

Pre-Application Consultation Report

LT000014 – Lewis Hub (AC Substation and HVDC Converter Station)

February 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report is submitted by Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc, operating and known as Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), as part of an application for Planning Permission in Principle under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) ('TCPA 1997') for permission to construct and operate a new strategic electricity transmission hub at Arnish Moor, Isle of Lewis, HS2 9JN. The project is referred to and described as the Lewis Hub (AC Substation and HVDC Converter Station), and hereafter interchangeably as 'The Proposed Development'. The PAC Report is submitted as a requirement of S35C of the TCPA 1997 in accordance with requirements prescribed in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (as amended) (The DMRs) and particularly with reference to regulation 7B, which prescribes specific content for PAC Reports. In general, the PAC Report provides an overview of the consultation programme and describes: the findings from the PAC process, the steps taken to meet statutory requirements, the feedback received during the PAC process, and how we responded.

1.1.1 The PAC Report is comprised of five parts:

- 1: Introduction;
- 2: Project Background – outlines the background to the project and provides a description of the key elements and non-statutory consultation undertaken;
- 3: The Consultation Process – describes the submission of Proposal of Application Notices (PANs); the dates and venues for consultation events; any additional consultation required (or otherwise) by the local planning authority;
- 4: Public Responses and Key Issues – an overview of public responses to consultation;
- 5: Feedback and How the Project Team Has Responded – summarises the written responses to consultation and the views raised at public events; and
- 6: Conclusion.

Appendices are attached to provide evidence of consultation carried out, under the terms of the abovementioned Regulations.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, operating under licence held by Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc, owns, operates and develops the high voltage electricity transmission system in the north of Scotland and islands and has a statutory duty under section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (“the 1989 Act”) to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical electrical transmission system in its licence area.

2.1 Site Description

The Proposed Development would be located on land approximately 2km south west of Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis (“the Site”). The Site would comprise an area of approximately 285 hectares consisting mainly of modified grassland and wet heathland.

The development site is in the vicinity of Macaulay Farm on land to the south of Arnish Road and east of the A859 Road and partly to the west of the A859 Road and the developed area would be around 400m south of the River Creed. There are no designated assets located within the Site boundary. The closest designation is Lews Castle and Lady Lever Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL), located approximately 200 m northeast of the Site at its closest point. There are no statutory designations within the site or any residential properties within the Site. The closest settlement, at Maybank, is c. 1km to the North, and it is not, allocated, protected or reserved for other development.

2.2 Proposed Development

The Proposed Development would consist of the Construction and Operation of a Strategic Electricity Transmission Hub. The key components would be a High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Converter Station, a 132kV and 400kV Substation and ancillary works including the construction of temporary and permanent access, the establishment of a new junction from the A859 and the minor Arnish Road, vegetation clearance, rock extraction and the reinstatement and restoration of peat.

2.3 Requirement for Pre-application Consultation

The Proposed Development is classed as ‘National Development’ as it is of a type that falls within National Development 3 “Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure” in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), and the site is of a size that it would otherwise be considered Major Development under the provisions of Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (‘the Hierarchy Regulations’). Development within National Development 3 is only National Development when it meets this threshold. Regulation 4 of the DMRs requires that pre-application consultation is carried out for all national and major developments.

2.4 Early Non-Statutory Consultation

Prior to the statutory consultation phase for the Lewis hub, a comprehensive non-statutory consultation phase was undertaken to support a two-stage site selection process. This consisted of Stage 1: Initial Site Screening followed by Stage 2: Detailed Site Selection.

The initial Stage 1 site selection consultation, which was held in September 2022 at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway, included 8 site options upon which public and stakeholder feedback was invited. Further consultation on a refined list of four site options was held on 17 April 2023, also at the Cabarfeidh Hotel. This included a new site, site option four referred to as Creed North which provided an optimum balance of environmental, technical and commercial factors and was presented as the Preferred Site option. Statutory Consultees were provided with a digital consultation document via the Western Isles Project website.

