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Dear Dr Jones

Thank you again for your time on 16 November. At the meeting, you asked whether the Scottish Government would be interested in commissioning research on the socio-economic impacts of transmission infrastructure based on your paper '*An investigation into the potential impact of a high voltage electricity transmission infrastructure project in Dumfries and Galloway*'. I appreciate the thought given to this and the concerns you have raised and therefore asked my officials to consider this in detail.

Our considered view is that there is clear merit in developing our collective knowledge on the socio-economic impacts of transmission investment across Scotland. While your proposal aims to investigate the impacts within the Dumfries and Galloway area, we would like to encourage work built upon a wider scope. This would allow nation-wide impacts to be considered and enable final research outputs (for example, a methodology to quantify the socio-economic impact of infrastructure investment) to be applied to projects across all areas of Scotland.

Discussions with the network companies has revealed their intention to work together to develop an industry-standard methodology that allows for the assessment of the socio-economic impacts of new investment. There is recognition that while methodologies do exist, there is wide disparity between approaches and they often only consider economic values. A standardised model that could be applied on a project by project basis across Scotland would allow us to maximise the knowledge to be gleaned from this exercise.

The Scottish Government will now encourage the development of this tool. We will be involved in a consultative capacity to ensure the final product is robust, that it can be used by a wide range of industry and non-industry parties and that it is applicable across Scotland and across a range of investment projects.

I would like to thank you again for your proposal and for highlighting the value of the proposed work.

Kindest regards


Paul Wheelhouse