      | M      |
|                                 | Topography                                      | L      | L      |
| <b>Environmental Conditions</b> | Geology   | M      | L      |
|                                 | Elevation                                       | M      | M      |
|                                 | Flooding  | M      | M      |
| <b>Environmental/Consent</b>    | Carbon Footprint                                | H      | H      |
|                                 | Contaminated Land                               | H      | H      |
|                                 | Noise   | M      | M      |
| <b>Natural Heritage</b>         | Designation                                     | M      | M      |
|                                 | Protected Species                               | M      | M      |
|                                 | Habitats  | M      | L      |
|                                 | Ornithology                                     | M      | M      |
|                                 | Hydrology/Geology                               | H      | H      |
| <b>Cultural Heritage</b>        | Designations                                    | M      | L      |
|                                 | Cultural Heritage Assets                        | L      | L      |
| <b>Landscape and Visual</b>     | Designations                                    | L      | L      |
|                                 | Landscape Character                             | M      | M      |
|                                 | Visual  | H      | H      |
| <b>Land Use</b>                 | Agriculture                                     | H      | H      |
|                                 | Woodland / Forestry                             | H      | H      |
|                                 | Recreation                                      | H      | H      |
| <b>Planning</b>                 | Policy  | M      | M      |
|                                 | Proposals                                       | H      | H      |
| <b>Cost</b>                     |   |        |        |
| Cost                            | Capital   | M      | M      |
|                                 | Operational                                     | M      | M      |

# Development considerations

During the site selection and design development, we have taken into account many of engineering, environmental and social considerations to establish a practical potential site for the new substation.

## Environmental considerations

During site selection, environmental constraints are considered in terms of:

- Landscape and visual - Identification of any landscape designations, potential to screen the site from surrounding views.
- Natural heritage - Presence of any designations, protected species and habitats.
- Land use and recreation - Presence and class of agricultural land, woodland/forestry, and recreation.
- Cultural heritage - Proximity to cultural heritage assets, including sites and monuments.
- Hydrology and geology - Proximity to watercourses, aquifer and water supply.

We have identified two potential sites—Site 4 and Site 6—and have carefully assessed them to understand their environmental characteristics and identify ways to minimise potential effects on the surrounding area.

These considerations help ensure the Development is delivered responsibly, balancing technical needs with the protection of nature, heritage, landscape and local communities.

The potential environmental impacts of the chosen site will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or voluntary Environmental Appraisal (EA), which will be submitted as part of any consent applications in Q3 of 2027.

The requirement for EIA and its scope will be established with Aberdeenshire Council in advance of any consent application submissions. Once any applications are submitted, the EIA/EA will be available for members of the public to view and comment on, along with all other supporting documentation, as part of the application determination process.

## Cultural heritage

There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, or Inventory Battlefields within the boundaries of either Site 4 or Site 6.

The nearest high value asset is the Category A listed Castle of Fiddes (LB6753), located approximately 500m (Site 4) and 1km (Site 6) to southwest. There is the potential for Site 4 to be constrained due to the potential for change to the character of the landscape which contributes to the significance of this cultural heritage asset. Given the greater distance between Site 6 and the Castle, existing screening and the presence of the A90 there is less potential for constraints associated with this site.

Other designated assets are limited to the Scheduled Monument Bruxie Hill Long Cairn (SM4574) situated approximately 1.2km and 1.9km to the southwest of Site 4 and Site 6 respectively. This is located on the slopes of Bruxie Hill, however, it is not a prominent feature, or discernible from either site or the surrounding landscape, due to its level of preservation.

There are no non-designated historic environment assets within Site 4 or Site 6 and based on current information, the archaeological potential of both sites is low. SSEN will continue to gather information on these heritage assets to make sure they are properly understood, and any potential impacts will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

## Natural heritage

There are no International, European, National or Regional ecological designations within Site 6 or Site 8 boundaries. However, each sits within a wider landscape that contains important natural features:

- **Site 4** - Fowlsheugh Special Protection Area (SPA)/SSSI is designated for breeding seabirds and is located approximately 4.9km east of the Site, whilst Garron Point SAC is approximately 8.2km northeast. There is an area of Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) long-established (of plantation origin) woodland approximately 650m east of the Site.
- **Site 6** - Fowlsheugh SPA/SSSI is located approximately 4.4km east of Site 6, with Garron Point SAC approximately 7.4km to the northeast. Loch of Lumgair SSSI is designated for basin fen ('schwingmoor' type) and wet woodland and located approximately 1.6km east of Site 6. There is an area of AWI long-established (of plantation origin) woodland approximately 490m north of the Site.

