



Petition from the VCDA Community to SSEN Regarding the Proposed “Kergord 2” Substation and associated transmission infrastructure

To:

SSEN Transmission

From:

The Voe Community Development Association & Members of the Shetland Community

Subject: Demand for responsible planning, landscape protection and full Cumulative Impact Assessment in the development of the proposed “Kergord 2” Substation and associated transmission infrastructure.

We, the undersigned members of the VCDA community, formally and firmly call upon SSEN to assess, design, and construct the proposed “Kergord 2” Substation and associated transmission infrastructure in full compliance with the highest environmental, legislative, and community-respecting standards.

This infrastructure sits within one of Scotland’s most sensitive and celebrated landscapes and must therefore reflect the expectations as set out in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), which places a clear obligation on developers to protect landscapes, respect communities, and contribute to a nature-positive future.

Accordingly, and not in order of priority, we require that SSEN take the following actions:

1. Visually Hide and Sensitively Site the “Kergord 2” Substation

The substation must be designed and located to minimise visual intrusion through earth shaping, strategic planting, sensitive landscaping, and any other measures that materially reduce its prominence. Anything less would be inconsistent with NPF4’s requirement to safeguard valued landscapes.

2. Reject Lattice Pylons and Require Burying of All Cables

We unequivocally oppose the installation of lattice pylons, which would dominate and permanently scar the landscape, damage tourism, and undermine Geopark values. We insist that all cables between the existing Kergord substation, via the proposed “Kergord 2” Substation and onwards to the proposed Northern Substation Hub be buried underground, in line with best practice for sensitive landscapes and fully consistent with NPF4’s policies on minimising environmental impact.

3. Respect and Protect Our Geopark Landscape

Our community is part of a recognised Geopark, an internationally valued designation acknowledging the rarity and exceptional significance of our geological environment.

Any large-scale energy infrastructure must therefore be held to the highest standards of environmental and landscape responsibility to avoid undermining the integrity of this designation.

4. Protect Tourism and the Visitor Experience

Our region's beauty, tranquillity, and geological interest attract visitors from across the world and form a cornerstone of our local economy.

Industrialising this landscape risks direct and lasting harm to tourism.

We therefore insist that project design fully protects the scenery, character, and sense of place that visitors expect when travelling to this area.

5. Conduct a Full and Transparent Cumulative Impact Assessment

Given the unprecedented scale of energy infrastructure proposed for our region, we demand a rigorous Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). Currently, SSEN Transmission have seven separate and independent planning applications in place in Shetland which are, at this stage, not being considered as to their cumulative impact on the islands. This CIA should consider:

- all existing, approved, and proposed substations and transmission infrastructure,
- cumulative landscape and visual effects,
- cumulative impact on tourism,
- implications for the Geopark designation.

This CIA must be published, transparent, and independently robust, and must inform decision-making before any further progress is made.

Our Expectation

We expect SSEN to fully uphold their obligations under Scottish planning policy by delivering a project that:

- respects our Geopark status,
- avoids permanent landscape industrialisation,
- safeguards tourism,
- and meaningfully incorporates the voices and interests of affected communities.

This petition reflects our clear, united stance. We expect these requirements to be taken seriously and fully integrated into all assessments, plans, and design decisions relating to the "Kergord 2" Substation and its associated works.