



**SP ENERGY
NETWORKS**

**Reinforcement to North Shropshire
Electricity Distribution Network:
132kV Wood Pole Overhead Line from
Oswestry to Wem**

**Updated Line Route Report
November 2016**

GILLESPIES

PROJECT TITLE

North Shropshire Reinforcement Project

DOCUMENT TITLE

M5405 701 Updated Line Routeing Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In June 2016 SP Energy Networks published the Line Route Report for the new overhead line (the Proposed Development) as part of the preliminary consultation process.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Updated Line Route Report is to explain how SP Energy Networks has reviewed the preferred line route shown in **Figure 1.1** and developed it into the proposed line route after consideration of feedback from the Stage One Consultation and additional work undertaken by the project's technical team.
- 1.3 It should however be noted that the project is still at a formative stage and whilst this report moves onto the next stage, consideration will continue to be given to new information and the routeing reviewed where necessary.

FEEDBACK REVIEW

- 1.4 Feedback to the Stage One Consultation was received from statutory bodies, interested groups and members of the public. Four public exhibition events at Whittington, Wem, Cockshutt and Lower Hordley also provided the opportunity for stakeholders and the public to talk to the SP Energy Networks' technical and environment teams.
- 1.5 SP Energy Networks' environmental advisers, Gillespies, has now considered the feedback received from the above sources that relates to two of the questions from the consultation feedback form:
 1. *Question 1: Do you have any comments on the location and limits of this preferred line route or its options?*
 2. *Question 2: Do you have any comments on the likely environmental impacts of the preferred line route and its associated construction works, such as lay-down areas or transport?*
- 1.6 Feedback received related to the overall preferred line route or to particular sections i.e., Section 1, 2, 3 or 4. Section 2.0 of this report summarises the feedback for each of these sections and the response provided as to the likely environmental effects.
- 1.7 Feedback on the other two questions from the consultation feedback form (Questions 3 and 4) is summarised in the Stage One Consultation Feedback Report (November 2016).

2. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

COMMENTS RELATING TO THE OVERALL PREFERRED LINE ROUTE

- 2.1** As well as helpful feedback from local people we received a number of comments from statutory bodies such as Shropshire Council, the Environment Agency and local parish councils. We also received comments from a range of other organisations such as the local wildlife trust and the RSPB. These responses were generally supportive and provided additional information.
- 2.2** Comments were made about the potential sites of interest / concern, by Shropshire Council (Natural and Historic Environment), the Woodland Trust, the RSPB and Shropshire Wildlife Trust.
- 2.3** Shropshire Council (Natural and Historic Environment) commented on non-designated parklands and the potential for impacts to their settings. They also commented on the marching camp at Perry Farm. More specific comments noted slight preferences for Option 2A in Hordley due to increased distance from cultural heritage sites, and for Option 3B at Cockshutt as it lies further from Stanwardine Grange. A concern over potential views to the south of a cluster of listed buildings at Noneley was also noted.
- 2.4** Shropshire Council (Ecology) comments that all international sites had been avoided and that the preferred route is close to only one SSSI. Information was also provided on known constraints along the route.
- 2.5** Natural England commented that the preferred route options have taken into account statutory designated sites in the area and are not considered likely to have direct effects and that it has no specific comments with regard to particular concerns or issues in relation to this project.
- 2.6** The Woodland Trust commented on ancient woodland and Long Wood in particular (see comments on Section 1 below).
- 2.7** Feedback from RSPB noted that the preferred route does not pass through any sensitive sites (apart from Baggy Moor (Section 1), and that it appears to avoid non statutory sites). It was further noted that the RSPB is working with local farmers to protect Baggy Moor. They also commented that they expect the proposals will be routed to avoid any damage to non-statutory wildlife sites such as Local Wildlife Sites.
- 2.8** Shropshire Wildlife Trust commented on the Oswestry site compound area, noting that there are historical records for great crested newts in this area associated with ponds at Windsor Road. They also noted the presence of significant ornithological interest and the need for careful routeing. The Environment Agency highlighted the presence of watercourses in the study area, the 'Shropshire Groundwater Scheme', the presence of Source Protection Zones (SPZ) and licensed groundwater abstraction supplies, and to avoid if possible siting within the 1% plus climate change floodplain.
- 2.9** Severn Trent Water Ltd provided comments on the potential for impacts and potential constraints including the location and nature of existing and proposed assets. A further comment noted potential use of land holdings for compounds and lay down areas.
- 2.10** The MOD requested they be kept up-to-date with the nature and location of the development and likely construction dates. NATs commented that as their nearest sites are over 30km away they don't anticipate any issues with the proposal.

- 2.11** The Canal and River Trust have expressed concern about overhead lines crossing the canal and advised of the need to take their guidelines into account.
- 2.12** A number of comments were received from the Parish Councils within the Study Area. Baschurch Parish Council supported the proposal. Cockshutt Parish Council had no specific comments, and considered that residents had already made their comments direct to SP Energy Networks. Hordley Parish Council noted that they had discussed the route and had no comments to make.
- 2.13** Loppington Parish Council identified that the preferred line route is close to the airfield at Sleaf and recommended seeking the views of the users of the airfield and RAF Shawbury as they fly training and practice helicopters into and out of Sleaf Airfield.
- 2.14** Oswestry Rural Parish Council had no comments to make. Oswestry Town Council welcomed the investment in infrastructure. Wem Town Council supported the proposed route. Wem Rural Parish Council had no comments to make to the proposals at this stage but reserved the right to comment at later stages. West Felton Parish Council commented that they had no objection provided that disruption due to construction activities is minimised.
- 2.15** Whittington Parish Council, whilst not objecting to the need for the project, made comments on Section 1 of the preferred line route (see below). They would like a more suitable route to be identified, further away from Babbinswood to preserve the heritage of the area.
- 2.16** Informal discussions have taken place with Historic England during the development of the project and no concerns have been raised and no formal response has been received to the Stage One Consultation at the time of writing. SP Energy Networks will however take into consideration any response from Historic England.

COMMENTS RELATING TO PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 1

- 2.17** Shropshire Council (Ecology) commented on local constraints but did not express a preference.
- 2.18** The Woodland Trust commented on Long Wood being of historical and ecological importance and it being likely to be ancient woodland. Further mapping research and an ecological study of the site will need to be carried out before any decision is made regarding the route. Within Section 1 the mapping shows that Long Wood falls just within the proposed boundary, and they recommend that this small section of possible ancient woodland is excluded from any proposed works. A further area of woodland identified falls within Section 1 and also Option 1B, and they also recommend that this small section of possible ancient woodland is excluded from any proposed works.
- 2.19** Shropshire Wildlife Trust noted that there were historical records for Great Crested Newts near the Oswestry Site Compound Area, also commenting that Options 1A and 1B would take the route closer to ancient woodland at Gravenall and Big Wood and to Halston Hall Heronry Local Wildlife Site which should be avoided
- 2.20** Severn Trent Water noted that that Option 1A is close to Drenyewdd sewage treatment works for which improvement works are planned.
- 2.21** Whittington Parish Council queried why the route of the overhead line that ran between Oswestry and Haughton is not being utilised for Section 1. They suggested that, in Section 1 the route should

be located further south of Babbinswood, since the village of Wittington is steeped in history (including the castle) and there is a Roman settlement that is crossed by Section 1. They would like a more suitable route to be identified, further away from Babbinswood to preserve the heritage of the area.

- 2.22** Feedback received from members of the public was generally supportive of the preferred line route option (Section 1) rather than Options 1A and 1B. This is due to proximity of the latter to the settlements at Babbinswood and Wittington, and the directness of the preferred line route.
- 2.23** Comments were also made that Section 1 would compromise the views of the Shropshire Hills, and Option 1B would make that impact greater. Other comments noted that Section 1 would minimise likely visual effects on residents as it is the most direct route.
- 2.24** Concerns were also expressed about the potential for effects from heavy construction traffic.
- 2.25** Feedback from members of the public at events noted a preference for Section 1 as Option 1B lies closer to a property.

COMMENTS RELATING TO PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 2

- 2.26** Comments from Shropshire Council regarding the historic environment noted a slight preference for Option 2A in Hordley due to increased distance from cultural heritage sites.
- 2.27** The RSPB raised concerns about the potential for effects on the concentration of breeding waders and wet grassland habitat on the northern part of Baggy Moor, and requested relevant survey information.
- 2.28** Other comments requested information about the design and position of site compounds, and about potential use of land holdings for compounds and lay down areas.
- 2.29** Feedback from landowners raised concerns about the potential impacts of Option 2A on farmland and agricultural operations, and suggested a route further north of Option 2A to avoid these impacts. It was noted that large centre point irrigation facilities are installed within the fields along the preferred line route. It was also suggested that the River Perry should be crossed at right angles to assist with maintenance.
- 2.30** Concerns were expressed by members of the public on the effects on maintenance of the River Perry and Baggy Moor as a result of the preferred line route. Concerns were also noted as the route passes close to an area on the Woodhouse Estate where future development is proposed.
- 2.31** A further comment raised the potential for effects on flying activities at Rednal Airfield.
- 2.32** Feedback at events noted concerns about the proximity of the route to the scattered residential properties between Lower Hordley and Bagley and suggested a route north of the ABP packaging facility, where there are fewer properties and the line would be further away from Bagley Marsh. Concerns were also expressed that the preferred route 'splits Baggy in half'. Some visitors questioned the design, e.g., spacing and appearance of the poles. Comments were also made on the effects on ecology in this area and the presence of toads and newts in the area close to the route at Bagley Marsh.

