



Millmoor Rig Wind Farm 132kV Overhead Line Grid Connection

Routeing and Consultation Document

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CONTROL SHEET

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

This document has been prepared by EnviroCentre and MVGLA on behalf of SP Energy Networks (SPEN). It relates to the identification and appraisal of route options for a new 132 kilovolt (kV) overhead line (OHL) supported on wood poles from Hawick 132kV substation to Millmoor Rig Wind Farm, located within the administrative boundary of Scottish Borders Council. The construction and operation of the new 132kV OHL is hereby referred to as the 'Millmoor Rig Wind Farm 132kV Overhead Line Grid Connection Project'.

This report presents the methodology adopted for routeing the new OHL, culminating with the description of the 'proposed route'. This report also sets out the process for the consultation which will be undertaken. This process is designed to gather feedback from stakeholders, including the public, to inform the subsequent stages of the Millmoor Rig Wind Farm 132kV Overhead Line Grid Connection Project.

1.2 Need of the Project

There is ongoing substantial interest for renewable energy generation development and SPEN continues to receive associated grid connection requests via NESO from developers wishing to develop such renewable energy schemes. An application has been received from NESO to connect Millmoor Rig Wind Farm to the existing Hawick substation in the Scottish Borders Council area.

1.3 Legal Framework

1.3.1 Legislations and Regulations

The overarching legislation in relation to generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity is the Electricity Act 1989¹. Consent is required under Section 37 of the Electricity Act to install and operate overhead power lines and associated ancillary development with applications being processed by the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) on behalf of the Scottish Ministers.

The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017² (the EIA Regs) defines whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required to accompany any Section 37 application.

On granting Section 37 consent, the Scottish Ministers may direct that planning permission for that development shall be deemed to be granted (in terms of Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997)³, subject to such conditions (if any) as may be specified in the direction.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/contents>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/101/contents>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/8/contents>

Section 37(2) of the Electricity Act provides certain exemptions from the consenting procedures with the Overhead Lines (Exemption) (Scotland) Regulations 2013⁴ (OHL Exemption Regs) specifically defining exemptions for certain minor works to overhead lines.

1.3.2 Policy

National Planning Framework (NPF) 4

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)⁵ sets out Scotland's national spatial strategy. Policy 11 Energy of NPF4 states that the policy is intended -

“to encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore. This includes energy generation, storage, new and replacement transmission and distribution infrastructure and emerging low-carbon and zero emissions technologies including hydrogen and carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS).”

It further states that,

“(a) Development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported. These include: . . .

ii. enabling works, such as grid transmission and distribution infrastructure;”

Scottish Borders Adopted Local Development Plan 2

The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP2)⁶ was adopted on 22 August 2024. Policy Economic Development (ED) 9: Renewable Energy Development states that:

“Development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported. These include:

ii. enabling works, such as grid transmission and distribution infrastructure.

Development proposals will be assessed in accordance with NPF4 Policy 11 paragraphs b) to f) and other relevant provisions of NPF4.”

1.3.3 SPEN's Statutory and Licence Duties

As transmission licence holder for southern Scotland, SPEN⁷ are required under Section 9(2) of the Electricity Act 1989 to:

- Develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission; and
- Facilitate competition in the supply and generation of electricity.

SPEN are required in terms of its statutory and licence obligations to provide for new electricity generators wanting to connect to the transmission system in its licence area. SPEN are also obliged to

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/264/contents/made>

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/02/national-planning-framework-4/documents/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/govscot%3Adocument/national-planning-framework-4.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/12939/adopted-ldp2-volume-1-policies>

⁷ SPEN owns and operates the electricity transmission and distribution networks in central and southern Scotland through its wholly-owned subsidiaries SP Transmission plc (SPT) and SP Distribution plc (SPD). SP Transmission plc is the holder of a transmission licence.

ensure its transmission system are available to support these purposes and to ensure that the systems are fit for purpose through appropriate reinforcements to accommodate the contracted capacity.

Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act imposes a further statutory duty on SPEN to take account of the following factors in formulating proposals for the installation of overhead transmission lines.

- *(a) to have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features or special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and*
- *(b) to do what it reasonably can to mitigate any effects which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects."*

SPEN's 'Schedule 9 Statement' sets out how it will meet the duty placed upon them under Schedule 9. The Statement also refers to the application of best practice methods to assess the environmental impacts of proposals and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.

In summary of the above, SPEN are required to identify electrical connections that meet the technical requirements of the electricity system, which are economically viable, and cause on balance, the least disturbance to both the environment and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

1.4 The Development and Consenting Process

The project comprises five key phases:

- Phase One: Routeing and Consultation;
- Phase Two: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening;
- Phase Three: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)/Environmental Appraisal;
- Phase Four: Schedule of Mitigation; and
- Phase Five: Application for Consent.

1.4.1 Phase One: Routeing and Consultation

This report relates to Phase One, which comprises a review of environmental, technical and economic considerations and the application of established step-by-step routeing principles to identify and appraise potential route options to establish a 'proposed route' for the OHL.

SPEN are committed to ongoing consultation with interested parties, including statutory and non-statutory consultees and local communities. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to consult during the early routeing stages, SPEN nonetheless considers it good practice to introduce consultation at this stage.

