



SP Energy Networks

**The Clauchrie 132kV
Connection Project**
Summary of Feedback from
the Pre-Application
Consultation

Final report

Prepared by LUC

October 2021



**SP ENERGY
NETWORKS**

SP Energy Networks

The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project Summary of Feedback from the Pre-Application Consultation

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1.	Draft	K. Jukes	L. McGowan		04.10.2021
2.	Draft for Issue to SPEN	K. Jukes	L. McGowan	K. Wigley	06.10.2021
3.	Final	LUC	LUC	SPEN	12.10.2021

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OHS627041

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Purpose of this Document

1.1 This document has been prepared by LUC on behalf of SP Energy Networks (SPEN), to present the findings of pre-application consultation on the Clauchrie 132 kilovolt (kV) Connection project.

1.2 The pre-application consultation for the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project was undertaken during May and June 2021 following the identification of a preferred route for the new 132kV overhead line (OHL), as seen in **Figure 1.1**. The purpose of this document is to detail the feedback received to date, address feedback received during the pre-application consultation and demonstrate how this feedback has influenced the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project.

The Need for the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project

1.3 A request for a connection to the transmission grid has been received by SPEN via NGET from the developer of the Clauchrie Wind Farm. Following consideration of the network in this area by SPEN, the proposed point of connection from the Clauchrie Wind Farm substation is to the Mark Hill collector substation via a 132kV OHL.

1.4 The Clauchrie Wind Farm is being proposed by ScottishPower Renewables and is located in an area of commercial forestry on the National Forest Estate, approximately 5.5 km north-east of Barrhill in South Ayrshire. It currently comprises 18 wind turbines of up to 200 metres (m) to blade tip height with an overall capacity to produce up to 100 megawatts (MW) of generation. The proposed Clauchrie Wind Farm development also includes a 25MW energy storage facility.

1.5 The application for the proposed Clauchrie Wind Farm was submitted to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in September 2020 and is currently going through the Inquiry process with the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) (DPEA Reference: WIN-370-3).

1.6 SPEN has a legal duty under the Electricity Act 1989 to provide, develop and maintain technically feasible and economically viable transmission and distribution system grid connections to new electricity generating developments. SPEN also has a duty to provide a connection for new

generation (i.e., the proposed Clauchrie Wind Farm) to the wider electricity transmission network.

1.7 Therefore, to meet our license obligations, SPEN is proposing to construct a new 132kV OHL grid connection which is required to connect the proposed Clauchrie Wind Farm into the approved extension to the existing Mark Hill collector substation in South Ayrshire.

1.8 The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project will be approximately 3.9 km in length and supported on wood poles. A section of underground cable will also be required for technical reasons to connect the OHL to the Mark Hill substation and will be approximately 227 m in length. The location of the existing electricity network and points of connection (substations) are shown on **Figure 1.1**. Further details of the routeing study undertaken to inform the consultation process can be found in The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project: Routeing and Consultation Report (2021)¹.

SP Energy Networks

1.9 SPEN owns and operates the electricity transmission and distribution networks in Southern and Central Scotland through its wholly-owned subsidiaries, SP Transmission plc (SPT) and SP Distribution plc (SPD). SPT is the holder of a transmission licence.² SPEN's transmission network is the backbone of the electricity system within its area, carrying large amounts of electricity at high voltages from generating sources such as wind farms, power stations and various other utilities across long distances to connected homes and businesses. The transmission network consists of approximately 4,000 km of overhead lines and over 600 km of underground cables. The electricity is then delivered via the distribution network which has over 150 substations and in excess of 100 grid supply points which serves approximately two million customers in Southern and Central Scotland.

1.10 As transmission licence holder for Southern Scotland, SPEN is required under Section 9(2) of the Electricity Act 1989 to:

- develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission; and
- facilitate competition in the supply and generation of electricity.

1.11 As mentioned previously, SPEN is required in terms of its statutory and licence obligations to provide for new electricity generators wishing to connect to the transmission system in

its licence area. SPEN is also obliged to make its transmission system available for these purposes and to ensure that the system is fit for purpose through appropriate reinforcements to accommodate the contracted capacity.

1.12 Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 imposes a further statutory duty on SPEN to take account of the following factors in formulating proposals for the installation of overhead transmission lines:

- *“(a) to have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and*
- *(b) to do what it reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.”*

1.13 SPEN's 'Schedule 9 Statement' sets out how it will meet the duty placed upon it under Schedule 9. The Statement also refers to the application of best practice methods to assess the environmental impacts of proposals and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.

