



Heathland Wind Farm Grid Consultation

Report on Consultation

Prepared for:

SP Energy Networks

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited
5th Floor, 2 City Walk
Leeds LS11 9AR
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)113 391 6800
aecom.com

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Glossary

BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CEGB	Central Electricity Generating Board
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMF	Electro and Magnetic Fields
km	Kilometre
kV	Kilovolt
NGC	National Grid Company
NET	National Grid Electricity Transmission
Ofgem	Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
OHL	Overhead line
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SHETL	Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Limited
SPEN	Scottish Power Energy Networks
SPT	Scottish Power Transmission Plc
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
UGC	Underground cable

1. Introduction

Document Purpose

Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) proposes to construct a new wood pole 132 kilovolt (kV) overhead line (OHL) supported by wood poles to connect Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation. Heathland Wind Farm is located approximately 10 km southwest of West Calder, West Lothian and approximately 15 km east of Wishaw, North Lanarkshire with the grid connection extending to the east to Wishaw Substation located within Wishaw.

This Report on Consultation includes a summary of the Round One consultation activities undertaken to engage with local communities, as well as responses taken to this consultation. The consultation period ran from 22nd May to the 19th June 2023, and included several public consultation events and as well as a virtual consultation. Round One consultation related to the process of routeing and the identification of a preferred route option. This Report on Consultation should be read in conjunction with the Routeing and Consultation Document¹ which sets out the approach to routeing and the findings of the options appraisal work undertaken. A subsequent round of consultation, Round Two, will take place to engage the community on the detailed route alignment.

Project Background and Need

SPEN are legally obliged under the Electricity Act 1989 to provide grid connections to new electricity generating developments and have been approached by the developer for Heathland Wind Farm to provide a grid connection to the wider electricity transmission network.

Scottish Power Transmission Plc (SPT) is required under the Electricity Act 1989 and under the terms of its Electricity Supply Licence “to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission”. SPEN, acting on behalf of SPT, stated view is that wherever practical, an OHL approach is taken when planning and designing new lines.

As a result, SPEN are proposing to construct a new 132 kV OHL between Heathland Wind Farm and Wishaw Substation.

Structure of the Report

The remaining sections of this report are structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the overall SPEN approach to routeing; and
- Section 3 describes the comments made by the public during the preferred route option consultation period between May and June 2023 and the responses to those comments by SPEN.

¹ Routeing and Consultation Document is available on the project website:
https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/heathlands_wind_farm_connection.aspx

2. SPEN Approach to Routeing

Overview of Routeing Process

In 2015, as part of a wider industry review involving Government and the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem), SPEN reviewed its approach to routeing. This review concluded that the requirement to balance statutory duties and licence obligations comprising economic, technical and environmental factors continues to support the development of an OHL in most circumstances. However, SPEN also concluded that there are certain circumstances in which development of an underground cable (UGC) should be considered.

SPEN undertook a further review of their approach in 2020 as part of preparing their RIIO-T2² Business Plan which reaffirmed these conclusions. As part of the review SPEN consulted on and published an updated version of 'Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment'³ which describes their general approach to routeing new electricity transmission infrastructure.

The basic premise of the approach set out by SPEN is that the main effect of an OHL is visual and that the degree of visual impact can be reduced by careful routeing; for example by using topography and trees to provide screening and/or background to the OHL and by routeing the OHL at a distance from settlements and roads. In addition, OHL routeing takes into account other environmental and technical considerations and will avoid, wherever possible, the most sensitive and valued natural and man-made features.

Routeing Strategy Methodology

Overview

The approach to identifying and assessing alternative route options for the grid connection is illustrated below in **Figure 1**. It follows SPEN's approach and draws upon established practice ensuring that it is robust and transparent. It is a systematic and iterative approach in which an increasing level of detail is applied at each step concluding with the identification of a preferred route option to be subject to consultation.

There are broadly three key activities, firstly informed by Steps 1 to 3, the definition of a routeing strategy specific to the grid connection, secondly in Steps 4 to 6 the identification and assessment of route options based on the strategy concluding with a preferred route option and finally consultation on the preferred route option through Steps 7 to 9. Steps 4 to 7 ensure that route options are tested and

² RIIO-T2 is the current price control and runs from April 2021 to March 2026. RIIO stands for 'Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs'. It's a framework used by Ofgem to ensure that network companies, like SPEN, provide a safe and reliable service, value for money, maximise performance, operate efficiently, innovate and ensure the resilience of their networks for current and future customers.

³https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/SPEN_Approach_to_Routeing_Document_2nd_version.pdf

refined taking into account the routeing strategy as well as feedback received from consultation with key statutory stakeholders.