In addition, in the weeks before, during and after the Stage 2 consultation events, various meetings were held with other key stakeholders such as landowners, statutory and non-statutory consultees, councillors and community councils to discuss the project proposals.

2.5 Pre-application Consultation with Local Planning Authority

2.5.1 The project team has maintained regular contact with the Local Planning Authority throughout the site selection process through a series of Microsoft Teams update calls, and in person meetings. This included an accompanied site visit to a working converter station at Blackhillock in the Moray Council Administrative area.

2.5.2 A pre-application meeting was held with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Planning Service via Microsoft Teams on 10/10/2024. Representatives from SSEN Transmission's project team attended the meeting, along with representatives from CnES Planning, Environmental Health, Archaeology and Roads Departments. Minutes of the meeting were taken by SSEN Transmission.

Separate discussion was held with CnES Planning Service regarding the nature and extent of PAC activity expected and any requirements for any activity beyond that stated as minimum in regulations. It was established that statutory notices should be placed in the Stornoway Gazette. CnES Planning Service also requested that PAC events be publicised on local radio, social media and on web-based news sites ("We love Stornoway" and "Hebrides News")

3. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This section describes the consultation process and demonstrates how statutory PAC requirements have been met. The PAC process is specified in Section 35B of the TCPA 1997, and in Regulation 7 of the DMRs.

3.2 Proposal of Application Notice (PAN)

3.2.1 A PAN must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), containing the information prescribed in 35B(4) of the TCPA 1997 and Regulation 6 of the DMRs, including an account of what consultation the applicant intends to undertake and information as to when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take.

3.2.2 A PAN was submitted to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar on the 6th of August 2024, triggering the beginning of the statutory consultation period. The PAN provided the Council with an outline of the application details, dates of public events, publicity arrangements, and confirmation of the site location.

3.2.3 Copies of the PAN(s) and attachments are provided in **Appendix A**.

3.2.4 The Comhairle noted that the two consultation events that were proposed as required by Regulation was sufficient, subject to the publicity proposed. Additional consultation and publicity described In the PAN included:

3.2.5 A postcard maildrop to properties within 5km (and subsequently increased to 10km) of the Site to make the public aware of the consultation events; and

- A dedicated project website at <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/western-isles/>

3.2.6 Statutory Newspaper notices (details below)

- Local radio advertisement;
- Advertisement on Social Media;
- Advertisement on web-based news sites; and
- Notification of local and neighbouring community councils, local and neighbouring Council ward members and the Holyrood and Westminster elected representatives.

3.2.7 A letter approving the proposed PAC activity was received on 6th August 2024 from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in response to the PAN submission. No additional information or consultation beyond that specified in the PAN was prescribed.

3.2.8 In addition to the PAN and attachments being sent to the LPA, we attach a list in **Appendix B** of other parties these were sent to, including: Community Councils, local councillors, and Holyrood and Westminster elected representatives (Alasdair Allan MSP and Torcuil Crichton MP) as well as relevant statutory bodies.

3.3 Newspaper Notices

3.3.1 Newspaper adverts must be published in respect of public events, the form of which is described in Regulation 7 of the DMRs. Notice of these public events must be published at least 7 days in advance in a newspaper circulating in the locality of the proposed development. The second (or final) public event must be held at least 14 days after the first public event.

3.3.2 In respect of the first consultation event, newspaper notices were published in the public notices section of the Press and Journal, West Coast/Inverness edition on Thursday 22nd August and Wednesday 28th August 2024. The statutory notice for the first event was placed in the classified public notices section of the Stornoway Gazette on Thursday the 22nd of August 2024.

3.3.3 In respect of the final consultation event, newspaper notices were published in the public notices section of the Press and Journal, West Coast/Inverness edition on Wednesday 30th October and Tuesday 5th November 2024. The statutory notice for the final event was placed in the classified public notices section of the Stornoway Gazette on Thursday the 31st of October 2024.

