Scottish and Southern Energy
Power Distribution

Beauly – Blackhillock Reinforcement and Blackhillock – Kintore Reinforcement

Report on Consultation

August 2016

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc

Beauly – Blackhillock Reinforcement
and
Blackhillock – Kintore Reinforcement

Report on Consultation

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GLOSSARY

275 kV	Electrical circuit operating at 275,000 volts
400 kV	Electrical circuit operating at 400,000 volts
AC	alternating current
AGLV	Area of Great Landscape Value - areas identified by The Moray Council by virtue either as being large scale areas of regional importance for scenic quality, or as being small scale areas of local scenic and recreational value. They are afforded protection under Policy E7 of the Moray Local Plan 2008, and the proposed Moray Local Development Plan.
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
CA	Conservation Area
ECDU	Energy Consents and Deployment Unit (Scottish Government) – this is the former name for Local Energy and Consents
EIA	Environmental impact assessment - a formal process set down in The Electricity Works (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (as amended in 2008) used to systematically identify, predict and assess the likely significant environmental impacts of a proposed project or development.
ES	Environmental Statement – the report produced to describe the EIA process and outcomes for a proposed project or development.
FES	Future Energy Scenarios
GDL	Garden and Designed Landscape
GSP	Grid Supply Point
GWDTE	Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystem
Holford Rules	A set of 7 rules, first developed in 1959 by Sir William Holford, which define the principles of overhead line route selection and which continue to inform transmission line routeing in the UK
HVDC	high voltage direct current
IBA	Important Bird Areas are designated by Birdlife as places of international significance for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity[1]. They are a non-statutory, international designation.
kV	kilovolt (1000 volts) - capacity of an electricity power line
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LEC	Local Energy and Consents (Scottish Government)

1 www.birdlife.org

Listed Building	A building that has been recognised through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as of special architectural or historical interest.
MW	Mega-watt
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission
NETSO	National Electricity Transmission System Operator
NETS SQSS	National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard
NOA	Network Options Assessment
OHL	Overhead line. An electric line installed above ground, usually supported by lattice steel towers or wood poles.
Planning application	An application for planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. It should be noted that consent under section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 usually carries with it deemed planning permission from the Scottish Ministers under Section 57 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
Preferred route corridor	The route corridor option which is considered to represent the optimum balance between the various environmental, technical and economic considerations
Preferred route alignment	The OHL route alignment that has been selected as the preference following completion of a detailed route selection study.
Proposed route corridor	The final route corridor within which alternative OHL route alignments will be defined and appraised.
Proposed route alignment	The OHL route alignment that will be taken forward for further detailed survey and assessment work, prior to submission of a section 37 application.
Route alignment	The line of an OHL connecting two electrical substations.
Route corridor	A linear area of search within the Study Area, through which a new transmission line could be located
Routeing	The work undertaken which leads to the selection of a proposed route alignment, capable of being taken forward into the consenting process under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.
Section 37 (s37) application	An application to The Scottish Minsters for development consent under section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989
SAC	Special Area of Conservation - designated under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (known as - The Habitats Directive)

SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SHE Transmission	Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc
SLA	Special Landscape Area - areas identified by The Highland Council by virtue either as being large scale areas of regional importance for scenic quality, or as being small scale areas of local scenic and recreational value. They are afforded protection under Policy 61 of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan (Adopted 2012).
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Area – designated under Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive)
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest – designated by SNH under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
Stakeholders	Organisations and individuals who can affect or are affected by SHE Transmission works
Study Area	The widest area of land between the existing Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore substations, within which the route corridor options are located.
Substation	an electricity network connection point used for connecting circuits with or without transformers to change circuit voltages
THC	The Highland Council
TMC	The Moray Council
VP	Vantage Point locations overlooking the preferred corridor from which ornithology surveys will be carried out.
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility - the theoretical visibility of an object in the landscape

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (SHE Transmission) is proposing to construct a new double circuit 400 kV overhead line (OHL), supported by lattice steel towers, between the existing Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore substations (hereafter 'the Projects').

This Report on Consultation documents the consultation undertaken between October 2015 and January 2016 and between March and May 2016. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with statutory and non-statutory organisations and local communities, in order to invite feedback on the rationale for and approach to the selection of the preferred route corridor for the Projects. Consultees were also invited to provide feedback on the consideration given to environmental constraints and on any specific factors or environmental features that may have been overlooked.

A series of public exhibitions were held in October and November 2015 throughout the preferred route corridor area; these were attended by a total of 560 people. In addition, a further public exhibition was held in March 2016 in Monymusk, following an extension to the preferred route corridor; this was attended by 144 people.

In total, 177 consultation responses were received during the first consultation period and a further 485 consultation responses were received during the second consultation period. These included both written correspondence and completion of feed-back forms. Responses cover a range of topics, with a number raising specific issues in relation to the preferred route corridor. Common themes emerging from responses related to the projects' need, the route corridor selection process and environmental factors such as potential landscape and visual impacts of a new overhead line within the preferred route corridor. Comments were also received seeking further explanation of engineering, design and construction issues and the criteria used in the route corridor selection study.

All comments have been carefully considered by the Project team. This report provides information on how SHE Transmission has taken into account the points and queries that were raised and how they will be used to further inform later stages of the Projects' development, particularly the detailed route selection stage of the Projects.

The next steps of the Projects include:

- Selection of the Proposed Route Corridor – This will be set out in a separate Route Selection Study report, which will provide full detail of the basis for SHE Transmission's selection of the Proposed Route Corridor.
- Detailed Route Selection – Following the identification of a Proposed Route Corridor, SHE Transmission will carry out assessments and design work to identify a Preferred Route Alignment for the transmission line. The next round of consultation will provide an opportunity to present and receive comment upon the Preferred Route Alignment, with particular regard to sensitive locations and the need for any mitigation. This consultation is anticipated to take place in 2017.
- Proposed Route Alignment – Having regard to consultation undertaken on the Preferred Route Alignment, SHE Transmission will identify its Proposed Route Alignment. SHE Transmission will continue to undertake further surveys, and detailed environmental impact assessments will be carried out as the Projects progress. Further consultation with statutory and other stakeholders is anticipated to take place in 2018, which will be the final phase

of pre-application consultation prior to the application being submitted for development consent.

- Application – SHE Transmission will consider the final details of its proposals before submitting an application for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. The application will be submitted to the Scottish Government Local Energy and Consents (LEC) and will be supported by an Environmental Statement reporting upon an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposals. There will be a further opportunity for comments to be submitted to the LEC in relation to the application and accompanying ES.

During the above listed stages of the Projects, SHE Transmission will seek to work closely with stakeholders, communities and landowners to discuss and explain its decisions during the route selection and environmental assessment processes.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 SHE Transmission is proposing to construct a new double circuit 400 kV OHL, supported by lattice steel towers, between the existing Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore substations (hereafter 'the Projects').

1.1.2 A route corridor selection study has been completed in order to select a preferred route corridor within which an OHL may be routed, representing the area of fewest environmental and technical constraints between the three connection points (Beauly substation, Blackhillock substation and Kintore substation).. The route corridor selection study followed a systematic process of considering environmental and technical constraints, resulting in the selection of a route corridor which is technically feasible and economically viable and which causes the least disturbance to the environment; and those living in it, working in it, visiting it or using it for recreational purposes.

1.1.3 A programme of consultation with statutory stakeholders was carried out throughout the route corridor selection study. This culminated in a period of community consultation between October 2015 and January 2016 on the basis of the preferred route corridor, followed by a second period of community consultation between March and May 2016 on the basis of an extension to the preferred route corridor.

1.1.4 During the community consultation periods, a Consultation Document and public exhibitions were used to engage with statutory and non-statutory organisations and local communities. Feedback was invited on the rationale for and approach to the selection of the preferred route corridor, as well as on the consideration given to environmental constraints and on any specific factors and environmental features that may have been overlooked.

1.1.5 This Report on Consultation documents the responses received; identifies matters for further consideration as part of the detailed route selection process, and confirms the location of the proposed route corridor which will be taken forward for more detailed analysis.

1.1.6 The remainder of this Report on Consultation is structured as follows:

- Section 2 gives a summary of the project need and description.
- Section 3 sets out the consultation process, including dates of workshops, public exhibitions and the list of statutory and non-statutory consultees.
- Section 4 provides an overview of the information and main views obtained during the consultation process.
- Section 5 sets out the responses from the SHE Transmission project team to feedback received during the community consultation periods described above.
- Section 6 provides a summary of the consultation process and outlines the next steps in the route selection process.

1.1.7 Annex A provides figures and Annex B provides a copy of the revised Table 5.1: Comparative Analysis of Potential Route Corridors from the Consultation Document (issued January 2016). Annex C provides details of the consultation undertaken with

key stakeholders throughout 2014 and 2015. Annexes D and E contain details of the measures undertaken to advertise the public exhibitions, and copies of the exhibition display materials, respectively. Annex F contains the public information booklets that were produced for each community consultation period, and Annex G contains a copy of the feedback form. Finally, Annex H contains a record of the project media coverage during the consultation periods.

2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Project Need

2.1.1 As part of its obligations under the Electricity Act 1989 and Transmission Licence, SHE Transmission has a number of responsibilities including:

i. the development and maintenance of an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission

ii. the facilitation of competition in the supply and generation of electricity, and

iii. ensuring that the security of the network is maintained as the demand and/or generation connections change over time.

2.1.2 The existing SHE Transmission grid system network is shown on Figure 1. It is divided by main system boundaries, marked by the blue lines. Each boundary divides the network into two separate sections which are regularly tested to ensure that the required transfer capability exists across the boundary. The objective of the proposed reinforcements between Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore is to increase the transfer capacity across the B1 boundary.

