

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY STRATEGIC REINFORCEMENT – STAKEHOLDER LIAISON GROUP MEETING MINUTES		
Date	29 th April 2015	
Time	1030-1230hrs	
Venue	Cairndale Hotel, Dumfries	
Attendees:		
Name		
Cathy Cacace (CC) – Scottish Government	Kathryn Heslop (KH) - Copper	Diyar Kadar (DK) - SPEN
Nikki Anderson (NA) – Scottish Government	Ruth Cameron (RC) – Historic Scotland	Colin Brown (CB) - SPEN
Stuart Graham (SG) - SNH	John Esslemont (SAC)	Cathie Hill (CH) - SPEN
John Malcolm (JM) – Historic Scotland	Ross Baxter (RB) - SPEN	Guy Kenyon (GK) – Cumbria CC
David Suttie (DS) – Dumfries & Galloway	Stephen Jack (SJ) - SPEN	
Ian Steele (IS) - SPEN	Kate Wigley (LUC)	
Marc Van Grieken (MVG) - MVGLA	Polly Rourke (PR) - Copper	
Circulation:		
Name		
Cathy Cacace (SGECU)	Frances Pacitti (SGECU)	David Suttie (DGC)
Robert Duncan (DGC)	John Esslemont (SAC)	Stuart Graham (SNH)
John Malcolm (HS)	Ruth Cameron (HS)	David McNay (SEPA)
Lorna MacLean (SEPA)	Guy Kenyon (CCC)	Graham Hale (CCC)
Chris Hardman (CC)	Hannah Booth (EN)	Andrew Davison (EH)
Phillip Carter (EA)	Stephen Jack (SPEN)	Ross Baxter (SPEN)
Colin Brown (SPEN)	Iain Steele (SPEN)	Cathie Hill (SPEN)
Diyar Kadar (SPEN)	Joanna Wright (LUC)	James Baird (LUC)
Marc Van Grieken (MVGLA)	Ross Hayman (Copper)	Kate Wigley (LUC)

	Description	Owner	Status
1.0	Before the meeting, CC explained that the Scottish Government (SG) were undergoing a review of the consenting process, although this didn't include notable changes to the transmission side of the process. Aim to introduce target process agreements to keep projects moving along within timescales. CC introduced NA as the senior case officer moving forward for the lifetime of the DGSR project.		
2.0	Note of Attendance and Introductions		
3.0	Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed. There was a short discussion about the proposed secure interactive sharepoint site being created for SLG members as part of the DGSR website. SJ explained the website would go live in May with separate log-ins for each SLG organisation these would be issued in due course.	SJ	Ongoing
4.0	Routing Methodology Feedback		
4.1	SJ explained the routing methodology had been circulated and comments had been received. These are dealt with under item 4.		
5.0	Emerging Corridors and Substation Siting Areas		
5.1	KW gave a presentation on the routing methodology. She thanked group members for feedback. Some people requested clarification on certain issues within their remit. Examples were given in the slide presentation. Thanks to the localised guidance received, all issues raised and clarification needed has been covered in the new document.		
5.2	MvG and KW gave a presentation explaining each stage of the routing process so far and why each preferred corridor section and substation siting area was chosen. They gave details of the environmental appraisal that had been completed on each section of the route to arrive at the preferred corridor and substation siting areas.		

