

SSEN ED3 Business Priorities Research

Final report

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The background image shows two utility workers in high-visibility orange and yellow safety gear, including helmets and harnesses, working on a wooden utility pole. One worker is positioned higher on the pole, while the other is lower. A yellow warning sign is attached to the pole. A semi-transparent red banner with white text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

01 Executive Summary

Executive summary

Large business energy users vs domestic and general business customers

Reliability and resilience is the top-ranked priority area across all customer segments, with strong consensus among domestic and general business customers.



33% of domestic customers rank it #1



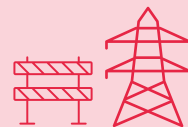
28% of business customers rank it #1



22% of large business energy users rank it #1

Aside from this, large business energy users' more evenly spread priorities overall. These customers want the same things as other customers in the sub priorities analysis (network resilience, extreme weather preparedness), but alongside a wider set of other concerns.

Affordability dominates for domestic and business customers. Helping bring down bills in the long term accounts for over 10% and 8% of weighted importance respectively. However, it ranks as a lower priority for large energy users (2.7%), who instead spread their value for money priorities more evenly across long-term planning, use of technology, and SSEN empowering their people.



Large business energy users place distinctly greater weight on **cyber security** and **building skills for the future**, both closely tied to protecting and sustaining their own operations, as well as on local economic growth and faster, easier connections.



Large business energy users expect almost every priority to matter more in future. These customers aren't just prioritising differently today, they anticipate their expectations of SSEN broadening further over the next decade, especially around smart/secure network operation, customer service and economic growth.



Executive summary

What are the priorities of large business energy users?

IMPORTANCE OF 8 PRIORITY AREAS (large business energy users)

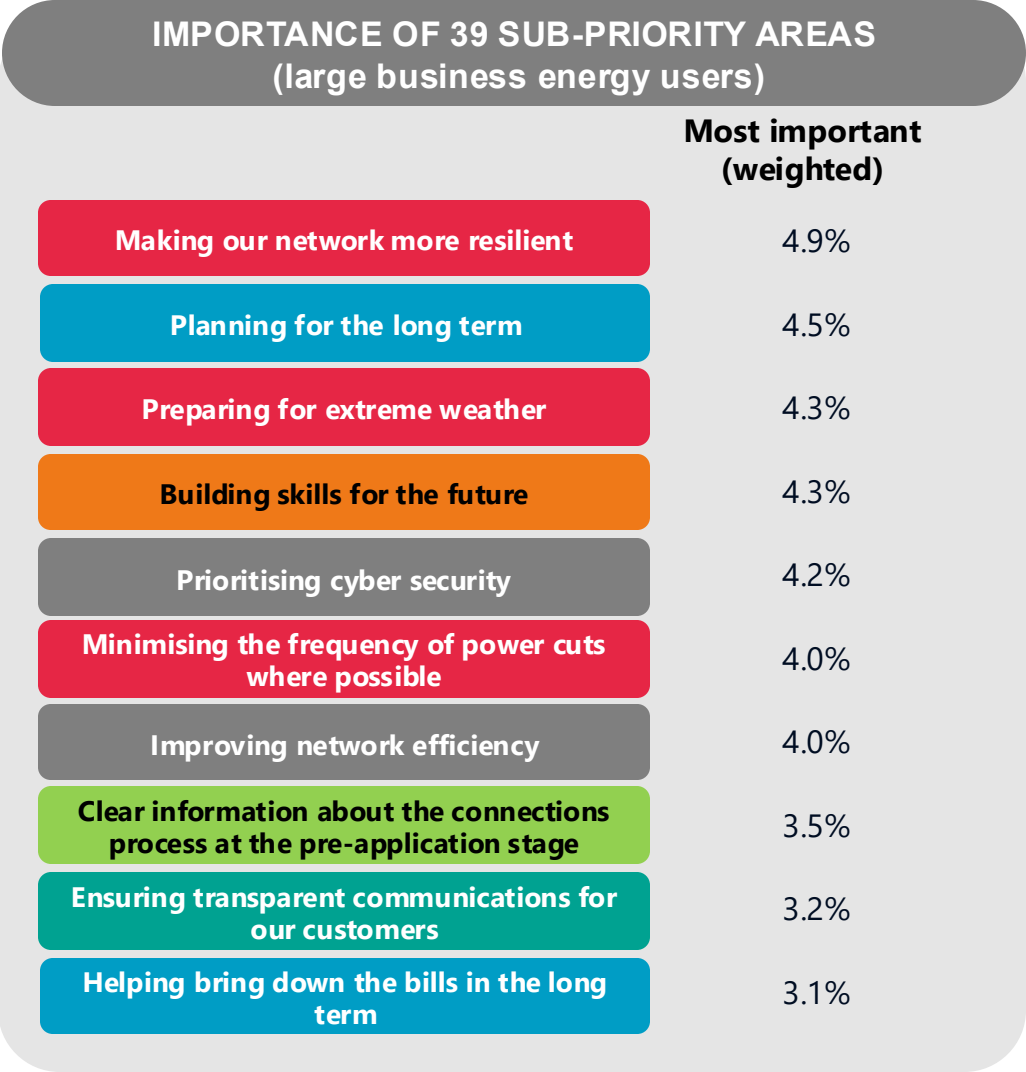
	RANKED 1ST	RANKED 1-3
Building a reliable and resilient network	28%	52%
Driving local economic growth	14%	33%
Supporting customers in vulnerable situations	12%	33%
Delivering value for money services	12%	40%
Minimising SSEN's direct environmental impact	9%	28%
Operating a smarter, more secure network	9%	41%
Providing high-quality customer service	10%	38%
Making new connections easier and faster	7%	36%