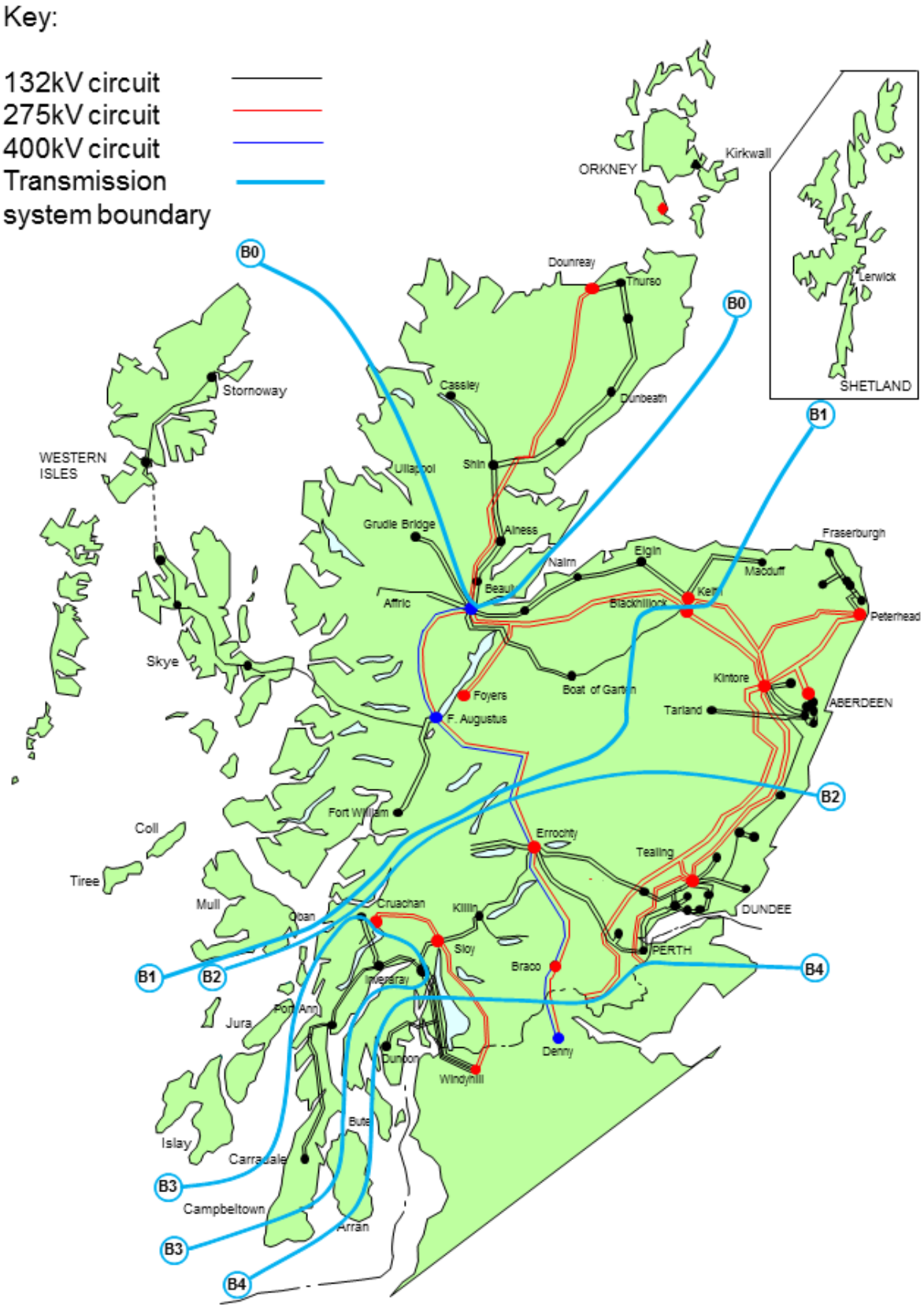

Figure 1: Existing SHE Transmission Grid System Network

2.1.3 The National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard (NETS SQSS) provides the criteria that all transmission owners use to plan and design the transmission system. Under the SQSS assessment, it is necessary to establish the required transfer capabilities across sections of the transmission network for a range of generation and network scenarios and to compare this to the actual network capability. The SQSS assessment for each section of the network can readily indicate any divergence between required capability and actual capability and therefore demonstrate when reinforcement across a section of network is required. The need for reinforcement of the transmission system between Beauly and Blackhillock and between Blackhillock and Kintore is a result of the significant growth in renewable energy generation in the north of Scotland. The forecast for renewable energy generation growth in the area is informed by generation with signed contracts for connection to the grid and the Future Energy Scenarios (FES) provided by the National Electricity Transmission System Operator (NETSO), NGET (National Grid Electricity Transmission), taking account of stakeholder feedback.

2.1.4 The FES, published by NETSO, describe various scenarios for generation and demand across the transmission network of Great Britain and this is reviewed annually via the Networks Options Assessment (NOA) report. The NOA report scrutinises transmission owner reinforcement options and gives recommendations for future development of the transmission system based on a cost benefit approach. Early development of large transmission projects are therefore influenced significantly by the role of National Grid as System Operator and the obligation to ensure that any solution is economic and efficient.

2.1.5 The FES for the growth of electricity generation across the whole of the Great Britain transmission network are regularly analysed, taking account of whether or not future electricity generation would meet the Government's environmental targets. This scenario analysis indicated that reinforcement of the B1 boundary would be required after 2020, with a new high voltage connection required by 2024. A first review of the FES to the north of the B1 boundary was undertaken by National Grid at the end of 2015. This review extended the timescale over which the reinforcement would be required and confirmed that the new connection would be required by 2025.

2.1.6 SHE Transmission is currently preparing the 2016 NOA submission and any impacts on the Projects from changing generation scenarios will be assessed during this process.

2.1.7 The existing Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore substations have been selected to accommodate this reinforcement based on the layout of the existing network, as well as on their individual size and location.

2.2 Project Description

2.2.1 The scope of the Projects was determined through appraisal of a number of options for the required reinforcements. The appraisal allowed a conclusion to be reached regarding the nature of the Projects, which is described below at paragraph 2.2.8.

Connection Options Appraisal

2.2.2 The options that were identified for the Projects included consideration of available technology, and covered all possible geographic locations in the vicinity of the B1 boundary. The options considered were as follows:

- Upgrade of existing infrastructure between Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore to 400 kV capacity;
- Construction of a marine cable link for part of the route between Beauly and Blackhillock, as well as new/upgraded OHL to Blackhillock and Kintore;
- Construction of a new onshore AC underground cable between the connection points;
- Construction of a new onshore HVDC underground cable between the connection points;
- Construction of new double-circuit 400 kV OHL, in combination with upgrades to existing infrastructure; or
- Construction of new double-circuit 400 kV OHL for the entire length of the connection.

2.2.3 The options were appraised in terms of technical, environmental and cost factors.

2.2.4 Technical considerations were made in the first instance, to review the technical feasibility of potential options, and assess whether they are achievable.

2.2.5 Environmental considerations considered the most sensitive environmental features within the area of Scotland under consideration. Potential effects on nature conservation designations as well as effects on people, communities and the economy were identified.

2.2.6 Finally, cost considerations were made in order to address the financial impact of each option. A key requirement for SHE Transmission, as the relevant license holder, is to provide an economically efficient connection, as defined by Ofgem. Regard has to be had to not only the total cost of construction/installation, but also the lifetime operation and maintenance costs.

2.2.7 The options appraisal concluded that the following option was appropriate to progress to the next stage of analysis:

- Construction of new double-circuit 400 kV OHL for the full length of the connection.

2.2.8 Therefore, as a result of the options appraisal, it has been determined that the Projects will comprise a new OHL connection. It is anticipated that this would be mounted on steel lattice towers of a typical height of 50 m and an anticipated average span length of 250-300 m.

Definition of Study Area

2.2.9 A study area has been defined, which incorporates the maximum area under consideration for the two options described above. The study area is shown on Figure 2 (Annex A). The boundaries of the study area are defined as follows:

- The northern boundary is formed by the Moray Firth coastline, from Beauly as far east as Portgordon, to the north of Blackhillock substation, as well as an area to the east of Huntly.
- The eastern boundary is located approximately 10 km east of a direct line between Blackhillock and Kintore substations, in order to allow full consideration of this area;
- The southern boundary is formed by the boundary of the Cairngorms National Park, as well as the location of site options for a new substation at Tomatin.
- The western boundary is formed by the existing Beauly substation and Loch Ness, as well as the area along the western side of Loch Ness.

2.2.10 The western part of the study area lies within The Highland Council local authority area; the central part within The Moray Council area and the eastern part in Aberdeenshire Council's area.

Route Corridor Selection Study

2.2.11 In order to refine the study area and exclude the areas of highest amenity value[2], unsuitable terrain, topography and settlements, the first stage of route selection comprises the identification of a route corridor, of variable width, within which the proposed development could be sited. A route corridor selection study has been completed, as detailed below.

2.2.12 The methodology adopted for the route corridor selection study has comprised the following staged approach:

- Step 1: Route Corridor Identification: this involved environmental baseline data gathering to identify existing environmental features and sensitivities across the study area. It also included the identification of opportunities for rationalisation of existing infrastructure and efficiencies with other proposed projects. In light of this information, potential route corridor options were identified which represented locations with greatest potential for locating the Projects;
- Step 2: Route Corridor Analysis: this involved a comparative assessment of the potential route corridor options;
- Step 3: Consultation: consultation with a Statutory Stakeholder Forum convened by the Scottish Government was completed early in 2015,

[2] As defined by the Holford Rules for transmission line routeing in the UK. These rules advocate the application of a hierarchical approach to routeing which first avoids major areas of highest amenity, then smaller areas of high amenity, and finally considers factors such as backdrop, woodland and orientation. The Holford Rules apply the term 'amenity' to refer to environmental designations and classifications such as Natura 2000 sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Scenic Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, and National Parks.

throughout Step 2, to allow the provision of input and feedback on planning, environmental, cultural and natural heritage matters.

2.2.13 The comparative assessment undertaken at Step 2 above is summarised within Table 5.1 of the Consultation Document (October 2015), which lists the key high and medium sensitivity environmental factors that were considered and which allowed the identification of preferences for each section of the study area. Based on feedback received during the consultation process, an updated version of Table 5.1 was produced in January 2016, to provide additional detail of the preferences that were identified for each environmental topic, on the basis of the sensitivities identified in Step 1. This version of Table 5.1 was published on the Project websites in January 2016, and is included in Annex B of this report.

2.2.14 Clear preferences relating to each individual environmental topic were identified at Step 2. Then a balance of factors was considered in order to identify a single continuous and preferred route corridor to allow connection between Beauly, Blackhillock and Kintore.

