

Document reference	February 2023			
Revision	1			
Function	Major Projects			

Meeting	Beauly Community Liaison Group	
Date	7 th February 2023	
Time & Venue	7pm @ Lovat Hotel & Teams	

Beauly CLG Attendees and Apologies:

Attendees	Representation	
Cllr David Fraser	Cllr and Chair of Beauly CLG	
John Stewart	Kilmorack Community Council	
Steve Byford	Kilmorack Community Council	
Bill Fraser	Kiltarlity Community Council	
Lee Wilson	SSEN Transmission	
Simon Hall	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Kelly Scott	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Matthew McKessick	SSEN Transmission	
Sarah Lashley	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Sally Cooper	SSEN Transmission	
Alice Byrne	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Tara Cowley	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Rob Slaughter	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Callum Petrie	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Kevin Feeney	SSEN Transmission (Teams)	
Apologies	Position	
Duncan McCall	SSEN Transmission	
Duncan Fraser	Kilmorack Community Council	

Minutes

Introductions and agenda 1.0 1.1 Introductions and Agenda 1.Safety Moment 2. Previous meeting notes, outstanding actions 3. Noise monitoring 4. Project Updates i. Beauly 132kV Redevelopment ii. CPNI fencing project iii. West of Beauly – Asset Replacement projects iv. Pathway to 2030 Updates 5. Community experience since last meeting 6. Issues arising - SSEN Transmission - Community 8. AOB and next meeting date First hybrid meeting. 2.0 **Previous Meeting Notes** 2.1 **Previous Meeting Notes Outstanding Actions** Re-sent link re planting around substation entrance Closed RS Open Noise monitors in-situ To request that Environmental Health ensure community involvement in the 2023 noise Copy of Archaeology report to be sent to Bill Fraser when ready Scope of Works for Beauly – Denny project LW/AB Closed Invite SSER to Feb 2023 CLG meeting Open Noise – with extra volume of power being transmitted through Pathway to 2030 projects RS Closed what impact will this have on noise. 3.0 Noise Monitoring Update

3.1

Noise Monitoring

- Unfortunately, it has taken much longer than we had anticipated to get the monitor in position due to various challenges such as;
- Ongoing and planned works within substation boundary such as the fencing project/132kV GIS requiring various CDM areas.
- Agreeing a location with 4G connectivity on the Wester <u>Balblair</u> side, out with an acoustic shadow (away from building which could impact readings) and where the monitor can stay in-situ for 12 months and a location that is accessible by consultant all very challenging. (Especially considering weather station is on a long pole.)
- However a location on top of the control building has now been agreed. The monitor to be positioned w/c 6th February and will remain in place for a minimum of 12 months as agreed.



- 3.2 SSEN Transmission (Transmission) further explained that regular access to the monitor is required, approx. once every 3 months for checks, therefore the control building roof allows this. Monitor to be put in place early February; there will be a report after the first month and assessments will be ongoing.
- The Chair asked the Community if there were any noise issues. The Community said the noise had been heard recently at nighttime. The 24th January and 7th February had been particularly noticeable, not as harsh as it was previously but it is still there sometimes. Transmission will carry out checks for those dates and encouraged the Community to keep noting the dates when/if noise is heard. Transmission reiterated to the Community that noise will never completely disappear.

Post Meeting Notes:

Checked loading for week starting Saturday 21st January – SVC was active on 24th, but not as heavily loaded as either 22nd or 25th January. (Peak on 24th comparable to peak on 23rd.) There seems to have been relatively high variation in the loading of SGTs on the site over these days though, which could have contributed to the overall site noise levels being more noticeable.

Checked loading for week starting Wednesday 1st February – the noted time period (afternoon of 7th February) seems to coincide with a calibration of the SVC (approx. 4.40pm). In order to reduce risk of SVC noise increasing, Control Room complete calibrations periodically, as well as after any completion of any works (as noted below). The exact time of the calibration can vary to coincide with operation, however it would typically last circa five minutes and cause higher noise output for that short period

Community expressed future noise concerns. (See notes under Section 10). Transmission explained that there is now a written procedure used by the Control Room with checks conducted periodically. Within the procedures there is protocol for recalibration when the SVC is turned back on.