1.14 As a result of the above, SPEN is required to identify electrical connections that meet the technical requirements of the electricity system, which are economically viable, and cause on balance, the least disturbance to both the environment and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

SPEN's Commitment to Engagement

1.15 SPEN attaches great importance to the effect that its works may have on the environment and on people. In seeking to achieve 'least disturbance' SPEN is keen to engage with key stakeholders including local communities and others who may have an interest in the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project. This engagement process begins at the early stages of development of a project to ensure that the project design balances the views of stakeholders and communities with SPEN's statutory obligations and continues into construction once consent has been granted.

1.16 In Scotland, the requirements for public consultation in relation to applications for OHL consent are not prescriptive. However, Scottish Ministers encourage developers to follow

¹ SP Energy Networks (2021) The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project Routeing and Consultation Report. Available [online] at: https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/Clauchrie_Routeing_and_Consultation_Document.pdf

² The references below to SPEN in the context of statutory and licence duties and the application for Section 37 consent should be read as applying to SP Transmission plc.

consultation principles as set out within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Regulations (Scotland) 2013 and the relevant provisions of the Town and Country (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

1.17 SPEN's approach to stakeholder engagement for major electrical infrastructure projects is outlined in Chapter 2 of SPEN's Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment³ document. SPEN aims to ensure effective, inclusive and meaningful engagement with the public, local communities statutory and other consultees and interested parties through four key engagement steps:

- Pre-project notification and engagement with consenting bodies, planning authorities, and statutory consultees;
- Information gathering to inform the routeing stage;
- Obtaining feedback on emerging route options and preferred route; and
- The Environmental Appraisal stage.

1.18 In addition, and as noted above, SPEN as a holder of a transmission licence, has a duty under Section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989, when formulating proposals for new electricity lines and other transmission development, to have regard to the effect of work on communities, in addition to the desirability of the preservation of amenity, the natural environment, cultural heritage, landscape and visual quality.

1.19 Due to current COVID-19 restrictions regarding face to face interactions, the public consultation and stakeholder engagement took place online using a virtual consultation hub developed by LUC.

Routeing and Consultation Process

1.20 A routeing exercise was undertaken in 2021 which comprised a review of environmental, technical and economic considerations and the application of established step-by-step routeing principles to identify and appraise potential route options to establish a 'preferred' route for the OHL. The objective was to identify a route for the OHL which meets the technical requirements of the electricity system, which are economically viable and cause, on balance, the least disturbance to the environment and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

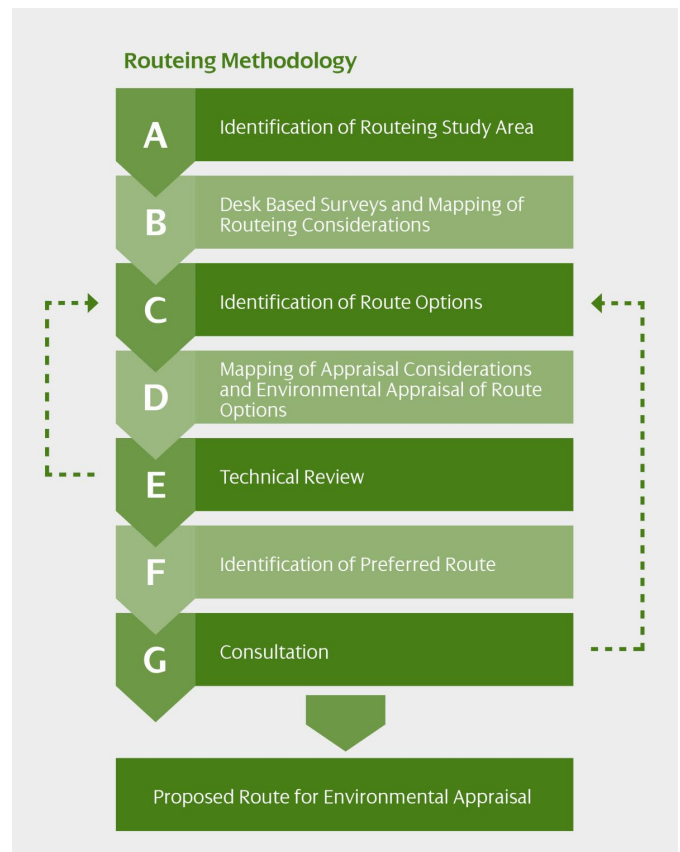
1.21 Following established best practice for routeing OHLs, initial stages of the routeing process comprised the identification of a study area, within which environmental

characteristics were mapped to inform the identification of a total of two route corridors. These route options were appraised against environmental criteria including landscape and visibility, cultural heritage and biodiversity, to identify a preferred route for the OHL connection. Following a technical review by SPEN, the preferred route was then taken forward through the consultation process, with feedback being used to further review the routeing findings and inform the next steps.