Both sites are considered to be of low suitability for notable and protected species, comprising highly exposed agricultural land with sub-optimal habitat for foraging, commuting or creation of resting/breeding sites.

## Landscape and visual

Landscape and visual aspects are based on a Study Area of 3km, offset from the outer boundary of each of the potential substation sites. It is considered that this extent allows identification of receptors with greatest potential for constraining the sites and therefore of most importance to the appraisal of potential substation sites.

The sites are not within any nationally or regionally protected landscape sites. Both locations are within rural landscapes that contain a mix of agricultural field, woodland, and existing infrastructure.

There are no national, regional, or local designations identified within 3km of either site. The Southeast Aberdeenshire Coast Special Landscape Area (SLA) is the closest designation, located approximately 4.2km to the east of Site 4 and slightly closer at 3.8km from Site 6.

Field surveys have confirmed potential constraints from the SLA would be limited by intervening landform, including Hillhead of Auquhirie, Bisset's Hill, Bruxie Hill and Brackmuirhill.

Localised lines of trees and scrub to the north of and wetlands to the south of Site 4 may provide opportunities for roosting/commuting species such as bats and badger. Ditches within and adjacent to Site 4 are also suitable habitat for amphibious species such as water vole. A line of immature non-native sycamore trees divides Site 6 which may be utilised by commuting/foraging species, such as bats and badgers, but are considered unlikely to support roosting bats. While isolated areas of scrub exist around the edges of Site 6 may be suitable habitat for foraging badger, there are few opportunities present for badger sett creation.

Both sites contain suitable nesting habitat for Schedule 1 species common quail, with suitable nesting habitat for barn owl, red kite and goshawk also present with 2km. Both sites also comprise suitable breeding habitat for several species on the BoCC Red List including skylark, linnet, yellowhammer, tree sparrow, house sparrow, greenfinch, starling, grey partridge and lapwing. There is also suitable foraging habitat for all of these species in winter due to the presence of agricultural fields. Regardless of the site chosen, we will minimise loss of valuable habitats wherever possible, reinstate areas affected by construction, and identify opportunities for biodiversity enhancement as part of our 10% Biodiversity Net Gain Commitment.

Site 4 is approximately 4km southwest from Stonehaven, the nearest town, with intervisibility largely limited by the Woods of Dunnottar. Multiple residential properties are located in close proximity to this site, with the nearest located approximately 70m to the northwest.

Site 6 is approximately 3.2km southwest to Stonehaven, with potential visibility largely limited by the Woods of Dunnottar. Multiple residential properties are located in close proximity to Site 6 with the nearest located approximately 100m to the northeast.

For both sites, while there are infrastructure elements in the surrounding landscape which would provide a context and reduce the contrast of the Proposed Development, there is potential for the sites to be constrained due to the proximity to and open visibility from a number of residential properties.

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVIA) will be undertaken to understand how the Proposed Development may be viewed within the surrounding area. Findings from this assessment will support the consent application and help identify any required mitigation.

### Land use and recreation

Across both sites, the underlying ground conditions reflect the rural and previously modified landscapes. Site 6 is located on Class 3.1 prime agricultural land, and whilst the majority of Site 4 is also Class 3.1, some area also fall with Class 3.2 (not classed as prime agricultural land). There is no commercial forestry within either site, however there are several felling permissions and licenses within 2km of both sites.

Neither site contains established recreational routes, and there are no public footpaths or national cycle routes crossing the site boundaries. As a result, irrespective of which site is selected, the proposed development is not expected to affect public access or recreational use of the areas.



### Geology, hydrology and hydrogeology

There are no areas of peat or carbon-rich soils located within the Sites. Moreover, there is no proximity to wetland habitat, and therefore impacts on Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems are considered very unlikely. However, both locations lie within the Stonehaven Drinking Water Protected Area and moderately productive aquifers.

