

By email: [Heather.Gray@sse.com](mailto:Heather.Gray@sse.com)

Ms Heather Gray  
Consents & Environment Manager  
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks  
200 Dunkeld Road  
Perth  
PH1 3AQ

11 October 2022

Dear Ms Gray

### **Beauly-Peterhead 400 kV OHL Project Consultation**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposed Corridor Selection options for the Beauly-Peterhead 400 kV OHL project.

Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with more than 15,000 members and is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains. We represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, and provide training and information to mountain users for safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.

Our interests lie with the perceptions of landscape and its scenic and wild qualities, and the wildlife that lives there. Walkers and climbers move through the landscape to mountain destinations, they are not stationary observers of landscape. It is therefore the overall effect of the proposed project as it is viewed in the landscape that is important, and not only from static viewpoints.

Our main focus is on the potential effects of construction on the landscape qualities, and visual impact in the area that the route traverses. This includes the line itself and any permanent stone roads, with the effects of construction and quality of restoration of temporary access roads being a key consideration in this.

You ask for consideration of four specific questions.

1. Have we explained the need for this Project adequately?
2. Have we explained the approach taken to select the Preferred Corridor adequately?
3. Are there any factors, or environmental features, that you consider may have been overlooked during the Preferred Corridor selection process?
4. Do you feel, on balance, that the Preferred Corridor selected is the most appropriate for further consideration at the alignment selection stage?

The first two are related to the process of route selection, and we think that you have adequately explained your reasoning behind this assessment.

Question 3 is important to our interests. We note that your Appraisal Environmental Criteria looked at recreation as a Landuse. However on closer scrutiny this amounted to desk studies on the location of Core Paths, National Cycle Network routes and Long Distance Paths for walking and cycling as a recreational activity.

We recommend inclusion in your desk-based studies of routes to hill summits listed as Munros, Corbetts, Donalds or Grahams. These are significant recreational destinations across Scotland in which landscape and visual amenity are a key aspect of the activity. Inclusion of the main routes to these listed summits would provide an improved coverage of actual recreational walking and cycling routes for assessment.


Fortunately, in this particular project your sensitivity filter of avoiding the hilly/ mountainous land over 450m above ordnance datum effectively removed these summits from potential impact and needing to be an assessment factor.

It is not clear in the documentation why 450m AOD was chosen as an environmental parameter, but we welcome its inclusion in the assessment of the Corridor Selection appraisal. Some explanation of this would have been beneficial.

Regarding Question 4, your assessment of the constraints at this level seems reasonable.

We hope these comments are helpful to you in your further consideration of this project.

Yours sincerely



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