

T Route Rebuild Project Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is this consultation happening virtually?

In accordance with government guidance an online consultation format will be utilised in place of a village hall event. This approach is consistent with current government advice (Coronavirus (COVID-19): planning guidance on pre-application consultations for public events – April 2020 and amendments 2022).

2. How do we provide feedback without a physical public consultation?

In the same way as a normal consultation event, you are able to provide feedback via email or post. The addresses can be found at the end of these FAQ.

3. Who is SP Energy Networks?

SP Energy Networks is part of the ScottishPower Group. SP Transmission sit within SP Energy Networks and are responsible for the transmission of electricity in central and southern Scotland and the distribution network in parts of North West England and North Wales. Our role is to maintain, operate and invest in our network to secure a safe, reliable, and economic service for current and future consumers.



4. What statutory obligations does SP Energy Networks have?

Our statutory obligations are set out in the Electricity Act 1989 and in our transmission licence. We must develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical transmission system in accordance with security and quality of supply standards. We must offer to connect new power generators to the system and, make sure we keep disturbance to the natural and built environment and the people who live in it, work in it or enjoy it to a minimum.

5. Who regulates SP Energy Networks?

We are regulated by Ofgem (Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets). Further information about Ofgem is available:

- o At www.ofgem.gov.uk (opens in a new window);
- o By calling Ofgem's Consumer Affairs team on 020 7901 7295; or
- o By emailing consumeraffairs@ofgem.gov.uk.

6. How will SP Energy Networks pay for this project?

The project will be funded as part of our regulated transmission business and agreed with the regulator Ofgem. Ofgem has recognised the key role of businesses like SP Energy Networks in tackling climate change and ensuring security of supply in its price control model and regulatory framework.



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7. Will the cost be added to customers' bills?

Ultimately the cost of our investment in the electricity system is partly borne by consumers through electricity bills, so we are obliged to be economic and efficient. We recover our costs through transmission charges levied by National Grid.

8. How much will the project cost?

It will be funded through our regulated transmission businesses and agreed with the regulator Ofgem.

9. Why is this project needed?

This project is needed to make sure we provide a safe, secure and efficient electricity connection. As a regulated utility provider, SPT takes electricity generated from power stations, windfarms and various other utilities and transports it through the transmission network, which comprises over 4000km of overhead lines and 320km of underground cables.



10. When is the project needed by?

We plan to have the project in operation by 2024, but there is a lot to do before then, such as environmental studies, designing the project, obtaining the necessary development consent, and building it.

11. Who gives you permission to construct new overhead lines?

We will be applying for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 to install the proposed overhead line and to dismantle the existing steel lattice line. As such, application will be submitted to Scottish Ministers who make the final decision whether to grant or refuse it.

12. What exactly are you proposing?

We are proposing to replace a section of the existing 132kV overhead line supported on steel lattice towers (AK and T Routes) between the AK Route near Annan and the National Grid Energy Transmission (NGET) connection in the Solway Firth. The new overhead line will carry a maximum voltage of 132kV and will be supported on wood pole structures of the Trident design, which are smaller and less prominent in the landscape than steel lattice towers.



13. Will you be consulting local people?

Yes. The first round of consultation, which involves asking people what they think of our preferred route, is currently underway. This is not a statutory requirement but is useful, as it allows us to understand local issues. After we submit our application for consent in 2022, there will also be a formal statutory consultation conducted by the Scottish Government.

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14. Can you use underground cables?

SP Energy Networks is a responsible company and we care about the environment and communities in which we operate. We will work closely with stakeholders and communities to develop a technically feasible and economically viable solution which causes, on balance, the least disturbance to people and the environment.

The UK Government and the electricity industry, including SPEN, constantly review their positions on the use of transmission overhead lines.

Wherever practical, we take an overhead line approach when planning and designing new or replacement major infrastructure projects. At the present time, SPEN remain confident that a continuous overhead line solution can be found for the T Route Rebuild Project. However, as set out above, we will continue to review and test this through feedback from consultation and from details emerging as the environmental survey work progresses.



You can find out more about our approaches to both overhead lines and undergrounding in our Approach to Routeing Transmission Infrastructure document https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/userfiles/file/SPEN_Approach_to_Routeing.pdf (opens in a new window).

15. How will you determine the route of the electricity connection?

We are following established guidelines for routeing of transmission overhead lines, which combine in depth environmental studies with technical and economic factors. A key part of this is consultation with stakeholders and the public to inform the development of the project. Professional judgement is then used to appraise a number of route options in order to balance technical feasibility and economic viability with the least disturbance to people and the environment.

16. Can you tell me more about Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs)?

Wherever electricity is used there will also be electric and magnetic fields. This is inherent in the laws of physics - we can modify the fields to some extent, but if we are going to use electricity, then EMFs are inevitable. Like many other things that we encounter in nature, EMFs can be harmful at high-enough levels. But the fields required, for example, to start interfering with the body's nervous system are much greater than those produced by the UK electricity system. Hundreds of millions of pounds have been spent investigating this issue around the world. Research still continues to seek greater clarity; however, the balance of scientific evidence to date suggests that EMFs do not cause disease.

'Electric and Magnetic Fields – The Facts' is a document produced by the UK electricity industry. This document is available to download on the T Route Rebuild project website.

If your question is not answered within these FAQs, you can email the project manager at TRoute@spenergynetworks.co.uk

Alternatively you can write to:

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