Site 4 has a field drain located within the eastern extent of the site, whilst Site 6 is bisected by a field drain, with another field drain flowing into Lumgair Burn approximately 29m west of the site. As such, careful drainage design and pollution-prevention measures would need to be incorporated into the project to minimise impacts on water quality.

While no significant geological or soil-based constraints have been identified at this stage, more detailed assessments will be carried out to inform the design and ensure best-practice protection of soil resources and water environments.



# The Consenting Process

The legislation that enables the planning of the new Fiddes 132kV substation is the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

### Engaging the right people

Local Planning Authorities determine the outcome of any applications made under the Town and Country Planning Act and establish the planning pathway our substation projects must take, including which consents are required. This involves confirming whether projects require Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) under the relevant legislation.

The substation proposed as part of this project is classed as "National Development" under the Town and Country Planning process; therefore, pre-application consultation is required with the public and interested parties. There will be further opportunities to provide feedback to us during the formal pre-application consultation process.

If our project is deemed non-EIA (due to its scale or potential environmental impacts), a voluntary Environmental Appraisal (EA) may be produced by us to support the consent application. These assessments would be made publicly available once submitted in support of a planning application.

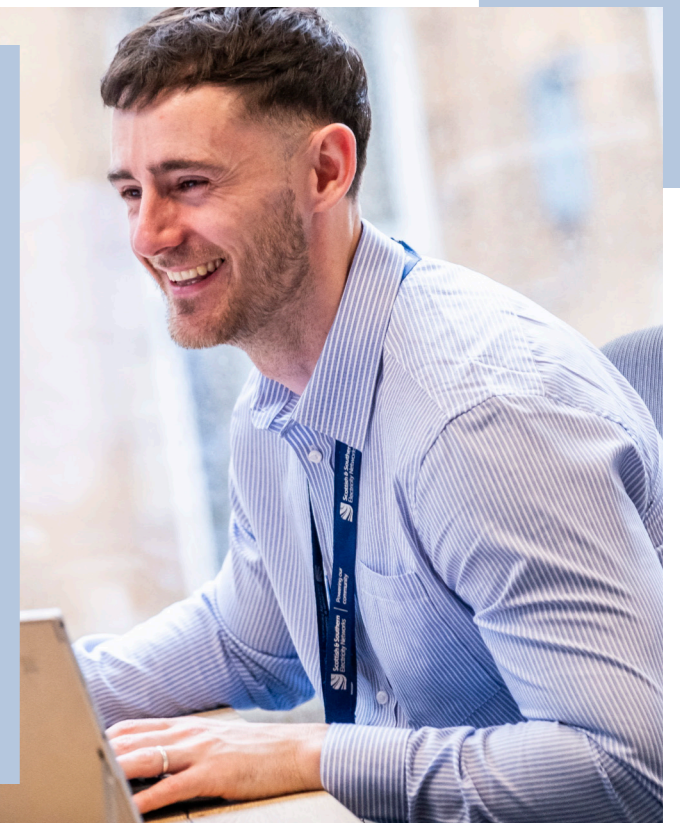
Any comments made to us as the Applicant are not representations to Aberdeenshire Council as the planning authority. There will be opportunity to make formal representations to the planning authority following the submission of the planning application.

### Overhead line (OHL) Section 37

The overhead line (OHL) element of the New Fiddes GSP project which will connect the new substation to the existing OHL will be determined under Electricity Act 1989. Applications for consent to construct and operate new overhead lines are made under Section 37 of this Act. The Section 37 application will be submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU).

The potential OHL routing has yet to be confirmed, and we will seek to consult on these once details are available. There will be opportunities to provide feedback to us on the OHL as part of the formal pre-application consultation process planned for later this year.

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. There will be an opportunity for the public to make formal representations to the ECU before a recommendation is made by them to the Scottish Ministers for a decision.