4.0 Project Updates

4.1

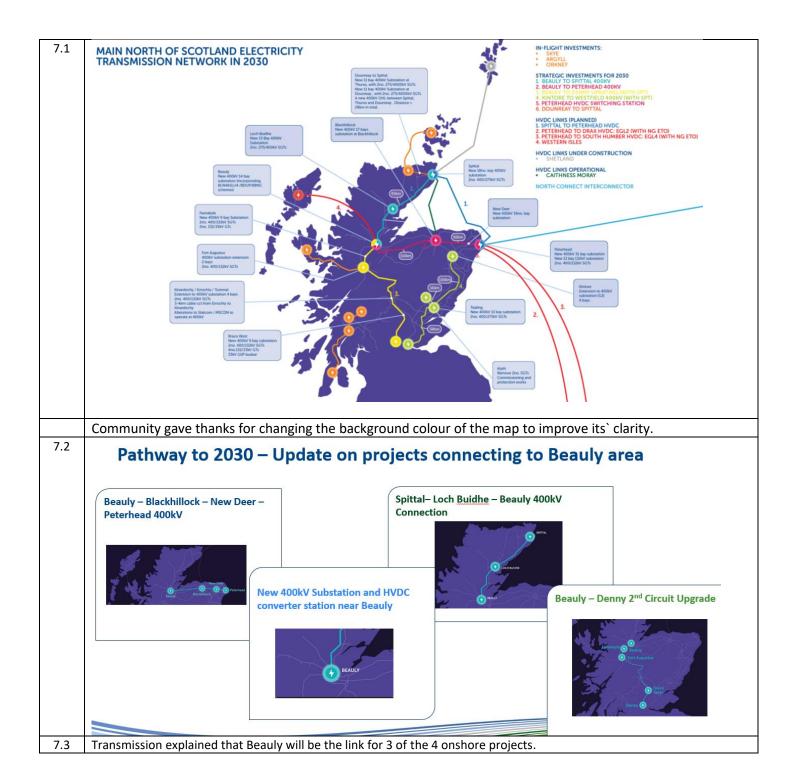
Beauly 132kV Redevelopment Project

Progress

- Tree felling works complete. All commercial timber went to Dingwall Sawmill, all bio-mass went to Shane MacLennan in Torgormack.
- Badger mitigation works complete. The last section of badger fencing installed December 2022.
- Vegetation clearance now completed on the new access track location, compound area and platform extension area. Access track along the west of 400kV compound is progressing well, allowing access to the main site compound area
- Earthworks for the platform extension have commenced, soil stripping has now been completed on the slope.
- · Archaeology Update:
 - Excavations of Prehistoric roundhouse are complete. Interim report for the archaeological excavations (Data Structure Report) has been uploaded to Historic
 Environment Record. (The report is available in the public domain for download <u>HERE*</u>) This report summarises the findings and allows presentation of the
 data in a format allowing further assessment to be undertaken.
 - Post excavation work is underway. Soil samples from the excavations are being processed to recover artefacts and ecofacts. This will also present samples
 suitable for radiocarbon dating. Specialists will produce reports on artefacts and ecofacts encountered during the excavation/post excavation work.
 - The post excavation process will last up to a year with a more formal publication produced on the excavations at the end of the project.

Look Ahead – the temporary site compound will be demobilised once main compound is established. Construction of the new 132kV GIS building will commence.