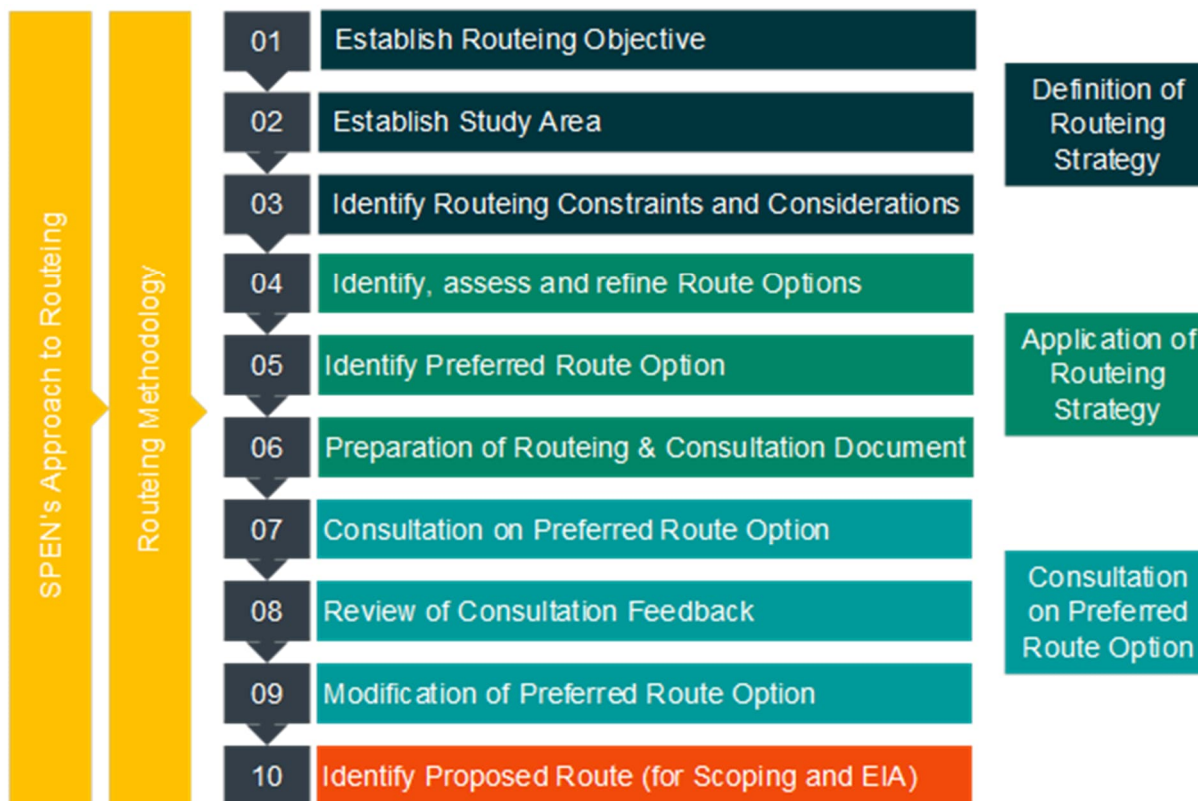


Figure 1. Routeing Methodology

Routeing Objective

The objective of the route selection process is to identify a technically feasible and economically viable single circuit 132 kV overhead line route, supported on wood poles, between the consented Heathland Wind Farm and the Wishaw 400 kV Substation which causes, on balance, least disturbance to the environment of the study area and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

Established Practice for Overhead Line Routeing

In 1959, Lord Holford, then advisor to the Central Electricity Generating Board, developed a series of guidelines with regard to the routeing of high voltage OHLs which have subsequently become known as the “Holford Rules” (‘the Rules’). It is generally accepted across the industry that the Rules should continue to inform the routeing of high voltage OHLs.

The basic premise of SPEN’s general approach draws on the Rules including avoidance of areas of highest or high amenity value where possible as well as consideration of landform, topography, and vegetation in order to reduce landscape and visual effects.

Routeing Considerations

OHLs are linear elements in the landscape. They are likely to affect, to varying degrees, visual and other environmental aspects of the area through which they run. This part of the process predominantly comprises information gathering and consideration of the potential for effects.

The initial stage is to determine a study area and gather baseline information within this area through desk-based studies, site visits, and consultations in order to identify potential constraints to, and opportunities for routeing.

To define a route that meets the requirements of the Electricity Act 1989, a balance must be struck between three sets of considerations:

- Economic;
- Technical; and
- Environmental.

In compliance with Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 the routeing objective requires the proposed connection to be economical. It is understood that this is interpreted by SPEN as meaning that as far as possible, and all other things being equal, the connections should be as direct as possible and the route should avoid areas where technical difficulty, such as altitude, slope angle, existing infrastructure and large water bodies, or compensatory schemes would render the connection uneconomical. The technical considerations mentioned above are not considered as being absolute constraints but are a guide to routeing.

Environment Considerations

Statutory duties imposed by Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 require licence holders to seek to preserve features of natural and cultural heritage interest and mitigate where possible, any adverse effects which a development may have. Experience across the electricity industry shows that an overhead transmission line is likely to affect to varying degrees the following:

- Landscape and visual amenity;
- Ecology, ornithology and nature conservation;
- Geology, hydrogeology and hydrology;
- Cultural heritage; and
- Forestry and woodland.

Other considerations which may affect routeing to a greater or lesser degree include:

- Planning allocations and major applications;
- Noise;
- Traffic (including access for construction);
- Land Use; and
- Socio-economics (tourism and recreation).

Study Area and Routeing Considerations

Study Area

The extents of the Study Area have been informed by a combination of desk and field-based analysis coupled with an understanding of the need to balance potential adverse environmental effects with technical feasibility and economic viability.

The Study Area has largely been defined by the location of Heathland Wind Farm in the east and an approximate 20 km long section to Wishaw 400 kV Substation to the west. The Study Area lies within North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian. The highest elevations across the route reach around 350 m.

Key Routeing Considerations

Key routeing considerations are those that have been that have informed the development of Route Options. These typically comprise large designated sites of international or national importance as well as larger settlements or areas of existing development which are considered to be areas of the highest or high environmental value within the Study Area, or areas where routeing is not technically feasible.

Within the Heathland Study Area this includes:

- The Clyde Valley Woods SAC and Garrion Gill SSSI are to the east of the A71 at Overtown in the west of the Study Area. The Clyde Valley Woods, and some adjacent pockets of woodland, are on the Ancient Woodland inventory.
- Settlements to the west including Wishaw, Carluke and surrounding villages such as Newmains, and the village of Forth to the east. The settlements of Wishaw and Forth contain a number of listed buildings.
- The extensive coverage of existing wind farms present to the centre and east of the Study Area, including Tormywheel Wind Farm, Blacklaw Wind Farm and its Blacklaw Extension Wind Farm. The Study Area also has applications in place for additional wind farms which are in various stages of the application process.