3.3.4 Copies of the newspaper notices are provided in **Appendix C**.

3.4 Additional advertising and promotion

3.4.1 In addition to the public notice advert, a comprehensive promotional campaign included:

- Colour adverts providing introductory information on the Proposed Development and advertising the planned public events published on Hebrides News (local news website);
- An information postcard with details of the consultation events was posted to all residents within a 10km radius of the proposed development, encompassing over 9,500 residents. Copy of the postcard is available in **Appendix D**;
- Press Releases for both the PAC 1 Event and PAC 2 Events in a local newspaper, the Stornoway Gazette;
- PAC 2 Event press release shared with over 30 recipients in national, local and online media including We Love Stornoway and Isles FM; and
- Email invites were sent to all recipients (154 email addresses) on the Western Isles distribution list ahead of the PAC 2 Event, with online resource link attached, in case recipients were unable to attend the event in person. The notices directed readers to the project website and provided details of how to contact a dedicated Community Liaison Manager for any parties requiring further information or an explanation of the nature of the pre- application consultation. All the above can be found in **Appendix D**.

3.5 Public Consultation Events

The first PAC event was held at the Cabarfeidh Hotel on the 5th of September 2024 from 3 – 7pm. The purpose of the first public event was to provide an opportunity for members of the public, local stakeholders and statutory authorities to view information about the project, ask questions and provide feedback in person.

3.5.1 The Applicant produced a range of consultation materials to explain the proposals, including:

- Information banners shown in **Appendix E**.
- A Gaelic and English version of the Consultation booklet was shared online and produced in hard copy for attendants to take away. The booklet, which contained information about the proposal, contact details, key dates, and information on how to provide comments online, is shown in **Appendix E**.
- Feedback forms, attached to the consultation booklet & accessible through a QR code, including the closing date for feedback <https://sse-transmission.tractivity.co.uk/ExternalFormViewer/Form.aspx?ExternalFormID=117>
- Online Website Project Update (23rd August 2024) with information on PAC 1 Event, contact information and link access to Event resources <https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/western-isles/>

- Additional visual aids including an interactive fly through 3D animation presented on a screen at the event.

Photographs taken at the first public consultation event are shown in **Appendix F**. A sign-in register was used to record the number of attendees. A total of 60 people signed in.

The feedback period following the first public consultation event was planned to be 6 weeks, initially and was due to close on the 17th of October 2024. This period was extended and the closing date for feedback closed on 28th November 2024. This deadline was communicated in the consultation materials and the extension was included as part of our press releases for the PAC 2 event.

- 3.5.2 The final public consultation event was held at the Cabarfeidh Hotel on the 14th of November 2024 from 3 - 7pm.

A sign in register was used to record the number of attendees for the PAC 2 event. A total of 71 people signed in.

- 3.5.3 The purpose of the final public event was to give feedback to members of the public in respect of comments received as regards the Proposed Development from earlier consultation, and to provide further opportunity to view information about the project, ask questions and to provide feedback. The feedback period following the second public consultation event closed on 28th November 2024, this was communicated in the consultation materials and through a press release.

- 3.5.4 Consultation materials for the final PAC event comprised information banners and a consultation booklet shown in **Appendix G**. Consultation materials from the first event were also available at this event. In line with PAC requirements, consultees at the final event were provided a summary of comments received at the first event. This was published in the consultation booklet for the final event, and can be seen on pages 15-19 of the consultation booklet contained in **Appendix G**.

- 3.5.5 Interested parties were informed via consultation materials in respect of all public events that the purpose of this consultation was to provide feedback to SSEN Transmission only, and that an opportunity to comment on the proposals directly to the Planning Authority would be provided at the planning application stages should the proposed development progress to that stage. This is evidenced in documents submitted in the Appendices, including within the consultation booklets.

3.6 Additional Steps Taken to Consultation

Several meetings have been held with Statutory Consultees as the project has developed. Most recently, a meeting with SEPA was undertaken via Microsoft Teams on 31/10/24 to discuss the project and outline peat management proposals, and to gain feedback. A meeting with CnES county archaeologist was held via Microsoft Teams on the 31/10/24 to obtain information on likely mitigation measures for cultural heritage ahead of construction starting on site and during construction. A meeting with NatureScot was undertaken via Microsoft Teams on 25/11/24 to discuss the project and peat management proposals, and to gain feedback.