COMMENTS RELATING TO PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 3

- 2.33** The feedback comments generally objected to the preferred line route in Section 3, noting concerns about the visual amenity effects on properties close to the route, and the close proximity of Section 3 to the southern edge of Cockshutt village.
- 2.34** Comments from Shropshire Council regarding the historic environment noted a preference for Option 3B at Cockshutt as it lies further from Stanwardine Grange. Shropshire Council (Ecology) indicated no strong preference between Options 3B or 3C.
- 2.35** More comments were made by members of the public on this Section than any other section of the preferred line route. Concerns were expressed by members of the public as to disruption to businesses and farming operations, and potential effects to horse riders. Comments were also made on the proximity of the route to individual properties and in particular the village of Cockshutt.
- 2.36** It was suggested that Section 3 is too close to Cockshutt, and that it should be routed further south to avoid a horse paddock on the edge of the village. The preferred line route would also affect a proposed extension to the edge of the village (note, no land allocated for housing is crossed by the preferred line route). Option 3B was therefore preferred.
- 2.37** Comments raised concerns about the wet ground near the River Perry at Bagley and near Wackley Brook, the financial effect the route would have on an individual property (having previously invested in the burying of a Phase 3 electricity line), about construction traffic and proposed lay down area near Cockshutt.
- 2.38** The proximity of Section 3 to the Grade II Listed Building at Malt Kiln Farm was noted. An objection was raised to any route south of Malt Kiln Farm, due to likely effects on bird flight paths and residential visual amenity.
- 2.39** One respondent expressed a preference for Option 3C rather than Section 3, although suggesting that this option should be routed further to the north-east in order to be further from ponds (birds), and to utilise slightly lower lying ground.
- 2.40** A preference was expressed for Section 3 rather than Option 3B due to presence of wildlife, a deep ditch prone to flooding and land within an environmental scheme. In contrast a preference was expressed for Option 3B rather than Section 3 due to concerns over visual effects on the village, individual properties and to road users.
- 2.41** Other comments suggested an alternative option that would run in a direct line from Option 3B (Wackley Lodge) to Section 4, east of Moor House Farm. It was also requested that an option routeing further from Kenwick Lodge, avoiding the mature oak trees close to the Lodge, should be considered.
- 2.42** Option 3C was preferred over Section 3 by some respondents as it avoids a pond and would therefore have fewer impacts on wildlife.
- 2.43** Comments also included information about the potential sterilisation of mineral deposits to the east of Cockshutt, and noted the presence of peat south of Cockshutt.

- 2.44** It was noted from feedback at the Cockshutt event that people felt the preferred line route should be routed further south, away from properties at Cockshutt, away from land which could potentially be used for new housing, routed through open fields and away from horse paddocks. A preference was noted for Option 3B which could be routed more directly in the direction of Coppice Farm or Moor House Farm. Concerns were expressed over the proximity of Option 3A to individual properties.
- 2.45** General queries were raised as to the likely effects of construction traffic and the temporary construction compounds.

COMMENTS RELATING TO PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 4

- 2.46** Comments from Shropshire Council regarding the historic environment noted a concern over potential views of the proposed overhead line to the south of a cluster of listed buildings at Noneley, and expressed a preference for Option 4A. Shropshire Council (Ecology) recommended that Option 4A should be avoided due to proximity to the Ruewood Pastures SSSI and Local Wildlife Site.
- 2.47** Shropshire Wildlife Trust noted the proximity of the route to Moorfields Loppington Local Wildlife Site, and Ruewood Pastures SSSI and Local Wildlife Site, although commenting that no significant impacts were expected. Noting that Option 4A was closer than Section 4 to Ruewood Pastures they suggested it should be avoided.
- 2.48** Feedback from members of the public generally focussed on concerns about proximity to Noneley and visual effects on the long-ranging and uninterrupted rural views to the south and south-east of the hamlet, and views towards Grinshill and the Breidden Hills.
- 2.49** Alternative routes presented included, following the route of the existing 33kV overhead line that runs to the west and north of Noneley and then heads east into Wem substation, routing further south from Noneley and closer to Sleaf Airfield where there are no residential properties.
- 2.50** A further suggestion was to route from Option 3C east towards Wem and connect into the existing 33kV overhead line to Wem.
- 2.51** Comments were made on the potential views from Noneley, the close proximity and potential impacts of the preferred route on a listed building.
- 2.52** The close proximity of the preferred route to the northern perimeter of Sleaf airfield was also raised as an objection, in particular the proximity to the runway which is in regular use. It was noted that the area immediately to the south-west of Noneley is used by low flying helicopters from RAF Shawbury.
- 2.53** Section 4 was not preferred by one respondent due to the potential adverse effects on views from the Noneley area.
- 2.54** Concerns were raised about the potential health issues resulting from overhead lines, potential hazards relating to equestrian activities in close proximity to overhead lines and poles, and safety hazards relating to the proximity of overhead lines to Sleaf Airfield.

- 2.55** Feedback from the events raised concerns over visual effects on individual properties. It was also suggested that the line be routed further north of Noneley, to the south of Loppington, and should utilise the existing overhead line route.
- 2.56** One attendee felt the preferred line route avoided properties and villages, and the meres and mosses and associated wildlife, and considered this positive.
- 2.57** At the event in Wem a more direct route to the north of Pearl Farm was suggested.

COMMENTS RELATING TO LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

- 2.58** Comments from Shropshire Council about the approach to landscape and visual assessment were positive but requested some clarification with respect to the relationship between visual assessment and residential visual amenity assessment, with respect to sensitivity appraisal and the need to consider historic landscapes, and with respect to visibility mapping (it was agreed that ZTVs would not be produced at this stage).
- 2.59** In addition Shropshire Council requested that both visually obstructing features and visual constraints that inform the routing, are included in a visual appraisal plan. Shropshire Council, also requested further clarification of viewpoints. The issues identified will be addressed as part of the ongoing assessment process and the methodology agreed prior to submission of the Scoping Report as part of the formal EIA process. In the meantime **Figure 2.1** illustrates 'Sites of Local Interest and Importance'.
- 2.60** Shropshire Wildlife Trust noted that the preferred route would appear to be unlikely to cause a significant environmental impact in any one location, but detailed local knowledge of the route gained through the consultation process should be used to ensure that species and habitats are adequately taken into account. They also commented on the need to consult with the Shropshire Ornithological Society.
- 2.61** The Environment Agency provided general advice in relation to further assessments (Flood Risk Assessment) and surveys noting that they would provide more detailed comments during the scoping stage.
- 2.62** Comments from the National Farmers Union provided advice on how to alleviate potential disruption to farming practices through careful design, about the need to maintain the good efforts to gather local knowledge and to listen to farmers' views and concerns. There was also a request to follow best practice when arranging access to farmland for surveys.
- 2.63** Other comments from members of the public requested information about electromagnetic fields (EMFs), and the design and location of site compounds and lay-down areas. A request was made that all environmental surveys are completed, and a further request that construction traffic is restricted at school times. Concern was also expressed about the effects on wildlife in the area.

3. RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

- 3.1** SP Energy Networks has considered the above responses and addressed them in reviewing the preferred line route and options and likely environmental impacts. This report refers to how potential environmental impacts highlighted in feedback have been considered in further line routeing and either avoided, or acknowledged as matters to be assessed at a later stage when there is a more refined design, or in possible future mitigation measures.
- 3.2** SP Energy Networks considered feedback using the same environmental and technical criteria that were used to identify the preferred line route. These are:
- Length of the line route;
 - Landscape and visual amenity;
 - Historic environment;
 - Ecology and biodiversity;
 - Water environment;
 - Forestry and woodland;
 - Socio economic;
 - Technical feasibility; and
 - Planning and land use considerations.
- 3.3** SP Energy Networks also considered the findings of the Route Corridor Options Report (June 2016). This was a high-level study that eliminated areas that were considered to be the most sensitive to a 132kV overhead line. As a project develops, SP Energy Networks applies a more detailed rationale to the appraisal of options. This can result the in re-evaluation of some areas that had previously discounted or selected.
- 3.4** **Figures 3.1 - 3.4** illustrate the preferred line route and a number of the additional constraints and opportunities that were identified in the consultation feedback.

PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 1

- 3.5** Feedback was generally supportive of Section 1, since it lessens likely visual effects on Whittington and Babbinswood and other scattered residential properties. It is also the most direct route, is at a greater distance from ancient woodland than Options 1A and 1B, avoids potential constraints near Dreneywdd sewage treatment works (close to Option 1A), and has the potential to avoid breeding lapwings near Option 1B (subject to further environmental surveys).
- 3.6** The suggestion to follow the route of a former overhead line through Middleton and towards Haughton (see **Figure 3.1**) is discounted. This route lies close to features that are important in terms of ecology and the historic environment, and features that are of local interest. The resulting corridor is narrow and routeing would be very constrained. The route is not very direct since it would first travel south-east before turning in a north-easterly direction to realign with Wem.
- 3.7** The suggestion to route the line further south of Babbinswood to preserve the cultural heritage of the area would bring the overhead line closer to the scattered residential properties south of Babbinswood, including Bryn y Plentyn, Henllarth, New Bungalow, Fields, Farm, Hendre Cottage,

The Oaks, Decoy Farm, The Leasowes, etc. Section 1 has been carefully routed to lie equidistant between properties to the north and south in this location. If the route were positioned further south it would then have to divert north to route around Woodhouse Estate. The use of angle poles to achieve the change in direction would necessitate the use of larger and more visible structures.

- 3.8** The outcome of the appraisal is that Option 1A and Option 1B are discounted. Section 1 is taken forward as part of the proposed line route.

PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 2

- 3.9** Whilst feedback was generally supportive of Section 2, a number of concerns were expressed during the Stage One Consultation, including potential visual effects on the residential visual amenity of properties close to Bagley Marsh (to the south of Lower Hordley) and potential ecological effects, related to breeding waders and wet grassland habitat near Baggy Moor and the River Perry. Concerns were also raised about the proximity and likely conflict of Section 2 with a large scale field irrigation scheme and future development proposals close to Rednal Airfield and the River Perry.
- 3.10** An alternative Option 2A was suggested and appraised by SP Energy Networks. This option is shown in **Figure 3.2**.
- 3.11** SP Energy Networks consider that Option 2A performs favourably in comparison to Section 2. This is in terms of reducing the potential for both visual and ecological effects and overcoming technical constraints by avoiding conflict with the irrigation scheme and future development proposals. Section 2A does however route close to Red House Farm.
- 3.12** Feedback from landowners raised concerns about the potential impacts of routing to the north of Section 2 on farmland and agricultural operations, and suggested a route further north to avoid any of these impacts. This option has been referred to as Option 2B and falls within part of the red corridor (as identified in the Route Corridor Options Report June 2016).
- 3.13** Option 2B would originate in proximity to the rural lane near Woodhouse Estate and Rednal Mill, before heading in a north-easterly direction, roughly equidistant between Rednal Mill Cottage and Lower Lees. The change in direction south of Rednal Mill would necessitate a larger, more visually intrusive, structure. Rednal Mill is already close to a number of other existing overhead lines including a 400kV line. The addition of a 132kV overhead line would surround the property on three sides. Option 2B is also less direct than Option 2A.
- 3.14** The outcome of the appraisal was that Section 2 was discounted, and Option 2A is taken forward as part of the proposed line route. From this point onwards Option 2A is referred to as Section 2 of the proposed line. Evaluation of these options is almost complete and if there are changes to this section SP Energy Networks will let people know.

PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 3

- 3.15** Section 3 was discounted in response to consultation feedback and concerns about the likely visual effects on Cockshutt Village, proximity to horse paddocks and garden boundaries, and potential sterilisation of part of the minerals allocation area east of Cockshutt.
- 3.16** Option 3B was identified as the preferred option in feedback responses due to its greater distance from Cockshutt, and a likely reduction in effects on visual amenity.

- 3.17** In response to feedback, SP Energy Networks identified three additional options (Options 3D, 3E, and 3F). These options are shown in **Figure 3.3**.
- 3.18** Option 3D and part of Option 3B (between Kenwick Lodge and Wackley Lodge) were proposed to reduce the likelihood of visual amenity effects at Kenwick Lodge and Cockshutt Village, to avoid mature oak hedgerow trees and to avoid a minerals allocation area east of Cockshutt. Option 3D also provides a connection between the newly proposed Section 2A and Option 3B that routes slightly further from Kenwick Lodge.
- 3.19** Option 3F responds to comments raised by landowners and members of the public relating to visual effects and the presence of ponds and wildlife.
- 3.20** Option 3F routes between Wackley Lodge and Coppice Farm, utilising a small section of the eastern extent of Option 3C, and providing a more direct connection between the western part of Option 3B and Section 4.
- 3.21** This option would route closer to Coppice Farm than Section 3, with consequent visual effects, but further from properties at The Wood and Malt Kiln Farm. A route further south, whilst more direct, would be visible in views to the south including views from the properties at The Wood and Malt Kiln Farm. Malt Kiln Farm is a listed building.
- 3.22** Option 3F also seeks to avoid crossing directly over a number of ponds in the area close to The Wood and Coppice Farm.
- 3.23** The outcome of the appraisal is that Section 3 was discounted and a proposed line route which follows Options 3D, 3B and 3F is taken forward. From this point onwards these options are combined and referred to as Section 3 of the proposed line route. Evaluation of these options is almost complete and if there are changes to this section SP Energy Networks will let people know.

PREFERRED LINE ROUTE SECTION 4

- 3.24** Part of Section 4 (to the south of Noneley) was discounted in response to public concerns about the likely effects on visual amenity on the southern edge of the village. Other concerns were raised about the proximity of the line route to a listed building (the respondent noted it was within 1 km of the preferred line route), a concern over potential views of Section 3 to the south of a cluster of listed buildings at Noneley, visual effects on the approaches to Noneley, proximity to houses and interference with flying activities at Sleaf Airfield.
- 3.25** Feedback on behalf of a number of residents in Noneley included suggestions for alternatives, including undergrounding. The assessment work undertaken to date shows that the likely level of landscape and visual impact would not justify placing any sections of the overhead line underground. An overhead wood pole trident line allows SP Energy Networks to find the right balance between minimising environmental impacts and ensuring that the new line offers value for money.
- 3.26** In response to feedback SP Energy Networks identified three additional options (Options 4B, 4C and 4D). Two of these options (Options 4C and 4D) follow a section of existing 33kV overhead line. All of the options are shown in **Figure 3.4**.

- 3.27** Option 4B is routed through a sparsely populated, relatively flat landform with fewer landscape features than Option 4D and further from listed buildings than the alternative route. The landscape is open and there are long views across and beyond this corridor, but the scale and design of the proposed development is such that significant effects on visual amenity are unlikely at the separation distances involved. Few landscape features would be lost due to the nature of this largely agricultural landscape, which is open and prone to flooding, and contains few existing blocks of trees and woodland. The existing 33kV line would be unaffected by the proposal, and therefore remains as an established and accepted element of infrastructure within the landscape. This is illustrated in **Figure 3.5** which provides an indicative photomontage of the existing and proposed view from Noneley.
- 3.28** Option 4C would route from the east of Cockshutt (from Section 3) to the substation at Wem. This option was not taken forward as Section 3 was discounted as part of the ongoing routing work. There was therefore no available connection between Section 3 and Option 4C.
- 3.29** Option 4D lies closer to residential properties (south east of Loppington) and a listed building (Shayes Farmhouse) than 4B. It is likely to result in greater effects on the landscape west of Noneley, which features a smaller scale field pattern with mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and scattered mature trees. This option would also necessitate finding an alternative route for the existing 33kV line. Option 4D was therefore discounted.
- 3.30** Some feedback suggested that the existing 33kV route could be used to route the proposed 132kV overhead line. Whilst the 33kV line provides a potentially technically feasible route, the potential outcomes are compromised. Either:
- A new 33kV line would be introduced to the south of Noneley and Commonwood, resulting in a new vertical element (albeit smaller than a 132kV line) and a larger 132kV structure would be routed close to the south-eastern edge of Loppington, and to the west of Noneley near the listed building at Shayes Farmhouse; or,
 - A wider and visually cluttered parallel line (consisting of 33kV and 132kV poles of different height, spaced at differing intervals) would be routed close to the west of Noneley and the listed building at Shayes Farmhouse, and to the south-eastern edge of Loppington, with potential landscape losses (hedges and trees).
- 3.31** As a result part of Section 4 (to the south of Noneley) was discounted and an alternative option (4B) is taken forward as part of Section 4. From this point Section 4 and Option 4B are combined and referred to as Section 4 of the proposed line route.

4. SUMMARY & DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED LINE ROUTE

- 4.1 SP Energy Networks reviewed the Stage One Consultation feedback comments on the preferred line route and options against new information arising from ongoing survey work and landowner discussions. Having carefully considered the feedback a series of localised design changes to the preferred line route were identified (the alternative options described in this document) and reviewed against the criteria and key considerations used in earlier evaluations of line route options. This exercise resulted in the proposed line route. **Figure 4.1** compares the preferred line route (June 2016) which was the subject of the Stage One Consultation and updated proposed line route (November 2016) which is the outcome. **Figure 4.2** illustrates the proposed line route (November 2016).
- 4.2 In order to avoid physical constraints and visual clutter arising from a new overhead line close to two existing 132kV overhead lines, the proposed line route exits the Oswestry substation which is located on the north-eastern edge of Oswestry as an underground cable. It passes under the A5 before running parallel to the eastern edge of the A5 for a distance of approximately 1km before turning east to the south of Round Wood where it transfers to an overhead line.