2.2.15 Overall, the central route corridor was considered to represent the option with least potential for significant adverse impact. However, for topics where a preference for a different route corridor was identified, the key issues associated with the central route corridor were:

- potential for adverse impact on views from Bennachie and surrounding high ground; and
- potential for adverse impact on views from the summit and walking routes in the vicinity of Mither Tap.

2.2.16 As a result of these potential impacts, the southern route corridor was identified as the preference in the part of the study area that includes Bennachie and Mither Tap.

2.2.17 The location of the preferred route corridor is shown on Figure 2.

3 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 In accordance with established methodology for route selection currently employed by SHE Transmission[3], a process of consultation on the preferred route corridor has been implemented.

3.2 Who did SHE Transmission Consult?

Stakeholder Analysis

3.2.1 From the earliest stages of the Projects, SHE Transmission has worked with the Scottish Government Local Energy and Consents (LEC) to determine all relevant stakeholders and a Statutory Stakeholder Forum has been established. SHE Transmission is also working with other relevant parties to identify further groups or people that should be contacted in relation to the Projects. This work will continue throughout the Projects, as SHE Transmission narrows down the options and is able to identify who may be affected at a local level. Details of the early consultation undertaken on the Projects is contained in Annex C of this report.

Statutory Stakeholder Forum

3.2.2 A Statutory Stakeholder Forum has been established in discussion with the Scottish Government LEC, comprising key statutory authorities and those viewed as most likely to engage with the OHL route selection and subsequent Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes. Consistent with Scottish Government LEC policy, this group has the remit of providing a forum for considering the planning, environmental, cultural and natural heritage issues that will arise from the Projects. Although decisions on the Projects will ultimately be a matter for Ministers, the Statutory Stakeholder Forum's purpose will be to ensure that there is an open and constructive approach to identifying, reporting and considering matters that will have an influence on those decisions.

3.2.3 The Forum will be used in addressing overarching issues and in developing good information flows to facilitate consultation with other stakeholders. The Forum currently comprises the planning authorities (The Highland Council, The Moray Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Cairngorms National Park Authority), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) as statutory consultees, as well as the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Fisheries Trust; the Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Charitable Trust; the River Don Fisheries Trust; the Ness & Beauly Fisheries Trust; and the Spey Fishery Board.

[3] SHE Transmission (Formerly SHETL) (2004): Electricity Transmission Development Proposals in Scotland: Guidance to the Routeing of High Voltage Steel Lattice Tower Transmission Lines leading to an Application for Consent in Scotland.

Other Stakeholders

3.2.4 In advance of the community consultation period (October 2015 to January 2016), notification was provided by letter to local MPs, MSPs, Community Councillors and known landowners within the preferred route corridor.

3.2.5 Other organisations, community groups and individuals, including local communities, who have an interest in the Projects were consulted during the consultation periods from October 2015 to January 2016 and from March to May 2016. Consultation will continue throughout the Projects with stakeholders affected by the Projects. In addition, an ongoing programme of consultation and notification of landowners who own land within the preferred route corridor is being undertaken by the SHE Transmission's land team.

3.3 How did SHE Transmission Consult?

3.3.1 Throughout the consultation process, SHE Transmission invited communities and interested parties to view, discuss and comment on the preferred route corridor.

3.3.2 A range of consultation methods were used by SHE Transmission to ensure as many people as possible were able to access the information and take part in the consultation. The overall strategy was to use a range of methods to ensure the consultation was appropriate and accessible to everyone wishing to take part. The approaches used included:

i. Consultation Document[4];
ii. Project websites;
iii. Public exhibitions;
iv. Public Information Booklet;
v. Feedback form;
vi. Social media;
vii. Radio broadcasts; and
viii. Advertising in regional, local and farming newspapers: posters displayed on community notice boards, in local shops and post offices and provided to local community councils to display.
ix. Letters sent to known landowners, Community Councils and elected representatives, as well as 935 residents in the Monymusk area.

3.3.3 The Consultation Document was made available on the Projects' websites[5] and was also available at the public exhibitions. The Consultation Document was also issued by email to members of the Stakeholder Forum and to anyone who requested a copy.

[4] SHET (2015) Beauly-Blackhillock and Blackhillock-Kintore Reinforcements –Consultation Document, October 2015

[5] www.ssepd.co.uk/BeaulyBlackhillockReinforcement and www.ssepd.co.uk/BlackhillockKintoreReinforcement

Project websites

3.3.4 The Project websites provided comprehensive information about the Projects to date. All consultation reports, exhibition materials and project maps were available to download from the website.

3.3.5 The websites are specifically designed to allow for online consultation by including a dedicated area for registering views and comments. The websites will continue to be regularly updated to reflect the latest stage of the consultation and development process. The website addresses were included on all Project-related materials distributed during the consultation period.

Public Exhibitions

3.3.6 A series of public exhibitions were held in October and November 2015 throughout the preferred route corridor area. In addition, a further public exhibition was held in March 2016 in Monymusk, following an extension to the preferred route corridor.

3.3.7 The exhibitions were publicised extensively in advance through:

i. the Project websites;

ii. advertising in local press and on local radio;

iii. posters displayed on community notice boards, local post offices and shops and provided to local community councils for display in other prominent locations;

iv. emails issued directly to Stakeholder Forum members; and

v. letters sent to MSPs MPs and local Councillors.

3.3.8 A letter was also sent directly to 935 residents in the Monymusk and surrounding area, to advertise the later exhibition in March 2016.

3.3.9 Copies of the posters advertising the exhibitions, as well as details of the dates of newspaper and media advertisements, are provided in Annex D.

3.3.10 The public exhibitions provided a forum to share information about the route corridor selection study and the preferred route corridor. Materials available at each exhibition included:

i. exhibition panels explaining the Projects;

ii. maps showing the study area and preferred route corridor as well as key environmental constraints;

iii. larger scaled maps showing local study areas;

iv. images of technology types;

v. information booklets containing the same information as on the exhibition panels;

vi. reference copies of the Consultation Document (October 2015); and

vii. feedback forms.

3.3.11 Members of the Project team were present at the exhibitions to explain the Projects and answer any questions asked by people attending.

3.3.12 The exhibition panels (see Annex E) detailed:

- the background to the project, the project need and overview of the consultation process;
- a description of the Projects, the anticipated timeline and information about the route corridor selection process;
- a map of the preferred route corridor showing the key environmental sensitivities considered during the route corridor selection study process; and
- questions for consideration and next stages.

3.3.13 The exhibitions were also an opportunity for people with an interest in land which might be affected by the Projects to be identified and find out initial information. Relevant members of the SHE Transmission land team were present at each exhibition.

3.3.14 Table 3.1 below presents the number of visitors to each public exhibition (during both the October 2015 to January 2016 consultation period and the March to May 2016 consultation period), based on those who provided their contact details.

Table 3.1: Details of Public Exhibitions

Venue	Date	Number of Visitors
Church of Scotland Hall, Kintore	27th October 2015	32
Strathnairn Hall, Daviot	28th October 2015	11
Alford Public Hall, Kingsford Road, Alford	29th October 2015	41
Longmore Hall, Banff Road, Keith	3rd November 2015	41
Stewarts Hall, Huntly	4th November 2015	43
Inchberry Hall, Inchberry	5th November 2015	24
Dallas Village Hall, Dallas	10th November 2015	52
Church of Scotland Hall, Rothes	11th November 2015	40
Culduthel Christian Centre, Inverness	12th November 2015	12
Kirkhill Community Centre, St Marys Road, Kirkhill	17th November 2015	77
Ferness Hall, Ferness	18th November 2015	20
Insch Institute, Insch	24th November 2015	77
Kilmorack Hall, Kilmorack	25th November 2015	90
Monymusk Hall, Monymusk	9th March 2016	144

3.3.15 In addition to the above exhibitions, a consultation van was located in a number of smaller villages during the consultation period. Table 3.2 presents the number of visitors to each consultation van exhibition.

Table 3.2: Details of Consultation Van Exhibitions

Venue	Date	Number of Visitors
Millbank Hall, Millbank	27th October 2015	6
Keig School, Keig	29th October 2015	6
Gartly Hall, Gartly	3rd November 2015	5
Kiltarlity Hall, Kiltarlity	17th November 2015	0
Premnay Hall. Auchleven	24th November 2015	24

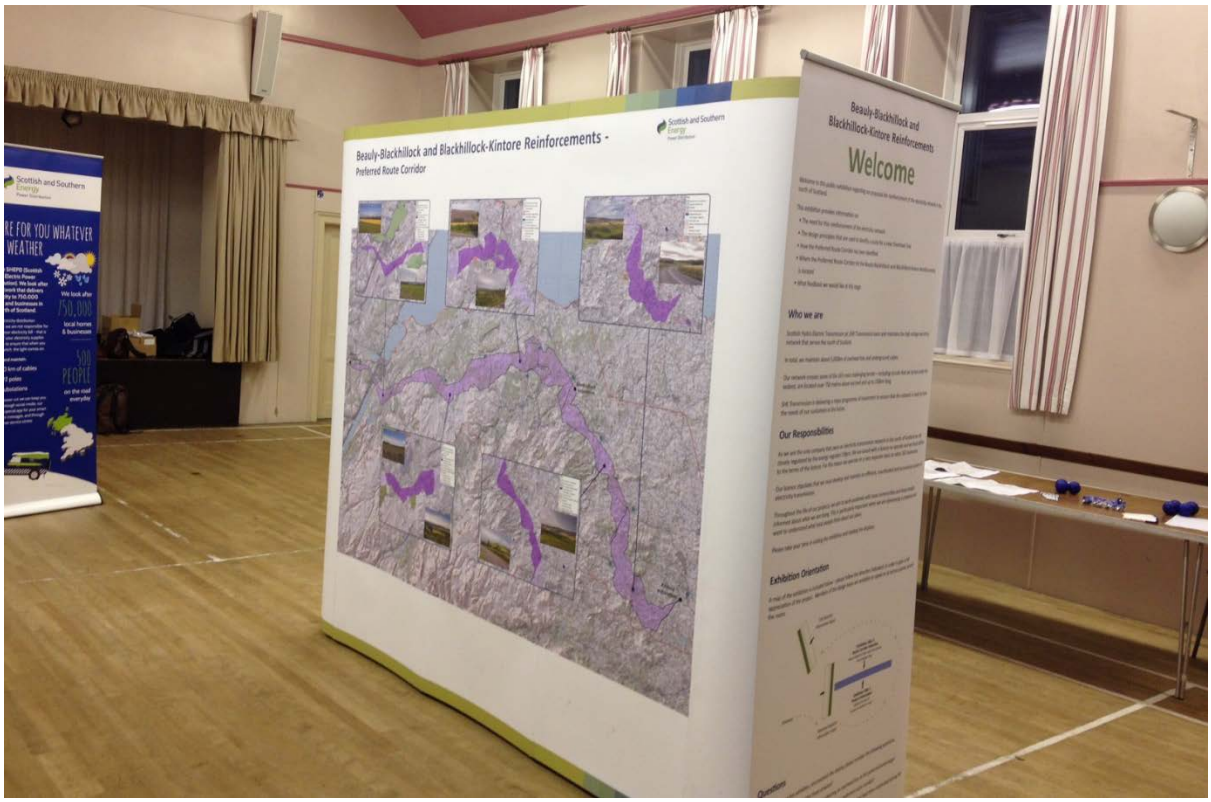

Photo 1: Public exhibition: Daviot, 28th October 2015

Photo 2: Public Exhibition: Monymusk, 9th March 2016

Public Information Booklet

3.3.16 An information booklet was available to all attendees of the public exhibitions, and no limit was placed on the number of copies of the information booklet that attendees could take away. The information booklet provided a summary of the information that was presented on the consultation display panels and included a copy of the feedback form.