All responses to the consultation process will be evaluated and the 'proposed route' confirmed for progression to the next stage.

1.4.2 Phase Two: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

As the project comprises an '*electric line installed above ground with a voltage of 132 kilovolts or more*', the Millmoor Rig Wind Farm 132kV Overhead Line Connection Project may be considered an 'EIA development' under Schedule 2 of The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations').

Following confirmation of the proposed route, SPEN would submit a request for an EIA Screening Opinion to the Scottish Ministers in accordance with Regulation 8(1) of the EIA Regulations. The request would be accompanied by the relevant information in accordance with Regulation 8(2) and 8(3) and would take into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 and the findings of the work undertaken as part of the routeing process.

The Scottish Ministers would consult the planning authority with regards to the project. Depending on the nature of the project, environmental designations or sensitivities within the proximity of the project, the Scottish Ministers may also seek advice from environmental agencies (NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, and Historic Environment Scotland) and other consultees.

Considering the advice from the planning authority and other consultees, the Scottish Minister would adopt a Screening Opinion and would share with the applicant.

1.4.3 Phase Three: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)/ Environmental Appraisal

Should the Scottish Ministers determine that the project is an EIA development and that subsequent provisions of the EIA Regulations apply, SPEN would follow the EIA process, with the topics requiring further consideration to be agreed with consultees through the EIA Scoping process. Further from this, SPEN would then prepare an 'EIA Report'.

Should the Scottish Ministers determine that EIA is not required, then an 'Environmental Appraisal' will be undertaken.

1.4.4 Phase Four: Schedule of Mitigation

A Schedule of Mitigation will be included regardless of whether the project requires EIA, or not. This will collate the various mitigation measures identified in the individual assessment chapters.

1.4.5 Phase Five: Application for Consent

SPEN will apply to the Scottish Ministers for consent under Section 37 of the Electricity Act, as amended, to install and keep installed, the proposed OHL identified above. In conjunction with the Section 37 application, SPEN will apply for deemed planning permission for the OHL under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, for any ancillary development such as access tracks or substation facilitation works. The EIA Report/Environmental Appraisal will accompany the application as relevant.

1.5 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is an important component of the Scottish planning and consenting process. Legislation and government guidance aim to ensure that the public, local communities, statutory bodies and other consultees or interested parties have the opportunity to have their views considered throughout the planning process.

SPEN recognises the importance of consulting effectively on proposals, through transparency of decisions and balance in feedback on decisions reached. SPEN are keen to engage with key stakeholders including local communities and others who may have an interest in Millmoor Rig Wind Farm 132kV Overhead Line Connection Project. This engagement process begins at the early stages of the development of a project and continues into construction once consent has been granted.

SPEN's approach to stakeholder engagement for major electrical infrastructure projects is outlined in Chapter 2 of the SPEN document 'Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment'⁸. SPEN aims to ensure effective, inclusive and meaningful engagement with the public, local communities, statutory and other consultees and interested parties through four key engagement steps:

- **Pre-project notification and engagement:** Discussions are undertaken with consenting bodies, planning authorities, and statutory consultees such as NatureScot and Scottish Forestry. Early and proactive engagement enables the views of these consultees to inform project design, assessment methodologies and further engagement. It also provides consultees with an early understanding of the likely programme to submission of the application for consent.
- **Information gathering:** To inform the routeing stage, information on relevant environmental and planning considerations and proposed data gathering techniques (e.g. for seasonal ecological surveys) are requested from statutory consultees and other relevant organisations.
- **Obtaining feedback on emerging route options:** This Routeing and Consultation document has been prepared to gather feedback on the emerging project details. It will be issued to statutory consultees, and made available on SPEN's website, with its availability advertised in the press. Local exhibitions and/or public meetings will be arranged.
- **The EIA/EA stage:** The results of stakeholder engagement are taken into consideration and used to confirm the 'proposed route' for progression to EIA or EA as required.

The main purpose of the EIA is to identify the significant effects arising from a project. Further consultation is carried out during the EIA stage, including additional information gathering, and the preparation of a publicly available Scoping Report which accompanies a 'Request for a Scoping Opinion' to the consenting authority as to the information to be provided in the EIA Report.

The main purpose of the Environmental Appraisal (EA) is to identify and report the potential environmental effects of the project. Further consultation is carried out during finalisation of the proposed alignment for the proposed OHL development. The EA would also provide mitigation measures to address the potential environmental effects.

In addition, and as noted above, SPEN as a holder of a transmission licence, has a duty under section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989, when formulating proposals for the new electricity lines and other transmission development, to have regard to the effect of work on communities, in addition to the desirability of the preservation of amenity, the natural environment, cultural heritage, landscape and visual quality.

1.6 Report Structure

The report comprises the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: Introduction;
- Chapter 2: Project Description;
- Chapter 3: Approach to Routeing;
- Chapter 4: Identification of the Proposed Route; and
- Chapter 5: Consultation Process and Next Steps

⁸ SPEN_Approach_to_Routeing_Document_2nd_version.pdf

This report is also supported by figures and appendices which are referenced throughout.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 The Grid Connection

The project comprises a new 132kV Overhead Line to connect the proposed Wind Farm (NT 63606 06978) to Hawick substation (NT 49365 15738). Location of both end points of the proposed OHL is shown in Figure No. 01, Appendix A.