PROPOSED LINE ROUTE SECTION 1

- 4.3 Section 1 originates in fields to the east of the A5 near Oswestry, to the south-west of Round Wood. It runs in an easterly direction passing through hedged fields with occasional blocks of trees to the south (near Middleton Coppice). Section 1 continues in a broadly easterly direction across fields before crossing the B5009 next to the fuel oil distribution yard south of Babbinswood and the Shrewsbury to Crewe main line railway. From it passes to the north of the Oaks and Decoy Farm through some smaller, low-lying fields with a small woodland block and frequent mature hedgerow trees, before it turns to a more south-easterly direction and crosses an area of flood zone associated with the River Perry.
- 4.4 Continuing in an easterly direction Section 1 then crosses the Montgomery Canal and the regional trail along the Montgomery Canal. This is a long distance walking trail promoted by the Long Distance Walking Association which also forms part of the Shropshire Way Route 27, and part of the locally promoted 53km Oswestry Round. East of the canal Section 1 passes through slightly elevated hedged fields which lie to the north of the privately owned Woodhouse Estate, avoiding wherever possible, larger blocks of trees and the frequent mature hedgerow trees. Section 1 passes south of Rednal Mill and crosses a lower-lying rural road (Woodhouse Drive) north of the industrial estate at Rednal where it meets line route Section 2.

PROPOSED LINE ROUTE SECTION 2

- 4.5 Section 2 originates east of Woodhouse Drive, north of Rednal Industrial Estate and equidistant between Lees Farm (to the south) and Rednal Mill Cottage and Lower Lee (to the north). It passes through open and low-lying larger scale fields in an easterly direction, crossing the River Perry and heading towards the village of Lower Hordley, south of the farmhouse at Sycamore Farm. From here it continues in an easterly direction, crossing the rural lane just north of the ABP packaging facility and south of Red House Farm. It then skirts around a large pond and block of trees to the north and passes to the north of Park House. From here Section 2 turns slightly to the south-east before crossing an area of slightly more elevated farmland south of Top House Farm and entering a landscape with a smaller and more irregular field pattern, and more mature trees. It meets Section 3 to the south-west of Kenwick Lodge.

PROPOSED LINE ROUTE SECTION 3

- 4.6** Section 3 runs in an easterly direction as it approaches a localised ridgeline near Kenwick Lodge. This is an area of small to medium scale fields with scattered mature hedgerow trees, including a distinctive line of oaks. Mature hedgerow trees are avoided wherever possible. The line route changes direction twice to the south and then south-east of Kenwick Lodge in order to increase the distance from the Lodge and reduce the likelihood of visual impacts. It then passes over a shallow localised ridgeline and descends into the lower lying fields near Cockshutt and Stanwardine Grange, passing through small to medium scale fields with scattered mature hedgerow trees. The localised ridge continues east of Stanwardine in the Wood, which would limit views from the area east of Stanwardine.
- 4.7** It then crosses a rural lane and the A528 in relatively quick succession, before continuing east in the general direction of Wackley Lodge. The farmland comprises some large open fields with occasional mature hedgerows trees and an area of farmland prone to flooding from Wackley Brook. The line route skirts to the north of a large pond before crossing a lane and passing to the north of the residential properties at The Wood and Malt Kiln Farm over very slightly elevated land. The line route is designed to be broadly equidistant between The Runner's Rest and The Wood, and also to avoid the ponds scattered about this area. Section 3 then turns and heads in a south-easterly direction, crossing a large field with some individual mature trees, before oversailing the B4397 and crossing open fields (with no hedgerow boundaries) to the south-east of Coppice Farm where it meets Section 4.

PROPOSED LINE ROUTE SECTION 4

- 4.8** Section 4 originates south-east of Coppice Farm, to the east of the B4397. It runs in a south-easterly direction and skirts around the southern edge of Moor Fields Local Wildlife Site. Moor Fields is an area of distinctive field patterns with mature hedgerows and trees and identified as important in terms of its grassland. The line route then passes through an area of farmland prone to flooding from Wackley Brook, before turning east, and running across an area of low-lying larger-scale fields bounded by low hedgerows and with few trees north of Sleep Airfield. It also crosses two rural lanes. In adopting this alignment the proposed line route lies further away from the southern edge of the small hamlet of Noneley than the preferred line route.
- 4.9** South-east of Commonwood, Section 4 heads north-east, avoiding the settlement at Ruewood and oversailing a rural lane to the east of Pearl Farm. It then continues across low-lying fields with occasional mature hedgerow trees, before crossing a large area of farmland which is prone to flooding from the River Roden. The line route oversails the River Roden and turns slightly to the east, continuing to cross the low-lying and open fields of the floodplain.
- 4.10** East of the residential property at Pools Farm, Section 4 turns north and heads in the direction of the existing substation at Wem, crossing low-lying open fields with occasional hedgerow trees. It oversails the B5063 Ellesmere Road before terminating in the existing substation at Wem. This latter section lies close to the western edge of Wem, in particular the individual residential properties (Avondale, Harley House and Overfields) that lie close to the B5063.