3.3.17 Copies of both the information booklet prepared for the first period of community consultation between October 2015 and January 2016, and the information booklet prepared for the second period of community consultation between March and May 2016 are included in Annex F.

Feedback Form and Written Comments

3.3.18 A series of questions were asked within the Consultation Document, seeking comments on the project rationale and whether environmental, economic and technical issues had been appropriately balanced or if any factors had been overlooked. These questions were replicated on a feedback form, which was distributed at the public exhibitions listed above.

3.3.19 This form enabled people to comment on the route corridor options and areas of sensitivity in relation to the preferred route corridor. The feedback form also provided a section to give feedback on the overall project and the consultation process itself. The feedback form was also available online and could be requested via email, letter or phone call.

3.3.20 SHE Transmission also accepted written submissions via letters and emails from people who attended the exhibitions and others who had heard about the Projects. All feedback has been identified and addressed through this report.

3.3.21 A copy of the feedback form is included in Annex G.

Social Media

3.3.22 SHE Transmission issued regular updates and reminders about its consultation via its Facebook page. The Facebook page was used to broadcast details of where public exhibitions were taking place and also direct interested parties to where detailed information is available.

Radio Broadcasts

3.3.23 Proactive media relations targeting print and radio broadcast took place throughout the consultation period. In the run up to and throughout the October 2015 to January 2016 consultation period, approximately 360 radio broadcasts advertised the public exhibitions, as follows:

- Moray Firth Radio: a total of 95 adverts were broadcast on the basis of 5 per day between 5th October and 23rd October 2015;
- Keith Community Radio: a total of 96 adverts were broadcast on the basis of 3 per day between 5th October and 25th October 2015, with a further 75 tailored adverts broadcast on the basis of 15 per day 3 days prior to each of the exhibitions held in Keith, Huntly, Inchberry, Dallas and Rothes;
- Northsound Radio: a total of 205 adverts were broadcast on the basis of 5 per day between 5th October and 23rd October 2015.

Advertising and Other Promotion

3.3.24 Advertising ran across relevant regional Highland, Moray and Aberdeenshire print media in advance of and during the consultation period. Adverts were placed in:

- Inverness Courier, 9th Oct, 23rd Oct and 7th Nov 2015;
- Banffshire Herald, 9th Oct and 23rd Oct 2015;
- Huntly Express, 9th Oct and 23rd Oct 2015;
- Northern Scot, 9th Oct and 23rd Oct 2015;

- Forres Gazette, 7th Oct, 21st Oct, 28th Oct and 4th Nov 2015;
- Inverurie Herald, w/c 5th Oct, w/c 19th Oct and w/c 26th Oct 2015;
- Deeside Piper and Donside Piper, 9th Oct, 16th Oct and 23rd Oct 2015;
- Nairnshire Telegraph, w/c 5th Oct, w/c 19th Oct, w/c 2nd Nov and w/c 9th Nov 2015
- Press and Journal, w/c 5th Oct and w/c 19th Oct 2015;
- P&J Farming/Rural Affairs Supplement, Saturdays w/c 5th Oct and w/c 19th Oct 2015;
- The Inverurie Herald, 25th Feb and 3rd March 2016; and
- Ellon Times, 25th Feb and 3rd March 2016.

3.3.25 In addition, the Projects were covered extensively in the media, with approximately 15 pieces of coverage, particularly during the March to May 2016 consultation period. A list of key coverage is provided in Annex H.

4 CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND KEY FEEDBACK

4.1 October 2015 to January 2016 Consultation Period

Overview

4.1.1 In total, 177 written consultation responses were received during the consultation period from October 2015 to January 2016. Of these, five were from statutory and non-statutory consultees and the remaining 172 were from individuals and community groups including landowners and community councils.

4.1.2 Responses were received in a number of different formats, as follows:

- Completed feedback forms: 130
- Letter or email: 47

4.1.3 All consultation responses received during the consultation period have been collated and summarised into a consultation database. This database remains an active document and will be updated on receipt of any further consultation responses, as the Projects progress.

Matters emerging from consultation feedback

4.1.4 The comments and queries received have been reviewed by consultation question. In order to organise the consultation responses to allow efficient and effective responses to be provided by SHE Transmission, an initial framework has been created by grouping the comments and queries raised into various themes, as described below:

- Consultation and information: comments on the consultation process, current and future. Requests for more information about the Projects.
- Project need: comments and queries regarding the need for the Projects.
- Engineering, design and construction: comments about the viability of different technology options and infrastructure. Comments about the wider network, the resilience of the options.
- Route corridors: preferences expressed by respondents for a particular route corridor, or amendment to the preferred route corridor.
- Environment: all comments about the natural environment, including designated sites such as scheduled monuments.
- Health, safety and security: health and physical safety concerns, e.g. accident risk, including aviation safety, concerns regarding electric and magnetic fields (EMFs).
- Socio-economics: comments about potential impacts on local economic activity and other socio-economic factors, including tourism.
- Routeing: comments about where an OHL should be located, both general principles and specifics.

4.1.5 Table 4.1 below indicates the number of responses that were received under each theme category.

Table 4.1: Consultation Responses

Theme	Response categories	No. of responses
Consultation and information	Methods used for advertising	31
	Public exhibitions (number, locations, format)	7
	Information provided at exhibitions	11
	Further information requests	9
	Requests for further consultation	1
	Consultation process	0
Project need	Project need	21
	Beauly substation	1
	Strategic planning	6
Engineering, design and construction	Upgrading of existing lines	10
	Undergrounding	18
	Marine cable	5
	Technical specification of proposed OHL	3
	Construction works	2
	Removal of existing infrastructure	2
Route corridors	Queries relating to alternative route corridors	10
Environment	Nature/wildlife, including ornithology	33
	Landscape	68
	Visual impact	77
	Cultural heritage	18
	Hydrology, including watercourses and private water supplies	9
	Geology	2
	Noise	3
	Traffic	2
Health, safety and security	Airfield and flight safety (Insch airfield and Easterton airfield)	10
	Health impacts including EMF effects	24
	Hazards - gas pipelines; wind turbines; A96 dualling; haulage yard	8
Socio-economics	House and land valuations	15

Table 4.1: Consultation Responses		
Theme	**Response categories**	**No. of responses**
	Compensation	0
	Tourism and recreational facilities	34
	Residential amenity	39
	Impact on farming practices and agricultural land	10
	Suggestions for community benefit (e.g. car parking spaces, flood defences, linking access tracks for recreational use)	2
Routeing	Route suggestions for an OHL	43

4.1.6 Chapter 5 of this report provides a more detailed analysis of the comments made by respondents during the October 2015 to January 2016 consultation period, and sets out the SHE Transmission project team response on each issue. Chapter 5 does not set out each respondent's comments separately, rather it provides a summary of the points that have been raised under each theme listed in Table 4.1; therefore, where several respondents raised matters within the same category, these are summarised in one place.

4.2 March to May 2016 Consultation Period

Overview

4.2.1 A total of 485 responses were received during the consultation period from March to May 2016. Of these, two were from non-statutory consultees and the remaining 483 were from local communities and individuals.

4.2.2 Responses were received in the following formats:

- Completed feedback forms: 36
- Letter or email: 449
- Postcards: 11

4.2.3 All consultation responses received during the March to May 2016 consultation period have been added to the consultation database, which is a live document that will be updated on receipt of further consultation responses as the Projects progress.

Matters emerging from consultation feedback

4.2.4 The comments and queries raised in the responses received have been reviewed against the categories and themes listed in Table 4.1. No additional consultation response themes have been introduced by the responses received during the March – May 2016 consultation period. Table 4.2 below provides an indication of the number of responses received under each theme category.

Table 4.2: Consultation Responses		
Theme	**Response categories**	**No. of responses**
Consultation and information	Methods used for advertising	47
	Public exhibitions (number, locations, format)	6
	Information provided at exhibitions	23
	Further information requests	42
	Requests for further consultation	37
	Consultation process	64
Project need	Project need	58
	Beauly substation	0
	Strategic planning	24
Engineering, design and construction	Upgrading of existing lines	38
	Undergrounding	115
	Marine cable	60
	Technical specification of proposed OHL	40
	Construction works	11
	Removal of existing infrastructure	2
Route corridors	Queries relating to alternative route corridors	90
Environment	Nature/wildlife, including ornithology	188
	Landscape	238
	Visual impact	378
	Cultural heritage	138
	Hydrology, including watercourses and private water supplies	1
	Geology	0
	Noise	2
	Traffic	5
Health, safety and security	Airfield and flight safety (Insch airfield and Easterton airfield)	4
	Health impacts including EMF effects	91
	Hazards - gas pipelines; wind turbines; A96 dualling; haulage yard	54
Socio-economics	House and land valuations	53
	Compensation	12

Table 4.2: Consultation Responses		
Theme	**Response categories**	**No. of responses**
	Tourism and recreational facilities	293
	Residential amenity	268
	Impact on farming practices and agricultural land	74
	Suggestions for community benefit (e.g. car parking spaces, flood defences, linking access tracks for recreational use)	0
Routeing	Route suggestions for an OHL	61

4.2.5 Chapter 5 provides a deeper understanding of the comments and queries raised by respondents during the March to May 2016 consultation period, and sets out the SHE Transmission project team response on each issue. Chapter 5 does not set out each respondent's comments separately, rather it provides a summary of the points that have been raised under each theme as listed in Table 4.2; where several respondents raised queries within the same category, these are summarised in one place.