4.2	Community was informed that the speed awareness signs have been ordered and will be getting delivered to the current Site Cabins, Transmission will install the pole and The Council will install the SID Signs.			
5.0	CPNI Fencing Project			
5.1	CPNI Fencing Project			
	 Installation of owl boxes, pine martin box along with bird and bat boxes complete (6 bat, 9 bird, 2 owl and 1 pinemartin) 			
	Fence construction complete			
	 Access steps and handrail construction ongoing. 			
	Alarms and CCTV construction largely complete			
	 Commissioning of alarms and CCTV to be undertaken over the next 3 weeks. Some patience and forbearance maybe required and appreciated in advance as the system is bedded in. The sensitivity levels will require to be adjusted accordingly. 			
	 Minor snagging will probably take us into March to complete 			
5.2	Transmission asked the Community for patience once the alarms are set, there may be some sensitivities which may result in the alarms going off, so it's very likely adjustments will be required at the initial commissioning stage. Community commented on the much-improved appearance of the fence.			
6.0	West of Beauly – Asset Replacement Projects			
6.1	Transmission explained a meeting had been held with Scottish Forestry to discuss the area at the top of the hill at Kilmorack, classed as ancient woodland inventory (AWI). National Planning Framework 4 comes into effect on 12 th February with clear protections for Ancient Woodland. Transmission recognises the importance of this but also the significance when looking to deliver on our T2 and 2030 obligations. Transmission is currently looking to adopt a business position which will hopefully be agreed with local planning authorities and NatureScot to ensure a hierarchy of protection based on the 3 categories of woodland included in the AWI (1a/2a being the highest quality, irreplaceable habitat, 2a/2b being of Long-Established Plantation Origin (LEPO) and Other (appearing on the Roy military mapping). Projects will seek to avoid 1a/2a wherever possible, whilst looking to minimise impacts on the lower quality habitats where unavoidable. We would like to pursue one of the 2 sites and will be looking at a design which minimises impacts on higher quality AWI and offers compensatory planting and bio-diversity net gain (BNG).			
6.2	VISTA Glen Strathfarrar – for VISTA projects letters of support are required from community members and statutory stakeholders rather than feedback forms. Transmission explained that there will be a separate 'information type' of event. Transmission will apply to Ofgem for funding. Communications will be shared in advance about the event with the local communities Strathglass and Kilmorack CC to see when the events suit them to maximise attendance.			
6.3	As an additional comment - The Chair advised to think carefully about the wording used for the final PAN events – rather than `Consultation` instead something like `Project Events Summary` `You Said We Did` to demonstrate how feedback has been taken onboard and where possible incorporated into the design.			
7.0	Pathway to 2030			



Spittal-Loch Buidhe - Beauly 400kV Reinforcement 7.4

We are reinforcing the overhead line network from Spittal to Loch Buidhe to Beauly as part of the wider Pathway to 2030 strategy.

This reinforcement project spans a significant length of the north of Scotland and will involve the construction of a new 400kV overhead line connection, between the new proposed substations at Spittal, Loch Buidhe and Beauly.

We will be sharing information and gathering feedback on preferred technology options and proposed route options.

Have utilised new sophisticated optioneering software, that considers environmental, engineering and socio-economic factors and surveys to help determine routes



Consultation event for OHL route + new 400kV substation and HVDC Converter Station near Beauly -

- 2nd March 2023
- Kilmorack Hall
- 2.30-7pm

7.5 New 400kV Substation and HVDC converter station near Beauly

- Completed a detailed appraisal of each site identified, based on various criteria, such as: engineering, environmental, planning and economical. This has highlighted our 4no. preferred sites.
- Our external environmental consultant has completed the appraisal of each site based on environmental and planning criteria, whilst we have completed the engineering and economical assessment of each site.
- Identification and appraisal of OHL connection for each site, as the site needs to connect back to the existing Beauly - Denny 400KV OHL and connect to the new 400kv OHLs and Converter station.



Consultation event for OHL route + new 400kV substation and HVDC Converter Station near Beauly -

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Programme Dates

- **Public Consultation: March 2023**
- Public Consultation 2nd & 3rd event: Winter 2023- Spring 2024
- Planning Application submitted: Spring- Summer 2024
- Construction End: Spring 2029

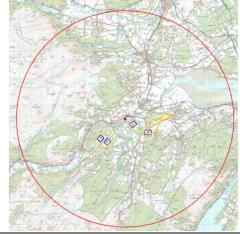
New 400kV Substation and HVDC converter station near Beauly 7.6

Stage 0 - Strategic Options Assessment

- · New site must be close to existing to minimise amount of new OHLS or cabling Be large enough to accommodate joint substation/converter station footprints, landscaping, contractor compounds, access and new connection routes. Space for future expansion desirable.
- Be in an area which doesn't contain environmental designations or cultural heritage
- Should allow connection routes for proposed 400kV OHLs and HVDC cables.