Briefings have been held with the full body of elected members and Sustainability Development Committee of the Western Isles Council to provide updates and gain feedback on the development of the project and site selection process and to brief elected members ahead of the public consultation (PAC) events. Briefings were given at the council chambers on 17th June 2024 and 14th February 2025 and a pre-PAC event briefing for the Elected members was held on the 14th November 2024.

4. PUBLIC RESPONSES AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 First Public Consultation Event

4.1.1 This section documents how the project has responded to the feedback raised by stakeholders through the consultation process. During the feedback period we received 4 online feedback responses and a number of in person queries from the 60 attendees at the PAC 1 event.

There was a consistent theme across the online submissions which focused primarily on the impacts on peatland and the River Creed as part of the infrastructure construction works, should planning permission be granted.

Table 1 below summarises the comments received. The responses to the feedback raised were detailed in the consultation booklet for the second PAC event and are replicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary Feedback from First Public Event

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Summary</i>
Peat Management – removal and restoration of peat & volumes involved.	Concerns raised from the public around where peat restoration will take place within the RLB for the Site. Main concerns focused on impacts this may have on the River Creed (as a spate river) & the historical chemical works.
Visual Impacts – Loss of amenity/negative impact on local viewpoints & residential properties.	The size of the site and the proximity to the castle grounds/ Stornoway Harbour were both raised as a concern from residents (in person and via online feedback forms) and from the community council. Residents with holiday accommodation were concerned about impacts on their businesses and house values due to the visual impact the site may have from the Stornoway harbour area.
Community Benefit – Both from a local business point of view & local community potential benefit.	General interest in the benefits the project will bring regarding work for local contractors, jobs the construction/operation will bring to the local area. Also, a number of enquiries about funding opportunities through the Community Benefit Regional & local fund, support in kind and any sponsorship opportunities.
Noise & Light Impacts –	Concern raised specifically around disruption on the castle grounds throughout the construction process and the organisations operating within the vicinity of the Site. Also concerns around impact of noise on groups including the students at Macaulay College, the Lewis Car Club members, the equestrian centre members at Lochside Arena.
Environmental Impacts – Particular focus on local wildlife & potential flood risk.	Questions raised about the assessment of potential flood risks the processes to ensure minimal risk to wildlife flora and fauna. Concerns about how the Proposed Development may affect human health and major accidents/disasters, including electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure, moor fire, lightning strikes and peat slide.

4.2 Final Consultation Event

4.2.1 A sign in register was used to understand the number of attendees. 71 attendees over the duration of the event were recorded.

4.2.2 Table 2 below summarises the comments received, grouped into themes.

Table 2: Summary Feedback from Final Public Event

Theme	Summary
Visual Impacts –	<p>It is clear that despite the development being 27.5 metres high in places, it will not be possible to see it from most parts of Stornoway. However, it is also evident that it will be distinctly visually intrusive when viewed from parts of the paths in the Castle Grounds, that are closest to the Creed. The Castle Grounds have tremendous amenity value and are visited daily by many Stornoway residents.</p> <p>Concerns over visibility from paths in the Castle Grounds, as the Castle Grounds are of high amenity value and are visited daily by many Stornoway residents and other visitors.</p>
Hydrology/Flood Risk –	<p>We understand the hydrology analysis you have looked at suggests that the water would normally flow towards the Creed River.</p> <p>The Creed itself is already prone to flooding during winter, and when this is combined with high tide, the Creed footpaths closest to the sea can become impassible.</p> <p>Concerns over impacts on the River Creed, and on whether the development could exacerbate flooding of the footpaths closest to the river, which happens when high tides coincide with higher flows.</p>
Workforce Accommodation –	<p>Accommodation has been a significant matter of concern in our discussions about this project, both in terms of where all the workers are going to stay while they work on the Proposed Development, and in terms of what is left afterwards which the community might benefit from.</p> <p>One of the most positive and interesting discussions, amongst many, we had had at the November PAC was that with your Accommodation specialist. He presented as enormously experienced.</p> <p>Welcoming of the development of an accommodation strategy, and positive comments around engagement on this to date.</p>

5. HOW THE PROJECT HAS RESPONDED TO FEEDBACK

5.1.1 This section documents how the applicant has responded to the themes raised by stakeholders through the consultation process. We address each theme in turn below.