5 PROJECT RESPONSES TO FEEDBACK RECEIVED

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter considers the themes and queries raised by statutory and non-statutory consultees, as well as by local communities and individuals, in relation to the Projects. SHE Transmission has analysed the points raised under a series of themes (Table 4.2). This document summarises the feedback received in relation to those themes and gives SHE Transmission's response according to each such theme, with further headings to help organise the information. The SHE Transmission's Project team has taken into account all of the feedback that has been received during the consultation period. Responses received after the conclusion of the consultation period are also included in this report.

5.2 Consultation

5.2.1 Table 5.1 below describes the types of comments that were received during the consultation, comments in relation to the consultation process itself, and recommendations for future consultation. The table also includes the relevant response from SHE Transmission.

Table 5.1: Comments Received - Consultation

Topic	Comments Received	SHE Transmission Response
Advertising	A number of comments and recommendations were received in relation to advertising the Projects' consultation. The following suggestions were made: • Better publicity in advance of exhibitions; • Clearer and better information available on project website; • Advertise the exhibitions more widely, particularly within the areas that could be affected, e.g. with flyers through the post or via official sponsored social media. • Local newsletters • Open a local office with a drop-in facility.	Details of the methods used to advertise the consultation events are described in Chapter 3 of this report. The Projects are at an early stage of development, and the methods used were considered sufficiently comprehensive at this stage. Nevertheless, SHE Transmission will consider these comments in planning future consultation, which will take place as described in Section 6.3 of this report.

Table 5.1: Comments Received - Consultation		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Public exhibitions	The following comments were made in relation to future public exhibitions: • Show a film of the Beauly-Denny project, emphasising the landscape design techniques used. • Larger premises would be better in some locations. • Have staff available to discuss all SSE interests in the area, as the cumulative impacts of all SSE projects are a concern to local communities.	SHE Transmission will consider these comments in planning future consultation, which will take place as described in Section 6.3 of this report. Concerns over cumulative impact will be considered as part of the consultation process and other relevant projects taken into account. The public exhibition held in Kilmorack on 25th November 2015 was a combined exhibition where information was presented on these Projects alongside information on the proposed Beauly converter station, and the proposed Beauly-Loch Buidhe 275 kV OHL. An update on the Beauly-Denny OHL project was also available.
Information provided at exhibitions	The following feedback was received: • Good maps and lots of background information given. • Staff were well informed and helpful. • Staff were only interested in this particular project and not informed about the history of all SSE developments in the area. • Recommend that larger scale maps of route/corridor are available to take away. • Existing transmission infrastructure and capacity information should have been highlighted on larger scale route corridor maps.	SHE Transmission will consider this feedback in planning future consultation, which will take place as described in Section 6.3 of this report. Please note, however, that, due to business separation, SHE Transmission is unable to provide detailed information on projects being brought forward by other companies within the SSE group.
Further information	A number of respondents requested more specific information on a likely route.	SHE Transmission has not yet defined a preferred route alignment; this will involve further detailed assessments and design work. Details of the project development stages and anticipated timescale are set out in Section 6.3 of this report.
Requests for further	A few respondents also requested further discussion	SHE Transmission has attended the following meetings to discuss the Projects

Table 5.1: Comments Received - Consultation		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
consultation	and communication, as follows: • Insch airfield; • Donside Community Council; • Kennethmount Residents' Association; • Kemnay Golf Club.	in 2015 and 2016: • with Councillor Helen Carmichael, Provost and Leader of Inverness and Area, and with Councillor Margaret Davidson, Leader of the Highland Council on 6th October 2015 to make them aware of the Projects particularly within The Highland Council area. • a landowner meeting with representatives from Insch airfield on 10th Dec 2015, as well as a further meeting on 12th July 2016. • with members of Donside Community Council and the public on 21st Dec 2015. • with members of Kennethmount Residents' Association and the public on 2nd February 2016; • with MSPs Nannette Milne, Alexander Barnette and Miles Briggs on 26th February 2016. • with Stuart Donaldson MP on 30th May 2016 to give him more information about the Projects • a landowner meeting with representatives from Kemnay Golf Club on 9th May 2016.

5.3 Project Need

5.3.1 Table 4.1 provides an overview of the range of responses received in relation to project need (question 1). Table 5.2 describes the comments that were received on feedback forms in relation to project need, as well as relevant comments received within letter/postcard responses. The table also includes the relevant response from SHE Transmission.

Table 5.2: Comments Received – Project Need		
Topic	**Comments Received / Queries Raised**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Project need	Can understand we need (voltage) higher electricity lines - because of demand	As set out within Chapter 2 of this report, SHE Transmission has a responsibility under the Electricity Act 1989 and its Transmission Licence to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical electricity transmission system; and to ensure that the security of the network is maintained as the demand and/or generation connections change over time. The need for these Projects has been identified by SHE Transmission's systems planning team, through a process of electricity transmission forecasting across the coming decades. The need has been identified for this new infrastructure to be in place by the mid-2020s. As shown on the timeline included on the exhibition display panels (Annex E), these Projects are at an early stage of development. An updated version of this timeline is shown on the Project websites. The project need is reviewed by SHE Transmission and National Grid (in its role as Great Britain system operator) on an annual basis, and the anticipated timescale of these Projects may change in response to changing electricity generation and demand scenarios, including any consequences of changes in renewable energy subsidies. It should be noted that the Projects comprise national infrastructure and are not influenced by local economic changes.
	The [consultation] document does not evidence the point about the increase in renewable energy production, so it is difficult to assess the extent to which this is reliable.	
	I would question the need, firstly as a result of the reduction in wind farm subsidies there will be less power generated and secondly with the reduction in oil activity the forecast increase in demand for both domestic and industrial consumption will be less and therefore existing capacity will be adequate	
	During the Kintore 400 kV Substation Expansion planning application process, we were told that "as part of the upgrade to the existing Blackhillock to Kincardine 275kV overhead transmission line to 400kV"existing transmission infrastructure would be upgraded "without the requirement for construction of new towers or conductors". This was detailed within Section 1.1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment report and matches what was written in the Scottish National Planning Framework 2. Why was this project not mentioned during the Substation Expansion project planning application and why do the other documents talk about an East Coast 400kV upgrade instead of new build powerlines?	
	I do not have a detailed understanding of why the	

Table 5.2: Comments Received – Project Need		
Topic	**Comments Received / Queries Raised**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	Blackhillock - Kintore lines are required.	
	Do we need that capacity? What is the projected consumption that this project will address? Is more and more large scale infrastructure going to address our current population energy demands?	
	Whilst we understand the principle we question whether the position remains as concluded following recent changes in the renewables support environment. This may materially impact the amount of future capacity built and we request that SSEPD provide further information on the assumptions made to underpin the need for the reinforcement.	
	Do the planned works take into account the considerable recent downturn in the economic climate in the north-east of Scotland, therefore corresponding potential reduction in energy requirements locally and potential reduction in required size and capacity of the proposed scheme?	
Beauly substation	There are other areas that could service lines to and from the west - I do not agree that Beauly should be the hub	Beauly substation has been selected as one of the connection points due to the fact that it has existing capacity to accommodate the required voltage. This is a function of the layout of the existing transmission network (see Figure 1).
Strategic planning	I understand the need, but do not accept the ad hoc approach to each new project. Surely there should be a strategic plan in place that minimises the environmental damage. If spare capacity were created in anticipation of future projects the environmental impact would be minimised and overall costs would be less.	Each new project must be submitted to the UK Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem), which requires that the project must be justifiable in terms of its cost efficiency. In conjunction with the continual process of energy forecasting, this can lead to considerable changes to the scope of individual projects and therefore a strategic approach to transmission development is difficult to achieve. There is no legal requirement to carry out SEA of the Projects. However, the Scottish Government National Planning Framework 3 (2014) (NPF3) contains detail regarding the strategic planning of 'national
	Without the benefit of the transparency of a Strategic	

Table 5.2: Comments Received – Project Need		
Topic	**Comments Received / Queries Raised**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	Environmental Assessment (SEA), we cannot see the need for this project. In the absence of an SEA, it is not clear that SSE has done a suitably thorough assessment of the alternative options available or that SSE has adequately considered the cumulative impact of the current and proposed programme of works affecting the north of Scotland and particularly the nodal point of Beauly substation.	developments'. The Projects are identified as national developments in NPF3 and as such have been considered in the SEA undertaken of NPF3[6].

5.4 Engineering, design and construction

5.4.1 Table 5.3 describes the comments that were received in relation to engineering, design and construction, as well as the relevant response from SHE Transmission.

