



**Scottish & Southern**  
Electricity Networks



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**Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) has now commenced the construction of a new substation and overhead line as part of the Knocknagael-Tomatin reinforcement project.**

The project which has been in development since 2012 will see the construction of a new 275kV overhead line between an existing substation at Knocknagael to a new substation in Glen Kyllachy, 5km from the village of Tomatin.

SSEN has worked closely with the community throughout the development of the project and in 2015 changed the location of the new substation from a site close to the road to a less visible position in Glen Kyllachy based on feedback from early consultation events. The substation received planning consent in November 2016 with the overhead line then consented in August 2017.

Simon Robertson, Lead Project Manager at SSEN, explains more:

“We understand the importance of working responsibly with the local community, particularly during the early development stages and I am pleased that we were able to come up with a solution that met the technical and environmental requirements as well as addressing local community considerations raised during the consultation process.

“We are already working with our contractors to ensure that the views of the local community continue to be taken into account during the delivery of the works. We have established Community Liaison Groups in Tomatin and Farr and these are already helping achieve a collaborative approach to successful project delivery.”

The project is being constructed in mainly upland terrain with significant challenges in terms of long access tracks, steep gradients, wind and weather. The welfare of the workforce is a primary concern of SSEN and extensive planning is underway to ensure safe access to and from the site as well as emergency access, particularly over the winter.

The upland nature of the sites is also shared with other land users such as forestry, windfarms and sporting estates as well as local and tourist access. This has been a major consideration in the execution of the enabling works over the course of the summer months this year. The enabling works package involved construction of 6km of new access track, upgrading of existing tracks, forestry work, bridge strengthening and installation of a new bridge along the 17km access track from the A9.

Use of this access track has enabled SSEN to remove the need for construction vehicles to travel through the nearby village of Tomatin and leave residents relatively unaffected by the works.

Neil Macdonald, Construction Manager at SSEN, added:

“We are very pleased to have developed a strong working relationship with the local land-users and community. Our stakeholders are of the utmost importance to us and we make every effort to involve them in our work through face to face meetings and being reactive and available to assist. From escorting mountain bikers and long distance walkers through the site to accommodating timber wagons and shooting parties, we make sure that our works progress and land users are unaffected through good forward planning and a strong working relationship with our stakeholders.”

The project is scheduled to be complete by November 2019 and will enable the connection of renewable generation whilst strengthening the security of supply to local homes and businesses. Once complete, 24km of existing 132kV line between Farr and Knocknagael will be removed.