1.22 More information about the process followed to identify and appraise route options to select the preferred route can be found in The Clauchrie Wind Farm 132kV Grid Connection: Routeing and Consultation Report (May 2021)⁴.

1.23 An overview of the broad sequential steps in SPEN's routeing methodology are provided in **Figure 1.2** below.

Figure 1.2: Overview of Routeing Methodology

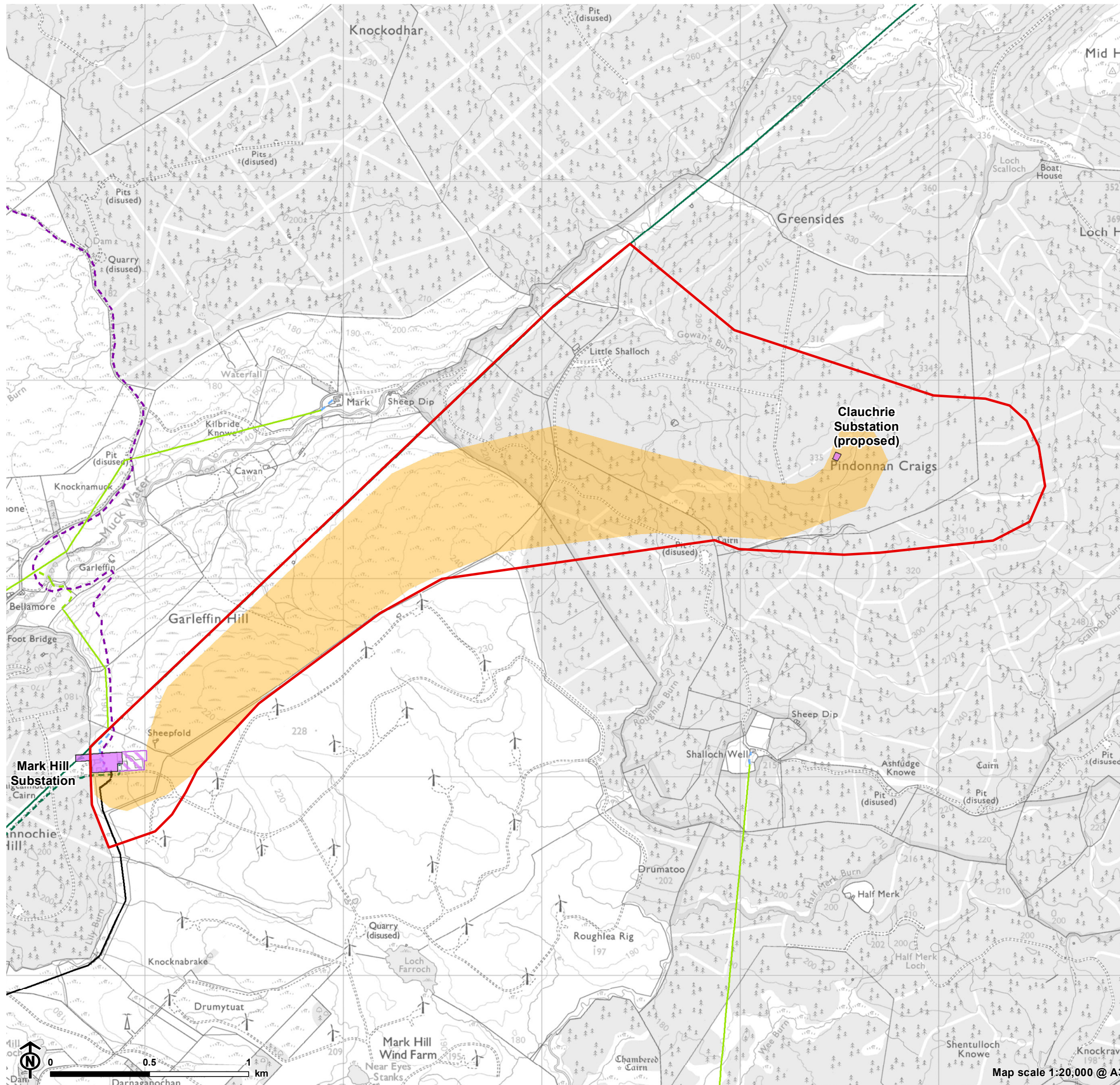


³ SP Energy Networks (May 2021) Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment, Version 2, Available [online] at: https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/SPEN_Approach_to_Routeing_Document_2nd_version.pdf