In addition to the above, there are a number of other designated sites which are considered to be of highest or high environmental value within the Study Area, however, these tend to be smaller in size and more widely dispersed. This does not diminish their importance within the routeing study but does mean when developing larger route options, they may be avoidable. Further details regarding key routeing considerations can be found in the Routeing and Consultation Document.

3. Route Consultation

Public Consultations

SPEN is embracing best practice as promoted by Scottish Government Energy Consents and Deployment Unit's and which encourages applicants to engage with stakeholders and the public in order to develop their proposals in advance of the application being made. SPEN has also embraced Scottish Government Planning Advice Note 3/2010 on Community Engagement. This guidance describes engagement as:

"...giving people a genuine opportunity to have a say on a development plan or proposal which affects them; listening to what they say and reaching a decision in an open and transparent way taking account of all views expressed."

SPEN propose to carry out two rounds of consultation with stakeholders and the public prior to submitting any future planning application. For the first round of consultation, events were held in Nethererton and Forth in May and June 2023 to present and consult on the preferred route option for the proposed grid connection. Prior to these events SPEN sent a letter to landowners within the preferred route option notifying them of the development and inviting them to comment. The events were advertised in the following local newspapers:

- Wishaw Press on the 31st May and on their website for 28 days;
- East Kilbride News on the 31st May and on their website for 28 days; and
- Carluke & Lanark Gazette and on their website on the 24th May.

Notice of Public Consultation Event –Heathland Wind Farm Connection

SP Transmission is holding public consultation events to invite members of the local community and other interested parties to find out more about its proposal to construct an overhead line for a length of approximately 22 km from the consented Heathland Wind Farm to Wishaw substation.

Public consultation events will be held on the following dates and times:
30th May at Nethererton Community Centre, between 12.00 and 20.00
31st May at Nethererton Community Centre, between 09.30 and 18.30
8th June at Forth and Wilsontown Bowling Club, Forth, between 13.00 and 18.00

At the events interested parties will have the opportunity to learn more about the Project and provide feedback to SP Transmission. Interested parties wishing to make a comment can do so from 22nd May until the 19th June by the following:

- Email: heathlandprojectmanager@spenergynetworks.co.uk
- Web address: spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/heathlands_wind_farm_connection
- Post: Heathland Wind Farm Connection Project, Land and Planning Team, SP Energy Networks, 55 Fullarton Drive, Glasgow, G32 8FA
- Telephone: 07516 461129

Please be aware that comments made to SP Transmission are not representations to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU). When the application is submitted there will be an opportunity to make representation to the Energy Consents Unit as part of the planning process.

Image 1. Newspaper advert text

Image 1 shows the advertisement that was published in the Carlisle & Lanark Gazette. An email was also sent to local community councils to notify them of the preferred route option, where community councils were established, known and contact information could be obtained. This included Central Wishaw, Newmains and District and Overtown and Waterloo Community Councils.

28 | CARLUKE & LANARK GAZETTE | carlukegazette.co.uk Wednesday, May 19, 2022

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Notice of application to be published in a local newspaper under regulation 20(1)

The plans and other documents submitted with the application for planning permission have not yet been inspected online at www.scotlandscotland.gov.uk

If you wish to comment on any application, we would encourage you to make them by creating planning@scotlandscotland.gov.uk or to submit them electronically using the comment button on Planning Portal facility at www.scotlandscotland.gov.uk. Only if you cannot submit comments electronically should you make written comments to the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, Floor 6, Council Offices, Alameda Street, Hamilton, ML1 3DA.

P-22-10211
23 Lanark Road, Carlisle ML9 4PW
Erection of detached dwelling on garden ground and formation of vehicle access
See notification of application
Representations within 14 days

P-22-10422
28 Aldergreen, Levenhogue ML11 0GJ
Change of use from retail unit to community centre incorporating single storey rear extension, new access for upper storey and formation of foot path (open)
See notification of application
Representations within 14 days
Development altering the character of a conservation area
Representations within 21 days

P-22-10506
Viewfield Tavern, 2 Ayr Road, Nipkirk Lanark, ML11 9NP
Demolition of existing building and erection of 4 detached dwellings (see principles)
See notification of application
Representations within 14 days

Please note that any comments which you make to an application cannot generally be treated as confidential. All emails or letters of objection or support for an application, including your name and address require to be open to public inspection and will be published on the Council's website. Sensitive personal information such as signatures, email address and phone numbers will usually be removed.

Clairan Beattie
Chief Executive
www.scotlandscotland.gov.uk

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Dates and times were correct at the time of publication, but could be subject to change.

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SEE OUR PUBLIC NOTICES SECTION

Notice of Public Consultation Event - Heathland Wind Farm Connection

SP Transmission is holding public consultation events to invite members of the local community and other interested parties to find out more about its proposal to construct an overhead line for a length of approximately 22 km from the converted Heathland Wind Farm to Waterloo substation.