Table 5.3: Comments Received – Engineering, design and construction		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Upgrading of existing lines	*A number of queries regarding the feasibility of upgrading the existing infrastructure were received. The following comprise a representative sample:* • *I don't see why the existing lines cannot be upgraded, within the existing corridors utilised.* • *The existing line was recently upgraded; why is a new line suddenly required?* • *We question whether it needs to be a new corridor (southern) in Section 5 as opposed to*	*The existing overhead lines are in the process of being upgraded. However, this extra capacity is not sufficient to meet the forecast demand, both from electricity customers and generators wishing to connect to the transmission network.* *The existing 132 kV overhead lines between Beauly and Blackhillock cannot be upgraded to operate at 275 kV or 400 kV as the towers cannot support the required size of conductors.* *The existing 275 kV overhead line between Beauly and Blackhillock is not suitable for 400 kV operation and has already been upgraded using the largest conductor that can be accommodated on the existing tower suite. This infrastructure is therefore at capacity.*

[6] The SEA of National Planning Framework 3 is available at this link: http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/04/3435/downloads

Table 5.3: Comments Received – Engineering, design and construction		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	upgrading or installing a new line within the existing (northern) transmission infrastructure. The comparative analysis for the Section 5 preferred corridor prioritises green field over brown field development.	*There are two existing 275 kV overhead lines between Blackhillock and Kintore; one is constructed at 400 kV and is capable of operating at 400 kV so will be uprated in the future. The other is a 275 kV tower design and cannot be uprated to 400 kV operation. Both must be retained for security and capacity reasons.*
Undergrounding	• Underground cabling would be better as pylons spoil the countryside. It may cost more for underground cables but the visual impact on the countryside that pylons have is surely worth the extra cost? • I cannot understand why the existing pylons cannot be upgraded or cabling placed underground	The widespread use of underground transmission cables as an alternative to overhead lines is not a feasible way forward from a technical standpoint as there are potentially severe technical issues with harmonic magnification, low frequency resonance and voltage stability which are likely to make the system inoperable. Overhead lines are a standard, well established technology that have many advantages. Modern, higher tensile steel allows slimmer tower designs; while significant advances in conductor technology allow higher capacities to be carried on new and existing towers. Therefore, this technology is not outdated, and overhead lines comprise the majority of new and existing electricity transmission infrastructure around the world. Furthermore, overhead lines are still the most economical way of transmitting electricity between two points. Newer technologies are sometimes unproven and commonly cost significantly more to construct and operate with a shorter life span. Although there are some countries in the world that are proposing undergrounding as a default for new infrastructure (for example, Denmark) a different regulatory regime is in place, with different economic drivers and objectives. World-wide, there is very little undergrouding of the 400 kV network. Where undergrounding is pursued, there will be technical challenges of cable charging current, voltage and network stability which increase with increased voltage and circuit length.
Marine cable	The best long-term solution would be to have the cables underground or under sea. Is it possible to have this routed offshore or	There are several reasons why subsea cabling is not feasible for these Projects. Firstly, subsea cabling is much more expensive than an overhead line, both in terms of construction and maintenance. As for underground cabling, SHE

Table 5.3: Comments Received – Engineering, design and construction		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	underground, at least in part?	Transmission need very good reasons to satisfy Ofgem that the additional cost can be justified (see responses in Table 5.2). Secondly, the installation of a 400 kV subsea cable may not be technically feasible since it is not a proven technology. The highest voltage subsea cables with a reliable service history operate at 220 kV; therefore, a 220 kV subsea cable link would have to be used. Due to the capacity limits on these subsea cables, there would be a requirement for multiple 220 kV cables per circuit to match the rating of the overhead line. The cables would also require the installation of transformers at each landfall location to adjust the voltage from 220 kV to 400 kV; each of these would have a nominal footprint of at least 100 m x 100 m. Finally, a subsea cable would also have potential to give rise to significant environmental effects, particularly on protected areas in the Moray Firth and Spey Bay and on protected species, e.g. dolphins and salmon. The Beauly Firth is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ramsar site, while the Inner Moray Firth is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). These environmental factors mean that a marine cable link from Beauly is unlikely to be a favourable option to statutory consultees.
Design	[Please confirm] more precisely where you intend to site the pylons	As described in Section 6.3 of this report, this detail will be available once we have undertaken detailed assessment and design work as part of the detailed route selection. Further consultation will be undertaken at that time.
Technical specification	[Please confirm] how big [the proposed pylons] are in comparison to the current pylons	The towers which support the existing 275 kV overhead lines between Beauly and Blackhillock, and between Blackhillock and Kintore are typically 37 m in height. The towers that are required to support a 400 kV line would be approximately 46-50 m in height, (depending on the tower style selected) similar to the existing Blackhillock – Rothienorman – Kintore and the Kintore – Kincardine lines.
Construction	[Please confirm] when the proposed build in my area would be, should this go ahead, how long it	The approximate project timeline shown on the exhibition display panels indicates that construction would take place between 2020 and 2024. This

Table 5.3: Comments Received – Engineering, design and construction		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	will take, and what precisely the building process will involve.	timeline has been updated following the 2015 NOA review (see paragraph 2.3.1 above), with the updated timeline shown on the Project websites. This indicates that construction will take place between 2021 and 2025. This is subject to further review. The construction of an overhead electricity line follows a standard sequence of events. The first stage is enabling works which includes public road improvements and any required tree cutting, improving existing access tracks and constructing new access tracks where required. Until the final alignment of the route is known, SHE Transmission cannot say where these tracks might be required, and whether they will be required on a permanent or temporary basis. SHE Transmission will work with landowners and communities to try and improve access for the long term, wherever possible. Thereafter tower foundations will be installed and towers erected. On completion of that, the conductors (wires) will be strung. Once the towers are erected, the ground around the towers will be reinstated and ground cover will be allowed to regenerate naturally. Reinstatement plans for any ground affected by the works would be agreed with statutory authorities ahead of works being started. SHE Transmission will complete reinstatement works as soon as appropriate after completion of construction of the line and will monitor these for a period of time to ensure that they have been successful.

5.5 Route Corridors

5.5.1 Table 5.4 describes the comments that were received in relation to the preferred route corridor and other route corridors, as well as the relevant response from SHE Transmission.

Table 5.4: Comments Received – Route Corridors		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Route corridor selection process	Why were other corridors rejected prior to consultation?	The purpose of the consultation was to present the preferred route corridor, to invite comment and provide an opportunity to raise queries at this early stage of the Projects. The Consultation Document (October 2015) contains details of the route corridor selection process, and includes a summary of the findings from the route corridor selection study setting out why other corridors were less preferred.
	The preferred route corridor appears to be well researched but will be able to make a better judgement when final route is selected.	
	It is not clear that SSE have been reasonable in reaching the decisions they have.	In addition to the explanation provided in the Consultation Document, the SHE Transmission Route Corridor Selection Study report will be available on the Project websites in summer 2016. This contains fuller details of the route corridor selection process and the analysis conducted.
Methodology for route corridor selection	There has been very little opportunity to analyse SSE's methodology.	The route selection process, including methodology, is described in Chapter 4 of the Consultation Document (October 2015).
	I would like to know the criteria (radius) for avoiding monument sites, SSSI's, houses etc.	
Selection of preferred route corridor	I understand that this route corridor was chosen to separate it from the current transmission lines and the A96, however, I feel that it would be far more appropriate to find a way of sitting it along the current route rather than spoiling a bit of unspoilt countryside.	Chapter 5 of the Consultation Document (October 2015) contains a summary of the findings of the route corridor selection study setting out why other route corridors were less preferred. Additional information in the form of an updated version of Table 5.3 was published on the Project websites on 7th January 2016, in order to provide greater detail of the findings. The next stage of project development is described in Section 6.3 of this report, and further detailed assessment of the preferred route corridor will be undertaken in due course. The existing A96 runs through and adjacent to towns and villages, with large populations, properties, businesses and other infrastructure in close proximity. Therefore, it is considered that there is not sufficient space to locate the Projects and the majority of the A96 route was excluded from the potential route corridors for this reason. The final route of the new A96 is not yet known; however, it is
	It is not clear why the Northern route corridor taking lines to the north of Bennachie is not selected.	
	The southern corridor route has too many options to make sensible comments at this time. The other corridors seem to be more direct.	
	We strongly oppose the “northern” corridor which is inappropriate for its impact on communities and	

Table 5.4: Comments Received – Route Corridors		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	environmental and landscape designations. We accept that the "southern" corridor presents landscape and environmental challenges and on that basis the "central" corridor seems appropriate.	likely that this will adopt a similar route to the existing A96.
	No one could give a reason why the A96 corridor had not been used again.	

5.6 Environment

5.6.1 As demonstrated by the range of topics listed in Table 4.1, numerous comments were received in relation to environmental factors associated with the preferred route corridor. Table 5.5 describes environmental topics that were raised, which are broken down by environmental topic. Relevant responses from SHE Transmission are also provided.

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Nature/wildlife, including ornithology	The following ecological sensitivities were identified within consultation feedback received: • Falcon breeding facilities, south west of Dallas village; • Swans and other birds and wildlife in the vicinity of Keig; • Wintering geese, badgers, woodpeckers and red squirrels in the vicinity of Alford; • Swans and geese in the fields to the south of Keith and in the fields around Monymusk; • Migratory route for waterfowl through the valley from Millbank to Torphins, towards Aboyne Loch; • Ospreys and golden eagle based in the Cairngorms follow a route from Clatt, to Leslie and Premnay to feed in Donside/Bennachie; • Wildilfe in Strathspey, including whooper swans, osprey, merlin, peregrine and otter;	Detailed ecological and ornithological surveys and assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. Further consultation with statutory authorities will be undertaken throughout the route selection and EIA stages of the Projects, to ensure that potential impacts on ecology and ornithology are understood and assessed. Targeted ornithology surveys are currently being undertaken in areas of the preferred route corridor which lie within the foraging range of a designated Special Protection Area (SPA), as defined by SNH. The

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	• Flocks of wintering geese around Lochindorb; • Barn owls, common lizard, badger setts, long-eared bats, pipstrelle bats, wildcat and pine marten in the area around Castle Forbes/Howe of Alford; • Falcons have a long-established breeding colony at Kemnay Quarry. Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) SNH recommends that SSSIs are considered in route selection; however, they do not consider that they act as a major constraint in the selection of the preferred route corridor. Collision mortality to the wintering goose interest of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) is a key issue for the preferred route corridor, and impacts on breeding bird qualifying features of SPAs are also likely to be a key issue. Cumulative impacts on certain sensitive bird species may also be significant, this is most likely to be an issue with respect to the red kite population in the western section of the preferred route corridor.	purpose of these surveys is to gain a greater understanding of bird movements from the SPAs and within the preferred route corridor.
Landscape	Concerns were raised regarding potential impacts on landscape and scenery at the following locations: • Cabrich hills and Balcraggan, The Aird; • Reelig Glen near Moniack; • Keig; • Gadie Burn valley, south west of Insch; • Strathspey; • Bennachie; • Agricultural landscape of the valley around Monymusk/Howe of Alford. Reference was made to Aberdeenshire Council's emerging guidance on Aberdeenshire Special Landscape Areas (2016). Scottish Natural Heritage SNH recommends that consideration should be given to the siting and design of entry/exit points into existing substations. In many locations existing substations already form significant detractors in the local landscape. This is heightened by	Detailed landscape surveys and assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. Further consultation with statutory authorities will be undertaken throughout the route selection and EIA stages of the Projects, to ensure that potential impacts on landscape are understood and inform route selection. Potential impacts will then be assessed as part of the EIA. The Route Corridor Selection Study includes a detailed analysis of landscape sensitivity across the study area on the basis of constituent landscape character types (LCT), as defined by SNH. Assessment has been

