

James Norman
Head of Electricity Transmission Development
OFGEM
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU

20th January 2022

Dear Mr Norman,

Isle of Skye Project – Initial Needs Case Consultation Response

Falck Renewables and its affiliated companies is an experienced worldwide player in the development, construction, purchase and management of wind and solar power projects at all stages of their development. Falck Renewables has a proven track record of successfully developing, constructing and operating wind projects across Europe. Falck renewables owns a wind and solar portfolio of 1,123 MW in operation with over 400 MW of onshore wind operational in the UK across 12 sites. Falck Renewables has UK offices in London and Inverness. Inverness houses the construction team that is engaged directly with pre-construction, construction and post construction activities. Falck Renewables headquarters are in Milan, where Falck Renewables S.p.A is listed on the Milan Stock exchange.

To reach The Scottish Government net-zero target by 2045 more capacity to connect into the areas of Scotland where renewables, particularly wind energy, work particularly efficiently is required. The situation on Skye is not only one with no capacity for connecting new projects but one where connected projects have constrained export capacity onto the grid. With an upgraded line this would be addressed; security of supply would also be improved thereby improving peoples' lives and helping local businesses.

As heat and transport are decarbonised the electricity requirement increases the needs case for more generation, and capacity to connect that generation is greater. The existing line, built in 1956 and 1989, which would be decommissioned, has been subject to storm damage which adds further justification for this new solution. These significant faults in winter 2021 led to back up supply required from the local distribution network and mobile diesel generators.

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Option 1b (2 x single circuit 132kV) would limit capacity to the point where there wouldn't be sufficient capacity to connect the current projects waiting for connection.

Limiting the capacity of the line increases the chance of returning to upgrade the line in future. Given the charge to Net Zero by 2045, a place such as Skye with such a very good renewable resource, should play a significant part.

We are not supportive of option 4a01 (132kV double circuit) going ahead given the 5 years additional time to construct that option but would support option 4 given the shorter timescale.

The line routing design has been well informed through various consultation events and contact with consultees. This allows the line to be built according to the best technical solution, but also avoids impacting on more sensitive communities. Furthermore, the net consumer lifetime benefit of over £400 million would ensure local benefits through employment and spend with local businesses.

Your sincerely,

Alan Macintyre
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