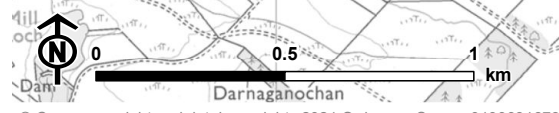
⁴ SP Energy Networks (2021) The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project Routeing and Consultation Report. Available [online] at: https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/Clauchrie_Routeing_and_Consultation_Document.pdf



Figure 1.1: Preferred Route



- Study area
- Substation
- Consented Mark Hill Substation Extension
- 132kV Preferred Route
- 275kV OHL
- 132kV OHL
- 11kV OHL
- 275kV UGC
- 132kV UGC
- 33kV UGC
- 11kV UGC
- 230v UGC



Map scale 1:20,000 @ A3



Chapter 2

Consultation Process

Overview

2.1 SPEN attaches great importance to the effects that its work may have on the environment and on local communities. In seeking to bring forward proposals which cause, on balance, the 'least disturbance' to people and the environment, SPEN engage with key stakeholders including local communities and others who may have an interest in the project, at a number of stages as outlined in **Chapter 1**.

2.2 Full details of the consultation that was undertaken (i.e. distribution of leaflets, advertising the public consultation, hosting an online public exhibition) are contained within The Clauchrie Wind Farm 132kV Grid Connection: Routeing and Consultation Report (May 2021)⁵.

Who SPEN Consulted

2.3 This section describes the various groups of stakeholders relevant to the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project that SPEN consulted during its pre-application consultation.

2.4 All listed consultees with the exception of the Nuclear Safety Directorate (HSE), were sent information about the project by email. HSE was sent information about the project via letter. These included detail of where to find information on the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project, including where to access the Routeing and Consultation Document and when and how to attend the online virtual exhibition, and how to make comments to SPEN. Consultees were asked for their views on:

- The preferred route.
- Any of the alternative route option considered during the routeing process.
- Any other issues, suggestions or feedback the consultees would like SPEN to consider.

2.5 Consultees were also informed that comments at this stage are informal comments to SPEN and are made to allow SPEN to determine whether changes to the preferred route are necessary. An opportunity to comment formally to the Scottish Government ECU will follow at a later stage in the process following submission of the Section 37 application.

⁵ SP Energy Networks (2021) The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project Routeing and Consultation Report. Available [online] at:

https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/Clauchrie_Routeing_and_Consultation_Document.pdf

Landowners

2.6 Landowners with the preferred route corridor on their property were contacted directly by SPEN.

Local Authorities and Statutory Consultees

2.7 Statutory consultees contacted as part of the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project are listed below:

- South Ayrshire Council (SAC – as relevant Local Planning Authority).
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).
- NatureScot (formally Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)).
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES).
- Scottish Forestry.

Community Councils

2.8 Local Community Councils within the surrounding area of the Clauchrie 132kV Connection project were also contacted. The Community Councils contacted were:

- Barr Community Council.
- Barrhill Community Council.
- Pinwherry and Pinmore Community Council.

Non-Statutory Consultees

2.9 Further non-statutory consultees were sent information about the project. The non-statutory consultees contacted were:

- British Horse Society
- Crown Estate Scotland
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation (MoD)
- Fisheries Management Scotland
- Ayrshire Rivers Trust
- Local District Salmon Fisheries
- Mountaineering Scotland
- NATS Safeguarding
- Nuclear Safety Directorate (HSE)
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Scotland
- Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays)
- Scottish Water
- Scottish Wildlife Trust

- Scottish Badgers
- South Scotland Red Squirrel Group
- Central Scotland Bat Group
- South Strathclyde Raptor Study Group
- British Trust for Ornithology (Ayrshire and Cumbrae)
- National Farmers Union of Scotland
- The Ramblers Association
- Scottish Outdoor Access Network
- Sustrans Scotland
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- The National Trust for Scotland
- Royal Air Force (RAF)
- The Coal Authority
- West of Scotland Archaeology Service

Local communities and members of the public

2.10 Leaflets were distributed to local properties located within 5 km of the study area. The project leaflet invited people to attend the online virtual exhibition and gave details about how to access more information via the project website and make comments. The wider general population in South Ayrshire was informed about the consultation using an advertisement within the Ayr Advertiser, a weekly local newspaper, as described above.