Public consultation events will be held on the following dates and times:

- 30th May at Netherton Community Centre, between 12:00 and 20:00
- 31st May at Netherton Community Centre, between 08:30 and 18:30
- 01st June at Forth and Warriston Bowling Club, Forth, between 11:00 and 16:00

At the events interested parties will have the opportunity to learn more about the Project and provide feedback to SP Transmission. Interested parties wishing to make a comment can do so from 22nd May until the 19th June by the following:

- Email: heathlandprojectmanager@spenergynetworks.co.uk
- Web address: www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/heathlands_wind_farm_connection
- Post: Heathland Wind Farm Connection Project, Land and Planning Team, SP Energy Networks, 55 Fullerton Drive, Glasgow, G33 9FA
- Telephone: 07516 461128

Please be aware that comments made to SP Transmission are not representations to the Energy Commission (see ECCL) when the application is submitted. They will be an important part of the evidence submitted to the Energy Commission, and as such all the evidence matters.

Image 2. Article as included in the Carlisle & Lanark Gazette

The public consultation events were held in the following locations on the following dates:

Netherton Community Centre

- 30th May 12.00 – 20.00
- 31st May 09.30 – 18.30

Forth and Wilsontown Bowling Club

- 8th June 13.00 – 18.00


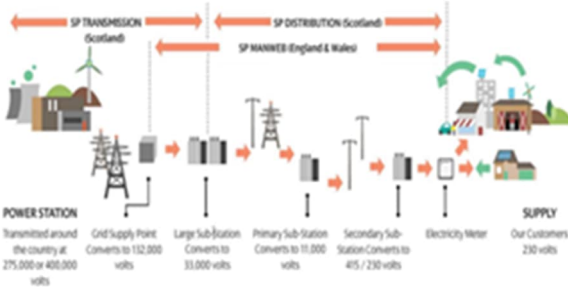

At these events there were a number of information boards providing details on the development, the approach to routeing and the rationale behind the preferred route option. **Image 3** shows two of the boards presented at the consultation events. The events were also attended by members of the grid connection team who introduced the grid connection and answered questions relating to the routeing approach and the preferred route option, see **Image 4**. Attendees were able to provide their opinions on the grid connection using the feedback forms available at the consultation events or directed to the project website and email address to submit their opinions and feedback in their own time.

About SP Energy Networks

SP Energy Networks is part of the Scottish Power group of companies. It owns three regulated electricity network businesses in the UK including SP Transmission (SPT), SP Distribution and SP Networks.

These businesses are 'asset-owner' companies holding the regulated assets and Electricity Transmission and Distribution licenses of Scottish Power. As part of this, SP Energy Networks operates, maintains, and develops the network of cables, overhead lines and substations which transport electricity to connected homes and businesses in Southern and Central Scotland.

Under Section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 SP Energy Networks has a legal duty to safeguard electricity supplies by keeping its network up to date and to enable new connections for the generation and supply of electricity.

About the Project

Need for the Project

SP Energy Networks received a request to provide a grid connection for the consented Heathland Wind Farm. The connection is required to allow the consented Heathland Wind Farm to input to the electricity network. To comply with its statutory and license obligations SP Energy Networks must provide the consented Heathland Wind Farm with a connection to the transmission system.

Our Proposals

The proposal involves an overhead line supported on wood poles located between the consented Heathland Wind Farm and Wshaw Substation, situated across the unitary authority boundaries of South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire, and West Lothian. The grid connection would be approximately 22km in length, subject to final routing.

Wood Pole Structure

The wood poles overhead line is proposed to be supported with galvanised steelwork cross arms supporting aluminium conductors on insulators. These are suitable for supporting single circuit lines operating at 132KV.

Whilst wood poles have a standard height above ground of 15m, these can be extended or reduced in height, as required. Pole heights may require to be increased where circumstances dictate, e.g. over elevated land, structures or features.

The distance between wood poles will average between 80m to 120m but can be increased if there is a requirement to span a larger distance due to the presence of a feature in the landscape such as a river or loch.

The precise pole configuration, height and span will be determined after a detailed line design. This overhead line design has been determined following a detailed review of the engineering and technical requirements for the connection.

The photographs below show a trident H pole and typical trident wood pole structure.








Image 3. Example consultation boards from public consultation events



Image 4. Photos from the public consultation events (Forth and Wilsontown Bowling Club, left; Netherton Community Centre, right)

Virtual Consultation

A virtual consultation room was set up for members of the public who were unable to attend the public consultation events. The virtual consultation room displayed an online version of the in-person consultation boards, see **Image 5** and **Image 6**. Access to the Routeing and Consultation Document and associated figures was also available via the virtual consultation room, along with a link to the online feedback form.

Furthermore, people could also comment on the grid connection via phone to the SPEN Project Consultation Contact Centre, by email and by post. The deadline for all feedback was at 17.00 on the 19th June 2023.