As Hawick is situated between the two end points, the OHL route will be either to the east or west of the town.

2.2 Overhead Line Infrastructure

OHLs transmit electricity by conductors/wires which are suspended at a specified height above ground and supported by wood poles or steel towers, spaced at intervals.

The conductors will be made of either aluminium or steel strands. The proposed grid connection would include a 132kV single circuit.

Conductors are strung from insulators attached to the steelwork at the top of the poles and prevent the electric current from crossing to the relevant support.

2.2.1 Wood Pole Structure

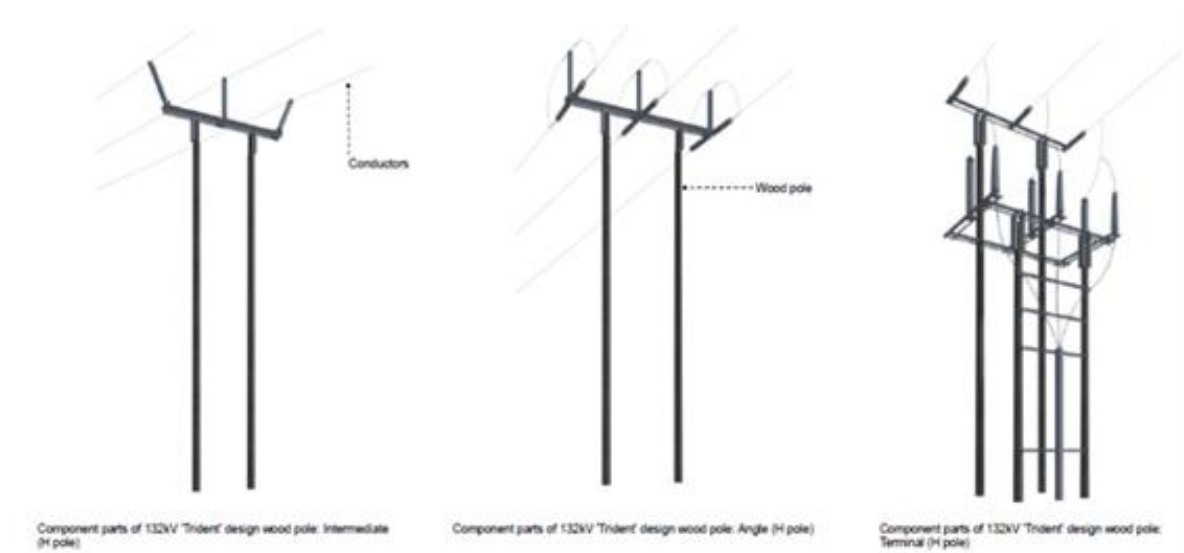
The proposed overhead line will be constructed using the Trident wood pole design. The 'Trident' OHL design specification is a UK Electricity Industry Design Standard and the final designation of pole type is generally dependant on three main factors:

- 1) altitude;
- 2) weather; and
- 3) the topography of the route.

The proposed wood pole will support three conductors (wires). The Trident wood pole design does not include a separate earth wire, as it is earthed at each end of the line and the telecommunications wire is included within one of the conductors.

There are three types of wood pole structure, in terms of appearance as described below and shown in Sketch 1.

- *Intermediate*: where the pole structure is part of a straight-line section;
- *Angle*: where there is a horizontal or vertical deviation in line direction of a specified number of degrees; and
- *Terminal*: where the overhead line terminates into a substation or on to an underground cable section via a separate cable sealing end compound of platform.



Sketch 1: Wooden Pole design

2.2.2 Wood Pole Heights and Span Lengths

The standard height of Trident wood poles varies from 11m to 16m above ground level.

The section of OHL between wood poles is known as the 'span', with the distance between them known as the 'span length'. Span lengths between wood poles average between 80 and 100m but can be increased if there is a requirement to span a larger distance due to the presence of a feature in landscape.

The size of poles and span lengths will vary depending on altitude, weather and topography, with poles being closer together at high altitudes to withstand the effects of greater exposure to high winds, ice and other weather events. The pole configuration, height and the distance between poles will therefore only be fully determined after a detailed line survey.

2.2.3 Wood Pole Colouring

Wood poles are dark brown in colour when first erected and weather to a silver/grey after a period of about five years.

The wood pole top cross-arms are galvanised steel and support the aluminium conductors on stacks of grey insulator discs. Both the steelwork and aluminium will weather and darken after a few years.

2.2.4 Wood Pole Locations & Servitude Corridor

Following identification of the Proposed Route for the new line, a detailed topographical survey will be carried out. This is required to identify the proposed positions and heights of each individual tower and wood pole. Site surveys to examine the subsoil conditions will also be carried out at proposed tower and wood pole positions where required. These will inform the tower foundation designs.

An Infrastructure Location Allowance (ILA) will be requested as part of the application for Section 37 consent to allow an appropriate degree of flexibility during construction, should insurmountable constraints be found at the site.

A wayleave agreement will be sought to secure access rights to the overhead line and to secure a level of resilience from trees and new buildings during its operational period. This servitude corridor will be 60m wide, 30m either side of the OHL.