Chapter 3

Overview of Consultation Feedback

Representations Received

3.1 This Chapter explains how the responses from the stakeholders outlined in **Chapter 2** have been summarised and presented in this Report. In total there were 1,232 visits to the online virtual exhibition, with a total of seven representations received from the public through the different response mechanisms previously outlined. Feedback has also been received from landowners and consultees who SPEN are continuing to work with to refine the preferred route option during the detailed design stage.

Stakeholder Responses

3.2 A total of four stakeholders made representations during the pre-application consultation. These were:

- South Ayrshire Council (SAC);
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES);
- NatureScot; and
- The Crown Estate Scotland.

3.3 SAC advised that they were unable to comment at this stage and will respond during the formal consultation stage in accordance with normal procedures.

3.4 SPEN are continuing to liaise with the landowners directly and landowner responses are being dealt with separately via the design process.

3.5 A full list summarising the consultation responses received and the responses made by SPEN (including any actions required through the design process) are outlined in **Appendix A: Summary of Pre-Application Consultation Feedback from Routeing Stage**.

Ongoing Consideration of Feedback

3.6 SPEN will continue to consider the local information people provided in their feedback to inform the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project's development and will keep communities, including landowners, up to date (via the project website) as its proposals move forward and there will also be further opportunities for people to provide feedback during future consultation following the submission of the Section 37 application to the ECU.

Key Feedback Themes

3.7 Key feedback themes identified through the pre-application consultation process included:

- Comments on the visibility of the OHL and effects on landscape and visual amenity.
- The rationale underpinning construction of an OHL as opposed to an underground cable and the requirement for an OHL where Clauchrie Wind Farm has not yet been granted permission.
- Comments on the need for a new OHL when existing OHLs are already present in the landscape.
- Comments on disturbance to local wildlife.
- Concerns raised regarding previous construction works in the area and the resulting impacts upon the condition of the existing tracks and roads in the locality and impacts upon existing telecommunication links within the area.
- Comments on information included within the Routeing and Consultation Report and the routeing process.

Chapter 4

Conclusions and Next Steps

4.1 SPEN has reviewed and considered in detail all feedback received from the public, consultee bodies and landowners in relation to the pre-application consultation for the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project.

4.2 The feedback received has informed SPEN's review of the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project with regard to the following:

- Views on the project as a whole, including the routeing methodology and consultation process;
- Views on SPEN's route options; and
- Information about the local area, for example, local environmental characteristics.

Confirmation of the Preferred Route

4.3 Following the findings of the routeing study and consideration of the feedback received during the pre-application consultation, Route Option 2 has been confirmed as the proposed route option for the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project, as seen on **Figure 1.1**.

Next Steps

4.4 The proposed Route Option 2 will be progressed to identify an OHL alignment, including pole positioning, which will be informed by the Environmental Appraisal⁶ detailed engineering ground surveys and discussions with landowners. The alignment, including all ancillary development, will be included in the application for Section 37 consent and deemed planning permission. Information collated from feedback received as part of the pre-application consultation relating to locally important areas and features will be reflected in the design of the alignment alongside the field surveys where relevant.

4.5 SPEN will consult fully with affected landowners and occupiers on all aspects of the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project and will give them an opportunity to comment on proposals as they progress.

4.6 The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project will require consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989. A Screening Request will be submitted for the Clauchrie 132kV

⁶ Subject to the Scottish Ministers confirming the Project does not require an EIA.

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Connection Project to request a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion from the Scottish Ministers in accordance with Regulation 8(1) of The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. If it is determined that an EIA is not required to accompany the application for Section 37 consent, the application will be accompanied by an Environmental Appraisal Report.

4.7 Following the submission of the Section 37 application, further public consultation will be carried out by the Scottish Government ECU.