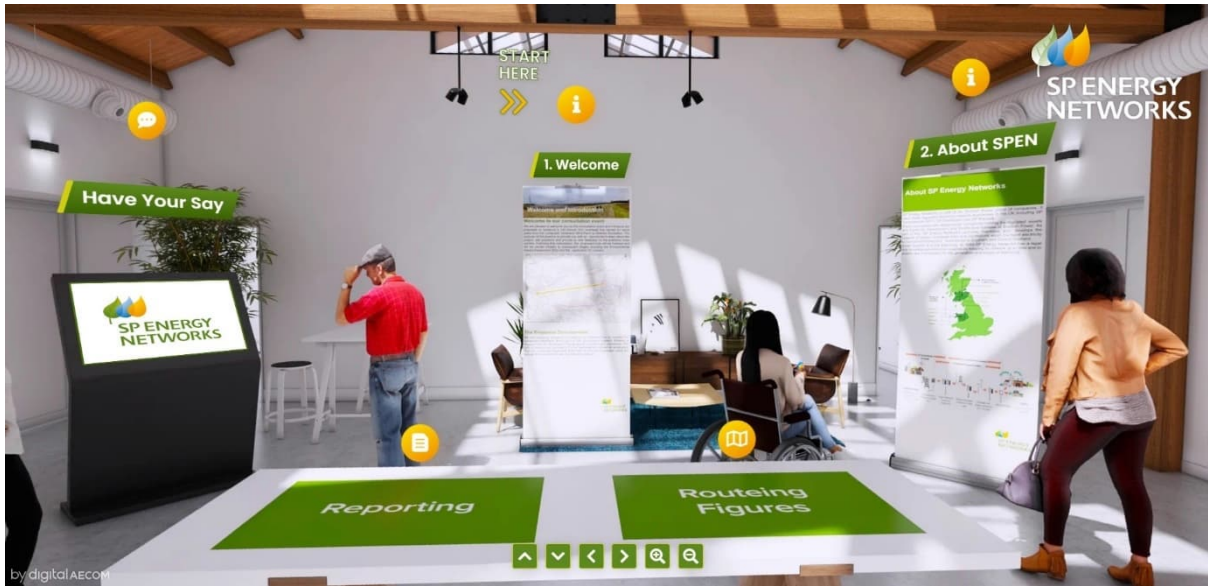


Image 5. Virtual consultation room

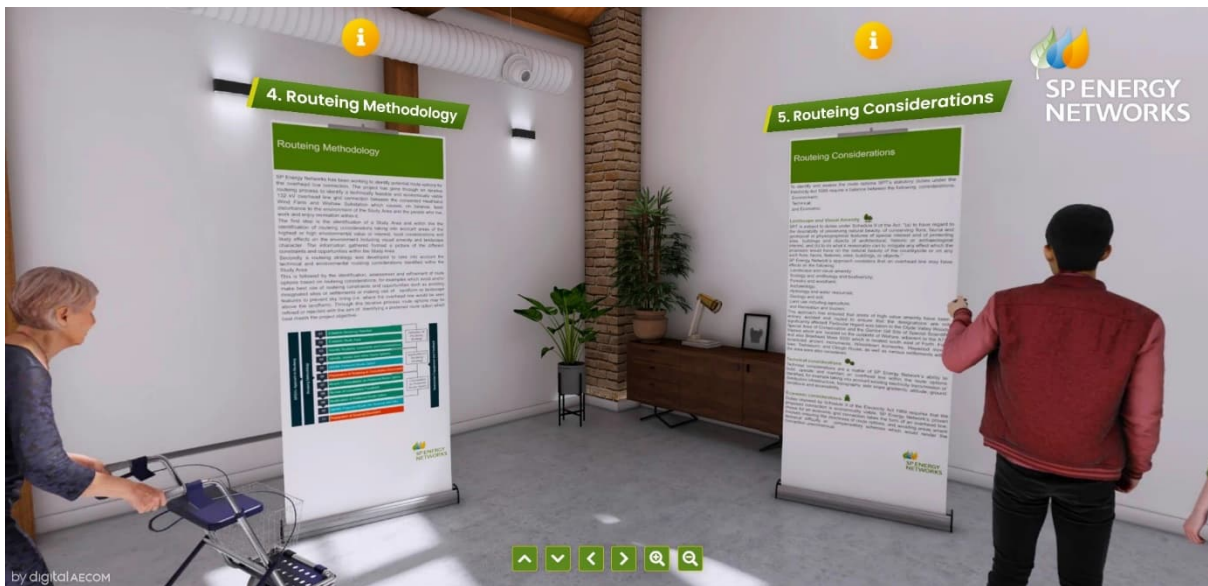


Image 6. Virtual consultation room

Public Consultation Comments

Feedback form

All attendees to the exhibitions were encouraged to complete a feedback form. This form was available as a hard copy at the public consultation events, and via the project website and the vestural consultation website for completing online. Below is an overview of the questions that were raised and a summary of the responses received.

Question 1 on feedback form:

'If you would like us to keep in touch regarding this project, please provide your contact details below. If you would rather remain anonymous, please move to the next question.'

Everyone that submitted a feedback form provided contact details.

Question 2 on feedback form:

'Do you have any comments regarding the rationale for the project?'

A summary of the main comments received is provided below:

- One respondent stated that they understood the need for the grid connection; and
- One respondent raised concerns regarding the rational for the project stating there was some 'poor thinking' behind it; and
- One respondent raised concerns regarding the preferred route option.

Question 3 on feedback form:

'Do you have any other comments regarding our proposed preferred route?'

A summary of the main comments received is provided below:

- Two respondents objected to the preferred route option; and
- One respondent said it would have a 'huge impact on wildlife and the local village'.

Question 4 on feedback form:

'How did you hear about the exhibition?'

Responses were as follows:

- Neighbour;
- Informal Facebook alert; and
- Accidentally.

Question 5 on feedback form:

'How effective was the exhibition in helping you gain an understanding of the selection of the preferred route?'

A summary of the main comments received is provided below:

- Two respondents thought the consultation was informative;
- One respondent stated that the consultation was poor and there was not enough information provided; and
- One respondent thought the consultation was moderately informative.

Question 6 on feedback form:

'Is there any other information that you would find helpful?'

One respondent requested a hard copy of the Routeing and Consultation Document as well as further information regarding environmental survey methods. Another respondent requested ongoing project updates to be sent by post.

Email Responses

In total there were 40 responses sent via email in regard to the grid connection. The majority of responses received through email were complaints that the consultation process could have been more effective, as many felt that there was a lack of direct communication with residents and landowners residing within the preferred route option. A large proportion of people are worried that the OHL may have detrimental effects on local wildlife and existing woodlands. 13% of the responses were concerns that an OHL would have visual impacts on the surrounding landscape.

