

APPENDIX 4: PRELIMINARY STATUTORY CONSULTATION RESPONSES TO ALIGNMENT OPTIONS FOLLOWING ALIGNMENT WORKSHOPS

Stakeholder	Summary of Feedback	Response by SSEN Transmission
Section 0 - Ardmore to Edinbane		
The Highland Council (THC)	Access officer highlighted that the OHL would run alongside Stein to Gillen, and Loch Caroy to Glen Vic Askill Core Paths, and crosses two other Rights of Way and Wider Path Network paths. Public access will need to be considered and accommodated during construction works, and where longer term access is required.	Core paths and other recognised walking routes are noted and referenced within this Consultation Document. Appropriate mitigation measures will be developed through the EIA stage of the project, in consultation with THC.
NatureScot	In light of the potential to cross the An Cleirach SSSI, NatureScot offered to provide the Earth Science Document for the site to help guide the siting of infrastructure.	The Earth Science Document has been obtained from NatureScot and will be referred to in the siting of infrastructure during the EIA stage of the project.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	HES raised some initial concerns with potential setting effects in relation to Trumpan Church and Dun Hallin Broch Scheduled Monuments. HES requested additional wirelines from / to these sites of all alignment options. On receipt of this information, HES provided written feedback concluding that the Baseline Alignment was preferred to alternative variants with respect to potential setting effects on Scheduled Monuments in this section.	Information was provided to HES to help inform their written feedback. A detailed settings assessment will be undertaken during the EIA stage of the project.
Forestry Land Scotland (FLS)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to alignment options and design solutions within Section 0.	None required.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to alignment options and design solutions within Section 0.	None required.

Section 1 – Edinbane to Sligachan		
The Highland Council (THC)	Access officer highlighted OHL crosses the Loch Caroy to Glen Vic Askill Core Path (also part of Wider Path Network path). Public access will need to be considered and accommodated during construction works, and where longer term access is required.	Core paths and other recognised walking routes are noted and referenced within this Consultation Document. Appropriate mitigation measures will be developed through the EIA stage of the project, in consultation with THC.
NatureScot	Highlighted that the OHL crosses watercourses that are upstream of the Sligachan Peatlands SAC and SSSI - avoiding silt and pollutants entering these watercourses will be key. Also highlighted Class 1 peatland habitat within much of Section 1 and recommend peat and vegetation surveys to guide the siting of infrastructure, and construction tracks.	Potential indirect effects on the Sligachan Peatlands SAC and SSSI will be considered in full and appropriate mitigation measures developed during the EIA stage of the project. Habitat and peat depth surveys have been undertaken and have informed the alignment selection within this section. Further survey and assessment work will be undertaken at the EIA stage of the project to inform infrastructure and construction access.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	During preliminary consultations, HES confirmed they were content that significant impacts on the setting of Dun Arkaig Broch Scheduled Monument are not likely following the Baseline Alignment.	None required. A detailed settings assessment will be undertaken during the EIA stage of the project.
Forestry Land Scotland	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to Section 1.	None required.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to Section 1.	None required.