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	cumulative impacts of several overhead lines e.g. Blackhillock and Kintore. Where these substations are to be extended/altered consideration should be given to existing mitigation (usually in the form of thick shelterbelt planting of inappropriate species), and whether there are opportunities to improve on landscape mitigation in terms of location planting and choice of species. Where the preferred route corridor crosses the A9 corridor extending eastwards to Rothes and the Spey Valley, the corridor width begins to extend up and onto the northern fringes of forested and open moorland hills. The transition from lower lying agricultural landscape, to foothills and open moorland uplands is a sensitive one, and we recommend that the additional transmission line does not break the skyline. In addition, at some locations these wooded foothills contained within the preferred route corridor can contribute to settlement setting, e.g. Keith, Huntly and Insch, which again have added sensitivities. The preferred route corridor runs close to or incorporates several wind energy developments, and there is the potential for additional cumulative impacts and associated landscape and visual clutter from a number of different vertical structures (pylons and wind turbines), which should be avoided. In many locations the preferred route corridor runs parallel to the A96. The proposed A96 Dualling Project is at the early stages but consideration should be given to the cumulative impacts of the proposed transmission line and road upgrading. Aberdeenshire Council are currently working on a project to assess and deliver local landscape designations. The outputs from the Special Landscape Areas project will be extremely useful in informing late sieve mapping and more detailed route selection.	made of the sensitivity of each LCT to new development of the scale proposed. The Route Corridor Selection Study is available for download from the Project websites.
Visual impact	Concerns were raised regarding potential visual impacts at the following locations: • land at Burnend, south of Huntly; • vale of Alford; • valley to the west of Dunnideer fort; • Insch; • Dava Moor;	Detailed visual amenity surveys and assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. Further consultation with statutory authorities will be undertaken throughout the route selection and EIA stages of the Projects, to

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	• Bennachie; • Lossie Glen, near Dallas; • Cairn Duhie and the Knock of Braemoray; • Gordon Way; • A939 over Dava Moor.	ensure that potential impacts on visual amenity are understood and assessed.
Cultural heritage	The following cultural heritage features were identified within consultation feedback received: • Castle Fraser; • Dunnideer fort and standing stones; • Wardhouse estate (listed properties); • Leith Hall listed building; • Clunie castle; • Tillycairn castle; • Howe of Alford bronze age findings; • Hill of New Leslie (ancient hill fort); • Lickleyhead Castle, Premnay; • Auchnagathle listed building; • Historic stone age sites in the vicinity of Castle Forbes; • National Trust for Scotland's Castle Trail in Aberdeenshire. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) HES has advised that potential impacts on all heritage assets (e.g. Conservation Areas, B and C listed buildings, non-designated archaeological sites and the potential discovery of previously unknown archaeological remains) should be considered and assessed. All of the corridor options identified have the potential to impact on the historic environment and it will be important to demonstrate that a more detailed level of assessment for impacts on the historic environment has been undertaken. It will be	Detailed cultural heritage walkover surveys and assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. Further consultation with statutory authorities will be undertaken throughout the route selection and EIA stages of the Projects, to ensure that potential impacts on cultural heritage are understood and assessed.

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	important to avoid direct (physical) impacts on these sites from any element of the development. Any potential indirect impacts (i.e. impacts on the setting of heritage assets) should also be assessed – both within and outwith the preferred route corridor. Given the presence of existing OHLs and wind turbines in the vicinity, the potential cumulative impact should be given particular attention and supported with visualisations. Mitigation measures should be explored at an early stage to lessen any adverse impacts. This includes determining the final OHL route within the broader corridor, and the micro-siting of towers. National Trust for Scotland (NTS) NTS strongly objects to the proposed northern route, which is projected to cross the site of the Battle of Culloden. NTS is also concerned at the potential impact of the preferred central route corridor on Culloden battlefield, and requests that the line is routed as far to the south as needed to avoid compromising the setting of this internationally important battlefield. NTS has also requested that, where there is potential to affect Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscape sites, tactical adjustments should be made to minimise visual intrusion. Both Leith Hall and Castle Fraser are nationally significant sites.	
Hydrology, including watercourses and private water supplies	The following comments were received in relation to hydrological features: • Private water supplies on east side of Alford; • Private water supplies at Whitehouse and surroundings; • Flood risk in Whitehouse, from drainage of water from the Whitehouse hills; • Impacts on the Don. Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) In developments such as this it is often the supporting infrastructure such as new tracks and their associated watercourse crossings, compounds and laydown areas which have the greater environmental effect. Very careful consideration of the location of the supporting works is therefore required. In addition it is very important that all the supporting infrastructure is clearly shown on plans within any application/Environmental Statement (ES). It should also be made clear what	Detailed hydrology surveys and assessment of effects on hydrology, including watercourses, water supplies and groundwater, will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. Discussions will be held with landowners during development of the Projects, to locate private water supplies. Further consultation with statutory authorities will be undertaken throughout the route selection and EIA stages of the Projects, to ensure that potential impacts on hydrology

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	infrastructure is permanent and which is temporary. From our perspective choosing routes which minimises impacts on (1) areas of groundwater dependant terrestrial ecosystem habitat (2) watercourses and (3) the deepest areas of peat, will be most important. Also it will be necessary to demonstrate within any ES how disturbed peat (and any forest waste) will be successfully managed and reused on the site or sites (depending how the proposals come forward), or disposal proposals clearly outlined. The finalised route of the line/cabling and location of supporting infrastructure should therefore take into consideration the following. Further information is provided on the assessment of the following: • Potential disruption to wetlands including peatlands and Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems; • Disturbance and re-used of excavated peat; • Forest removal and forest waste; • Existing groundwater abstractions; • Engineering activities in the water environment; • Water abstractions; • Pollution prevention and environmental management; • Borrow pits; • Flood risk. Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Fisheries Trust The project will involve a number of river crossings and potential issues may arise during the construction phase of the power line upgrade. In particular, if temporary access roads are required to cross smaller burns these may affect fish migration during certain times of the year and potentially affect riparian habitat. Given recent erosion issues developing on the Feith Ceo Glass (upper Nairn) due to the construction of the SSE Farigaig sub-station we would also wish to be consulted on the design of any infrastructure buildings and associated burn crossings.	are understood and assessed.

Table 5.5: Comments Received - Environment		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Geology	Scottish Natural Heritage The preferred route corridor crosses the Torvean Landforms SSSI which is designated for its geomorphological interest. Construction of a new powerline could result in damage to SSSI features, principally through creation of new access tracks/roads, excavation/infilling and construction of tower bases. A route which avoids key areas, including the central part of the site and the esker ridge in the north east, is less likely to result in significant impacts to protected features.	Assessment of effects on geology and hydrogeology will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. This will include further consultation with statutory authorities, to ensure that potential impacts on geology are understood and assessed.
Noise	The proliferation of pylon lines that has already occurred around Beauly as well as the degradation of the visual and acoustic environment caused by Balblair substation should be taken into account. Beauly has suffered a lot already. Is it wise to make one massive node? Will the noise problem there not ever be solved?	SHE Transmission will ensure that the Projects comply with the noise requirements provided by The Highland Council.
Traffic	Some old bridges over the railway [to the north east of Insch] may not be good enough for construction traffic.	Detailed traffic and transport surveys and assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. Further consultation with statutory authorities and road authorities will be undertaken throughout the route selection and EIA stages of the Projects, to ensure that potential impacts on traffic and transport are understood and assessed.

5.7 Health, safety and security

5.7.1 Table 5.6 describes the comments that were received in relation to the health, safety and security, as well as the relevant response from SHE Transmission.

Table 5.6: Comments Received - Health, Safety And Security

Topic	Comments Received	SHE Transmission Response
Insch airfield and flight safety Easterton airfield and gliding operations	The corridor passes over the airstrip at Insch. Insch airfield is a vibrant local airfield which is extremely valuable to the local flying community. The low level operating environment of the airfield is particularly important. This includes the need for unobstructed approach and climb out paths, and around the circuit pattern generally. This is made more complex by the high ground to the south and west of the airfield and by the rising ground on our western approach/take off funnels. The airfield has, with the Local Planning Authority, an agreed and established safeguarding zone of 3 km radius. Concern at the possibility that the line of new pylon towers … might have an adverse impact on the safety of gliding operations from Easterton Airfield, Birnie, Elgin.	SHE Transmission attended a landowner meeting with representatives from Insch airfield on 10th December 2015, in order to understand the operations associated with the airfield. A further landowner meeting was held on 12th July 2016 to allow further discussion of the airfield operations. The information gathered will be used to inform detailed route selection (see Section 6.3 of this report), and further discussion will be undertaken with the airfield in due course, as required. Liaison will also be undertaken with the Highland Gliding Club in respect of gliding operations from Easterton Airfield.
Health risks including EMFs	A number of respondents included general references to 'health risks', while others provide specific comments regarding potential impacts on human health, as follows: • The facts associated with the increased health risk are well established as are the mitigation recommendations made by the UK government's own advisory group SAGE http://www.emfs.info/policy/sage/. • While the science around the health impact on young children of HV power cables is still inconclusive, it would be sensible to avoid putting the lines anywhere near schools. • There are health risks associated with living near power lines, especially for children (Cancer Research UK). Current recommendations of "safe" distances	SHE Transmission will aim to maintain a minimum 100 m stand-off distance from all residential properties. The research into a possible link between electromagnetic fields generated from electricity transmission infrastructure and human health is documented in the Energy Networks Association (2013) publication *Electric and Magnetic Fields.* Additional information is provided within UK Government guidance available at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/electromagnetic-fields

Table 5.6: Comments Received - Health, Safety And Security		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
	are based on lower voltage lines than is proposed here. How sure can SSE be of the health risks associated with these higher voltage power lines? 600m would be a better distance- Draper et al 2005. • The link between power lines and childhood leukaemia is shown on the Cancer Research UK website and the gov.uk website.	The relevant standards and guidelines concerning EMF will be considered as part of the EIA process.
Hazards	A number of respondents made reference to safety concerns in connection with the following hazards: • Gas pipelines in the area around Monymusk and Craigearn; • Wind turbines at Edintore Farm near Blackhillock • Haulage yard within the preferred route corridor. • Kemnay quarry	These factors will be taken into account during the detailed route selection, process, during which the Project team will contact and work with owners of existing infrastructure, businesses and landowners within the preferred corridor.