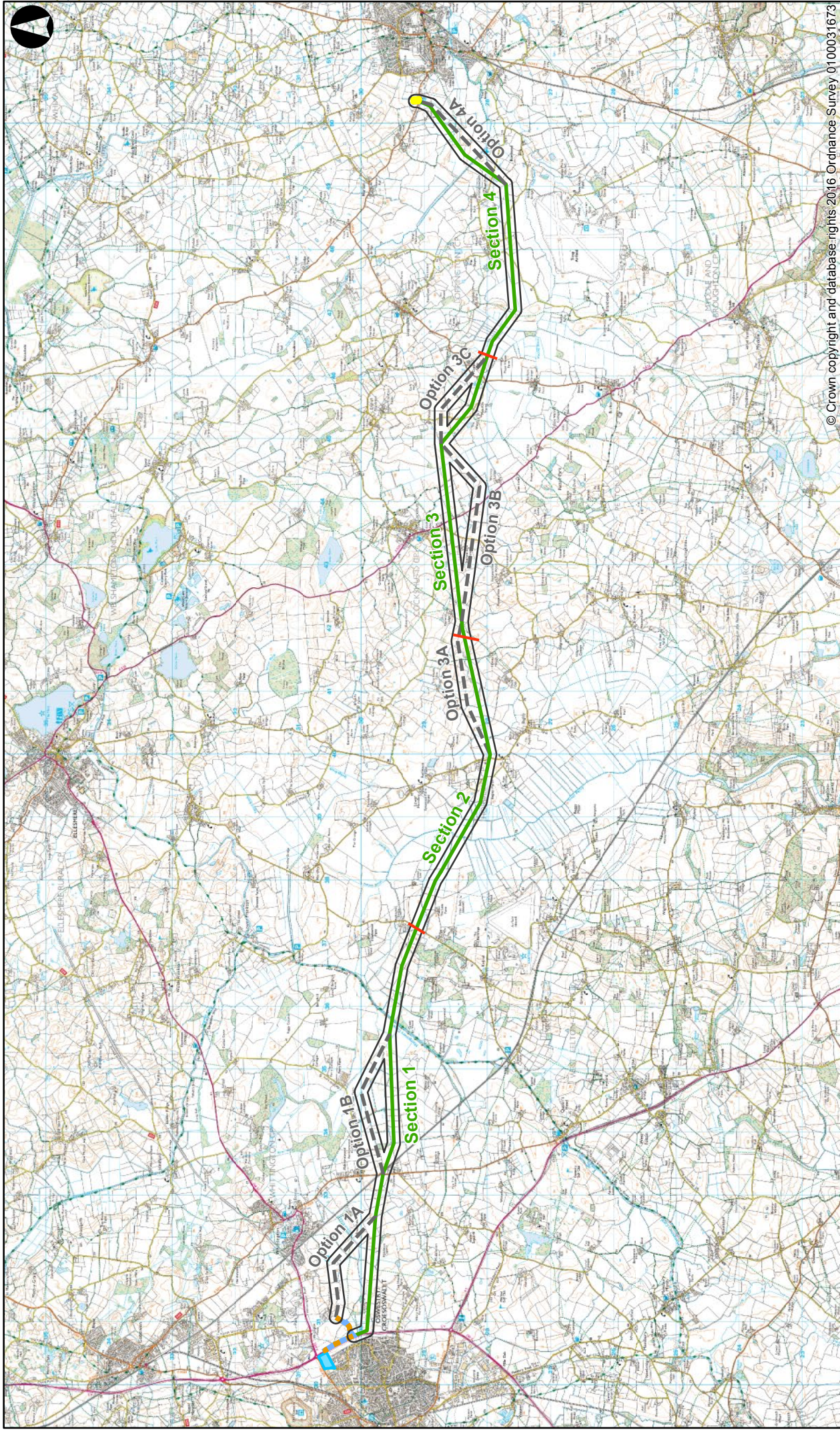
5. NEXT STEPS FOR ROUTEING

- 5.1 SP Energy Networks is now publishing the proposed line route to inform stakeholders of the route that has emerged from the Stage One Consultation.
- 5.2 The proposed line route will be subject to further detailed design development and surveys. This will include identifying individual wood pole positions, access and construction arrangements and mitigation. It should however be noted that the project is still at a formative stage and whilst this report moves onto the next stage, consideration will be continue to be given to new information and the routeing reviewed where necessary.
- 5.3 At the same time as detailed design work is being carried out, further surveys and assessment will be undertaken commencing with wintering bird surveys in late October / November 2016. If required, further amendments will be made to the proposed line route following the outcome of the survey work. Discussions during this period will continue with stakeholders including Shropshire Council's environment specialists.
- 5.4 Based on the proposed line route, SP Energy Networks will commence 'scoping' under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. This involves agreeing with statutory stakeholders the methodology for the individual topics and the extent of issues to be considered in the assessment and reported in the Environmental Statement.

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FIGURES

**Updated Line Route Report
November 2016**

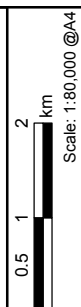


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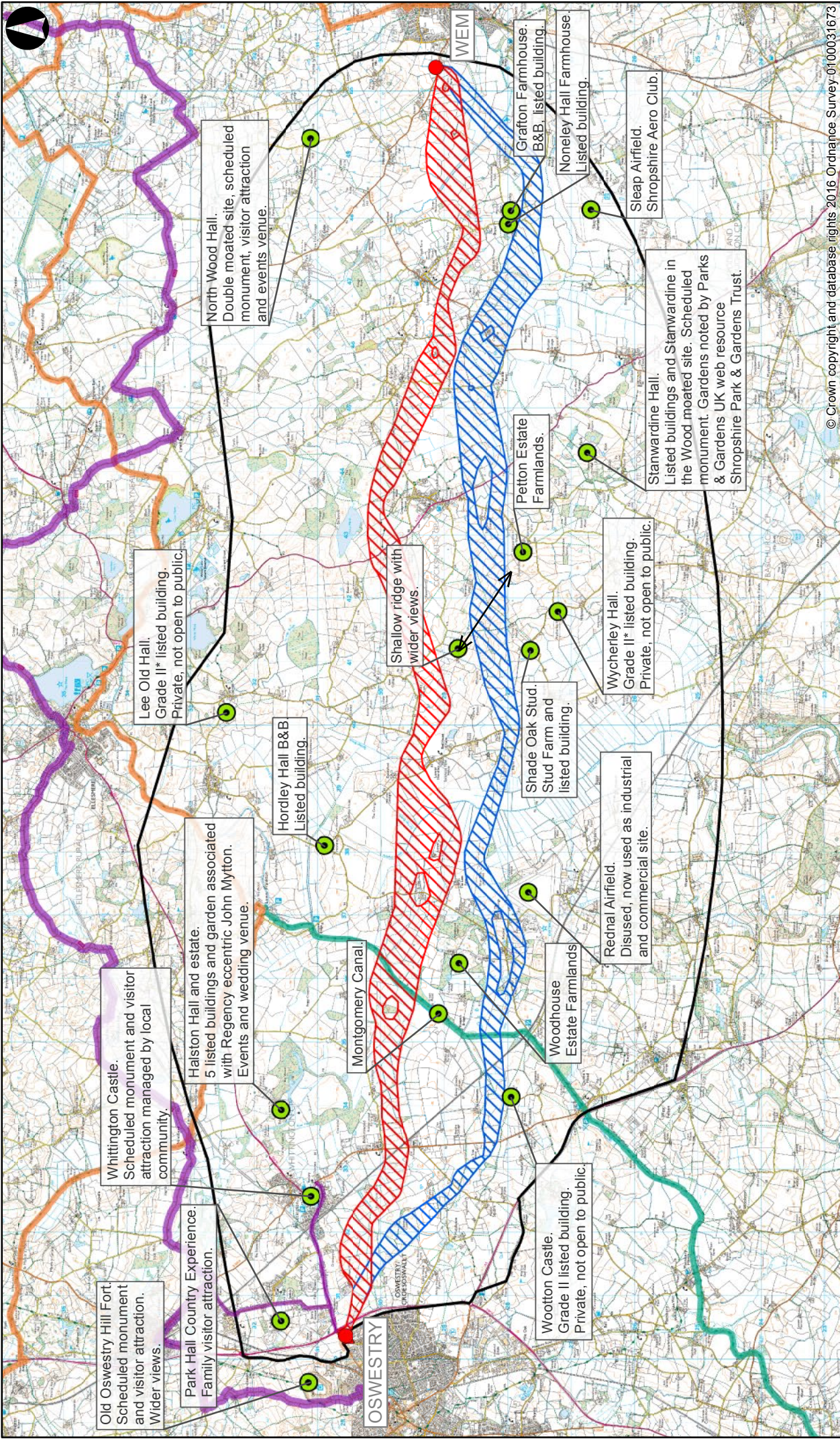
FIGURE 1.1
PREFERRED LINE ROUTE
AND OPTIONS FROM
JUNE 2016

Key:

- Preferred Line Route
- Alternative Line Routes
- Preferred Route 100m Buffer
- Initial Underground Route Option
- Section Separation Indicators
- Oswestry Substation
- Wem Substation



0 0.5 1 2 km
 Scale: 1:80,000 @A4



Key:

- Study
- Route Option Red Corridor
- Route Option Blue Corridor
- SPEN Substation Compound
- Sites of Local Interest & Importance
- On-road route on the National Cycle Network
- On-road route not on the National Cycle Network
- Montgomery Canal
- Towpath
- The Shropshire Way

FIGURE 2.1
SITES OF LOCAL INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE

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Scale: 1:80,000 @A4

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Old Oswestry Hill Fort.
Scheduled monument and visitor attraction.
Wider views.

Whittington Castle.
Scheduled monument and visitor attraction managed by local community.

Halston Hall and estate.
5 listed buildings and garden associated with Regency eccentric John Mytton.
Events and wedding venue.

Lee Old Hall.
Grade II* listed building.
Private, not open to public.

North Wood Hall.
Double moated site, scheduled monument, visitor attraction and events venue.

Park Hall Country Experience.
Family visitor attraction.

Hordley Hall B&B.
Listed building.

Shallow ridge with wider views.

Petton Estate Farmlands.

Grafton Farmhouse.
B&B, listed building.

Wootton Castle.
Grade II listed building.
Private, not open to public.

Woodhouse Estate Farmlands.

Shade Oak Stud.
Stud Farm and listed building.

Noneley Hall Farmhouse.
Listed building.

Sleep Airfield.
Shropshire Aero Club.

Rednal Airfield.
Disused, now used as industrial and commercial site.

Wycherley Hall.
Grade II* listed building.
Private, not open to public.

Stanwardine Hall.
Listed buildings and Stanwardine in the Wood moated site. Scheduled monument. Gardens noted by Parks & Gardens UK web resource Shropshire Park & Gardens Trust.

