



Embargo: For Immediate Release

Scottish Renewables Respond to Beaully-Denny Decision

Scottish Renewables, the voice of the renewables industry, has welcomed the decision made by the Scottish Government today (Wednesday 6 January) to go ahead with plans to upgrade the Beaully to Denny electricity transmission line.

Niall Stuart, Chief Executive Scottish Renewables, said the upgrade is good news for the economy, employment and the environment.

Commenting on the decision, Mr Stuart said: "This will unlock a massive increase in renewable electricity in the north of Scotland, and is good news for the Scottish economy, employment and the environment.

"The upgrade is absolutely vital if we are to capture the full potential of Scotland's unique wind, wave and tidal resources.

"Along with the other improvements set out in the National Planning Framework, the upgrade will allow the development of some 6 GigaWatts of additional renewable electricity generation in the north of Scotland – equivalent to almost double the entire renewables capacity in Scotland today.

"After many years of uncertainty, the renewable energy industry can now plan for the future, knowing that new projects will be connected to the grid. This will bring billions of pounds of investment, thousands of new jobs and a huge cut in CO2 emissions from the power sector.

"The report from the public inquiry shows quite clearly that the line is absolutely necessary, that there are no practical alternatives, and that all objections have been rigorously assessed against the environmental and economic benefits of the upgrade.

"We now need to focus on building the line, capturing the tremendous opportunities that it opens up, and make Scotland the renewables powerhouse of Europe."

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

- The Beaully to Denny project is an upgrade to an existing power line from 132kV to 400kV. This will bring the line up to the same capacity of the main arterial routes in Scotland's and the UK's electricity transmission network

- Along with other planned grid improvements set out in the second National Planning Framework, the upgrade will allow the connection of some additional 6 GigaWatts of renewable electricity in the north of Scotland.
- Subsea cables and reinforcement of the east coast line are both planned and are additional requirements, not alternatives to the Beaully to Denny project.
- Current constraints on the network mean that wind farms in the north of the Scotland can face up to ten-year delays to get connected to the grid. The proposed upgrade will shorten this to an acceptable level, and give assurance to Scotland's nascent wave and tidal sectors, firmly anchored in the Pentland Firth and Orkney waters, that they will have a route to market when they reach commercial scale.
- The need for the upgrade, possible alternatives and all objections have been subject to rigorous, independent analysis and scrutiny during the extensive public inquiry – the longest since devolution.
- The replacement route has fewer pylons, greatly reduces the number of houses within close proximity of the line, and has been designed after detailed discussions with local communities and statutory and non-statutory consultees such as SNH and RSPB Scotland.
- The replacement towers are larger than existing ones, but vary in size along the route. The height of the new towers will range from 42 metres to 65 metres, depending on the topography and the altitude. Almost 80% will be lower than 57 metres. The height of the towers on the existing line ranges from 25 metres to 41 metres.
- The construction of the line is likely to take around four years. A further year will be required to dismantle the existing line, including the removal of existing foundations and the reinstatement of ground cover.
- The project is a joint project being developed by SHETL (part of Scottish and Southern Energy) and SPT (part of ScottishPower). SHETL and SPT are licensed and regulated electricity transmission companies and have a duty under the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.

[Scottish Renewables Briefing Document on Beaully to Denny Transmission Upgrade](#)

The upgrade has the broad support of business, trade unions and environmental groups, including:

CBI Scotland - David Lonsdale, Assistant Director - 07908 705351

SCDI - Gareth Williams, Policy Manager – 07917 103997

STUC – Stephen Boyd, Assistant General Secretary - 07976 978355

Scottish Engineering – Dr Peter Hughes, Chief Executive - 07770 336186

BWEA – Charles Anglin, Director of Communications - 07740 023641

WWF Scotland – Mandy Carter, Press Officer – 01350 728 000

Friends of the Earth Scotland – Per Fischer, Press Officer – 07711 855821

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