Section 2 – Sligachan to Broadford Substation		
The Highland Council (THC)	Highlighted importance of providing information regarding alternative options within Section 2 (e.g. subsea and underground cable options, and NeSTS poles) in order for consultees to understand how these have been fully explored. Stated underground cable option considered within this section would be a positive step forward, subject to fuller understanding of impacts and above ground infrastructure requirements.	The consideration of alternative design solutions within this section is discussed in this Consultation Document. An underground cable option is being put forward as part of the design solution within Section 2 to mitigate likely significant landscape and visual effects. This will be subject to further review and assessment during the EIA stage of the project.
	Access officer highlighted the alignment crosses a number of core paths, rights of way and wider path network paths. Public access will need to be considered and accommodated during construction works, and where longer term access is required.	Core paths and other recognised walking routes are noted within this Consultation Document. Appropriate mitigation measures will be developed through the EIA stage of the project, in consultation with THC.
NatureScot	NatureScot continue to advise that an OHL in Route 2A is likely to have a significant effect on the NSA and WLA. Recommend consideration of both Route Options 2A and 2B, as believe 2B would result in fewer landscape and visual effects.	Alternative design solutions have been explored within this section, including the viability of Route Option 2B. This is discussed within this Consultation Document. An underground cable option is being put forward as part of the design solution within Section 2 to mitigate likely significant landscape and visual effects. This will be subject to further review and assessment during the EIA stage of the project.
	Assessment of Special Qualities of NSA should be carried out.	The special qualities of the NSA have been a key consideration in the consideration of alignment options and design solutions through this section. This is considered in relation to the Baseline Alignment in Appendix 5 of this Consultation Document. A full assessment of the proposed alignment and design solution will be included in the EIA Report.
	Crossing of Loch Sligachan and around Glamig is a key area where alternatives should be explored. Also an alternative route at Glen Tor-a-Mhulaig / Moll, and approach to Loch Ainort.	An underground cable option is being put forward as part of the design solution within Section 2 to mitigate likely significant landscape and visual effects.
	Underground / subsea cable options need to be assessed so that the relative impacts can be considered in a transparent way.	Alternative design solutions have been explored within this section. This is discussed within this Consultation Document. An underground cable option is being put forward as part of the design solution within Section 2 to mitigate likely significant landscape and visual effects. This will be subject to further review and assessment during the EIA stage of the project.

	Keen to see bird survey data collected to inform NatureScot advice further, in respect of the SPA.	This has been provided and further discussion with NatureScot will continue through the EIA stage of the project.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	No specific comments relating to Section 2 made during workshop, or in written feedback.	None required.
Forestry Land Scotland	No specific comments relating to Section 0 made during workshop. No other written feedback received to date.	None required.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to Section 2.	None required.

Section 3 – Broadford Substation to Kyle Rhea		
The Highland Council	The Highland Council attended a preliminary workshop whereby SSEN provided an update on Section 3.	Comments received by The Highland Council during the alignment consultation period will be considered, and further consultation undertaken during the EIA stage of the project.
NatureScot	NatureScot attended a preliminary workshop whereby SSEN provided an update on Section 3. NatureScot expressed concern about the potential adverse effects on site integrity of the Kinloch and Kyleakin Hills SAC / SSSI.	Concerns regarding potential adverse effects on site integrity of the Kinloch and Kyleakin Hills SAC / SSSI are acknowledged. The preferred alignment that has been developed seeks to minimise effects as far as practicable. Further consultation with NatureScot will continue through the EIA stage of the project.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	HES were not invited to provide preliminary comments on Section 3 given the evaluation and analysis of practicable options through this section has taken considerable time.	Comments received by HES during the alignment consultation period will be considered, and further consultation undertaken during the EIA stage of the project.
Forestry Land Scotland	Preliminary discussions have been held with Forestry Land Scotland in relation to impact on forestry through Section 3, and where the OHL crosses land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland.	Further discussions with Forestry and Land Scotland will continue through the EIA stage of the project.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	SEPA were not invited to provide preliminary comments on Section 3 given the evaluation and analysis of practicable options through this section has taken considerable time.	Comments received by SEPA during the alignment consultation period will be considered, and further consultation undertaken during the EIA stage of the project.

