

YOUR
CHANCE
TO OBJECT

HUGE new pylons

planned for West Aberdeenshire!

Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE plc) plan to build an entirely new 400 kV overhead power line with huge pylons averaging 50m (165ft) high from Keith to Kintore. This will be one of the highest capacity lines in Scotland (details on SSE's website). The new line would be working by 2024.

WHY? In short, by 2024 a huge amount of additional wind-generated power will be channelled to Blackhillock, near Keith, Aberdeenshire. This power will come from Shetland, Orkney, North of Scotland and especially from the Moray Firth. All this new power arriving at Blackhillock will overwhelm the existing two 275 kV lines south.

In March 2016 National Grid, who recommend annually to Ofgem what new power lines will be needed, specified a new 2 GW (that's pretty high capacity) submarine cable from Peterhead to North of England and upgrading (replacement) of one of the two 275 kV lines south.

What alternatives are there?

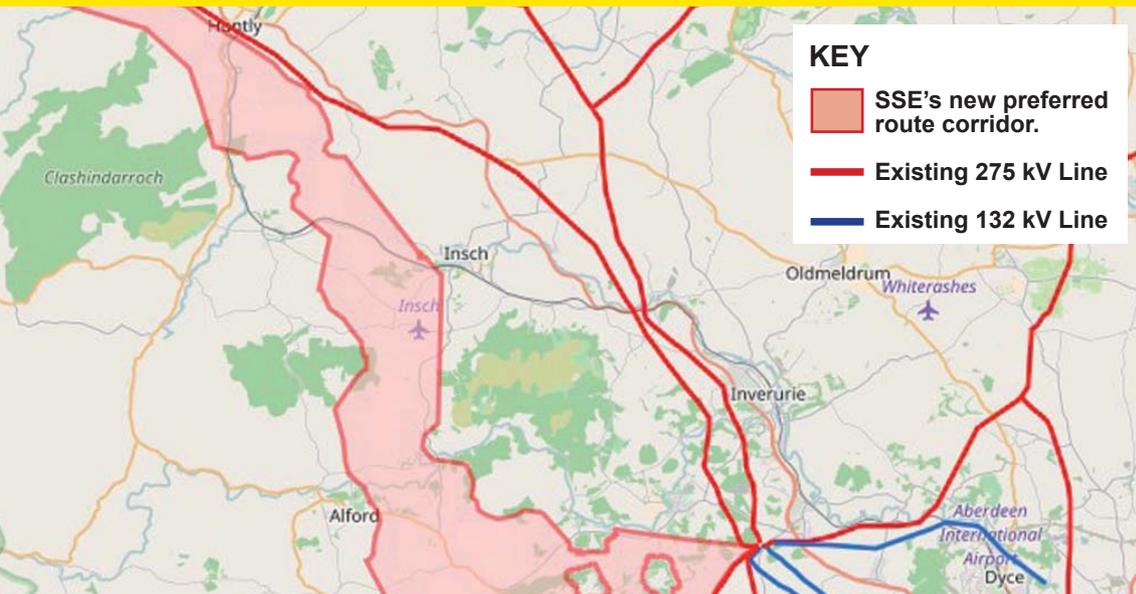
1 Double the planned capacity of the new submarine cable from Peterhead to England. The cost of laying two submarine cables is only 10% more than laying one cable – and substations at either end need not be twice as costly as one alone.

2 Bury new power lines while constructing the new dualled A96 between Inverness – Keith – Kintore. Two major infrastructure projects “from A to B” on similar timescale.

3 Use the existing pylon corridor from Keith to Kintore. Strengthen or build within or nearby – this corridor is shorter, lower cost and goes through less sensitive environment according to SSE's own special research. This was also SSE's original plan.

4 The purpose of this new line is to act as backup for the Beaulieu-Denny line to carry power down to Southern Scotland and England. **In the event of an outage, National Grid could choose to manage this situation instead of installing a new overhead line.**

Where exactly will the line go?



WAPA are frequently asked for details of where the line will go. SSE closed their public consultation about their 'preferred route corridor' for this new 400 kV line on 6 May 2016. On 1 Nov 2016 SSE reported their reasons for selecting this corridor. SSE will now take a year to tell us what detailed route they've chosen. They'll then take two more years to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments and finally submit their plans to the Scottish Government for approval as a "National Development". Aberdeenshire Council can object then and, if they wish to commit the funds, call for an Enquiry. The Scottish Government's reporter (lawyer) will preside/decide at any Enquiry.

