

**SUMMARY PRECOGNITION**

**by**

**Simon Allen**

**On Behalf Of**

**STIRLING BEFORE PYLONS &  
FRIENDS OF THE OCHILS**

**in relation to**

**THE STIRLING LOCAL SESSION OF THE  
BEAULY - DENNY PUBLIC INQUIRY**

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

**Undergrounding**

## SUMMARY

1. Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Limited (SHETL) and Scottish Power Transmission (SPT) propose to replace the existing 132kV overhead line that runs from Beaully to Denny with a larger overhead line capable of operating at 275 and 400kV. The length of the total line is 220km. The most southern section of line from Braco to Denny is approximately 30km.
2. The section of this line crosses a number of sensitive areas including Sherriffmuir, the Ochil Hills and the National Wallace Monument. It would also be within close proximity to many properties, including at least 36 within 200metres of the line and a University Halls of Residence housing some 200 students. When taken together, the proposal would result in significant adverse impacts for the local population, including risks to human health from EMFs, the diminution of property values and long term damage to the scenic and historic landscape. It is considered that due to the size of the proposed transmission pylons, there is likely to be no overhead route that would satisfactorily minimise the impact of these factors, and if an alternate overhead route cannot be found, this section of line should go underground.
3. Recent studies of potential cable routes have been carried out which conclude that it is technically feasible to lay 400kV cables along the route, although the laying of cables down the scarp of the Ochils is considered unrealistic. The additional costs of undergrounding will depend on the route but were estimated by the Applicants' consultants in January 2007 at £33 - £74 million more than an overhead line. An updated report is currently being completed, but has not yet been released.
4. The incremental costs of underground cables would need to be borne by electricity consumers but transmission charges make up only a very small proportion of the electricity bill and the costs will be borne by consumers across Great Britain. Financial modelling using National Grid's Load Flow Investment Cost Related Pricing Model has demonstrated that the impact of cabling a section of up to 20km of overhead line in the Stirling area would result in an increase of only £1.65/year, or 0.4%, in the average consumer electricity bill in Great Britain. This is considered a small price to pay to preserve a scenic and historic landscape from the adverse visual effects of 50+ metre high pylons and associated power lines. It is also a small price to pay in comparison to the estimated £1 billion per annum that is provided as public support to the renewable energy industry.