Appendix A

Summary of Consultation Feedback from Routeing Stage

Table A.1: Summary of consultation feedback from statutory consultees

Consultee	Summary of Feedback	Response / Comments
South Ayrshire Council (SAC)	<p>Response received: 25th May 2021</p> <p>SAC is unable to comment at this stage. SAC will respond during the formal consultation stage in accordance with normal procedures.</p>	<p>LUC confirmed receipt of the email from SAC on 25th May 2021 and noted that comments would be reserved for the formal consultation following submission of the application to the ECU.</p>
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	<p>Response received: 14th June 2021</p> <p>HES recommended SPEN contact South Ayrshire Council's archaeological advisors, the West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WoSAS), for advice on potential impacts on historic environment assets outwith HES' statutory remit.</p> <p>There are no designated assets within HES' remit within the preferred Route Option 2 or the alternative route option. HES is therefore, content that both route options will not have direct impacts on any assets within HES' specific remit.</p> <p>Given the distances to the closest designated assets within HES' remit and the small scale of the overhead line (OHL) being proposed, HES finds the preferred Route Option 2 and the alternative route option are also unlikely to have significant impacts on the setting of any designated assets in the wider surrounding area of the proposed development.</p>	<p>WoSAS were consulted via email on 18th May 2021 and 2nd September 2021 by LUC. No comments have been received from WoSAS in response to this consultation.</p> <p>SPEN note that there are no assets within HES' remit that would likely be impacted by the preferred OHL Route Option 2.</p>
NatureScot	<p>Response received: 21st June 2021</p> <p>NatureScot welcomes the work done to minimise negative impacts associated with the OHL on landscape and biodiversity receptors and agree that all of the important natural heritage constraints have been taken into account. NatureScot concurs with the conclusions set out within the Routeing and Consultation Report.</p> <p>NatureScot acknowledges the work carried out to minimise impacts on Class 1 and 2 priority peatland habitat and advise that careful micro-siting and mitigation should be employed to minimise impacts on Class 5 soils which are classed as carbon-rich soils and deep peats and which are found throughout the search area.</p> <p>NatureScot advises the impacts on the Plateau Moorland LCT are assessed through use of appropriately scaled ZTV and representative skyline and view point visualisations to help establish effects on landscape character, visual amenity and local landscape value.</p>	<p>Further detailed survey work is underway in relation to ecology/ornithology, and landscape in the area to further feed into the detailed design of the OHL route.</p> <p>A peat depth survey and watercourse survey has been undertaken for the Clauchrie route corridor and will be used to inform the siting of infrastructure to minimise impacts on peatland soils and watercourses. Areas of Class 1 priority peatland habitat and areas of deep peat will be avoided.</p> <p>The environmental appraisal work will consider the impacts noted by NatureScot in the review of the impacts of the OHL proposal.</p> <p>We note that NatureScot refer to potential for Great Crested Newt and in combination with Clauchrie 132kV. We assume that this is a typographical error which has resulted from commentary being provided on the</p>

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Consultee	Summary of Feedback	Response / Comments
	<p>NatureScot advises there are no statutory designated sites that will be directly or indirectly affected by the proposal.</p> <p>NatureScot advises the key natural heritage issues to be considered as part of the routeing process are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the locally designated site of Muck Water including the potential for Great Crested Newt pond and in combination with the proposed Clauchrie 132kV OHL Project; ■ impacts on watercourses and associated species; ■ impacts on any protected species; and ■ recreation and access impacts. <p>NatureScot advise that future environmental assessment should evaluate the cumulative impacts of the Knockodhar and Clauchrie grid connections and the relevant impacts of the associated wind farms.</p> <p>NatureScot advise that impacts arising from the construction access, and materials storage, aspects of the OHL build are fully integrated into any future environmental appraisal of the Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project.</p>	<p>neighbouring Knockodhar 132kV proposals. For clarity, GCN surveys have been undertaken and no evidence of the species was found.</p>

Table A.2: Summary of consultation feedback from non-statutory consultees

Consultee	Summary of Feedback	Response / Comments
The Crown Estate Scotland	Response received: 11 th June 2021 The Crown Estate Scotland requested GIS shapefiles for the preferred route to ascertain any impacts on Crown Estate Scotland interests.	GIS shapefiles for the preferred route (Route Option 2) were emailed by LUC on 15 th June 2021 to the Crown Estate Scotland.
	Response received: 25 th June 2021 The Crown Estate Scotland sought clarification regarding the status of the proposal in relation to the neighbouring wind farms.	Clarity was provided via email by LUC on 25 th June 2021 to confirm that the grid connection projects were being progressed by SPEN separately from the nearby wind farm applications.
	Response received: 16 th July 2021 The Crown Estate Scotland confirms the assets of Crown Estate Scotland are not affected by this proposal.	This response is noted.