Reliability and resilience stands out as the highest priority for this audience. Beyond these, priorities are relatively evenly distributed, with around one-third of respondents placing each of the remaining areas in their top three.

Reliability is prioritised primarily for business continuity reasons, while economic growth, vulnerable customer support and value for money are valued more for their broader community and trust impacts than for direct business benefit.

Executive summary

Where specifically should SSEN focus?



Sub-priority rankings across the 39 areas are also relatively dispersed among large business energy users, reflecting the more even distribution of importance across the eight priority areas. This indicates that large business energy users prioritise multiple areas rather than one being clearly dominant.



Executive summary

How do priorities compare with other stakeholder groups?

↑ Significantly higher

↓ Significantly lower

OVERALL 8 PRIORITY AREAS RANKED IN FIRST PLACE

	Domestic	Business	Large business energy users
Building a reliable and resilient network	28%	33%	28%
Delivering value for money services	26%	20%	12% ↓
Supporting customers in vulnerable situations	13%	13%	12%
Providing high-quality customer service	9%	11%	10%
Minimising SSEN's direct environmental impact	8%	8%	9%
Operating a smarter, more secure network	7%	7%	9%
Driving local economic growth	4%	7%	14% ↑
Making new connections easier and faster	4%	3%	7% ↑

Compared with other audiences, large business energy users place less emphasis on delivering value for money and greater emphasis on supporting local economic growth and improving the speed and ease of new connections.

Executive summary

How do priorities compare with other stakeholder groups?

TOP 10 SUB-PRIORITY AREAS RANKING

	Domestic	Business	Large business energy users
Helping bring down bills in the long term	10.3%	8.3%	3.1%
Making our network more resilient	6.4%	7.2%	4.9%
Planning for the long term	5.1%	4.0%	4.5%
Preparing for extreme weather	4.7%	3.5%	4.3%
Minimising the frequency of power cuts where possible	4.4%	4.4%	4.0%
Improving network efficiency	4.1%	4.6%	4.0%
Providing extra support during storms	4.1%	3.8%	2.5%
Providing targeted support for our most vulnerable customers	3.9%	3.3%	2.5%
Minimising the duration of power cuts when they happen	3.3%	3.3%	2.5%
Supporting energy efficiency schemes	3.3%	2.7%	2.5%

Helping to bring down bills in the long term was the dominant priority for domestic customers and smaller businesses, but it ranks considerably lower among large business energy users. They take a more balanced view, placing importance on a wider range of commitments.

Key to different sub-priority area colours



Executive summary

New electricity connections

CONNECTIONS EXPERIENCE

Large business energy users are more likely than domestic and smaller business customers to be aware of SSEN and have a better understanding of its role.

New electricity connections are particularly relevant to this audience. Around half have had a new connection installed within the last two years, and a further quarter are considering one.

When it comes to the connections process, speed of delivery is the most important factor, followed by a straightforward, easy-to-navigate process and access to responsive, knowledgeable customer support.

What to do:

- Make the new connections process as simple and intuitive as possible, with knowledgeable staff readily available to provide support when needed.
- Communicate clearly and consistently throughout the process, particularly regarding:
 - Timescales and delivery dates: provide realistic expectations and minimise delays wherever possible.
 - Connection costs: ensure pricing is transparent and customers have certainty about charges.
 - Progress updates: provide regular updates to keep customers informed and reduce uncertainty.
- This audience values speed, simplicity and transparency throughout the connections journey.

Qualitative research – Key findings

10 in depth interviews explored the perceptions of large business energy users in more detail

CONNECTIONS EXPERIENCE

Businesses see connections as increasingly critical to growth and decarbonisation, but want greater speed, certainty and transparency.

Experienced users can navigate the process relatively easily, while less experienced customers may find it complex.

The biggest concerns are uncertain costs and timescales, limited visibility of network capacity and delays caused by congestion/reform.

What to do:

- **Improve cost certainty:** provide clearer, more realistic costs earlier in the process.
- **Increase capacity visibility:** give customers better, up-to-date information about where capacity is available.
- **Communicate proactively:** flag constraints and alternative options earlier, rather than customers discovering them through the process.
- **Make connections simpler and faster:** reduce unnecessary complexity and delays, particularly for less experienced customers.
- **Offer digital and human support:** use digital tools for routine interactions, while retaining knowledgeable relationship support for complex projects.



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