



**Brief notes from a meeting with Scottish Power Energy Networks  
Thursday 8 September 2016**

**Present**

SPEN Cathie Hill  
DGAP Alan Jones  
Penny Coles

DGAP welcomed the opportunity to meet SPEN again to follow up progress from the earlier meeting of the 19 July and to discuss a number of issues that were not discussed at the initial meeting. The discussions ranged as follows:

**Strategic Stakeholder Liaison Group(SSLG) minutes from 27 July 2016**

DGAP reported that they had received several queries over the phrase that the DGSR project – “is not required at present” as recorded in the Strategic Stakeholder Liaison Group minutes. SPEN confirmed “they do not expect to be re-visiting the Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Reinforcement project,” which has also been confirmed by Ofgem, and raise the matter with the SSLG chair.

**Developer Forum relating to the Dumfries and Galloway Reinforcement Project (DGSR) reduction**

The slides for this have been put on the SPEN website and are very good at explaining the background to the decision. Link here:

[http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/DG\\_Developer\\_Forum\\_2016\\_07\\_29.p  
df](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/DG_Developer_Forum_2016_07_29.pdf)

The reduced scheme will give security of supply to the demand in Dumfries and Galloway and will allow 95% of required renewable electricity to be transmitted. To implement the reduced scheme SPEN will require Ofgem to grant them a derogation against their license obligations.

Limiting investment avoids creating stranded assets that will rarely, if ever, be used at maximum capacity. DGAP were given permission to provide a link to the Developer Forum slides on their website.

**Newton Stewart to Glenlee re-conductoring.** Scottish Power is considering using a new, more advanced conductor on this stretch of line to increase capacity. This new technology has been used successfully by Scottish Power in Ayrshire and won an industry award for innovation. This new conductor does not expand in the same way as traditional technologies at high temperatures. This means more electricity can be transmitted without compromising the safety clearance from the ground and provides the potential for using fewer pylons.

DGAP encouraged SPEN to promote this in the local press and felt sure people would be interested in how the problem was being solved by innovative techniques. The cost is approximately the same as new taller pylons and overhead line but with less visual

impact, and Galloway Forest Park will benefit from this approach. DGAP requested information on the new conductor technology.

In terms of innovation, SPEN also explained how they were the first operator to trial HVDC on a distribution network in Anglesey, thereby increasing capacity without the need for larger pylons or another overhead line.

### **Kendoon to Tongland Reinforcement**

This project is on target for the second consultation in the autumn after the October school holidays and exhibitions and consultation documents are being planned. The exhibition will include 3-D visualisations of the emerging route preference in the landscape. All exhibition venues have been assessed for disabled access and are accessible by ramp or lift. Where hearing loops are available they will be used. Alternatively, all venues also have quiet rooms available, where people with hearing difficulties can talk one-to-one with a member of the project team in the absence of background noise.

Work is underway to establish the Community Liaison Group. SPEN explained that great care is being taken to ensure all communities have equal access to information and all responses will be considered. DGAP suggested the first meeting would benefit from an explanation similar to that given at the Developer Forum. Clarification on the level of argument in support of undergrounding would also be helpful.

The previous Strategic Stakeholder Liaison Group meeting had talked about those properties that were outwith the first consultation householder notification but now within 1km of the revised corridor. There are about ten properties affected although these may have heard about the project through the local advertising.

SPEN stated that the KTR project will have no bearing on the development or application of wind farms in the vicinity.

### **Moyle Interconnector**

SPEN explained in more detail about the restriction in the technical capacity of the Moyle Interconnector. The modelling that SPEN have had carried out considered, among other things, the pattern of wind generation available in Scotland and Northern Ireland and the relative prices. This analysis suggests that there would be limited requirement for power from Northern Ireland.

The behaviour of the Moyle Interconnector to date has been mainly for the export of electricity from Scotland to Northern Ireland. The original 275Kv line connecting to the Moyle is now constrained by connections to wind farms and so this transmission route cannot accommodate the maximum technical capacity as originally planned.

### **Glenmuchloch Development**

SPEN are unable to divulge information about the distribution development at this time because of commercial confidence.

### **Transmission Stakeholder Panel**

SPEN explained they already had a consumer panel but it tends to focus on the end product rather than on transmission and the discussion touched on the possibility of organisations such as DGAP providing an input to such a panel. To this end DGAP made available a copy of a discussion paper entitled 'Electricity Transmission Planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.'

### **Research project**

DGAP has identified a gap in the existing research around electricity transmission infrastructure and has produced a research proposal. For example, while work has been undertaken to investigate particular impacts, such as tourism, a more holistic view to measure and evaluate the impact of new infrastructure on an area incorporating visual amenity, residential amenity and impact on the local economy has not been investigated by an academic body.

SPEN said that plans for the next round of transmission network developments (RIIO-T2) to be submitted to Ofgem for their consideration are starting to be thought about. The idea of an independent research project undertaken in a collaborative manner has a number of advantages. SPEN undertook to explore ways in which it and other relevant parties could participate, recognising that DGAP's research proposal has moved on following the DGSR project being withdrawn both parties agreed that the proposal was now aimed GB-wide. All agreed that any research must be based on a strong methodology, be independent, have credibility and use respected institutions. DGAP said they are currently in discussion with several institutions and have a feel for the duration of the work. SPEN agreed that this would meet the T2 timescale and would provide time for them to produce a Plan B, depending on the outcome. Such research will also require a range of stakeholders and need management. DGAP offered to give a presentation to this meeting.