



10/07/26

Please find below the consultation response from Lauderdale Community Council (LCC).

We appreciate the efforts made by SPEN to engage with LCC, specifically attending our June meeting and responding in writing to the list of questions that we submitted.

By the time it comes to responding to any future planning application, we will have fully surveyed the local community for opinions on the submitted proposal. At this current point in the process, we are more concerned with ensuring that the community will be fully informed of the likely impacts of the development, and that any local knowledge regarding aspects of the proposal is made available to you.

On that basis, this consultation response is limited to two points only. Further details on each of these points follows.

1. We reiterate our request that you provide clear, easy to access information regarding the likely number of overhead line connections to the proposed substation.
2. We provide detailed comments regarding your proposal for the temporary haul route via the A68, C76 (**The Blainslie Road**) and C77(**The Langshaw Road**). We have significant concerns about the safety of this proposal.

Clarity and Ease of Access of Information

It is our responsibility as a Community Council to ensure that residents in the area are aware of developments that may have an impact on them. It is likely that there will still be people in our community who expect the 'Gala North' substation to have little or no impact on them, since it is associated in their minds with Galashiels. In your response to our question 9, you state that 'the A68 is significantly closer to the site than the A7'. Lauder is on the A68, Galashiels is on the A7. It would therefore be more appropriate for the name of the substation to reflect that its closest town will be Lauder.

We have asked you to provide a map or graphic showing an indication of all the overhead lines that you are currently aware of that will or may connect to the substation. This would enable the community to get a clear idea of the likely bigger picture. You have told us that you will not do this. The reasons given are not entirely clear, but seem to include a procedural requirement to restrict information in a consultation only to very specific information which is directly relevant to the proposal as defined by SPEN. This is in contrast to the much larger context in which you place the proposed substation on your promotional material, such as Net Zero targets and UK government electricity usage forecasts.

We ask again that you make it clear to the local community the number of overhead lines that are likely to connect in to the substation once it is operational.

We further ask that you consider renaming the substation to make its name more reflective of its proximity to Lauder.

Temporary Haul Route

Given that your proposals will have been based presumably on studying maps and a site visit, you may not have noticed the paved path and cycleway that runs parallel to the A68 Southbound from Lauder. This path, locally known as 'The Blainslie Path', provides safe access for pedestrians and cyclists from the entrance to Thirlestane Drive along to the C76. This path and the C76 form a well used active travel

route linking Lauder to Blainslie, and a recreational route for walkers, runners and cyclists. There is no safe alternative to this route. If direct access from the Blainslie Path to the C76 were to be suspended, pedestrians would need to walk along the verge of the A68 where it is subject to the national speed limit. They would then need to follow the C76, and would still have to cross the path of any construction traffic following the temporary haul route.

As regards traffic safety, the turnoff from the southbound A68 into the C76 is known locally as a dangerous one, coming as it does shortly after leaving the 20mph zone where traffic speeds are generally increasing rapidly, and sitting on a bend of the A68.

We have the following specific comments and requests:

1. In your slide pack (slide 12), you mention that your preferred haul route option is approximately 4km shorter than alternative options. The implication is that the shorter route is preferable, but in terms of impact on the community this may not be the case. We would appreciate being made aware of the alternative route options so that we can provide feedback on them from the community perspective.
2. We appreciate your detailed response to our question 9, regarding alternative access routes by road. You state in that response that the route from the A7 along the C77 to the site is subject to constraints which would need to be addressed by strengthening and widening works. We appreciate that these works would come with a financial cost and some local disruption for the community, but request that you share with us the extent of the required works so that we can be reassured that this option has been fully considered.
3. Should the proposal go ahead with the haul route starting at the A68/C76 junction, we have the following requests:
 - a. During any works to improve safety of the A68/C76 junction, safe pedestrian and cycle access between the Blainslie Path and the C76 is maintained at all times.
 - b. During the construction of the temporary haul route, safe pedestrian and cycle access between the Blainslie Path and the C76 is maintained at all times.
 - c. Once the haul route is in operation, safe pedestrian and cycle access along the C76 is prioritised over construction traffic.
 - d. During construction and once the haul route is in operation, a designated point of contact is given to the community to raise any safety concerns that arise.
4. Regarding the upper end of the proposed haul route, where it connects to the C77, we request that consideration is given to the safety of pedestrians using the path that will be intersected by the haul route. Again, there is no safe alternative to this path.

Thank you for considering our response.

Jane Elliott
Chair Lauderdale Community Council