5.3	<p>DS asked how much wriggle room there was on the preferred corridor.</p> <p>SJ explained that they were not fixed and would be consulting on all corridor options. Responses received from stakeholders and the public during consultation will be used to review the corridor selection before finalising and confirming the proposed corridor and siting options later this year.</p> <p>MvG clarified that consultation was on corridors only and not routes for overhead lines.</p>		
5.4	<p>DS asked why at certain points the corridor was narrow.</p> <p>MvG explained that 'pinch points', based on technical and topographical issues, had been identified on certain routes. As an example, the corridor between Newton Stewart and Glenlee narrows to 1km at one point due to steep sided, narrow valleys.</p>		
5.5	<p>NA asked how wide the corridor was at the pinch point. MvG said the corridor ranged from 1km at its narrowest to up to 9km.</p>		
5.6	<p>DS explained that an application for a wind farm near Loch Ken (on the corridor between Glenlee and Tongland) had recently been recommended for approval but had been deferred to allow planning committee members to visit the site .</p> <p>KW said the existing 132kV line crosses Loch Ken. The team had considered following the same route with the new line but preferred the alternative option to allow the opportunity of freeing up sensitive areas. Cumulative impacts will also be considered at the detailed routeing stage and as part of the final environmental assessment.</p>		
5.7	<p>DS said the wide corridor near Kirkcudbright was a distinct landscape including drumlin hills which is a challenging area to site turbines. DS stated that this is an area the council generally advises developers to avoid. MvG acknowledged this and explained that these issues will be taken into account during the detailed routeing phase.</p>		
5.8	<p>DS questioned the reasoning for a longer route into Harker.</p> <p>KW explained they originally had four proposed corridors in the areas but the configuration of a number of constraints such a historic battlefield and a former MoD site, now earmarked for commercial development meant the longer route was a preferred option. It also avoided the existing 400kV Scotland to England interconnector and the Solway Firth Special Protection Area (SPA).</p>		
5.9	<p>DS asked whether undergrounding had been considered.</p> <p>SJ said economic, technical and environmental factors, specifically statutory duties and licence obligations, will support an overhead line approach in most cases. However, through the detailed route appraisal process, areas might be identified through which no overhead line route can be found due to either landscape, environmental or technical factors or a combination of these. In such instances this would trigger a further review of the overall routeing objective which may give rise to consideration of undergrounding certain sections of the route.</p> <p>SPEN is hoping to publish its policy approach to routeing transmission infrastructure which covers technologies like undergrounding, before the consultation.</p> <p>Members felt this was a good idea.</p> <p>DS advised this would be a reoccurring question from the public.</p>		
5.10	<p>JE asked about the need case for the project.</p> <p>SJ explained the three main drivers behind the need case and</p>		

	said they would be detailed in the need case document which was being published as part of the consultation.		
5.11	<p>JE asked about the possibility of a subsea cable or if it had been ruled out.</p> <p>SJ explained that an HVDC subsea cable was looked at during high level optioneering, but was discounted because it did not address the onshore need to improve security of supply of the existing 132kV network. The high level system options will be discussed in more detail as part of the need case document to be published for the consultation.</p> <p>CC asked whether the enhancement of security of supply was contained in the need case.</p> <p>SJ confirmed that this would be included.</p>		
5.12	<p>JE asked whether the project was fully-funded or whether it depended on other factors.</p> <p>CB explained that, as part of SPEN's approved transmission investment plan (RIIOT-1), Ofgem recognised that there was a need to do something in the area and had granted pre-construction funding to undertake system optioneering, routeing and pre-construction works. However, final approval of the need case, and awarding of funding, would be subject to approval from Ofgem.</p> <p>CC stated that SPEN must learn lessons from Beauy-Denny by considering costs for committed mitigation (such as landscape and visual) and building these into the need case submission for Ofgem.</p> <p>JE asked if the project was dependent on anything else for funding to be granted.</p> <p>CB said the need case had to demonstrate the most economically viable and technically efficient option, whilst being mindful of people and the environment, but doing nothing was not an option.</p>		
6.0	Stakeholder Engagement Plan		
6.1	PR gave a presentation detailing the phases of consultation, identified the stakeholders that would be consulted and how this would be achieved. The public exhibitions, proposed locations as well as the materials used to engage with the public throughout the consultation we explained to the group.		
6.2	<p>CC asked how people would be able to see other corridors if they are only presented with one option.</p> <p>SJ said they would be in the Routeing Consultation Document and also on large A0 maps at the public exhibitions.</p> <p>PR explained the newsletter would be used as a signpost to the events where the routes would be explained in further detail.</p> <p>SJ explained "story boards" would be at the exhibitions as an aid to explain the route corridors.</p> <p>RB reiterated that it's easier to explain to stakeholders the route options and corridors face to face and the exhibitions provide the opportunity to do that, the newsletter is just an introduction.</p>		
6.3	<p>NA commented that people will ask why certain route corridors have not been considered.</p> <p>SJ explained large maps would be available with all the route options for people to comment on.</p> <p>DS advised that an explanation of the reasons the preferred route has emerged over others would be key during the consultation phase.</p>		
6.4	<p>CC asked about the methodology on avoiding land use constraints and why existing wind farms, including those which are in the planning process, had been avoided.</p> <p>KW said it was not possible to route through a wind farm for technical reasons. Committed development for wind farms at the</p>		

