

STIRLING BEFORE PYLONS

- *opposing the Beauly to Denny power line in the Stirling area*



Briefing no. 8

Homes and the Proposed Power Line

1. Since the publication of their proposals for the Beauly to Denny power line, Scottish & Southern Energy (SSE) have made great play of the fact that, along the whole length of the line, only 10 houses would be within 100 metres of the proposed line. Dr MacLean of SSE stressed this point in a presentation to Stirling Council's Environment Committee on 17th October 2005, in response to concerns raised about the potential health issues.

2. In fact this is not the appropriate way to measure the impact. SSE are applying for permission to build the line anywhere within a corridor which is between 100 - 400 metres wide. The exact location of the line will be decided by the contractor on site, and the line could be at either edge of the deviation corridor. The correct way to measure the impact is therefore from the edge of the corridor.

3. Stirling Before Pylons (SBP) have surveyed the line through Stirling Council area and found that no fewer than 50 houses lie within 100 metres of the corridor in this area alone. The line also runs through Highland, Perth and Kinross and Falkirk Council areas. It is obvious from this that SSE have been very selective with their information on the number of houses affected.

4. There are valid reasons, (see Briefing No 2 : Health Impacts of the proposed power line), to consider the impacts on people living within 100, 200, 400 and 600 metres from the line. There is an increasing amount of evidence showing that childhood leukaemia, brain cancer, miscarriage, depression and suicide can be associated with living close to 400kv overhead power lines. The Scottish Parliament's Petitions Committee is currently considering the evidence.

5. SSE have confirmed that they did not consider health issues when deciding on the route for the line. SBP believes that the Precautionary Principle should be adopted, that the line should not be put within 600 metres of existing housing, and therefore that options for putting the line underground should be fully investigated.

6. SBP have carried out an on-the-ground survey, which has come up with the following results :

- There are 50 houses within 100 metres of the corridor, two directly beneath the proposed line, both occupied by recently widowed ladies.
- There are 878 houses within 600 metres of the corridor, with approximately 2,000 people living in them.
- 578 houses are affected in the deprived ex-mining village of Fallin, with a primary school on the 600 metre line.

- There are 20 houses within 100 metres in Logie Community Council area alone, which SSE acknowledge to be a 'pinch point' along the whole route. At the foot of the Ochils this is an area where landscape, history (Wallace Monument), woodland as well as health are all dramatically affected. This area also includes a Caravan Park near the Wallace Monument with 60 spaces and 6 permanent homes.
- In the same location there is the Alexander Hall of Residence at the University of Stirling, within 200 metres of the corridor. The 48 flats house 332 students. The University's Medical Centre is 600 metres from the corridor.
- The William Simpson Home for the elderly in Pleau houses 46 residents and is within 300 metres.
- The village of Kinbuck with 50 houses and Cromlix House Hotel 'amongst the best in UK' – according to the well known publication Scotland the Best

More detailed survey information is available from Peter Pearson (see below).

7. It is clear from this analysis that SSE have been very selective with the information that they have released about the impact of their proposals. This applies to all aspects of their application where they have minimised the potential impacts not only on health, but also on visual impact, tourism, landscape impact of the works, historical sites, water supplies etc.

8. Landlords such as the Council, Housing Associations, the University and Private Landlords could be subject to significant claims in the future if they have knowingly let homes to people who later develop major health problems as a result of proximity to the power line.

9. This means that a Public Inquiry is essential in order that all aspects of the application can be properly discussed in a public forum. SBP calls on Stirling Council to formally object to the application and trigger a public inquiry. We also want a full investigation of the options for undergrounding the line through this highly populated area to be fully explored, as SSE have refused to do this to date.

Note :

The figures quoted in this report are only as accurate as the maps provided by SSE. Although these are Ordnance Survey maps, the data are not fully up to date. We have made our figures as accurate as possible by walking the area and including new properties. It would be helpful if Stirling Council confirmed the figures using their GIS system and by mapping new houses. It would of course have been a relatively easy exercise for SSE to have done this themselves, before finalising their application.

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