2.3 Construction Process

2.3.1 Wood Pole Construction

The construction of the OHL will follow a well-established sequence of activities as outlined below:

- Preparation of access tracks;
- Excavation of foundations;
- Delivery of poles;
- Erection of poles;
- Delivery of conductor drums and stringing equipment;
- Insulators and conductor erection and tensioning; and
- Clearance and reinstatement

Prior to constructing the OHL, temporary working areas around each pole location will be required for foundation excavation and pole erection. Any vegetation present within the foundation footprint will be removed or lopped.

The erection of the wood poles will require a small excavation to allow the pole brace block and/or steel foundation braces to be positioned in place. A typical pole excavation will be 3m² by 2m deep. The excavated material will be sorted and stored and used for backfilling purposes.

Poles are erected in section, i.e. between angle support poles and/or terminal support pole. The insulator fittings and wood poles forming the pole support, will be assembled local to the pole site and fitted into position utilising the tracked excavator which excavated the foundations. The pole foundation holes will then be backfilled, and the pole stay wire supports attached to the ground in preparation for conductor stringing, erection and tensioning.

2.3.2 Access

Temporary access to all pole locations will be taken from the existing main road network wherever feasible, with the use of selected unclassified roads also likely to be required. The use of existing tracks and watercourse crossings will be maximised, with the upgrading of these where necessary.

The initial preference when taking temporary access is to use low ground pressure vehicles and plant. Where access is required to be taken through any sensitive areas, other less intrusive methods such as temporary steel matting, or timber roadways may be employed.

The use of temporary stone tracks is normally minimal for wood pole connections. All temporary tracks will be removed after commissioning with land being restored to its former condition.

2.3.3 Temporary Working

Temporary working areas will be required for the duration of the construction works. These are roped off areas of land. No areas of hardstanding or changes to the land composition are proposed as part of this. Temporary vehicular access is required to every pole location. Wood pole locations will have a

working area of approximately 30m x 15m and could also extend to accommodate conductor pulling if required.

In some cases, the shape or size of the working area will be determined by nearby environmental or land use constraints, identified prior to construction. Each working area will be taped off to delineate the area for environmental protection reasons.

Following the completion of the construction works, the temporary working areas will be reinstated and restored to former conditions.

2.3.4 Construction Timescales

Construction and erection of a standard single pole generally takes approximately half a day depending on ground conditions and location, i.e. it may take more hours if the ground is softer. Angle poles can also take longer due to the need for 'stay wires' to stabilise the pole in the ground.

The final construction schedule for the wind farm connection will be confirmed at the detailed design phase, once statutory approvals are granted, and all required land agreements are in place.

2.3.5 Operation and Maintenance

OHLs are designed for durability, requiring only minimal maintenance to remain in optimal condition. Routine inspections of the wooden poles are conducted to detect early signs of wear or deterioration, allowing for timely repairs or replacements that uphold the safety and integrity of the connection. OHL cables generally require refurbishment after approximately 40 years. Wooden pole damage could lead to potential bird nesting and bat roosting sites within the operational period of the OHL. Inspections of the poles would be carried out prior to any refurbishment works to identify any nesting/roosting potential.

Any felled wayleave areas will also have to be managed to maintain the required clearances whilst the connection remains in service. Walkover surveys or flyovers will identify where there is a requirement to clear wayleaves of new growth. Line marking should be considered to avoid avian collisions in sensitive areas (as identified during appropriate vantage point surveys).

2.3.6 Decommissioning

When the operational life of the Proposed Development comes to an end, it is possible that the line may be re-equipped with new conductors, insulators and refurbished. Alternatively, the OHL may be decommissioned fully.

Upon decommissioning of the Proposed Development, the wood poles will be removed in their entirety, with components re-used where possible.

Connections are usually required on an enduring basis but when an OHL is scheduled for decommissioning, a thorough and established dismantling process is followed to ensure minimal environmental impact.

3 APPROACH TO ROUTEING

3.1 Objective

The aim of this study is to identify a technically feasible and economically viable route for a continuous 132kV overhead line connection, supported on wood poles from the proposed point of connection from Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Substation to Hawick Substation. This route should, on balance, cause the least disturbance to the environment and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

3.2 Routeing Principles

In June 2021, SPEN published the second version of its Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment document outlining the approach taken to routeing transmission infrastructure.⁹ This approach has been applied to the routeing of the overhead line connection for Millmoor Rig Wind Farm. The principles informing the routeing process can be divided in environmental, technical and economic considerations.

Under the Electricity Act, SPEN are required to consider technical, economic and environmental matters, and reach a balance between them. This means that the proposed route will be the one, selected after an appraisal of a number of route options, which balances technical feasibility and economic viability with the least disturbance to the environment and to people. Following engagement with relevant stakeholders, including local communities, professional judgement is used to establish the balance between landscape, biodiversity, environmental issues and people. Depending on the nature and scale of a project, there may be multiple stages of consultation to develop and inform the selection of a proposed route.

3.3 Methodology

This study follows the approach to routeing studies as developed and updated over the years by SPEN. It is structured and executed as set out in SPEN's published guidance. An integral part of this approach is the Holford Rules, developed specifically for the purpose of routeing overhead lines by Lord Holford in 1959, and updated and reviewed for application in Scotland in 2003.