Table A.3: Summary of consultation feedback from public representation

Key Themes / Topics	Issue Raised	Response / Comments
Landscape and Visual	<p>Concern is expressed over the visibility of the proposed OHL in the landscape and the cumulative effects with existing OHLs; concern that further OHL connections will 'clutter' the skyline.</p> <p>Respondents questioned why the existing OHLs in the area cannot be utilised to connect the Clauchrie Wind Farm to the Mark Hill substation.</p> <p>Respondents also questioned why the proposed new connection cannot be undergrounded.</p> <p>One respondent strongly objected to the proposal due to detrimental effects on the visual aspects of the Muck Water area. The respondent comments that this part of Carrick has already reached saturation point with the number of wind turbines currently in the area and an additional OHL would exacerbate the industrialisation of the landscape within this scenic area. The respondent comments this area was designated by UNESCO as the 'buffer zone' of the Galloway and South Ayrshire Biosphere and should such power lines eventually be unavoidable, the cables should be placed underground.</p>	<p>With regards to landscape and visual amenity, the appraisal of the route options has been informed by both desk-based studies and field work undertaken by qualified Landscape Architects at LUC and has been assessed in accordance with accepted approaches to the analysis of this subject.</p> <p>Cumulative impacts with the existing 275kV OHL and the proposed Knockodhar 132kV OHL have been considered in combination with the emerging preferred Route Option 2. The preferred Route Option 2 would run broadly parallel to the south of the existing 275kV OHL, on the eastern approach to Mark Hill Substation when west of the forest cover.</p> <p>SPEN, as a regulated business, has a legal requirement under the Electricity Act 1989 to seek connections to the grid network for generators on request. Whilst we do look to consolidate connections if possible, this is not possible for Clauchrie wind farm, which requires its own 132kV connection into Mark Hill substation to then allow electricity to be stepped up to the 275kV interconnector and transmitted across the network.</p> <p>Scottish Power Transmission (SPT) (working on behalf of SPEN) are required by the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain a technically feasible and economically viable transmission and distribution system. In practice this will typically mean an OHL solution will be sought in the first instance rather than underground cable, due to the difference in cost. OFGEM act as the government regulator and require project costs to be justified prior to acceptance of a project.</p>
Natural Heritage	<p>Concern is expressed over disturbance to barn owls nesting at Little Shalloch and potential loss of these owls to the area. It is noted that these owls were disturbed during previous works in the area which were completed by SPEN during Summer 2016.</p> <p>Concern also expressed over impacts on other local wildlife including red and roe deer, birds and bats, especially at breeding times.</p>	<p>In relation to the comment received raising concern relating to barn owls. SPEN responded directly to this respondent on 24th August 2021 advising that appropriate mitigation measures and licences will be followed through the construction and operation period of the proposal, where required.</p> <p>The project ornithologist has also considered the impact of the proposed development on barn owls and has provided the following commentary: <i>"Construction disturbance at the nest site would be the main issue in this instance, however, barn owls can be very tolerant of human activity, e.g. on</i></p>

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Key Themes / Topics	Issue Raised	Response / Comments
		<p><i>working farms. Little Shalloch is largely isolated, but nevertheless subject to occasional forestry activities. It is also located near a somewhat large borrow-pit. A buffer distance of 100-200m for overhead line works would reduce disturbance and timing the works outside the breeding season would also help. It is likely that barn owls use the site as a roost throughout the year, however, breeding season is the main issue. Construction should not affect their foraging activity as they are nocturnal.</i></p> <p><i>Collision with lines is possible, but most flight activity is done at heights below 10m and their flight speed is low so risks are relatively low."</i></p> <p>For clarity, our preferred route (route option 2) is circa 800m away from Little Shalloch.</p> <p>To further supplement the alignment and environmental appraisal process, a series of ornithology and ecology surveys are currently being undertaken. Results of these surveys will be fed through the design process and reported through the environmental appraisal that will support the screening request and the final submission to the ECU in due course. Appropriate mitigation measures and licenses will be followed through the construction and operation period of the proposed, where required.</p>
Tracks / Roads	<p>Concern is expressed over the condition of the existing tracks/roads (with specific mention of Muck Road and the bridge over Muck Water) due to damage caused by previous works related to the Tralorg Wind Farm and Mark Hill Wind Farm. One respondent suggests a solution would be for businesses involved to show some consideration and repair the damage or at least pay for it.</p> <p>It is advised in order to increase access to the site, consideration should be given to creating a hard surface track on the proposed route to connect into Mark Hill wind farm to enable walkers, cyclists and horse riders to connect to this. At present this is only possible on foot due to boggy ground.</p>	<p>SPEN are (at the time of writing) in contact with local residents and the local authority with a view to resolving the concerns around the condition of the affected roads and bridge.</p> <p>SPEN do not own the land but instead secure access agreements with landowners for the right to operate and maintain the electricity infrastructure. For this reason it is not feasible to promote a hard surface access track for general use as part of this proposal.</p>
Telecommunication Links	<p>Concern expressed regarding potential damage to the telephone cable from Pinwherry Telephone Exchange to properties within the forested area, the last property being Ferter Farmhouse. Mobile phone signals are reported as being unreliable in this area. Therefore, any damage to the approximately 14 mile long cable would cause adverse effects to local residents.</p>	<p>Concerns regarding the potential damage to telecommunication links are noted.</p> <p>SPEN responded directly to this respondent on 24th August 2021 stating, subject to consent being granted, contact details can be provided to allow residents to voice any concerns to the relevant SPEN personnel, likely the</p>