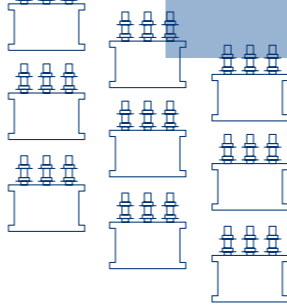
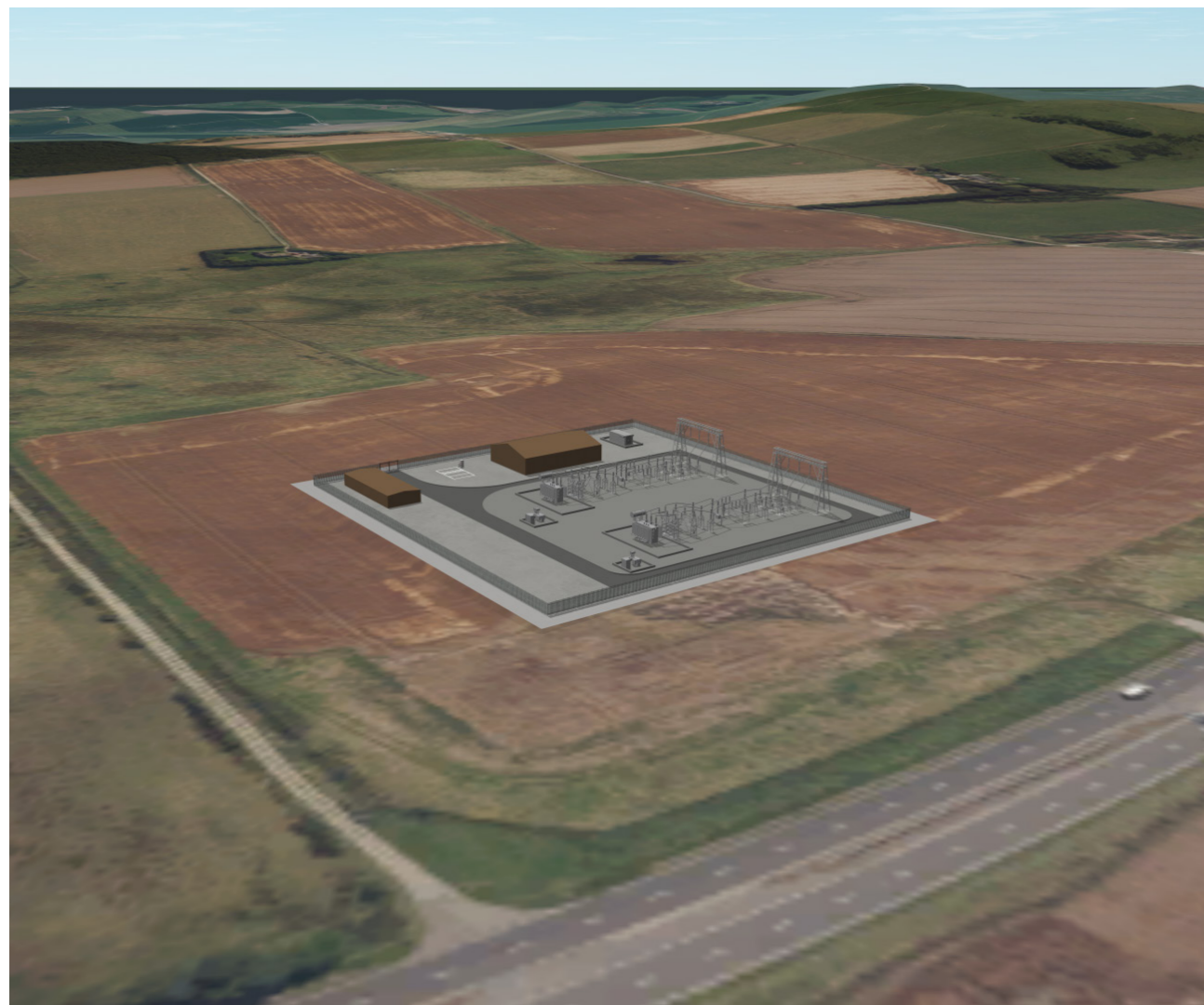
# 3D visualisation

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

The following is an image taken from the 3D model created for the new Fiddes 132kV substation. The layout and colour of our proposals may change based on feedback and further refinement of the design, if that happens, we'll update our model and video and share this on our webpage and with you at the next event. The 3d model will be available to view at the consultation event.