In outline the Holford Rules are as follows:

- Rule 1: avoid altogether major areas of highest amenity value;
- Rule 2: avoid smaller areas of highest amenity value or scientific interest by deviation;
- Rule 3: choose the most direct line;
- Rule 4: choose tree and hill backgrounds in preference to sky backgrounds;
- Rule 5: prefer moderately open valleys with woods;
- Rule 6: in flat, open country, keep the high voltage lines independent of other electricity infrastructure to avoid concentration or 'wirescape'; and
- Rule 7: approach urban areas through industrial zones, where necessary considering undergrounding.

⁹ SPEN_Approach_to_Routeing_Document_2nd_version.pdf

The Holford Rules are focused mainly on landscape amenity. In order to adequately address the importance of visual receptors, SPEN's guidance document includes three additional notes¹⁰ :

- Avoid routeing close to residential areas as far as possible on grounds of general amenity;
- In rural areas avoid as far as possible dominating isolated houses, farms or other small-scale settlements; and
- Minimise the visual effect perceived by users of roads and public rights of way, paying particular attention to the effects of recreational, tourist and other well used routes.

3.4 Routeing Strategy

In practice, the routeing strategy will be structured as follows:

- Stage 1: Identification of Study Area;
- Stage 2: Identification and Mapping of Major Areas of High Amenity Value (Holford Rule 1);
- Stage 3 Identification of Strategic Corridor;
- Stage 4 Identification and Mapping of Smaller Areas of High Amenity Value or Scientific Interest (Holford Rule 2);
- Stage 5 Identification of Route Options;
- Stage 6 Appraisal of Route Options; and
- Stage 7: Selection of Proposed Route

The preferred route is then subject to public consultation. Following consideration of feedback from the consultation process, a final proposed route is established. Pole locations are then plotted within this proposed route and are subject to additional public consultation and refinement through discussion with landowners, subject to being consistent with SPEN's approach to routeing.

This structure allows for an efficient but thorough process ultimately underpinning the proposed route. As has been set out in detail in the SPEN approach to routeing, the proposed route should on balance inform the optimal line route option. Holford Rules 1 and 2 are mentioned explicitly in Steps 1 and 2, because the hierarchy of amenity values ties in logically with the structure of the study. The other five Holford Rules may be relevant in more than one stage and will be taken into consideration as required.

¹⁰ SP Energy Networks: Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment, Appendix 4.

4 IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROPOSED ROUTE

4.1 Stage 1: Identification of Study Area

4.1.1 The Study Area Defined

The study area was defined by considering the connection point locations and local topography taking into account that there was sufficient area to accommodate all likely route options.

A desk-based review for the presence of sensitive environmental features was also undertaken to establish if any were present within or adjacent to the study area. The gathered information set the study area boundary as shown in Figure No 02, Appendix A.

4.1.2 Study Area Description

The Study Area is located within the Scottish Borders Council boundary. The main settlement in the area is Hawick which is situated on the banks of the River Teviot. This river flows in a southwest to northeast direction before it joins the River Tweed at Kelso.

The main route is the A7 which runs through Hawick connecting Selkirk in the north with the M6 at Carlisle to the southwest. Other roads of note within the area are the A698 connecting Hawick with Jedburgh and the A68 to the east and the A6088 which connects to the A68 at the Scottish/English border to the southeast. Minor roads which form the local road network generally follow the flat valley floors.

Away from Hawick, the area is relatively rural with the distribution of settlements largely coinciding with that of the local road network. The upland and forested areas in the south and east are sparsely populated.

Across the study area, the existing transmission network consists of an overhead line supported by steel lattice towers to the west of Hawick. Other overhead lines, found throughout the study area, are lower voltage distribution lines supported on wood poles.

4.2 Stage 2: Identification and Mapping of Major Areas of High Amenity Value (Holford Rule 1)

The routeing study followed the 'Approach to Routeing and Environmental Impact Assessment' and as a first step, a desktop review of constraints was undertaken. Based on mapping and reviewing the constraints in accordance with the Holford Rules, the areas of highest amenity value within the study area were avoided. The following nationally and internationally designated sites were considered within the study:

- National Scenic Areas (NSAs);
- Ramsar sites;
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs);
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
- National Nature Reserves (NNRs);

- World Heritage Sites (WHS);
- Scheduled Monuments;
- Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs);
- Grade A Listed Buildings; and
- Battlefields.

The figure showing all the constraints in the area is provided as Figure No. 03, Appendix A.

4.3 Stage 3 Identification of Strategic Corridor

Having identified which sections of the study area need to be avoided according to Holford Rule 1, we have identified the Strategic Corridor, illustrated on Figure No.04, Appendix A. The routeing objective of defining the optimal routes which are technically feasible, economically viable whilst having minimal disturbance as possible to the environment and people was taken into consideration when defining the strategic corridor.

4.4 Stage 4 Identification and Mapping of Smaller Areas of High Amenity Value or Scientific Interest (Holford Rule 2)

Having identified the Strategic Corridor, Stage 4 of the routing study identifies and maps smaller areas of high amenity value or scientific interest (Holford Rule 2). The following designated areas have been included in the study:

- Local Landscape Areas (LLAs);
- Nature Reserves;
- Special Landscape Areas (SLAs);
- Regional Parks;
- Country Parks;
- Conservation Areas;
- Local Nature Conservation Sites;
- Ancient Woodland Index (AWI); and
- National Forest Inventory (2021).

In addition, residential areas have been added as locations to be avoided as far as possible in accordance with SPEN's guidance notes on visual receptors.