Theme	Summary – PAC 2 Response
<p>Peat management</p>	<p>At site selection stage, opportunities to avoid and minimise impacts on peat were considered as part of the site selection process.</p> <p>The Proposed Development is in an area with varying depths of peat. In conjunction with specialist consultants, we have undertaken extensive peat probing and coring to understand depths and composition. We have avoided the deepest peat.</p> <p>An outline peat management plan will be submitted with our planning application, detailing volumes of peat to be excavated, and explaining how excavated peat will be reused on site, for example, to dress the sides of access tracks and roads. It is expected that the majority of excavated peat will be retained within the Site.</p>
<p>Pre-application Notice (PAN) boundary map</p> <p>Concern from residents over the use of the Creed North site and potential pollution of the Creed River.</p>	<p>The PAN Boundary Map issued in September 2024 was an indicative extent of total temporary and permanent land requirements at that stage of project development. These initial plans tend to be larger than the final requirements to allow for the unknowns at the early project stage and to prevent the requirement to re-start the planning timeline in the event that an increase be required at a later date.</p> <p>Since our September events the project team has been refining the permanent and temporary land requirements in discussion with landowners. In addition, the project Red Line Boundary was moved approximately 50m from the Creed River to create an additional buffer zone. The Site boundary will be further reviewed as the project progresses to planning submission in early 2025.</p>
<p>Construction and Operational Noise and Lighting on site</p> <p>Concern raised specifically around disruption on the castle grounds throughout the process</p>	<p>Construction and operational noise impacts will be assessed fully as part of the EIA, and this document will also recommend mitigation measures, to reduce the impact of any construction and operational noise, particularly for the closest properties.</p> <p>During Construction the site will be illuminated during operational hours and some specific locations after hours as well in order to ensure the safety of the equipment and personnel during construction.</p> <p>Post Construction substations are not generally illuminated. Floodlights would be installed but would only be used in the event of a fault during the hours of darkness; during the over-run of planned works; or when sensor activated as security lighting for night-time access. The access roads would not be lit under normal operation. The perimeter fence would use infra-red lighting (this would only switch to white light if the fence alarm were activated to allow night-time cameras to work better). A light would also be provided permanently at access gates.</p>