Viable alternative technologies
SSE have not presented a fully costed case, including environmental factors, showing that they have genuinely assessed the possibility of using submarine or underground cables instead of overhead cabling.

National Grid and SSE have put large line sections underground in England and Wales: A tunnel under the Menai Strait is set to cost £100m and take up to five years to complete. National Grid said it would use underground cables instead of pylons between Anglesey and the mainland in Gwynedd in order to protect the Menai Strait's natural beauty. It seems Ofgem and the National Grid value England and Wales's landscape more highly than Scotland's.

What consultation has there been?

- SSE have termed the project a 'reinforcement project' which suggests that it is an existing line which is being upgraded. In fact it is a totally new line along a new route. This is confusing and means many people are unaware of the scale and nature of this project.
- SSE has chosen one 'corridor' out of the three originally considered. Rationale for how these corridors were selected and how SSE came to choose their 'preferred corridor' has not been made clear.
- SSE have given broad timetables which change often making it difficult for communities to get involved.
- This new power is needed in England and Southern Scotland. It is not for Aberdeenshire or Northern Scotland. In addition, there is no clarity as to how the power will be transported south beyond Kintore.

SSE ignore Scottish planning policy
Government Planning Policy (2014) makes no mention of SSE's corridors between Keith and Kintore for high voltage power lines. Instead these are routed from North Aberdeenshire to Peterhead and thence via submarine cable to N England. SSE conducted their review of their Study Area in 2014/15 during which they identified their three corridors, apparently ignoring Government policy.

This policy recognises "... a need to mitigate the environmental impacts of new or upgraded high voltage onshore transmission lines and that there will be a cost associated with this. Mitigation corridors bringing wider benefits to landscape and visual amenity, and which promote green places and active travel networks, may be an effective option in some areas." SSE has suggested no such mitigation options. **Why not?**

'House prices near pylons are on average 25% lower than elsewhere'

– Money Supermarket

What about wildlife?

The line will pass through strongholds of protected species including: Scottish wildcat, Kellas cat, red squirrels and many rare birds. While pylons themselves may pose little risk, the process of installation will significantly disturb habitats – all trees will be felled either side and underneath in a 60m wide swathe.



Now is the time to act – if you have concerns don't wait. Make



Size matters

The pylons shown in the images above and below, are representative of the size and scale proposed for West Aberdeenshire. Bear in mind, each 50m (165ft) high pylon also needs an access track. The scar on the landscape will be substantial.

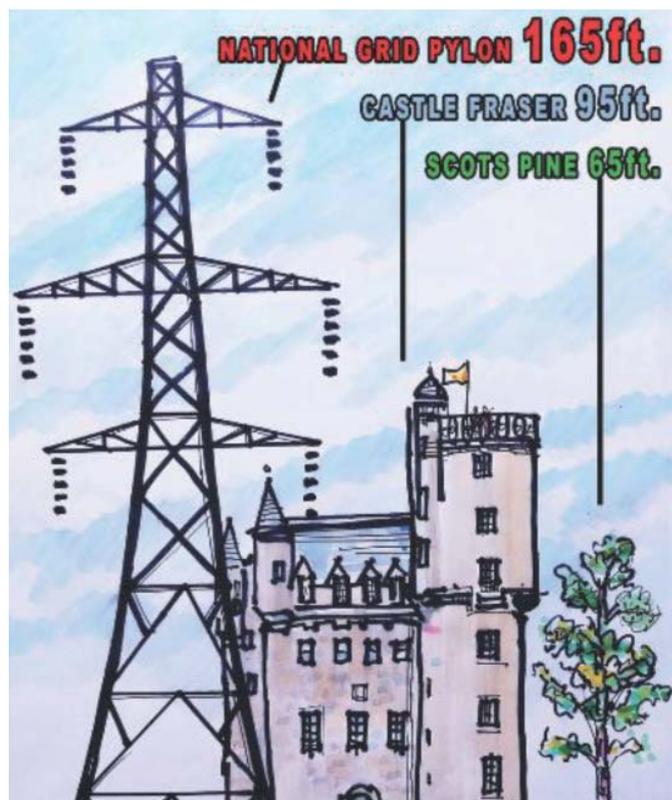
Creation of local jobs – NO!

One misconception is that this project will create local jobs. It won't! A few very short term jobs will be created but once the pylons are in, those jobs will disappear. The profits from the power produced and transmitted will go to the project owners which include companies from Denmark and China as well as SSE.

