

## Loch Ard Forest Central &amp; South



275 kV overhead line passing through the Loch Ard Forest

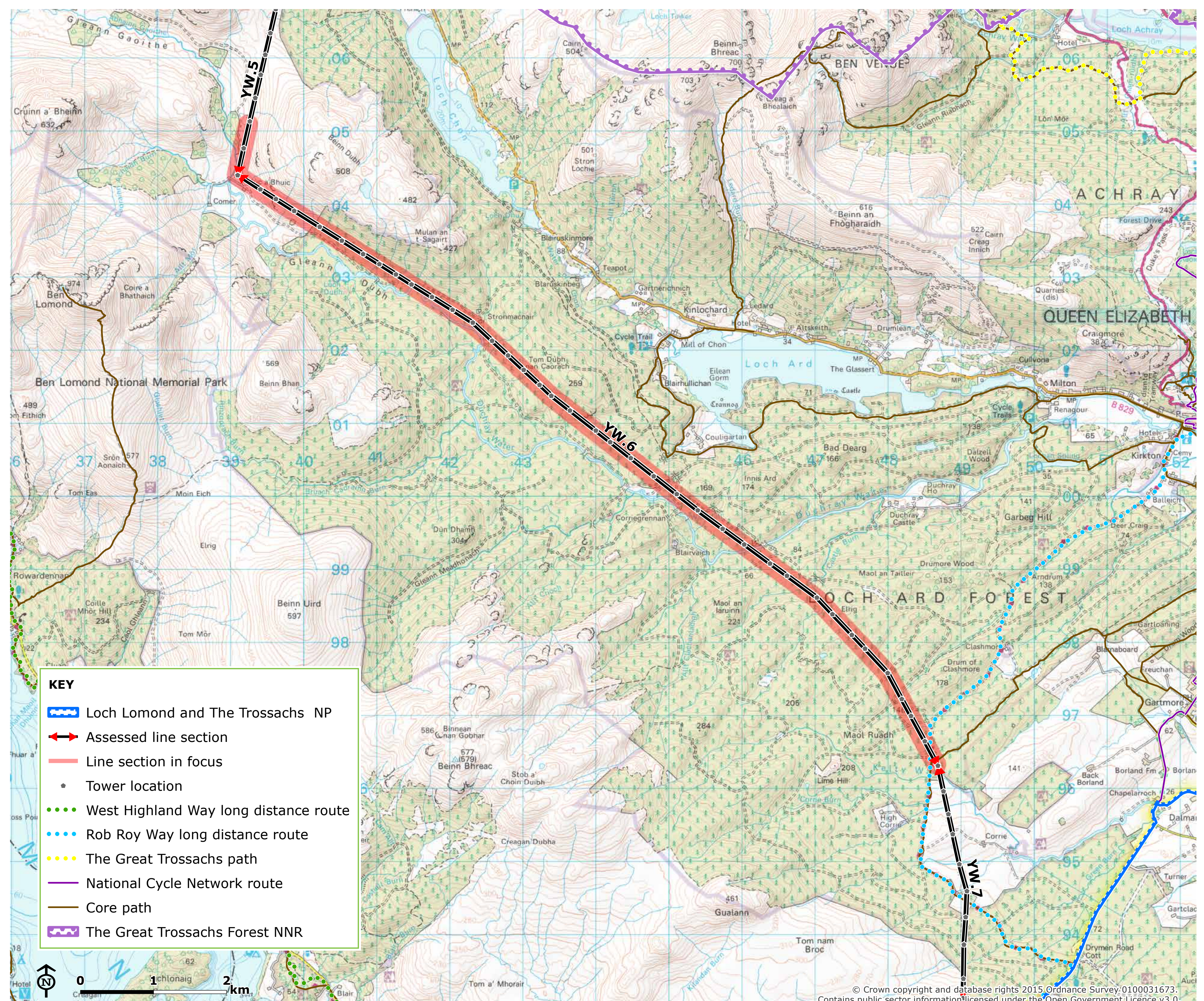
## Landscape and visual context

This section of the overhead line passes through Loch Ard Forest, a rolling, forested plateau crossed by small burns e.g. the Duchray Water. The forest is relatively inaccessible, except for forestry / water board tracks and mountain biking trails. There are some areas of semi-natural and planted broadleaved woodland e.g. Blairvaich Wood, and some heather moorland. The forest has a rugged backdrop of hills to the south and west, including Beinn Bhreac (579 m AOD) and Ben Lomond (974 m AOD). The Rob Roy Way crosses under the line south of Drum of Clashmore at the south eastern end of the section.

## Landscape and visual impacts

The pylons appear out of scale with the coniferous plantations and diminish the scale of the rugged backdrop of hills including Ben Lomond and other landmark hills. In the south east the pylons appear out of scale with other features e.g. the aqueducts and small scale knolls and ridges, but are sited lower within the forest and are therefore better integrated. Overall the landscape impact is **Medium**.

In the south east, views of the line are restricted to glimpses from forest tracks. Elsewhere the forestry provides effective screening of the line, however where the forest track is more elevated and the forest structure more open prolonged views of the line are possible, including from the Rob Roy Way. This section of line detracts from views of Ben Lomond. Overall the visual impact is **High**.



## Mitigation proposals



## Landscape enhancement

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Restructuring of forestry, tied into a management plan and access strategy for the Loch Ard Forest in order to maintain and improve screening of the overhead line provided by forestry and deciduous woodland. Coupled with improvement of access (circular routes for walking/mountain biking) and softening of wayleaves through the forest. Possible access route along the linear route of the Loch Katrine water project (aqueduct/pipeline) – the 'Utilities Spine route' back to Glasgow / potential cultural heritage link/new long distance footpath/cycle route with linked nodes along route (50 years. of Cruachan celebration).