Online Responses

In total there were 6 online responses in regard to the grid connection consultation. The majority of the responses received included opinions that an alternative route option was favoured over the identified preferred route option. 18% of the responses were complaints about the consultation process with many feeling that there was a lack of direct contact with residents living within or in proximity to the preferred route option, who may be impacted by the OHL.

Overview of all Responses

Every response received during the first round of consultations was reviewed. There were 82 responses in total and **Figure 2** indicates that the majority of concerns were about the consultation events as people felt that there was a lack of communication with local residents regarding the grid connection. Another concern was that the grid connection would impact local wildlife. A summary of the main issues raised, and the response provided by SPEN is presented in **Appendix A**.

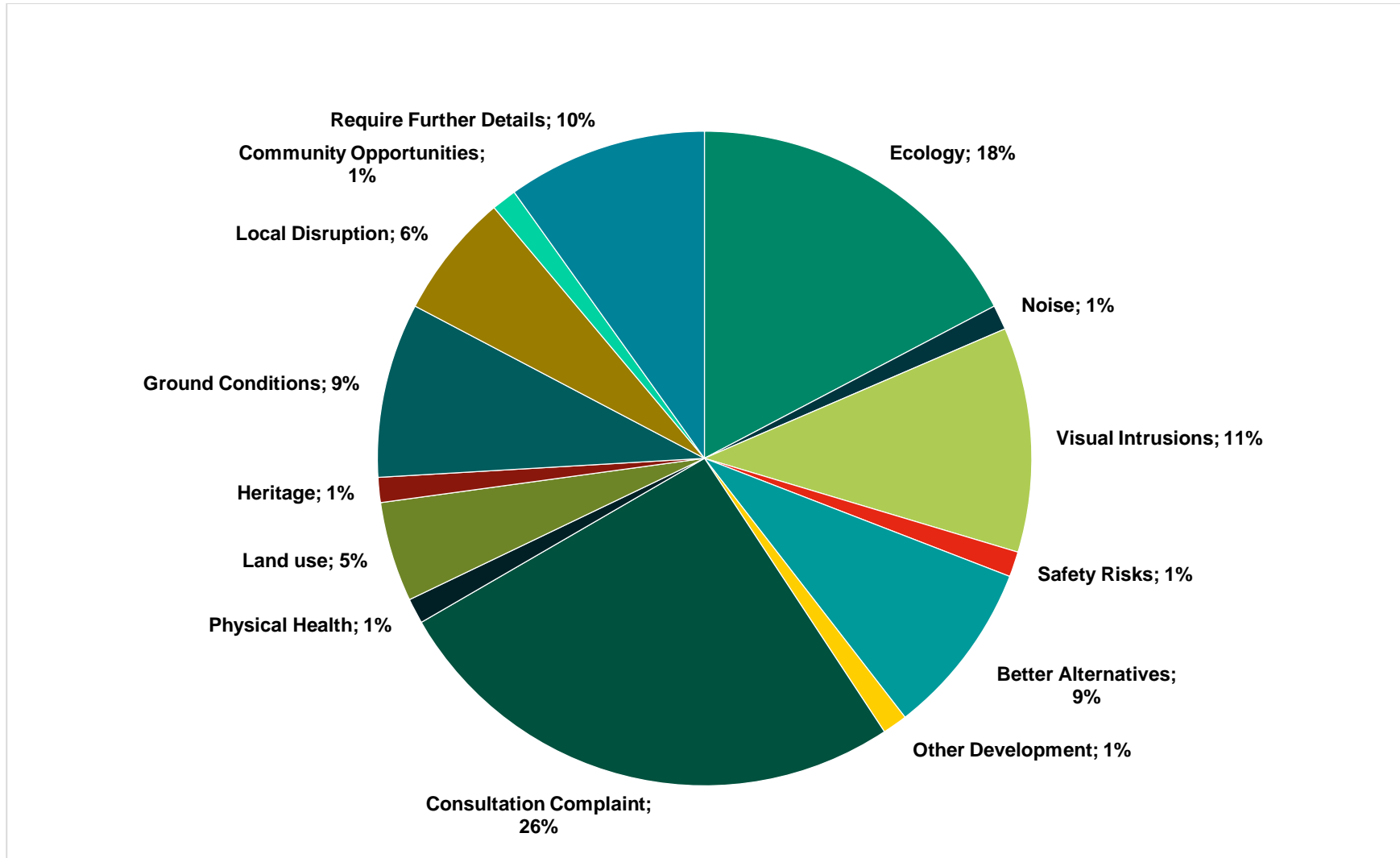


Figure 2. Chart showing all response comments

4. Project Development and Next Steps

Overview of Development to Date

In line with their statutory duties and obligations, following receipt of a request to connect the proposed Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system, SPEN (on behalf of SPT) have identified and assessed a number of possible route options for the grid connection to Wishaw Substation. This process has aligned with SPEN's Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment and follows industry 'Rules' to best avoid of areas of highest or high amenity value where possible as well as consider existing landform, topography and vegetation in order to reduce landscape and visual effects.

Through this identification and assessment process a preferred route option has been identified and presented to members of the public requesting feedback on the process and the outcomes. The feedback as reported within this Report on Consultation, will be fed back into the ongoing design development process. This design development will be informed by further surveys, assessment and consultation.

Scoping & EIA

The next step for the grid connection is to undertake Scoping for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which is a process of agreeing the extent and method of surveys and assessments to identify and assess the potential effect of the grid connection on the surrounding natural, physical and built environment. This process includes the engagement of statutory consultees, such as local councils, SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland and NatureScot. Discussions with landowners will also continue so that a more detailed route can be defined and is agreed by all parties.