OSWESTRY

WEM

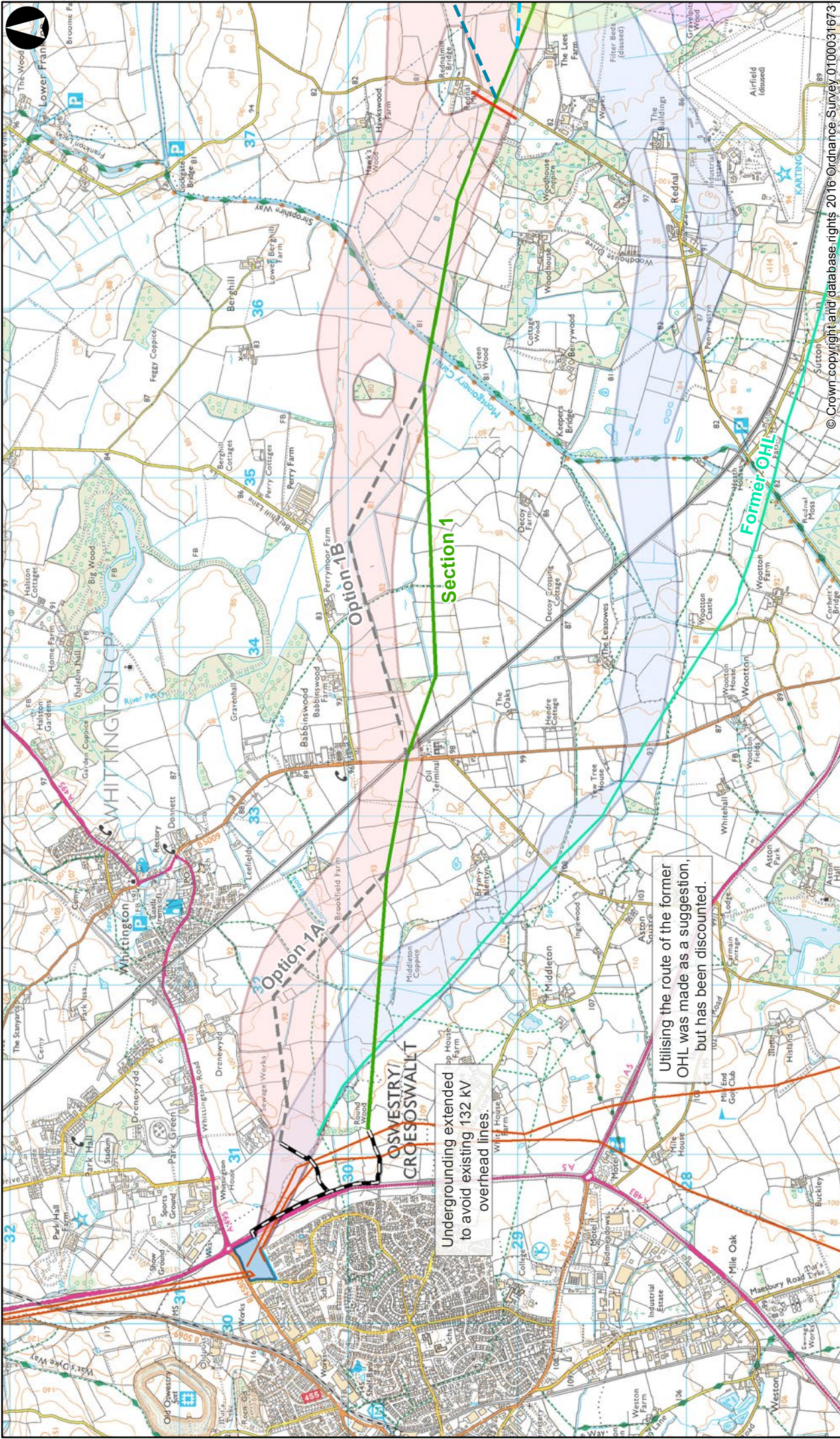
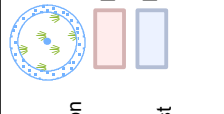


FIGURE 3.1
PREFERRED LINE ROUTE AND OPTIONS WITH ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS SECTION 1

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Key:

Consultation Route Options	Option 3E	Section Outlines	Centre Point Irrigation Systems
Preferred Line Route	Option 3F	Oswestry Substation	Route Option Red Corridor
Alternative Line Routes	Option 2A	Wern Substation	Route Option Blue Corridor
Potential Undergrounding	Option 2B	Area of Bird Interest	
SPEN Former OHL	Option 3D		
SPEN 132 KV OHL	Option 4C		
	Option 4D		

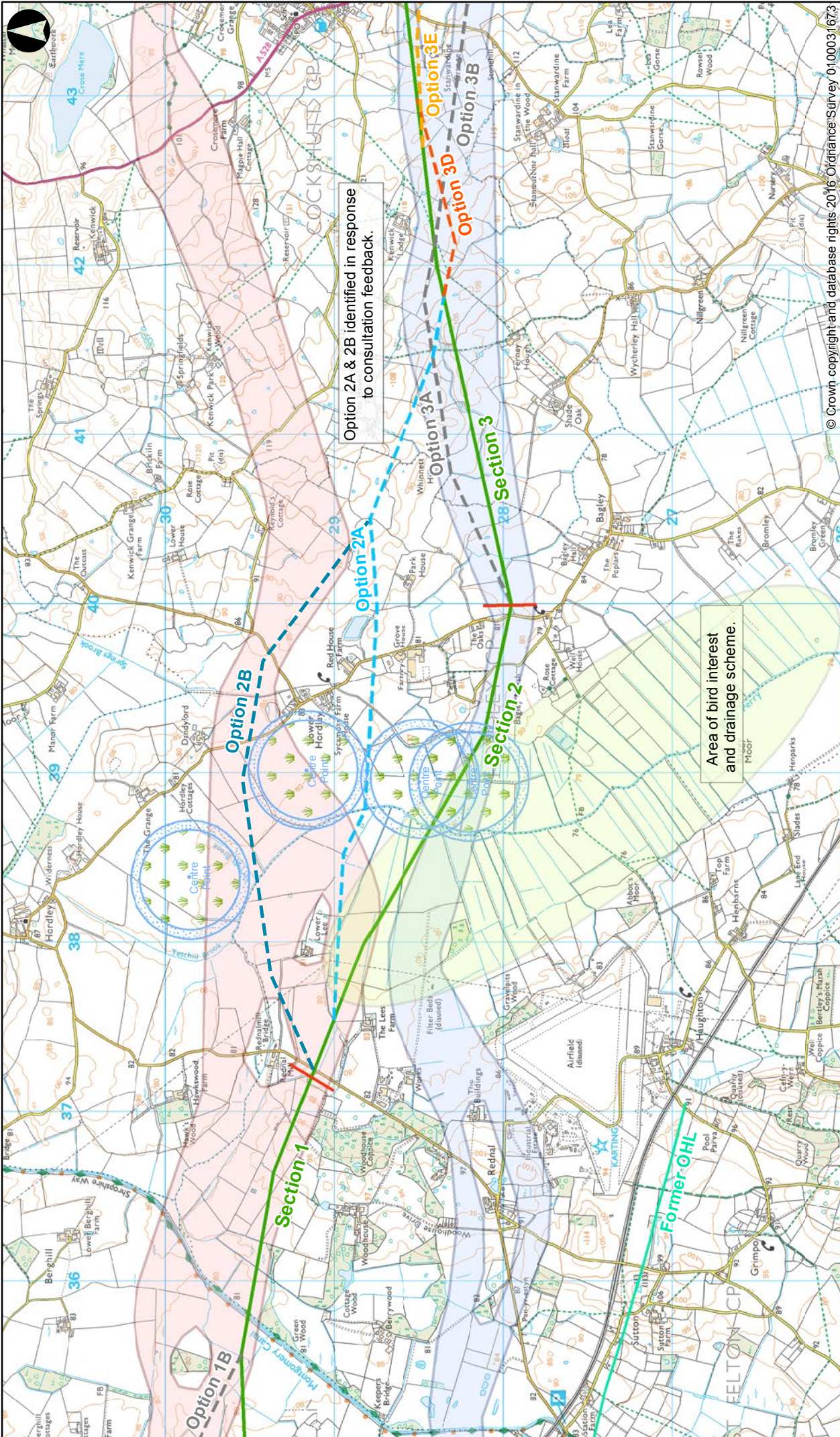


FIGURE 3.2
PREFERRED LINE ROUTE AND OPTIONS WITH ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS SECTION 2

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Key:

Consultation Route Options	Option 3E	Section Cutlines	Centre Point Irrigation Systems
Preferred Line Route	Option 3F	Oswestry Substation	Route Option Red Corridor
Alternative Line Routes	Option 4B	Wem Substation	Route Option Blue Corridor
Potential Undergrounding	Option 4C	Area of Bird Interest	
SPEN Former OHL	Option 4D		
SPEN 132 KV OHL			