Degrading the landscape

Wherever the actual overhead line goes, the proposed development will be highly visible from Bennachie, a designated Special Landscape Area (SLA) which is popular with visitors and locals. SSE's proposed route corridor overlaps with the area currently designated within this SLA. SSE themselves say that the Howe of Alford is a high sensitivity area.

The National Trust for Scotland has objected to SSE about the "unacceptable proposals to construct a run of 50m high electricity pylons close to some of the nation's most important heritage". They also say "Our own research has found that overhead power lines are identified by both our members and the wider public as one of the most significant factors in degrading the landscape." The impact on tourism for the area is likely to be substantial and will in fact *cost* Scottish jobs, not create them.



'Power lines... may raise risk of dementia, warns University of Edinburgh'

– Daily Telegraph, 12 October 2016

Potential health risks

Over the last 40 years there have been suggestions that magnetic fields, at the levels produced by overhead lines, may cause diseases, principally childhood leukaemia. The evidence is strong enough for magnetic fields to be classified by the World Health Organization as "possibly carcinogenic". While we appreciate this science is unproven, the distress and concern this causes to large sections of the community cannot be ignored. Public health was not a routing consideration for SSE in this project. Many homes will potentially be within 300m of these new pylons and some could be within 100m.

Funding

Fighting any campaign costs money and WAPA is extremely grateful for the donations received so far which have helped us to pay for hall rentals and publicity materials. For WAPA to continue to be able to help raise awareness of this important issue, further funding is needed. To contribute to WAPA please contact act@wapa.org.uk. We're getting organised and hope to have an online donation system up soon. Thank you.

How to object

1. Contact your MSP and MP. See contact list below.
2. Object to SSE's project manager, Greig Taylor. See contact list below.
3. Please also write to the media. See contact list below.
4. Join WAPA – send an email to act@wapa.org.uk. You can offer help, send photos and get updated on the latest developments. Find us on Facebook under West Aberdeenshire Pylon Action – you can join the Facebook group.

Who are WAPA?

West Aberdeenshire Pylon Action (WAPA) was formed to represent the views and concerns of individuals and organisations on SSE's currently proposed corridor between Huntly and Kintore. It is also an umbrella organisation for a group formed earlier (CLAMPA).

WHO TO OBJECT TO...

	Organisation	Contact Name	Email Address
SSE	SSE Liaison Officer	Lesley Dow *	lesley.dow@sse.com
	SSE Project Manager	Greig Taylor *	greig.taylor@sse.com
	SSE Chief Executive Officer	Alistair Phillips-Davies *	alistair.phillips-davies@sse.com
	SSE Chairman	Richard Gillingwater *	richard.gillingwater@sse.com
NAT. GRID / OFGEM	National Grid Chairman	Sir Peter Gershon	stewart.larque@nationalgrid.com
	National Grid CEO	John Pettigrew	john.pettigrew@ngrid.com
	Ofgem Chairman	David Gray	foi@ofgem.gov.uk
	Ofgem Chief Executive Officer	Dermot Nolan	dermot.nolan@ofgem.gov.uk
POLITICIANS	First Minister of Scotland	Nicola Sturgeon	scottish.ministers@gov.scot
	MSP West Aberdeenshire (Conservative)	Alexander Burnett	alexander.burnett@scottishconservatives.com alexander.burnett.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (LibDem)	Mike Rumbles	mikerumbles1@gmail.com mike.rumbles.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (Conservative)	Peter Chapman	peter.chapman@scottishconservatives.com peter.chapman.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (Conservative)	Liam Kerr	liam.kerr@scottishconservatives.com liam.kerr.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (Conservative)	Bill Bowman	bill.bowman@scottishconservatives.com bill.bowman.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (Conservative)	Ross Thomson	ross.thomson@scottishconservatives.com ross.thomson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (Labour)	Jenny Marra	jenny.marra.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	MSP NE Regional List (Labour)	Lewis Macdonald	lewis.macdonald.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
	Aberdeenshire Councillor	John Latham	cllr.j.latham@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
MEDIA	Press and Journal	Blair Dingwall	blair.dingwall@ajl.co.uk
	Scottish Television Newsdesk		stvnews@stv.tv
	BBC Scotland Newsdesk (via BBC website)		

* Postal address: SSE, Inveralmond House, 200 Dunkeld Road, Perth PH1 3AQ