Surveys that will be undertaken to help inform the EIA will include, but not be limited to ecology (flora and fauna) surveys, heritage surveys, as well as visual, noise, ground condition and transport assessments to better understand the potential impacts the OHL may have on the surrounding area. These surveys, along with technical assessments, engagement with landowners and statutory bodies will feed into the refinement of the preferred route option to a preliminary route alignment.

Round Two Consultation & Section 37 Application

After the identification of a preliminary route alignment Round Two of public consultation will be undertaken to present the preliminary route alignment to the wider public to seek comments on the surveys and assessments undertaken and the route identified, similar to Round One consultation. As above these will be held both virtually and in person and will be advertised through similar approaches as Round One taking on feedback received to ensure groups and individuals are informed as far as in advance as reasonably possible.

Feedback from the Round Two consultation events will be reviewed by the project team and revisions to the preliminary alignment made where applicable. This will be done in line with the finalisation of the EIA before submission of the consent application.

SPEN will be applying to the Scottish Ministers for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989, as amended, to install, and keep installed, the grid connection. The EIA Report will accompany the application for Section 37 consent, including a Report on Consultation which will include an outline of consultee responses to Rounds One and Two of consultation and also Scoping. At the same time, SPEN will also apply to Scottish Ministers for deemed planning permission under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, for the grid connection including ancillary development. While the Scottish Ministers will be responsible for the decision to approve the grid connection or not, in reaching their decision they will consult with statutory stakeholders and members of the public.

Appendix A Consultee Responses

Issue

Response

Ecology

Will the development have a negative impact on birds and local wildlife within the area?

Extensive environmental surveys including bird surveys will be undertaken within the area and will form part of the EIA. Within the EIA Report there will be an ecology chapter that will use the surveys to form a decision as to whether mitigation is necessary to prevent any negative impacts to the local wildlife.

The preferred route option runs close to Braehead Moss SSSI, have you considered the potential implications the grid connection may have upon the protected site?

During the routeing process all statutory and non statutory environmental sites are taken into consideration so that they can be avoided by potential route options. We are aware of Braehead Moss SSSI, which is also a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), and has been reported in the Routeing and Consultation Document. Route options avoid the site and therefore no direct impacts will result from any future OHL however the EIA, as informed by further surveys, will need to assess the potential indirect, secondary and cumulative effects on this site where these are regarded to be applicable.

Will areas of woodland need to be cleared?

Some areas of woodland may need to be cleared, however with further routeing still to be undertaken following further technical and environmental surveys and assessment, the preferred route option will aim to find a route that minimises the amount of woodland clearance needed.

Where areas of woodland cannot be avoided these impacts will need to be mitigated, and accounted for in the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment to ensure that there is no net loss in biodiversity as a result of the grid connection.

Issue

Response

Noise

Will the development emit any noises once it is operational?

Operating OHLs generate audible noise often heard as crackling sounds, the level of which depends upon the operating voltage and the choice of conductor system. For a single circuit 132 kV routed on wooden poles, as per the proposed grid connection, audible noise would only be perceptible to an observer standing directly beneath the line, therefore there are no significant effects anticipated associated with operational noise.

Visual Intrusion

Will the development negatively affect the value of properties in the area?

We recognise that the presence of an OHL near communities can impact the visual amenity of the area and our approach is to maximise the distance of the final route from properties wherever possible, including the principal views from properties.

There are concerns that the OHL will negatively impact the surrounding landscape, how do you plan to mitigate these impacts?

Through detailed routeing and 'pole-spotting' (i.e. planning out the location of each wood pole along the route) consideration will be given to the surrounding landscape and how the OHL will be viewed within the landscape. Routeing will utilise the existing landform and features within the landscape to mask or screen the OHL and reduce its prominence. This may be by siting poles on utilising lower elevations to reduce their height and prevent them dominating a skyline, or by routeing along woodland edges to provide a backcloth or screen the OHL from some viewpoints. Routeing will follow industry guidelines, namely the 'Holford Rules' which set out principles for protecting the amenity of local communities.

Issue

Response

Better Alternative

What is the rationale behind choosing Route option A4 as the preferred route option?

The preferred route option is deemed to present the best on-balance option for the Heathland Wind Farm grid connection based on the constraints identified within the Study Area. This option, utilising route options A4, A3/A4, B1/B2 and B1 which is technically feasible and economically viable and, relative to other route options, avoids or reduces impacts on the environment and people who live, work and undertake recreational activities in the area as far as possible. Route options A4 and A3/A4 offer the opportunity to reduce environmental impacts from reduced woodland removal, avoided technical constraints associated with interfaces with existing wind turbines and other existing utilities, including 400 kV and 132 kV and allowed for the avoidance of key routeing considerations identified within the Study Area. Whilst there are likely to be visual impacts on some receptors, these are balanced against the impacts to other receptors along or adjacent to the other route options and consideration given to the opportunities to minimise these impacts during the detailed routeing phase.

Route options B1/B2 and B1 were identified as the preferred option as these also limit the potential for native woodland tree removal and increases the separation distance between the OHL and the Garrion Gill SSSI which is immediately adjacent to route option B2.

Why have you not chosen a more direct route as the preferred option?

Whilst a direct alignment between the wind farm and the point of connection to the existing electricity transmission system would likely present the most economic option, routeing must account for environmental sensitivities and technical constraints to meet SPEN's statutory duties and the routeing objective. The preferred route option is the best on-balance option and therefore may not always be the most direct option.

Issue

Response

Safety Risks

There are very strong winds in the area, are the poles able to withstand more extreme weather conditions?