Scale: 1:30,000 @A4

GILLESPIES

SP ENERGY NETWORKS

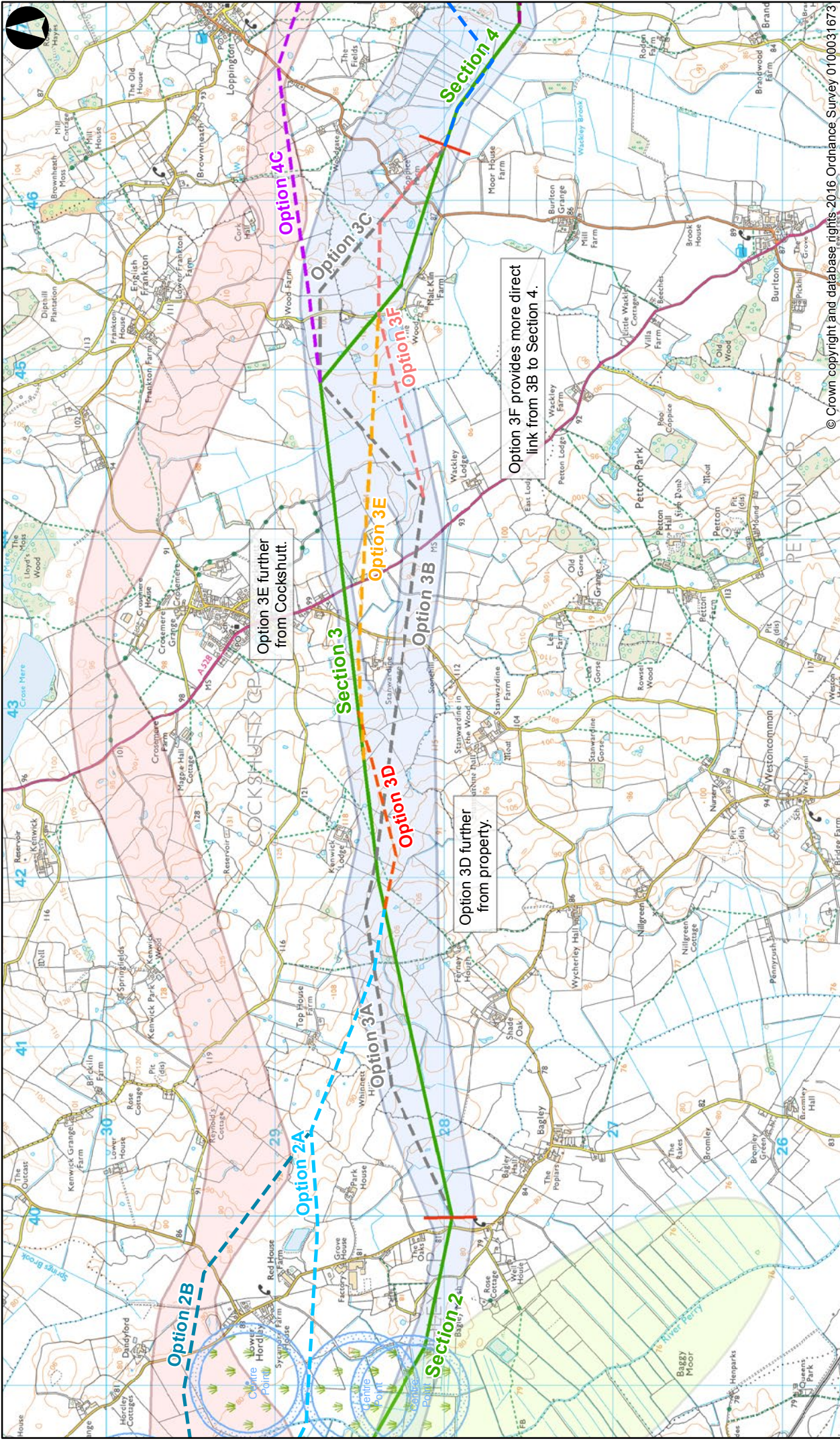


FIGURE 3.3
 PREFERRED LINE ROUTE
 AND OPTIONS WITH
 ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS
 SECTION 3

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SP ENERGY NETWORKS

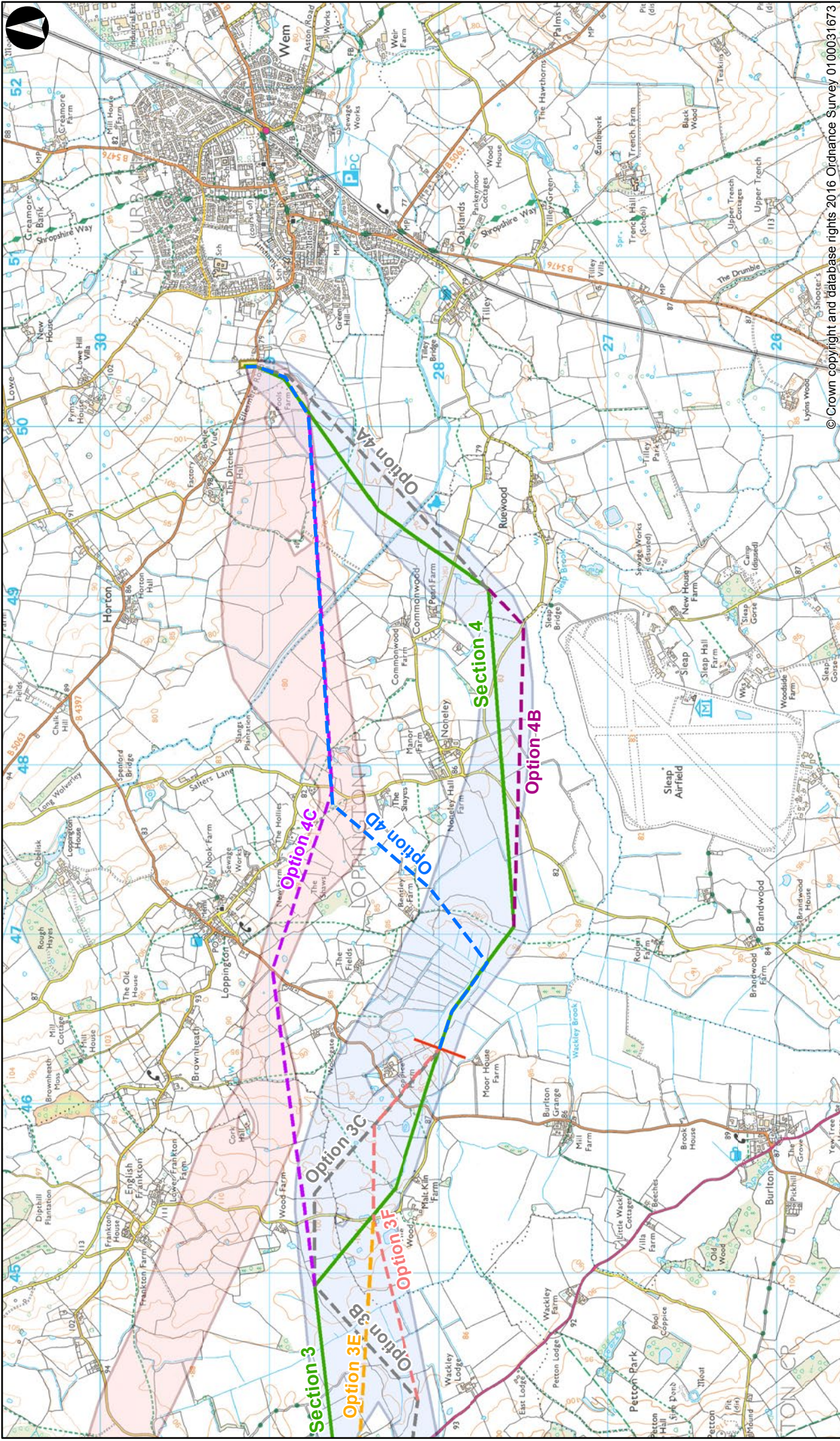
GILLESPIES

Scale: 1:30,000 @A4

0 0.25 0.5 1 km

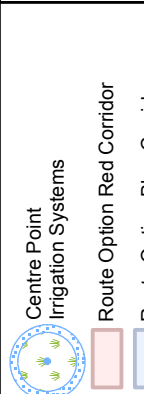
Key:

Consultation Route Options	Option 3E	Section Outlines	Centre Point Irrigation Systems
Preferred Line Route	Option 3F	Oswestry Substation	Route Option Red Corridor
Alternative Line Routes	Option 4B	Wem Substation	Route Option Blue Corridor
Potential Undergrounding	Option 4C	Area of Bird Interest	
SPEN Former OHL	Option 4D		
SPEN 132 KV OHL			



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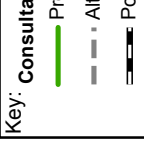
FIGURE 3.4
PREFERRED LINE ROUTE
AND OPTIONS WITH
ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS
SECTION 4