Theme	Summary – PAC 2 Response
<p>Usage of Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF6)</p> <p>Concerns about the usage of SF6 at the Lewis Hub site.</p>	<p>In August 2020, SSEN Transmission announced ambitious plans to reduce its own emissions in line with what is required to meet net zero emissions, becoming the world's first electricity networks company to receive external accreditation for a science-based target consistent with a 1.5°C global warming pathway.</p> <p>As part of this commitment, SSEN Transmission is focused in installing ground-breaking, innovative net zero technology across its network, with a particular focus on SF6-free technologies.</p> <p>SSEN Transmission actively contributes to various national and international industry groups such as CIGRE and the ENA to help support the use of SF6-free technology across the transmission network on a global level.</p> <p>The majority of plant and equipment on the site shall be SF6 free. All 132kV and 400kV switchgear will be SF6 free.</p> <p>Due to the lack of any market-ready alternatives, there will also be a small amount of SF6 gas in the 525kV HVDC cable terminations</p>
<p>Workforce Accommodation</p> <p>Concern around housing workforce and impact this will have on availability for locals and the tourism industry on island.</p>	<p>We are developing a Housing Strategy which outlines the risks and opportunities associated with providing overnight accommodation for a large-scale work force in our area of operation across various projects.</p> <p>The strategy considers the national housing crisis and logistical challenges which a project of this size brings. SSEN Transmission is working closely with external stakeholders, including business owners and the local planning authority, to ensure that any pressures currently being experienced are not exacerbated by the arrival of a transient workforce.</p> <p>A focus group has been established to develop and deliver a solution that can benefit the communities and provide a positive legacy. A mixed approach is likely to be required. As part of this SSEN Transmission will be looking at collaborating on permanent and temporary housing solutions with local suppliers and contract partners.</p>
<p>Environmental and Wildlife Impacts</p> <p>Feedback included concerns that the project could be endangering wildlife and local habitats, including local birdlife.</p>	<p>Habitat and protected species surveys have been undertaken by specialist environmental consultants. Ornithology surveys, notably for raptors, are ongoing until March 2025. This baseline data will be used within the EIA to determine the potential impact on ecology and ornithology. Suitable mitigation measures will be included.</p> <p>An ecologist will also be on site during nesting bird season to monitor any nesting activity close to the site, and to provide site specific mitigation measures during construction.</p>
<p>Visual Impact</p> <p>Stakeholders requested more information and visuals showing how the site will be screened. Viewpoints from the Castle grounds, Lower</p>	<p>We recognise that local people are concerned about the appearance of the building, and what this might look like within the local landscape.</p> <p>A landscape and visual impact chapter will form part of the EIA which will include appropriate mitigation measures. These might include hard landscaping (i.e. bunding) or soft landscaping, such as planting trees, particularly in areas close to existing trees to enhance tree cover. We will also</p>

Theme	Summary – PAC 2 Response
<p>Sandwick and the main road heading North on the A859 fast tracked for PAC 2 Event. What colour will the building be</p>	<p>be preparing a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment, which is a more detailed assessment, for the closest residential properties to the development. This will assess the impact on the closest properties in greater detail.</p> <p>We will consider the colours of buildings carefully, to ensure that these are sympathetic to the local environment.</p>
<p>Connections to and from the site</p> <p>Questions raised regarding the OHL and cable routes from developers</p>	<p>The connections into the Lewis Hub from other developments are not currently consented and members of the public will have the opportunity to comment on individual developments for connections into the proposed hub as such developments come forward for individual consent.</p>
<p>Archaeology</p> <p>Surveys and assessments of the ancient archaeology which may lie in the area.</p>	<p>We recognise that local people may be concerned about the impact of the development on cultural heritage, including archaeology.</p> <p>Cultural heritage will be considered in detail as part of the EIA, which will make recommendations for mitigation measures to reduce the potential impact. This chapter will also consider the potential impact of the development on Lews Castle and Lady Lever Park, for walkers and other recreational users of the park.</p> <p>Initial archaeological walkover surveys have identified some potential medieval archaeology in the southeast part of the site. We will try to microsite the development away from this but will carry out further archaeological assessment to determine the nature and significance of these features.</p>
<p>Project need</p> <p>Questions were raised over the need for the proposed development.</p>	<p>The proposed project on Arnish Moor is a National Development that is supported by national policy, the Electricity System Operator, and the energy regulator. It would contribute significantly towards the delivery of the UK and Scottish Government's Net Zero targets and help reduce the UK's dependence on imported oil and gas.</p>
<p>Community benefit</p> <p>Suggestions were received with respect to possible community benefits. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path improvements in the local area. • Upgrading the cycle pathways as part of the upgrading works on the roads. • Using volunteer days and support in kind to fix local playparks. • Support local car club to upgrade club house 	<p>We'd like to thank residents for providing their feedback suggesting community benefits they would like to see implemented within the local area.</p> <p>While some of the suggestions are outside of the scope of the project to deliver, it is our intention to work with the community to further explore opportunities in this area. This feedback has been noted and when it is appropriate to do so, will be considered by our construction team, contractors and our community benefit fund team.</p> <p>SSEN Transmission has recently released our first Community Benefit Fund which enables us to work directly with local communities to support initiatives across our operational area in the North of Scotland, Highlands and Islands, and help fund projects that can leave a lasting, positive legacy.</p> <p>In terms of broader community benefits, our Pathway to 2030 projects are boosting the economy, supporting local jobs and businesses. Recent studies show our Pathway to 2030 programme could contribute over £6 billion to the UK's economy, support 20,000 jobs across the UK and benefit Scotland by around £2.5 billion, supporting 9,000 Scottish jobs.</p>