5.8 Socio-economics

5.8.1 Table 5.7 describes the comments that were received in relation to the socio-economics, as well as the relevant response from SHE Transmission.

Table 5.7: Comments Received – Socio-economics		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
House / land values	The proposed new corridor will take the line past family homes and through local businesses, as well as sterilising large land areas. Consequential losses in values and uses will result in huge financial compensation, some of it ongoing. Has this been factored into the proposal of the totally new corridor?	All associated costs, including potential compensation claims are factored into the Project costs. Assessment of effects on agriculture and land use, as well as further liaison with landowners, will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted (see Section 6.3 of this report).

Table 5.7: Comments Received – Socio-economics		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
Tourism and recreation	The following sensitive tourism and recreation features were identified within consultation feedback received: • Castle Fraser and standing stones; • Gordon Way, from Suie Hill to Bennachie; • Bennachie; • Historic castle trail to the west of Kintore, including Castle Fraser, Pitfichie Castle, Tillycairn, Kemnay House, and Hallforest Castle; • Great Glen Way, near Dunain Hill; • Speyside Way; • Canoeing and rafting on the River Spey; • Reelig Glen, near Kirkhill; • Kemnay Golf Club; • Development of a core path from Kemnay to Castle Fraser; • Hot air ballooning from Castle Fraser; • Cairn William, Green Hill, White Hill and Pitfichie, popular with cyclists, walkers, horse-riders.	Detailed assessment of potential impacts on tourism and recreation will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. This will include further consultation with statutory authorities, to ensure that potential impacts on tourism and recreation are understood and assessed.
Residential amenity	A number of respondents expressed concern in relation to impacts on residential amenity, as follows: • Land to the south of Rothes wind farm and Dallas already has road infrastructure, clear felled forestry areas; • Dualling of A96, construction of considerable wind farms - Towiemore etc - will mean far too much industrialisation of area between Keith, Blackhillock and Drummuir. • Placement of 50 m pylons near to property in unspoilt rural location is totally out of character with the area. Strongly request that if the line is not to be buried, then consideration should be given to which pylon types are used. I understand that there are new, less obtrusive lighter frame designs available.	Detailed visual amenity surveys and assessment will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted. This will include assessment of effects on land use and properties, as well as further liaison with landowners. SHE Transmission is committed to investigating all appropriate mitigation techniques in order to reduce the potential impact of OHLs. This mitigation may include alternative tower designs. Both SHE Transmission and National Grid are

Table 5.7: Comments Received – Socio-economics		
Topic	**Comments Received**	**SHE Transmission Response**
		developing alternative tower designs but these are in the very early stages of development. These new designs may be suitable for the Projects. Further rigorous testing and assessments will be carried out before a decision can be taken.
Farming / Agriculture / Local business	A number of respondents made comments relating to land use and agricultural land: • We have active farming ground in the corridor and would be keen to avoid any disruption to our property as we already have an existing main line through the middle of our property; • Routes over agricultural land are surely more desirable and user friendly than over, or near to rural home property. Such land is usually owned by farmers who mostly would benefit from land tariffs.	Assessment of effects on agriculture and land use, as well as further liaison with landowners, will be undertaken as part of the detailed route selection and subsequent EIA process, prior to a consent application being submitted (see Section 6.3 of this report).
Community benefit	The following recommendations were made for potential community benefit aspects: • If roadways for construction could be of benefit, suggestions for car parking spaces at Yellowbog on Dallas - Knockando Road, for walks to Rothes windfarms or • Suggestion for working with Moray Council to help with flood defences for Dallas village.	SHE Transmission is a regulated business and is not permitted to pay community benefit due to project costs being met by electricity customers across Great Britain. All project costs have to be approved in advance by Ofgem, the electricity industry regulator. However, SHE Transmission may require to carry out some improvements to local infrastructure as part of the project delivery. There are indirect, but tangible benefits which arise during the construction of these projects. It was assessed that the construction of the Beauly – Denny project contributed over £100m to the Scottish economy. The project had a direct impact by providing business to local companies, using local accommodation and supporting local businesses.

5.9 Routeing

5.9.1 Table 5.8 describes the comments that were received in relation to suggestions for potential route alignments, by section of the preferred route corridor. These suggestions will be considered by SHE Transmission as part of the detailed route selection stage of the Projects. For this reason, no feedback from SHE Transmission is provided at this stage.

Table 5.8: Comments Received – Routeing

Topic	Comments Received
Preferred route corridor overall	The following routeing recommendations were made in relation to the preferred route corridor overall: • I still feel siting new power lines alongside existing ones is a preferred option. • Do not route next to existing line because I already live and work within existing. • Preference for route to go close to the wind farms; • Route should be away from properties and well sited in sympathy with contours and forestry; • Route over more agricultural land, away from residential; • Route over rough ground/woodland, not over agricultural land; • Marine cable from Moray Firth – Peterhead – Firth of Forth; • Follow the new route of the A96 dual carriageway.
Section 1	No specific routeing recommendations were made in respect of areas within Section 1.
Section 2	The following routeing recommendations were made in relation to areas within Section 2: • Keep close to existing pylons in the Cawdor-Clunas area
Section 3	The following routeing recommendations were made in relation to areas within Section 3: • Please avoid Mill Buie Moor, west of Dallas • Please avoid OHL coming though Mill Buie Moor - to the south would be preferable, i.e, Lone Hill (valley just to south). Dallas Estate land.
Section 4	The following routeing recommendations were made in relation to areas within Section 4: • A possible route for the OHL might be to the east between Slack and Wraes; • At Inchberry, route should either cross the river at Boat O'Brig or run alongside the existing line.

Table 5.8: Comments Received – Routeing	
Topic	**Comments Received**
	• Suggest route taken should be to the west of Leslie avoiding Dunnydeer Hill and Hill of Flinder.
Section 5	The following routeing recommendations were made in relation to areas within Section 5: • Alford to Kintore is shortest via Monymusk; • Suggest route should go between two castle estates on the Clunyside of Craigearn. • The chosen route should avoid crossing the A944. • I encourage investigation of routeing further north between Tillyfourie and Kintore by routeing north of Cluny Castle. This will reduce length and therefore lower impact as well as reduce costs. • The hills to the north of the A944 between Tillyfourie and Whitehouse should not be crossed. Any new overhead power line … should be routed between Tillyfourie and Whitehouse along the route of the A944. • Route to the south of each castle, initially along the easternmost edge of the Preferred Route Corridor and then generally aligned with the A944 from Dunecht to Tillyfourie • Rather than coming over the hill at Lauchentilly and Drumnaheath, would the Don valley be more preferable, so that pylons are not on the horizon? • Route between Castle Fraser and Kemnay, then follow valley between Monymusk and Cluny; • Route should follow the disused railway track, where there are less properties in proximity (south of Monymusk); • Route should come up through the valley south of Balvak, north of the A944, to conceal it in the valley; • Route to the north east of the Whitehouse hills • A route east of Bennachie, along the A96, would have much less impact

6 SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 SHE Transmission welcomes the level of engagement by respondents in the consultation on the preferred route corridor for the proposed Beauly-Blackhillock and Blackhillock-Kintore Reinforcement projects.

6.2 Summary

6.2.1 Two periods of community consultation on the preferred route corridor were completed; the first between October 2015 and January 2016, and the second between March and May 2016. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with statutory and non-statutory organisations and local communities, in order to invite feedback on the rationale for and approach to the selection of the preferred route corridor for the Projects.

6.2.2 A series of public exhibitions were held in October and November 2015 throughout the preferred route corridor area; these were attended by a total of 560 people. In addition, a further public exhibition was held in March 2016 in Monymusk, following an extension to the preferred route corridor; this was attended by 144 people.

6.2.3 A total of 177 consultation responses were received during the first consultation period and a further 485 consultation responses were received during the second consultation period. All comments have been carefully considered by the Project team. A response has been provided in this report to explain how SHE Transmission has taken into account the points and queries that were raised and how they will be taken into account in later stages of the Projects' development. SHE Transmission is confident that it has identified the important issues so that informed decisions can be made as the Projects move forward. The feedback received, along with further assessment and technical work will be used to inform the next stages of route selection.

6.3 Project Development – Next Stages

6.3.1 The next planned stages of the Projects are as follows:

i. Proposed Route Corridor – Having regard to consultation undertaken on the Preferred Route Corridor, SHE Transmission will identify its Proposed Route Corridor. This will be set out in a separate Route Selection Study report. That report will provide details of the basis for SHE Transmission's selection of the Proposed Route Corridor.

ii. Detailed Route Selection – Following the identification of a Proposed Route Corridor, SHE Transmission will carry out assessments and design work to identify a preferred route alignment for the transmission line. The next round of consultation will provide an opportunity to present and comment upon the Preferred Route Alignment, with particular regard to sensitive locations and the need for any mitigation. This consultation is anticipated to take place in late 2017.

iii. Proposed Route Alignment – Having regard to consultation undertaken on the Preferred Route Alignment, SHE Transmission will identify its Proposed Route Alignment. SHE Transmission will continue to undertake further surveys, and detailed environmental impact assessments will be carried out as the Projects progress. Further consultation with statutory and other stakeholders is anticipated to take place in 2018, which will be the final phase of pre-application consultation prior to the application being submitted for development consent.

iv. Application – Following the formal consultation stage, SHE Transmission will consider the final details of its proposals before submitting an application for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. There will be a further opportunity for comments to be submitted in relation to the application and accompanying ES to the Scottish Government LEC.

6.3.2 In looking at the next stages of the Project, SHE Transmission will seek to work closely with stakeholders, communities and landowners to discuss and explain its decisions during the route selection and environmental assessment processes.