Stage 1 - Initial Site Screening

- · Identifying technically feasible, economically viable and environmentally acceptable site options within Search Area (10km diameter from the existing
- Several potential sites identified were assessed for suitability against Stage One to shortlist sites for further assessment in Stage 2.



Stage 2 - Detailed Site Selection *Current Stage*

- Appraisal of the remaining options involves detailed consideration against a range of criteria including natural and cultural heritage, people, landscape, topography, access and ground conditions.
- Red Amber Green (RAG) ratings are produced to help identify a preferred
- 7.7 -The Community requested the maps are provided in higher-resolution.
 - -The Community stated that there were previously reassurances from Transmission that any projects going North from the back of Wester Balblair village would be undergrounded.
 - -The Community asked what the constraints were for the various options, what can and cannot be done, adding cost should not be a factor. Transmission explained these will be explained at consultation and information will be in the materials. Following CLG meetings the Community go back to their Community Councils to relay this information. The Chair added that undergrounding should be put forward as an option.
 - -Community interested in understanding what weighting is given to Community/Residences in the site/route selection process.

- -Community thought some sites maybe non-starters if landowners do not allow access etc. Transmission explained that if a preferred site is a clear favourite Transmission would have to consider CPO, (Compulsory Purchase Order), this would only be an option once discussions are exhausted. Transmission said there are many challenges regardless of site.

 -Community referred to a previous site visit to Spittal which was very useful in getting an understanding about the size of a converter station and acknowledged the scale of the new Beauly area substation/converter station and potential considerable visual impacts, so the siting is critical. Transmission added that whichever site is chosen there will be
- -Community asked about the site selection process, stating that they would like involvement in the process. Transmission explained that a specific session on site selection was explained at a previous CLG meeting to provide this understanding and said that Transmission is required to carry out internal studies initially to get a starting point these include site surveys/assessments covering environmental, engineering, technical and economic factors. Once these have provided preferred sites/routes Transmission then encourage feedback/comments at each of our consultation events from communities and interested stakeholders. Information within the materials explain the site selection process and the stage at which consultation becomes meaningful.
- -Chair expressed the importance of the CLG meetings being meaningful and constructive to get the outcomes required.
- -Community agreed that the size of the building will have the most impact on communities and said the Kiltarlity community were very concerned about the HVDC site as it could be larger than the substation.

Transmission informed the Community that the footprint will not have unlimited room for expansion. The intention is for there to be a definitive number of connections and once those are `used up` the substation would be full. Therefore, Transmission projects footprints being built now would be futureproofed to defined extent. There will be major road improvements regardless of the site location and landscape experts will be involved to mitigate visual impact. Chair would like to know about 15 sites selected and reasons why they were rejected to reach the 4 preferred sites. Would like to know the pros and cons of all sites, events to discuss further with attendees. The consultation materials explain clearly approach to consultation and show how the preferred sites were reached, RAG (Red, Amber Green) assessments and surveys.

The Chair commented on the huge investment in the 4 onshore and 3 offshore projects with Transmission saying that these accelerated programmes and timescales are extremely tight. The Chair stressed the importance of the process leading up to planning submission is very important and to get it right for the local communities. Transmission informed the Community that the Council have been informed very early on in the process with the sharing of its plans and so that feedback can be collected and assessed to assist with further design development.

Beauly – Denny 2nd Circuit Upgrade

screening to mitigate this and landscaping experts will also advise.