Figure No.05, Appendix A shows the relevant areas of consideration within the study area.

4.5 Stage 5 Identification of Route Options

With these additional constraints and taking the routeing objective into consideration, three viable routes were identified as shown on Figure No.06, Appendix A and listed below:

- Route A with options A1 & A2;
- Route B with options B1 & B2; and
- Route C.

Route A is orientated to the west from the proposed wind farm substation and then heads north, around the town, approaching Hawick Substation from the west. Both routes are similar in length with Option A1 (23.8km) coming out marginally better than Option A2 (24.2km).

Route B is orientated northwest from the proposed windfarm substation towards the A7 and A698 roads, before changing direction to approach the Hawick substation from the northeast. Both routes are similar in length with Option B1 (23km) and Option B2 (22.9km).

Route C is composed of a combination of Route A and B. Route C initially follows the line of Route B and B1 to the northwest from the proposed windfarm substation prior to heading west to connect to Route A2 prior to heading north following the line of Route A.

4.6 Stage 6 Appraisal of Route Options

4.6.1 Selection Criteria

In this study, five potential routes were identified i.e. A1, A2, B1, B2 and C and the criteria were set for their appraisal as follows:

- Length of broad route noting that only significant variance (minimum 5km) could be relevant;
- Environmental Concerns
- Technical considerations (topography, slope); and
- Cumulative Impacts with other linear projects such as windfarms, other electricity infrastructure to avoid 'wirescape'.

Relevant data was gathered by desktop study for each criterion. A summary of the desktop findings are presented in Table 1 and Table 2, Appendix B.

Length of Proposed Route

In accordance with the routeing principles stated previously, wherever possible, the most direct line is chosen to optimise economic viability, thus the length of the route is normally taken into consideration. In this case however the potential difference in length is not material.

Environmental Considerations

To determine the environmental risk associated with each strategic corridor option, the following topic areas were considered:-

- Landscape & Visual Amenity;
- Biodiversity;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Forestry & Woodland;
- Hydrology; and
- Geology (Peat).

Technical Considerations

Technical considerations relating to topography are considered when defining a proposed route as gradient and elevation can influence the project cost depending on the nature of the constraint. A 'soft' constraint is defined as being an obstacle that can be overcome through engineering solutions. A 'hard' constraint is an obstacle that will incur significant engineering effort resulting in financial implications.

The topographical criteria for defining soft and hard constraints are as follows:

- Areas with a slope gradient of greater than 15 degrees ('soft' slope constraint);
- Areas with a slope gradient of greater than 22 degrees ('hard' slope constraint);
- Areas above 300m elevation ('soft' elevation constraint); and
- Areas above 350m elevation ('hard' elevation constraint).

Cumulative Considerations

Wind farm developments within the broad routes were also researched, as these will present a constraint to be avoided, whether operational, under construction, or within the planning process (at both application and scoping stage and is current at the time of writing). This would also include Millmoor Rig Wind Farm itself which lies to the west of the substation. Refer to Figure No.8, Appendix A.

The concern in relation to wind farms is the air turbulence caused by operational turbines (called the “wake effect”) affecting the stability of the OHL. In addition, to protect the OHL infrastructure from physical damage, OHL’s should be sited out with the fall distance of turbines. The criteria for defining suitable buffer zones from wind farms are:

- X 3 rotor diameter to account for the potential wake effect; and
- tip height of the turbine plus 10%. to account for the falling distance.

The greatest distance of the two defines the distance to be avoided.

4.6.2 Route Options Appraisal

Where the characteristics of the study area were such that they required to be balanced to enable the overarching Routeing Objective to be met, professional judgement, informed by both desk studies and field work, and reflecting the Holford Rules, was employed to identify the proposed route. This professional judgement was made on a case-by-case basis.

The following provides a summary of the route options undertaken as detailed in Appendix B.

Appraisal: Route A (A1 and A2)

From a landscape perspective, the following LCTs are potentially affected by both routes:

- LCT 93: Southern Uplands with Scattered Forest;
- LCT 96: Southern Uplands with Forest – Borders;
- LCT 101: Rocky Upland Fringe;
- LCT 102: Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills;
- LCT 117: Pastoral Upland Valley; and
- LCT 119: Wooded Upland Fringe.

Three of the LCTS, (93, 96 and 101) are judged to have a Low susceptibility to change in accommodating an overhead line although potential effects from sky lining and forestry removal should be considered. LCT 117 Pastoral Upland Valley is considered to have a medium susceptibility due to its medium to small-scale characteristics, and two LCTs (102 and 119) are judged to have a high susceptibility to change due to the transitional nature of the Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills LCT, which is diverse in scale and of high visibility forming the background to lower lying areas. LCT 119 Wooded Upland Fringe is characterised by small-scale features, narrow and deeply incised valleys with limited development. From a landscape character perspective, Option A1 was preferred as it avoids LCT 119 Wooded Upland Fringe Valley which has a high susceptibility to overhead line development.

Option A1 was also preferred when considering the views from residential properties and footpaths. The closest residential property to Option A1 is approximately 132m, in comparison to Option A2 which is 180m. Option A1 also has far fewer properties and paths located within 1km reducing the number of visual receptors potentially affected.

