

Ask for it yourself

Paid for by the public: as electricity billpayers, and as taxpayers standing behind the loans.

Many of the missing figures are held by the regulator, the system operator and SSEN Transmission. The law lets anyone ask for them, and they must answer or say why not. This page gives the addresses, the questions and the steps. Write in your own words, and ask only for what you want to know.

Who to ask, and under which law

- **Ofgem**, the regulator. Freedom of Information Act 2000.
`information.rights@ofgem.gov.uk`
- **NESO**, the system operator. Freedom of Information Act 2000.
`InformationRights@neso.energy`
- **SSEN Transmission**. Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.
`TransmissionDataProtection@sse.com`

Check each body's website for its current information-requests address before you send. SSEN Transmission is a privately owned company, not a public authority listed in Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, so that Act does not cover it. Ask it for environmental information under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, which is how SSEN Transmission handles these requests.

How to write it

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) says a request should have:

- a subject line that says it is an information request, such as "Freedom of Information request" or "Environmental Information request";
- your name, and contact details the body can use to reply in writing;
- a clear description of the information you want.

It also helps to number each item, to ask for copies by email in the form the body holds them, and to ask for a list of anything withheld and the reason for each. If the body has already published an answer, it may point you to it.

A LETTER YOU CAN ADAPT

Subject: Freedom of Information request: Shetland HVDC Link 2

(FOR SSEN TRANSMISSION: ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2004 REQUEST)

Dear Sir or Madam,

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (SSEN TRANSMISSION: THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2004), I would like to request the following recorded information about the project SSEN Transmission calls Shetland HVDC Link 2, which Ofgem calls Shetland to Coachford (SHL256) and NESO calls Shetland to Blackhillock. Please send it by email, in the form you hold it.

[the numbered questions below]

Where any of this is environmental information, please treat the request as also made under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (for SSEN Transmission, the Scottish regulations of the same year). If anything is withheld, please list each document or part withheld and the reason. If any item would exceed the cost limit, please tell me before refusing, and treat the other items as a request in their own right.

The cost of this project is recovered from electricity billpayers. There is a strong public interest in seeing the costs and the reasons for the decisions.

Yours faithfully,

[your name]

[an address for the reply]

Questions you can copy

To Ofgem

1. SSEN Transmission's submissions to Ofgem for Shetland to Coachford (SHL256) in the transitional Centralised Strategic Network Plan 2 (tCSNP2), including any capital cost estimate, cost breakdown and needs case.
2. Ofgem's assessment papers and decision paper on putting SHL256 in the delivery track (1 January to 31 December 2024), including any paper on the system operator's advice that it stay in the development track (tCSNP2 decision, OFG1164, 11 December 2024, paragraphs 3.89 to 3.95).
3. The Pre-Construction Funding awarded for SHL256, as a project-level breakdown of the provisional £68.430 million (2018 prices) shown for SSEN Transmission's four-project portfolio.
4. Any reporting received on the 31 December 2027 deadline to submit all material planning consents.
5. Use, availability or power-flow reporting for the existing Shetland link (Link 1) since it started, and whether the 600MW capacity test in Ofgem's 30 November 2021 decision (paragraph 3.41) has been completed.
6. Correspondence with SSEN Transmission about community benefit funding for SHL256 since 1 January 2024.
7. Any cost-benefit analysis or bill-impact assessment for SHL256.

To NESO

1. The cost-benefit inputs for Shetland to Blackhillock in the Beyond 2030 workbook and tCSNP2, including the generation capacity assumed and the capital cost assumption for the link.
2. Both maturity assessments for the project and the evidence for each: the one that placed it at level 2, "Strategic Optioneering", in the March 2024 Beyond 2030 workbook, and the one that records level 3, "Design/development and consenting", in NESO's June 2026 Beyond 2030 update.
3. Boundary flow and constraint data for the existing Shetland link since it started, and constraint payments to Shetland generators by year.
4. NESO's advice to Ofgem on putting the project in the delivery track (tCSNP2 decision, paragraphs 3.89 to 3.95).

To SSEN Transmission

1. The site scoring and weighting used to drop Sandend and keep Boyne Bay and Boyndie Bay as landfall options.
2. Constraint mapping (GIS files) and grid references for both landfall sites and for the Cruchie and Rivestone hub sites.
3. The assumed easement and working widths, trench depth, joint bay and drilling compound sizes, construction time and vehicle movements for the 30km onshore cable.
4. Environmental survey and scoping reports for the Aberdeenshire landfall and onshore route.
5. Marine survey reports under European protected species licence EPS-00011333 and basking shark licence BS-00011332.
6. Any noise assessment for the proposed Strathbogie Hub converter station.
7. The calculation behind any community benefit figure for the Aberdeenshire part of the project.

What happens next

- **20 working days.** The body should usually answer within 20 working days. If it asks you to clarify, the clock starts again when you reply. For a Freedom of Information request it can take longer to weigh the public interest, but it must tell you. Under the Environmental Information Regulations it can take up to 40 working days if the request is complex. If nothing arrives after 20 working days, write to check it was received.
- **Internal review.** If you are refused or the answer is incomplete, write back and ask the body to review its decision. Say clearly why you disagree. A review should usually take another 20 working days. Do not leave it long before asking.
- **The Information Commissioner.** If the review does not settle it, complain to the ICO within six weeks of the body's last response. Send copies of your request, the reply, your review request and the outcome. For SEN Transmission, appeal instead to the Scottish Information Commissioner, as its replies direct.

SOURCE: ICO, GUIDANCE FOR THE PUBLIC ON OFFICIAL INFORMATION: PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A REQUEST; WHAT TO EXPECT; WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED (READ 7 OCTOBER 2026).

Keep a record

- Send yourself a copy of every email you send.
- Save the sent email and every reply with the date in the file name.
- Note the reference number each body gives you, and the date the answer is due.

Your request goes, in your name, only to the body you write to. Nothing reaches this site unless you send it. If you receive a document that fills a gap on [the missing figures](#), the address is on [About](#). Figures are published with the document they come from, never with the sender's name.

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