Theme	Summary – PAC 2 Response
<p>House value</p> <p>Concern for impact on house value, including from residents of Lower Sandwick</p>	<p>We understand that there are concerns about potential impacts from the Proposed Development on property values, particularly on those properties within the vicinity of the Site.</p> <p>We have engaged throughout with property owners and have listened to their concerns on this topic.</p> <p>SSEN Transmission will look to mitigate impacts on residential properties as far as is possible and any potential impacts will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process and will be reported in the EIA Report that will accompany our application.</p> <p>We will be conducting surveys at identified receptors, including selected residential properties so that we are able to model potential impacts on properties and the wider area.</p> <p>Concerns in relation to impacts on property are being noted by our team however as a regulated business, SSEN Transmission is obliged to follow a statutory legal framework under the Electricity Act 1989 and the Land Compensation Act 1961. If you are entitled to compensation under the provisions of the relevant legal framework, we will assess any claim on a case-by-case basis under the direction of this legal framework.</p>
<p>Tourism</p> <p>Concern for impact on tourism and visitors to the area</p>	<p>For each project that SSEN Transmission develops, including the Lewis Hub, we conduct a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. This is an element of the Environmental Impact Assessment.</p> <p>In this assessment, we consider visual impacts. In addition, an assessment of socio-economic impact (including tourism) will be undertaken as part of any planning application.</p>
<p>Site Name - Lewis Hub</p>	<p>Feedback on the “Lewis Hub” site suggests that there may be the possibility of confusion for community members as to what is being referred to when mentioning the Lewis Hub. There are other businesses and organisations within the Stornoway area that use Hub as part of their name, and this was raised at consultations as creating potential issues. The project team are taking this under consideration and will be looking at other options that may be more suitable for the site going forward.</p>

5.2 Overview of key responses and changes to the project arising from feedback

- 5.2.1 An overview of key responses to feedback between the PAC 1 and PAC 2 event is summarised above and, in the consultation, booklet produced for the PAC 2 event. Whilst changes to the project following the events have been minimal, it should be noted that the site that was taken forward to PAN and PAC, was a complete re-siting of the Proposed Development which resulted from the assessment of feedback that was received following the non-statutory consultation activity outlined at 2.4 above. The feedback received through the PAC process continues to be referenced in the ongoing design process for the development and opportunities to refine the development to mitigate areas of concern as far as is reasonably practicable will be actively sought as the Proposed Development progresses to finalised design.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 This PAC Report documents the consultation which ran for **16 weeks**, starting **6th August 2024** to **28th November 2024**.
- 6.1.2 The PAN was submitted to the LPA on 6th August 2024. Following this, a first public consultation event was held at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway on 5th September 2024, and a final consultation event at the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway on 14th November 2024.
- 6.1.3 The consultation was designed to facilitate engagement with the local community, community councils, statutory authorities and local leadership in order to invite feedback on the Proposed Development. The common themes from the feedback were:
- 6.1.4 PAN Red Line Boundary;
- Construction/Operational Noise;
 - Use of Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF6);
 - Workforce Accommodation;
 - Environmental & Wildlife Impacts;
 - Visual Impacts;
 - Consultation Process;
 - Connections to/from the Site;
 - Archaeology;
 - Project Need;
 - Community Benefit;
 - House Value;
 - Tourism;
 - Peat Management; and
 - Site Name.
- 6.1.5 The approach to public consultation has ensured that the relevant stakeholders have been given the opportunity to comment on the proposals. This has enabled locally important issues and concerns to be identified and subsequently considered in the preparation of the EIAR and planning application.
- 6.1.6 This PAC process has been informed by the statutory process laid out in the TCPA 1997 and the DMRs as referenced above.