Section 4 – Kyle Rhea to Loch Cuaich;		
The Highland Council	Reiterated NatureScot's comments within this section during preliminary consultation workshop.	See NatureScot response.
NatureScot	Suggest that it is likely that the Baseline Alignment will result in significant adverse impacts on the special qualities of the Knoydart NSA and the Kinlochhourn – Knoydart – Morar WLA. Of particular importance were the bealach at Cadha Mor, where there are two towers above Kinlochhourn, also the alignment at Loch Cuaich bridge, and the alignment at Loch Coire Shub.	A focus during the alignment selection process has been to minimise potential landscape and visual effects through the Knoydart NSA, Kinloch Hourn, Knoydart and Morar WLA, and Moidart, Morar and Glen SLA as far as practicable. This has included review of tower positions at the locations noted by NatureScot.
	Highlighted that the OHL could cross within the vicinity of Druim Iosal SSSI and Quoich Spillway SSSI which are both sites of interest for their Moine geology.	This is noted and has been considered during the alignment selection process. Due to a particular pinch point at Druim Iosal, two towers would be located within, or on the boundary of the SSSI, as per the existing OHL.
	NatureScot also highlighted peatland habitats, native woodland, ornithology and other protected species that may be present within Section 4.	These environmental constraints have been considered during the alignment selection stage of the project and will continue to be considered during the EIA stage of the project to minimise potential effects as far as practicable.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	HES noted the Scheduled Monuments of Bernera Barracks, Dun Telve and Dun Troddan, brochs, Glenelg (SM 90152) & Dun Grugaig, dun Gleann Beag (SM 914) which views from and to Glenmore are important to the monument's cultural significance.	Potential setting effects on these Scheduled Monuments have been considered, and a full settings assessment will be undertaken at the EIA stage.
Forestry Land Scotland	Highlighted that the OHL cuts through some smaller forestry blocks that the existing line avoids and queried whether these could be avoided.	Potential effects on woodland and forestry have been minimised as far as practicable.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to Section 4.	None required.

Section 5 – Loch Cuaich to Invergarry		
The Highland Council	No specific comments relating to Section 5 made during preliminary workshop. No other written feedback received to date.	None required.
NatureScot	Highlight that Section 5 passes close to Loch Poulary, Loch Garry and Loch Lundie, which are all part of the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA, designated for breeding black-throated divers and common scoter. Advise that following a route closest to the existing overhead line is likely to present the lowest risk of increased impacts to scoters and divers.	This is noted. The preferred alignment follows the existing OHL closely through this section.
	NatureScot also highlighted peatland habitats, native woodland, ornithology and other protected species that may be present within Section 5.	These environmental constraints have been considered during the alignment selection stage of the project and will continue to be considered during the EIA stage of the project.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	Limited potential to affect assets within their remit.	None required.
Forestry Land Scotland	Highlighted that the OHL cuts through some smaller forestry blocks that the existing line avoids and queried whether these could be avoided.	Potential effects on woodland and forestry have been minimised as far as practicable.
	Queried whether existing wayleave would be used.	Wayleave requirements for the preferred alignment would be clarified during the EIA stage of the project.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to Section 5.	None required.

Section 6 – Invergarry to Fort Augustus		
The Highland Council	Queried extent of undergrounding at Fort Augustus during preliminary workshop. No other written feedback received to date.	The extent of undergrounding at Fort Augustus is set out in this Consultation Document.
NatureScot	Noted that the Baseline Alignment is closer to Loch Lundie (part of the West Inverness-shire Lochs SPA) than the existing line and asked whether it could be moved closer to existing OHL.	The alignment has been reviewed in this location and the preferred alignment is close to the existing OHL.
	NatureScot also highlighted peatland habitats, native woodland, ornithology and other protected species that may be present within Section 6.	These environmental constraints have been considered during the alignment selection stage of the project and will continue to be considered during the EIA stage of the project.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	Highlighted the Baseline Alignment's proximity to the Scheduled Monument of Torr Dhuin, fort, Fort Augustus (SM 794). HES suggest a key consideration for this is whether the new towers associated with the Baseline Alignment would adversely impact important views to the fort from the Great Glen and from the fort along the Great Glen. HES have offered advice on viewpoint locations and continue to recommend that visualisations should be produced illustrating impacts on both outward and inward views from and to the fort.	This part of Section 6 will now be an underground cable connection into Fort Augustus Substation, therefore long term effects on the setting of this Scheduled Monument would not be likely.
Forestry Land Scotland	Preliminary discussions have been held with Forestry Land Scotland in relation to impact on forestry through Section 6, and where the OHL crosses land owned by Forestry Land Scotland.	Further discussions with Forestry Land Scotland will continue through the EIA stage of the project.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	No specific preliminary feedback received in relation to Section 6.	None required.