With regards to biodiversity, there would be no difference between Options A1 and A2, thus neither option is preferred over the other in terms of crossing the River Tweed SAC, and in proximity to SSSIs,

with Option A2 coming out more favourably due to the areas of Local Nature Conservation Sites being present in Option A1, a total of 4ha to 91ha.

Option A2 also has the fewest Scheduled Monuments in vicinity but there would be no material difference between both options for Listed Buildings.

When considering the National Forest Inventory, there is limited difference identified between the two options with Option A1 including approximately 800ha and Option A2 750ha, although Option A2 is preferred from an Ancient Woodland perspective with 19ha in comparison to A1 with 55 ha.

No preferred option was identified for Peat and Land Use categories.

Option A1 was identified as the preferred option as it was judged that there would be fewer landscape and visual effects in comparison to Option A2.

Appraisal: Route B (B1 and B2)

Both options are located within the following LCTs:

- LCT 96: Southern Uplands with Forest – Borders;
- LCT 99: Rolling Farmland – Borders;
- LCT 101: Rocky Upland Fringe;
- LCT 102: Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills;
- LCT 119: Wooded Upland Fringe; and
- LCT 120: Lowland Valley with Farmland.

Four of the LCTS, (96, 99, 101, and 120) are judged to have a low susceptibility to change in accommodating an overhead line although potential effects from sky lining and forestry removal should be considered. Two LCTs (102 and 119) are judged to have a high susceptibility to change due to the transitional nature of the Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills LCT which is diverse in scale and of high visibility in forming backgrounds to lower lying areas. LCT 119 Wooded Upland Fringe is characterised by small-scale features, narrow and deeply incised valleys with limited development. From a landscape character perspective, there is no preferred option as both options pass through the same LCTs.

Route B passes through the Teviot Valley SLA with Option B2 occupying approximately 55%, in comparison to Option B1 which covers 45% of the SLA, the latter being preferred for this reason.

No option was preferred when considering the views from residential properties with the nearest property being similar in distance to both options.

There are more kilometres of footpaths within Option B1, however, this does not translate to a greater number of visual effects and therefore does not carry as much weight.

There would be no difference between Options B1 and B2 for in terms of crossing the River Tweed SAC, and in proximity to SSSIs, or Local Nature Conservation Sites.

There are no Scheduled Monuments in of Options B1 or B2 and Listed Buildings would be limited to one Category B building, and therefore, no preferred route.

Although there are approximately 20 hectares more woodland including 3ha of AWI in Option B1, it is not considered to be significantly different to Option B2, and therefore neither route is preferred over the other.

Option B2 is preferred as there is less peat within this area, although the difference is not significant.

Route B1 was identified as the preferred option as it was judged that there would be less landscape and visual effects in comparison to route B2, which were judged to outweigh the other technical considerations.

Appraisal: Route A and B (A1 and B1)

Both Option A1 and B1 are of similar length in the order of 24km.

From a landscape perspective, the following LCTs are potentially affected by overhead line development:

- LCT 96: Southern Uplands with Forest – Borders;
- LCT 101: Rocky Upland Fringe; and
- LCT 102: Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills.

Two of the LCTS, (96 and 101) are judged to have a low susceptibility to change in accommodating an overhead line although potential effects from sky lining and forestry removal should be considered. LCT 102 Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills LCT which is diverse in scale and of high visibility in forming backgrounds to lower lying areas is considered to have a high susceptibility. From a landscape character perspective, route A1 was preferred as it avoids LCT 102 Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills which has a high susceptibility to overhead line development.

Option B1 is located within the Teviot Valley SLA occupying approximately 45%, in comparison to Option A1 which is not designated.

No option was preferred when considering the views from residential properties with the nearest property being similar in distance.

With regards to biodiversity, there would be no difference between Option A1 and B1, with the latter being preferred due as the total area of SACs, SSSIs.

Option B1 is the preferred route with fewer Scheduled Monuments in vicinity of the route but no material difference between both options for Listed Buildings.

Option B1 is also the preferred route regarding forestry and AWI with less woodland present.

No preferred option was identified for Peat and Land Use categories.

Option A1 was identified as the preferred option as it was judged that there would be less landscape and visual effects in comparison to Option B1. This was considered to be more important than technical considerations considered.

Appraisal: Route A and B with C

A fifth route, C, was identified earlier in the study. This route followed A in its northern part via the centre to B in the southern part. This does however not result in any difference between A/C verses B or B/C versus A.

There are two comparison studies, one compares routes A (Options A1 and A2), and the other compares routes B (Options B1 & B2). Through this analysis, it was concluded that Options A2 and B1 would be rejected, therefore, route C, which utilised both Options would not be viable and was therefore not been considered further. The results of both the studies were then compared to aid the selection of the preferred route.

4.7 Stage 7: Selection of Proposed Route

4.7.1 Proposed Route

Following SPEN's 'Approach to Overhead Line Routeing' this study identifies the 'proposed route'. The strategic corridor was divided into 5 separate routes as follows:

- Route A with Options A1 and A2;
- Route B with Options B1 and B2; and
- Route C with variants including routes A-B.

The appraisal resulted in selecting Option A1 as the proposed route when comparing against Option B1 which is located within the Teviot Valley SLA and crosses over a more complex landscape. Refer to Figure No.07, Appendix A.