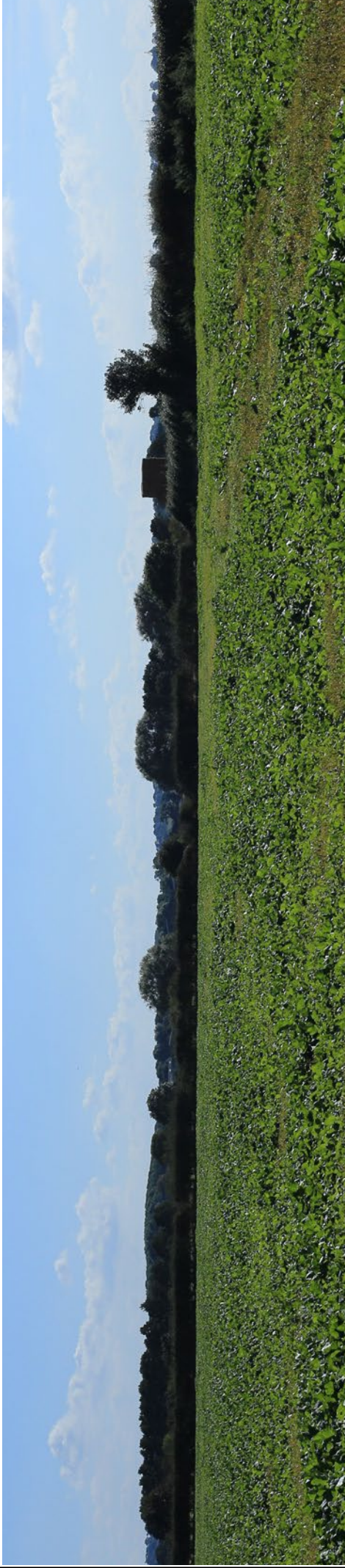


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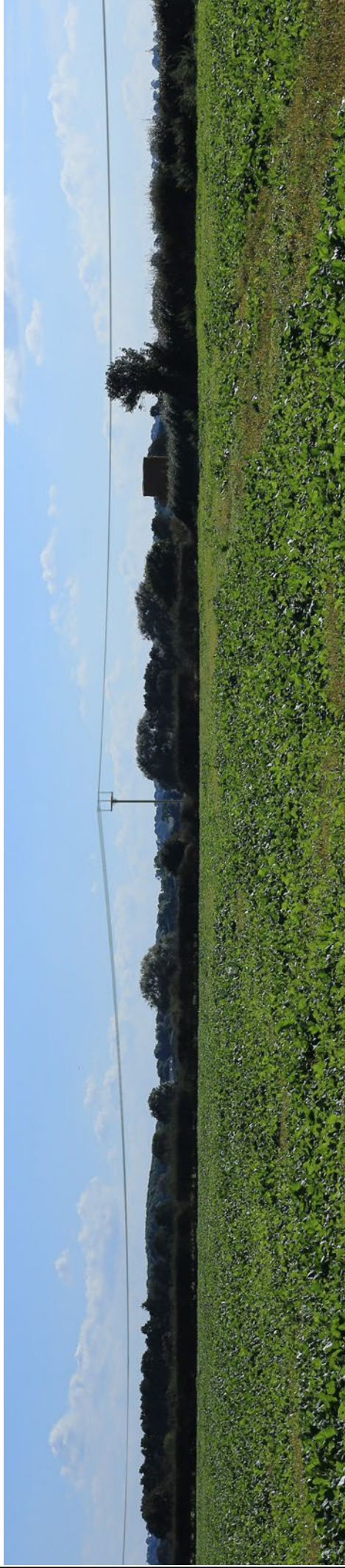
	Consultation Route Options		Option 3E		Section Outlines		Centre Point
	Preferred Line Route		Option 3F				Irrigation Systems
	Alternative Line Routes		Option 4A				Route Option Red Corridor
	Potential Undergrounding		Option 4B				Route Option Blue Corridor
	SPEN Former OHL		Option 4C				
	SPEN 132 KV OHL		Option 4D				

	Post Consultation Route Options		Oswestry Substation
	Option 2A		Wem Substation
	Option 2B		Area of Bird Interest
	Option 3D		





Existing View



Proposed View

Visualisations were based on single shot photography, taken from the edge of Noneley Village, approx. 320m from the proposed line (Section 4B) - produced to industry recognised standards.

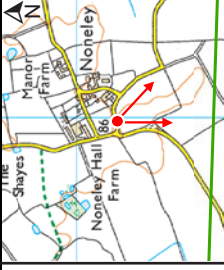


FIGURE 3.5
INDICATIVE
PHOTOMONTAGE:
EXISTING AND
PROPOSED VIEW
FROM NONELEY



GILLESPIES

Red dot marks location of the Viewpoint and direction of view.
Green line is the Proposed Route.

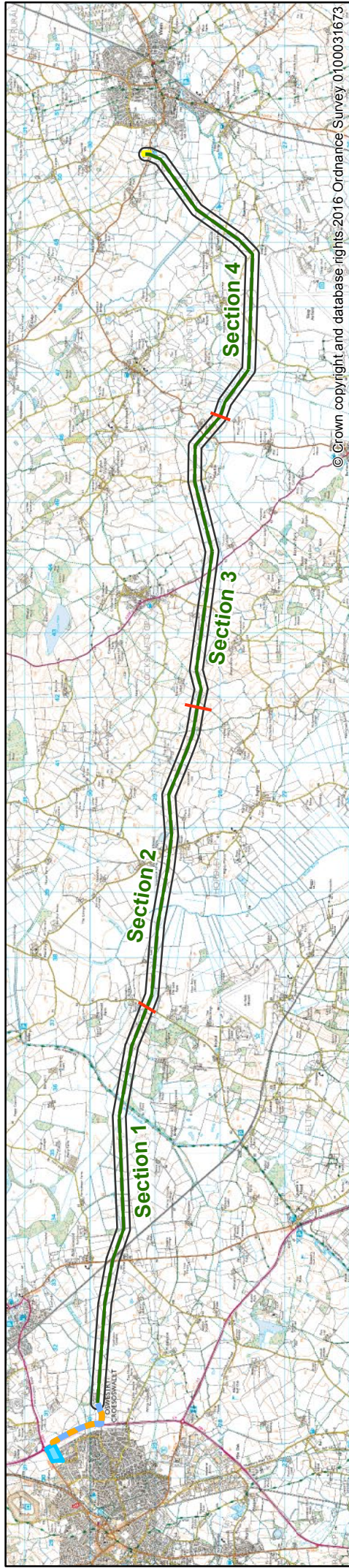
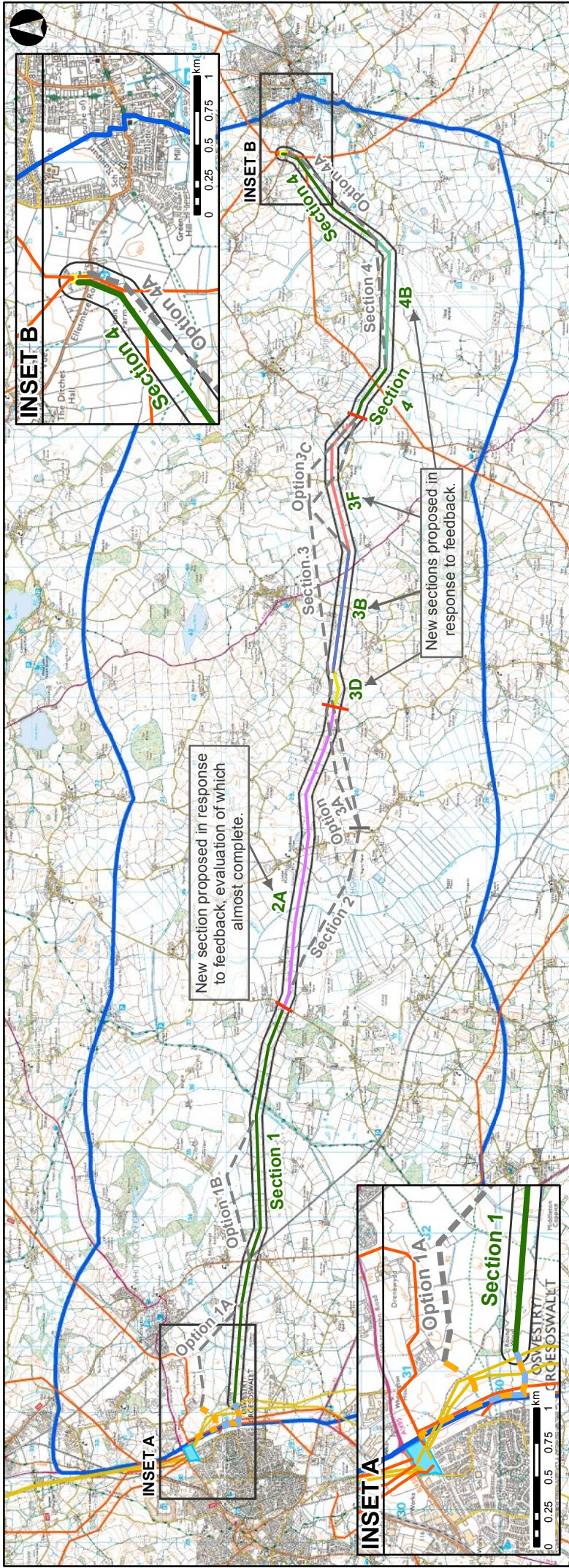


FIGURE 4.1
PREFERRED ROUTE AT
CONSULTATION STAGE AND
PROPOSED LINE ROUTE

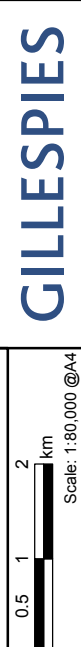
	Proposed Route		Wern Substation
	3B		Proposed Route Section
	Previously Preferred Route and Alternative Routes		Proposed Route 100m Buffer
	2A		Consultation Zone
	3D		Oswestry Substation
	Initial Underground Option		Oswestry Substation
	Extended Underground		Oswestry Substation
	Option		Oswestry Substation

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FIGURE 4.2
PROPOSED LINE ROUTE
 NOVEMBER 2016



- Key:**
- Proposed Route
 - Initial Underground Route Option
 - Proposed Route 100m Buffer
 - Section Cutlines
 - Oswestry Substation
 - Wern Substation



GILLESPIES