

**Electricity Act 1989**  
**Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997**  
**DPEA Code of Practice**

**Tealing to Kintore OHL proposal TRL-120-1**

**CHS Statement: Environmental Impact by Sue Paterson**

My name is Sue Paterson, and I have lived in Banchory for over 26 years.

I would like to speak about the environmental impact of the proposed overhead line on this area.

The landscape here is not empty land. It is a **living environment** made up of ancient woodland, productive farmland, rivers and watercourses, peat soils, and habitats supporting birds and wildlife. These are not isolated features. They are part of a connected natural system.

This proposal is **enormous in scale**. It stretches for 119km and includes around 550 pylons, each between 42 and 65m tall. Each tower brings a permanent footprint of up to 900 m<sup>2</sup>.

And this is not remote infrastructure. Around 25,000 people live within 2km of the route, and 137,000 within 5km. This development will be permanent, highly visible, and widely felt.

One of the greatest concerns is the impact on **prime agricultural land**. Around 40 to 45% of the route crosses productive farmland that supports food production and rural livelihoods.

Pylons bring permanent foundations, access tracks, and restrictions on how land can be used. That means fragmented fields, operational difficulties for farmers, and long-term loss of flexibility.

These impacts will last for **generations**.

I am also deeply concerned about **ancient woodland**. Around 4% of the route passes through established or ancient woodland. Ancient woodland is irreplaceable. Once it is damaged or fragmented, it cannot be recreated.

Even limited clearance for towers or access routes can damage long-established ecosystems and reduce biodiversity over the long term.

Planting new trees is not the same as protecting ancient woodland.

There are also concerns about **peatland and carbon-rich soils**. Disturbing peat can release stored carbon and damage its ability to act as a carbon store. At a time when we are trying to address climate change, that matters.

**Water quality** is another major concern. Construction activity can disturb soils, alter drainage, and increase sediment entering watercourses. The River Dee and its tributaries are sensitive environments. Atlantic salmon in the Dee are already under pressure, and further deterioration of habitat could be extremely damaging.

**Birdlife and wildlife habitats** are also at risk. The route cuts across field margins, woodland edges, and river corridors that provide feeding grounds and movement routes for wildlife. Overhead lines create collision risks for birds and fragment habitats across the landscape.

And that brings me to **cumulative impact**. This development does not stand alone. We already have transmission infrastructure and further energy developments across the region.

Each adds pressure to the same landscape. Over time, this leads to fragmentation, loss of ecological integrity, and gradual industrialisation of the environment.

**This is how landscapes are lost — piece by piece.**

I understand that infrastructure is needed.

But I do not believe the scale of this proposal and its cumulative environmental impacts have been properly weighed against the value of what is being affected.

This is not just about individual impacts. It is about the **long-term condition of the environment** that supports our community, our economy and our way of life.

I ask that you give full and careful weight to these impacts in your decision. Because once these systems are damaged, they cannot simply be restored.

Sue Paterson

11 May 2026