The foundations of the wood pole lines will be designed to take account of existing ground conditions and will consider the current environment as well as future predicted changes as a result of climate change, this includes pressure from stronger winds, increased rainfall intensity and larger ranges in maximum and minimum temperatures. Different aspects of the OHL design, such as the wood pole, the conductors (cables), and insulator discs all have different susceptibility to changing weather patterns and the operational management and maintenance of these assets will account of this to ensure that, where necessary, inspections and repairs take place in advance of any potential damage or failing.

Other Developments

Will the development be constructed through other proposed development sites?

The grid connection will not impact any of the other proposed developments in the area.

Land use

The preferred route option runs across my farm land, will the OHL impact my livestock?

During construction livestock will likely need to be moved or held in smaller sections of existing field boundaries to allow for wood pole installation and conductor stringing (i.e. installation of the overhead cables). This is for the safety of the livestock and the construction workers. This will only be temporary whilst works are undertaken in a given area and landowners will be consulted pre-construction on phasing and the best approach for access and maintaining operations where possible on a field-by-field basis.

Issue

Response

During operation of the OHL there will be no impact to livestock, with all land other than the areas required for the wood poles being reinstated to their former use.

Ground Conditions

The community are concerned that the preferred route option passes through areas of geologically unstable mining land, have you taken this into consideration?

Historic shallow and surface mining areas are present throughout the Study Area, and due to the spread of mining activity in the region this cannot be avoided.

During the design development process ground investigations will occur if we deem it necessary, to better understand the ground conditions and inform the appropriate 'pole-spotting' along the detailed design alignment. There will also be a chapter on the geology and hydrogeology of the area within the EIA Report which will discuss the potential impact of the project to local conditions and the risks of the ground conditions to the project, as well as identifying whether mitigation is needed.

Health

It is known that electric cables produce electro and magnetic fields (EMF) that may impact human health. Can you provide more details on the matter?

EMFs are present wherever electricity is used and this is inherent in the laws of physics. EMFs can be harmful at high levels, however the fields required to start interfering with the body's nervous system are much greater than those produced by the UK electrical network.

EMF measurements recorded during surveys of the electrical network are well within the UK governments guidelines which are set based on the advice provided by the Health Protection Agency.

Issue

Response

Heritage

Will this development effect the historically important mining village of Haywood and Wilsontown Iron works? And if so, how do you plan to mitigate these effects?

The project acknowledges the importance of the industrial past that influences the area around Forth village, and the scheduled monuments of Wilsontown iron works, the Haywood mining village, the bell pits at Cleugh House and the horse engine platform at Tashieburn all in proximity of the preferred route option. Each of these sites however is located outside of the preferred route option and therefore no direct impacts to these sites will be realised.

Indirect effects on the setting of these sites will be considered during the EIA and will be considered in the detailed design of the grid connection to best avoid or minimise potentially negative impacts. It is expected that with appropriate routeing of the OHL no further mitigation will be necessary.

Consultation Complaint

A number of landowners and residents located within the preferred route option were not notified of the grid connection proposals and the consultation events. Going forward, how do you propose to consult with local residents?

The public consultation events were advertised in paper and online in the Wishaw Press, East Kilbride News, and the Carluke & Lanark Gazette. A letter was sent to landowners within the area as well as community and local councils notifying them of the grid connection and inviting them to the public consultation events.

We are aware that some landowners and residents situated within the preferred route option did not receive a letter. Our landowner information is based on the information held by the Scottish Land Registry which may be out of date or not fully accurate, and we have advised our external consultants who conduct the land search of this. Through this first round of public consultation our project mailing list has also been updated with the feedback received to ensure that those that project updates can be issued via letter or email. Going

Issue

Response

forward we will continue to utilise various means of advertisement for round two consultation events, including lettering, email, project website updates, and local newspaper adverts.

Why was the consultation period so short and will there be another chance for me to express my views?

The consultation period started on the 22nd of May and ran to the 19th of June 2023. During this time there were three public consultation events that were advertised in three newspapers and online. There was also a virtual consultation room that people could access and provide feedback.

Yes, there will be another chance for you to express your views in the second round of public consultation events which we will inform you about in due course. Following the second round of consultation the application for consent will be made to the Energy Consent Unit where formal responses the application can be lodged.

Local Disruption

Will the construction of the development cause disruption to the local communities?

Any disruption during construction is considered to be temporary. It is anticipated that construction works will be complete within an 18 month period. Construction of a wood pole takes place in one single operation, i.e., the hole is dug and the pole erected within the same day depending on ground conditions and location. Angle poles can take longer due to the need for “stay wires” to stabilise the pole in the ground, but these will likely be at in-frequent locations along the route.

We would anticipate activities during construction to included 4x4 traffic for general access, crew vans for transporting personnel, with occasional HGV movements for transporting plant and materials to site and fuel deliveries for plant.

Issue

Response

Other

Can you explain the residential dwelling buffer and its significance?

The 150m residential dwelling buffer is used as an informative tool during the routeing process to develop and assess route options around residential areas and isolated properties. There is however no technical reason that would restrict the development of a wood pole line closer. Guidance within the industry's Holford Rule's places no specific rule on distance but Rule 7 advises to '*Avoid routeing close to residential areas as far as possible on grounds of general amenity*'.

Why can't you connect Heathland Wind Farm to the electricity transmission system at Wishaw Substation via existing OHLs?

The existing OHLs present in the area cannot accommodate further circuits and are also rated at a different voltage. This route is a single circuit 132kV which will be routed on wooden poles.

Community Opportunities

Are there any plans for landscaping/community enhancement within the effected communities?

There are no plans for landscaping or community enhancements as part of this project. Landscape mitigation will be addressed within the EIA as well as the requirement to provide biodiversity enhancement.