	<p>application stage and beyond up to a cut off point of Oct 1 2014 were considered.</p> <p>CC wondered whether people might query the sense of avoiding wind farms which might later need to be connected, with the construction of even more OHL.</p> <p>SJ explained that this was dependent on commercial, economic and environmental factors. SJ agreed that SPEN needs to be clear about what windfarms area classed as “committed development” for consideration at each stage of the routeing and assessment processes.</p>		
6.5	<p>JE asked for clarification on the route option between Auchencrosh and Newton Stewart and whether it followed the transport network in the area.</p> <p>MvG said the corridor did for part of the section but splits away to take account of topography and landscape issues.</p>		
6.6	<p>DS asked if the existing converter station would be removed at Auchencrosh.</p> <p>DK confirmed it would stay.</p>		
6.7	<p>DS asked what the rationale behind the Dumfries substation was.</p> <p>MvG explained it was a preferred site as that's where the existing line was and would connect.</p> <p>DS commented that it was low lying ground so would be a good site for the substation.</p>		
6.8	<p>CC asked whether there would be any potential benefits from the siting of the preferred corridor at a local/regional level.</p> <p>KW advised that by building a new network within the preferred corridor SPEN would be able to remove approximately 130km of existing overhead line.</p>		
6.9	<p>JE asked what the height of the towers would be.</p> <p>SJ explained that the towers were likely to be of a design that averages 46 metres in height.</p> <p>JE asked if they would be comparable with the towers that follow the M74 towards Glasgow.</p> <p>CC asked if there would be fewer towers than there are currently.</p> <p>RB stated that the typical design for 275/400kV towers meant that, whilst taller than the existing 132kV towers, they have longer span lengths so fewer towers are required than would be for a comparable length of 132kV overhead line.</p> <p>RB asked the group if they thought a site visit to an existing overhead line of similar design and construction would be beneficial. The group agreed it would be.</p>	SJ/RB	Ongoing
6.10	<p>SJ asked the group for feedback on the proposed venues for the consultation exhibitions.</p>		
6.11	<p>GK asked if there were any existing lines being removed in the Dumfries to Harker section.</p> <p>DK confirmed there would be a 132Kv line being removed.</p> <p>DS asked if the interconnector would stay.</p> <p>KW responded that it would.</p>		
6.12	<p>DS questioned some of the proposed venues.</p> <p>PR explained that the venues had been selected as they fell within the route corridor and minimised the travel time to venues for communities that would be most affected.</p> <p>DS stated that, whilst outside of the consultation zone, Lockerbie and Annan were local centres of the population on the Dumfries to Harker corridor. He questioned if it would be a better choice of location rather than some of the smaller locations that had been proposed.</p> <p>GK asked if an event in Carlisle had been considered.</p> <p>SJ explained that Longtown had been selected as a consultation</p>	SJ/Copper	Ongoing

	<p>event venue in order to cover communities in North Carlisle such as Rockcliffe which are within the consultation zone.</p> <p>RB added that SPEN don't want to miss anyone out and don't want to be perceived as leaving people out, that's not an objective of the consultation.</p>		
6.13	<p>DS asked if Planning offices and customer service centres would get copies of all the consultation documents as it would be a good idea if people are unable to attend the event.</p> <p>RB added the documents would also be on the project website. It was agreed that copies of the consultation documents would be available to view from planning offices and customer service centres along the route.</p>	SJ/Copper	Ongoing
6.14	<p>CC asked if elected members would be briefed before the consultation.</p> <p>SJ confirmed there were already dates in the diary and more to be added.</p>	SJ	Ongoing
6.15	<p>SJ summarised the main points of the meeting and the next meeting was proposed for October/November before the consultation feedback is published.</p> <p>CC proposed that the next meeting be in a workshop forum to review the feedback.</p>		