

Public

Ref: FOI/24/0047

National Energy System Operator

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17 March 2025

Dear requester

Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information which was received by NESO on 25 February 2025.

Request

You asked us:

I am looking for the analysis that takes the overall strategy for the transmission of electricity in the UK, from knowing that there is a need to transmit X GW of power from the north of the country to the south, to a decision that the solution is a 400kV OHL onshore between Spittal and Beaulieu.

I am keen to understand what other options were considered and why they were discounted. Given the complex nature of the industry, I am also keen to understand who is responsible for carrying out that optioneering and what criteria do they use to make their decisions. I would be very grateful if you would help me with finding answers to these questions. Perhaps you can send me the relevant documents. For the avoidance of doubt, I have looked at the Holistic Network Design and Network Options Assessment documents and do not believe they provide the analysis that I am seeking.

Our response

We have recently responded to a request for information relating to the SSEN 400kV Overhead Line (Spittal – Loch Buidhe – Beaulieu), in which ‘all documents, reports, and assessments related to the necessity of this network reinforcement’ were requested. We believe that our response to that request may be of interest to you and address the questions that you have asked.

NESO publishes all responses to requests managed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) in a disclosure log on our website. The relevant request can be accessed here: [FOI-24-0039 response](#).

This concludes our response to your request.

Advice and assistance

The Transmission Owner, SSEN, is subject to the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), and you may wish to request information from them. They have a project specific page available on their website: [Spittal – Loch Buidhe – Beaully 400kV Connection – SSEN Transmission](#).

You can request recorded information held by public authorities under the FOIA and EIR. If you would like to submit further requests, please contact us on InformationRights@nationalenergyso.com. Information on FOIA and EIR is available here: [Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations | National Energy System Operator](#).

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response. If you want us to carry out a review, please let us know within 40 working days and quote the reference number at the top of this letter.

If you are still dissatisfied after our internal review, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). You should make complaints to the ICO within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints. Alternatively, they can be contacted at: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the National Energy System Operator (NESO).

Regards,

The Information Rights Team, National Energy System Operator (NESO)