## Photomontages

Photomontage visualisations will also be produced as part of the EIA/EA process and once completed, these photomontages will be made available to view on our website along with the rest of the application submission documentation.



# Other projects in the local area

As the transmission operator in the north of Scotland, we need to maintain and invest in the high voltage electricity transmission network in our area to provide a safe and reliable electricity supply to our communities.

We also need to offer terms for connections to the transmission network for new generation such as wind farms and pumped storage schemes and for new sources of electricity demand.

Therefore, as well as the New Fiddes 132kV substation project, we have a number of other projects within the local area we are currently progressing, information on these other transmission projects is available through dedicated project websites linked below.

Kintore to Tealing 400kV Connection:  
[ssen-transmission.co.uk/TKUP](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/TKUP)

Hurlie substation  
[ssen-transmission.co.uk/hurlie](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/hurlie)

New East Coast 275kV substation  
[ssen-transmission.co.uk/ec275](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/ec275)

Fetteresso 132kV substation upgrade  
[ssen-transmission.co.uk/fetteressoupgrade](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/fetteressoupgrade)

## Local renewable developments

We know that local stakeholders are keen to understand the full extent of renewable developments being proposed in their local area.

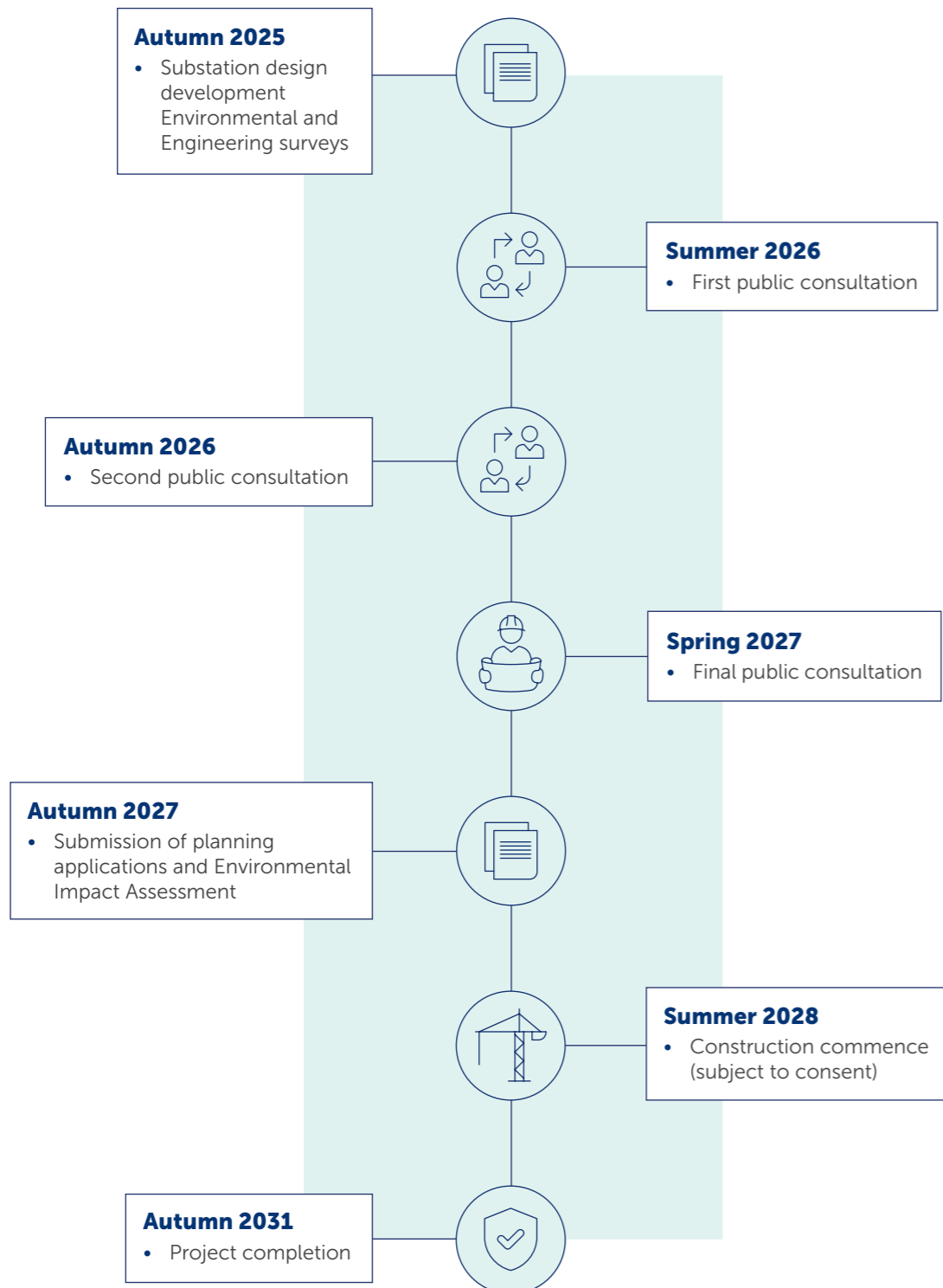
Applications to connect to the transmission network in our licence area are made to National Grid ESO and undergo a lengthy process of assessment before we begin to develop a network connection for those developments. We aim to be transparent about the renewable developments looking to connect to our network but are not permitted to disclose any details of these developments until they are in the public domain.