Progress

- Ongoing Site selection for the new proposed substations based on engineering, environmental, planning and economical criteria
- Environmental consultant appointed
- Tender out to facilitate a contractor to allow more resource and design / GI capability

Programme dates

- Public Consultation (Fasnakyle substation): Start of May 2023
- Public Consultation 2nd & 3rd event: Spring 2024
- Planning Application submitted: Spring- Summer 2024
- Construction start: Summer 2026
- Construction End: Spring 2029
- 8.1 For the Beauly Denny uprating project there will not be any tower modifications, no stringing. The voltage will be changed from 275kV to 400kV. There will be no impact on the Wester Balblair community.
- 8.2 Community asked if there were any further plans for the 400kV substation with the space available. Transmission explained there are 2 transformers, 1 side is 400kV and the other 275kV, this cable becomes redundant. Transformers and busbars will stay and there will be a new busbar onto the line.

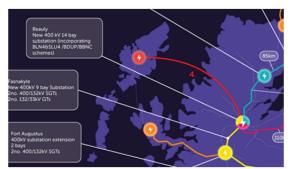
Community asked whether the busbars can be coloured?

Post Meeting Note:Transmission have consulted within Engineering team and reached out to one of our main busbar suppliers. At this stage, a definitive response has not been received and hope to have an update for the next CLG meeting. Our initial expectation is that this might not be possible, though the colouring of the fence has demonstrated the value of investigating thoroughly.

9.0

2030 Projects - Potential Noise Impacts

- There are transformers, reactors and reactive compensation i.e. noise emitting plant associated with new substations across the network for 2030 projects.
- We are designing with noise mitigation in mind from the start.
- There are however <u>no</u> current plans to add any new noise emitting plant such as transformers or reactors to the existing Beauly site at Wester <u>Balblair</u> as part of the 2030 projects.
- Furthermore, these projects do not require any upgrade to existing transformers at existing Beauly site. (SGT upgrades associated with 132kV GIS proceeding as previously covered.)
- As previously discussed, addition of other reactive compensation across network will hopefully further reduce necessity for Beauly SVC to operate.



9.1 As our default position, noise is considered at the inception stage of project design and going forward there will be capacity for transformers to have noise enclosures. (This was not eh case with the Beauly SVC transformer.) At Wester Balblair there is not any new noise emitting equipment going in as part of our 2030 schemes and at the new Beauly area substation, noise mitigation is being incorporated as a default. We have also taken the decision to minimise the amount of reactive compensation that could be required at the site, mindful of the historic issues with the SVC at Wester Balblair.

The community asked what will happen if noise continues to be an issue at Wester Balblair? The Chair added it would be good to have a high-level protocol to cover this. Transmission explained that this noise monitoring will be the first step, so will see how that goes over 12 months. Noise will remain an item on CLG agenda and Transmission are always open to being advised of specific issues, which will be investigated and responded to as quickly as possible.

Transmission explained going forward coolers will be installed separately by default. Coolers require space around them so therefore substations will be of a larger footprint but this does give the space required should noise enclosures be required. If there is space there are options, it's a trade-off as there will be mitigation measures which can be used if required.

10.0

Community Experience Since Last Meeting

Beauly Community to comment

-Community repeated that noise is still heard at times. Transmission explained the noise will not completely go away.

11

Issues Arising?

SSEN Transmission

Community

No further issues raised – which The Chair commented that this shows the CLG meetings are working well.

Actions

Number	Action / Update	Owner	Open/Closed
1.	Community to be informed when CPNI project – alarms etc	DMC/SC	OPEN
	commissioned as there may be some sensitivities initially.		
2.	Can the busbars in 400kV be coloured?	RS	OPEN
3.	Check what the `System` was doing on the dates the noise was heard on Jan 24 th and 7 th Feb.	RS	CLOSED
4.	New Beauly area substation and HVDC converter station – explanation of why the sites were discounted (Site selection report) to be shared at consultation. What weighting is given to communities in optioneering?	LW	OPEN
5.	Post excavation report availability once published (likely to be towards the end of 2023)	SH	OPEN
6.	To request that Environmental Health ensure community involvement in the 2023 noisereview.	DF	Open