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Key Themes / Topics	Issue Raised	Response / Comments
	A request is made for a contact number to be provided, so that any damages can be reported immediately	construction manager or community liaison representative. The Community Liaison details are 07516 461129 or email majorprojects@spenergynetworks.com.
Additional Information	Information requested on the number of Trident double 'H' poles to be proposed along the length of the route.	SPEN provided a direct response to this query on 17th May 2021 and a further clarification on 18th May 2021. It was confirmed that there are expected to be between 35 to 48 'H' poles for the Clauchrie Wind Farm connection to Mark Hill substation. This is on the basis of the line being approximately 4.3km in length including a 500m section of underground cable and with OHL spans between the poles of 80m – 110m. ⁷
Recreation	The preferred route option is identified as a recreational route used daily by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and dog walkers.	It is noted that sections of the preferred route are used for recreational purposes. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will address any required temporary closures or diversions which may result from the construction of the preferred route. A draft CEMP/CTMP would be expected to accompany a future application to the ECU which would detail any required mitigation resulting from the proposed OHL works.
Survey Information	It is suggested that field work should be undertaken rather than desk top studies.	A combination of desk-based studies and field work have informed the route analysis to date, with more detailed field surveys relating to ecology and ornithology, hydrology, geology and peat, and forestry being undertaken to inform the route alignment and environmental appraisal stages.
Route Options	One respondent commented that Route Option 2 would be preferred, however, asked if it is possible for the existing 275kV OHL below Little Shalloch to be utilised for the connection to minimise landscape and visual effects of additional cables and poles.	The preference of Route Option 2 is noted. As per SPEN's response to comments received in relation to Landscape and Visual aspects, SPEN advises that although we do look to consolidate connections if possible, this is not possible for Clauchrie wind farm, which requires its own 132kV connection into Mark Hill substation to then allow electricity to be stepped up to the 275kV interconnector and transmitted across the network. SPT (working on behalf of SPEN) are required by the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain a technically feasible and economically viable transmission and distribution system. In practice this will typically mean an

⁷ Response correct at time of writing. The final configuration of the route will be determined through the design process.

Appendix A
 Summary of Consultation Feedback from Routeing Stage

The Clauchrie 132kV Connection Project
 October 2021

Key Themes / Topics	Issue Raised	Response / Comments
		<p>overhead line solution will be sought in the first instance rather than underground cable, due to the difference in cost. OFGEM act as the government regulator and require project costs to be justified prior to acceptance of a project.</p>
<p>General</p>	<p>One respondent purely commented that they strongly object to the project.</p> <p>One respondent advises that the proposals will have a great impact on the local area.</p> <p>One respondent questioned why this application is being submitted given that approval has not been given for the Clauchrie Wind Farm.</p>	<p>The objection is noted. No details regarding the grounds of the objection were received.</p> <p>The impacts on the local area will continue to be considered through the environmental appraisal process.</p> <p>Due to the timelines involved in the delivery of OHL projects it is often the case that the connection is sought in parallel with applications for the connecting wind farm. Should approval not be granted for the wind farm then the connection would not be built.</p> <p>SPEN via SP Transmission are required by license obligations set out in the Electricity Act 1989 and regulated by Ofgem to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission/ distribution... In practice this means SPEN has a legal duty to seek connections for generators such as wind farms following a formal connection request. Whilst it is appreciated that some locations will experience a greater concentration of proposed connections than others, this is mainly as a result of geographical factors given the locations of wind farms and transmission substations on the network. Consideration of the impact on people who live, work and recreate close to proposed connections does form part of the balanced decision-making process when routeing a new connection. The pre-submission public consultation work undertaken by SPEN is aimed at understanding local opinion and further formal consultation is also possible once an application has been submitted for a decision to the Scottish Government. If the rationale described here is not sufficient to explain why SPEN operates in the way in which it does we would invite further dialogue via the SPEN Community Liaison contacts – Colin Wylie and Amar Shakoor, who can be contacted on telephone number 07516 461129 or by email at majorprojects@spenergynetworks.com.</p>