A list of projects that hold contracts for Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) with National Grid, the Electricity System Owner is available from their website: [neso.energy](https://neso.energy)  
Scan the QR code to search projects



# Project timeline

\*Please note that dates are indicative and subject to change.



# Have your say

We value community and stakeholder feedback. Without this, we would be unable to progress projects and reach a balanced proposal.

## The feedback period

We will accept feedback from now until **31 July 2026**.

## 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/newfiddes132](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/newfiddes132)
- Email the feedback form to the Community Liaison Manager.
- Or write to us enclosing the feedback form at the back of this booklet.

## What we're seeking views on

We want you to share your thoughts and opinions on our plans, where you think we can make improvements, concerns about the impact of our work and any changes or refinements we can make.

We'll be actively looking to mitigate the impacts of the site as much as possible over the coming months, but it would be helpful to understand what you believe we should be doing to help minimise these impacts and if there are any opportunities to deliver a local community benefit you would like us to consider.

We encourage all interested community members to fill in a feedback form when submitting feedback, however if you prefer, you can email us to provide your feedback or ask any questions.

**Community Liaison Manager**  
**Rob Whytock**

SSEN Transmission, Grampian House, 200 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 3GH

[rob.whytock@sse.com](mailto:rob.whytock@sse.com)



To support everyone online, we provide accessibility and language options on our website through 'Recite Me'. The accessibility and language support options provided by Recite Me include text-to-speech functionality, fully customisable styling features, reading aids, and a translation tool with over 100 languages, including 35 text-to-speech.

Please select "Accessibility" on our website to try out our inclusive toolbar."

## 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.

## 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/newfiddes132](https://ssen-transmission.co.uk/newfiddes132)

You can also follow us on social media:



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

**Q1. Have we adequately explained the need for this project?**

Yes  No  Unsure

Comments:

**Q2. Do you feel sufficient information has been provided to enable you to understand what is being proposed and why?**

Yes  No  Unsure

Comments:



**Q3. Do you agree with the sites identified as part of our site selection. If not, why?**

Yes  No  Unsure

Comments:

**Q4. Do you feel sufficient information has been provided to enable you to understand the site selection process that has been carried out?**

Yes  No  Unsure

Comments:

**Q5. Are there any factors, or environmental features, that you consider may have been over looked during the site selection process?**

Comments:

**Q6. Do you have any other comments (positive or negative) or concerns in relation to the project?**

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.

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 <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/privacy>

**If you would like your comments to remain anonymous 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:** SSEN Transmission, Grampian House, 200 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 3GH

**Email:** rob.whytock@sse.com

**Online:** [ssen-transmission.co.uk/newfiddes132](https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/newfiddes132)

**Download:** 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](https://www.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](https://www.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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