4.7.2 Proposed Route Environmental Considerations

The proposed route area comprises of some patches of peat soil, near Millmoor Rig Wind Farm and in the middle of the proposed route which might be affected due to the project but implementing peat management measures during construction phase would be sufficient to address the risk.

The proposed route and the surrounding area comprises of rivers there is a risk of contamination during the construction phase of the project but adherence to good construction practices and standard mitigation measures should ensure the avoidance of the risk.

The areas near the rivers are prone to river and surface flooding with the chance of flooding being up to 10% each year but Hawick Substation and Millmoor Rig Wind Farm are located away from rivers.

The proposed route is ecologically sensitive and comprise designated areas namely Borders Woods SAC, River Tweed SAC and SSSI, Kippilaw Moss SSSI and Cragbank and Wolfhopelee SSSI. Additionally, there are few Local Nature Conservation Sites and Ancient Woodlands within the preferred route. These areas might be affected due to the project activities.

There are few scheduled monuments and listed buildings within the proposed routes that could be avoided while finalising the proposed route alignment. Though there might be some impact on their settings.

In terms of landscape and visual, the proposed route comprises some Native Woodlands and few scattered settlements, which might be affected due to the proposed project.

Though there are some risks with the proposed project, they are not envisaged to result in any significant effect and should be addressed with implementation of standard mitigation measures and best practices.

4.7.3 Technical and Cumulative Considerations

The next step in the process is to undertake a detailed topographical survey of the proposed route to further refine the design based on technical and cumulative considerations. Refer to Section 5.2 for further information.

5 CONSULTATION PROCESS AND NEXT STEPS

5.1 The Consultation Process

Although there are no formal pre-application consultation requirements for Section 37 consent or deemed planning permission, SPEN are committed to following best practices of proactively engaging with stakeholders and the public before submitting the applications. As a result, SPEN are undertaking consultations with stakeholders including the public ahead of the application submission.

Once the application for Section 37 consent is submitted, the Scottish Government through ECU, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, will conduct further consultation with the public and stakeholders.

The primary objective of the consultation process is to ensure that all the interested parties are well informed about the project and are provided with adequate means to provide their feedback and comments at the pre-application stage of the proposal.

The consultation process will focus on gathering feedback from the stakeholders including the public on the proposed route and issues, suggestions, or comments related to local knowledge such as recreational areas, environmental features, or any development plans along the proposed route.

The key issues identified through this process will be documented and presented to decision-makers to support the consents process.

As part of the consultation strategy, SPEN will hold two rounds of public consultation events, first before finalising the 'proposed route' and second before finalising the 'proposed route alignment', allowing the stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals. This will be separate to any statutory consultation, as part of planning process. Further details of the first stage of consultation process are outlined below.

5.1.1 Commencement and Duration

The consultation will take place from Tuesday, 19th August 2025, until Tuesday, 30th September 2025.

Ahead of the consultation events, an advertisement will be published in the Borders Telegraph (a local newspaper) for two consecutive weeks during w/c 11th August 2025 and w/c 18th August 2025. This advertisement will provide details about the project, the consultation schedule, and locations. It will clarify that the comments gathered at this stage are informal feedback directed to SP Energy Networks and also highlight that formal comments can be submitted to the Energy Consents Unit once the application is submitted. A copy of the advertisement text is included in Appendix C.

Email notifications will also be sent to relevant stakeholders, informing them of the consultation and inviting their feedback.

The deadline for submitting responses to SPEN are midnight on Tuesday, 30th September 2025. After this date, the information will continue to be accessible online on the project website and available for download.

5.1.2 Stakeholders

SPEN aims to engage with key stakeholders to gather feedback on the proposed route. The consultation will focus on reaching the following groups:

- Statutory and non-statutory consultees, including community councils;
- Local interest and community groups within Scottish Borders Council area;
- Elected members of Scottish Borders Council area, the Member of Parliament (MP) and Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) whose constituencies are within in the Scottish Borders Council area; and
- Local residents, businesses and wider public.

A full list of consulted stakeholders can be found in Appendix D.

5.1.3 Public Consultation Events

As part of the first round of public consultation events for the project, SPEN will hold two public exhibitions on 26th and 27th August 2025. These events will give attendees the opportunity to view maps, speak with project team members, and complete a feedback form.

The exhibition locations have been carefully chosen to ensure that people within the consultation area can easily attend by either car or public transport. The exhibitions will take place at the following locations from 2.30 pm to 7 pm on the days stated:

- Tuesday, 26th August 2025 at Hawick Town Hall, Cross Wynd, Hawick TD9 9EF; and
- Wednesday, 27th August 2025 at Southdean Community Hall, Southdean, Hawick, Roxburghshire, TD9 8TH.

Full details of the dates and venues will also be provided in the project leaflet and on the website.

5.1.4 Project Website

The website will feature consultation documents that are available for the public to view or download. The consultation period is from Tuesday, 19th August 2025, until Tuesday, 30th September 2025.

http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/millmoor_rig_wind_farm_connection.aspx.

5.1.5 Public Viewing

Hard copies of consultation documents will be available at the following location from Tuesday, 19th August 2025 until Tuesday, 30th September 2025 during normal opening hours.

- Hawick Library, North Bridge St, Hawick TD9 9QT, United Kingdom

These are for individuals who don't have internet access, are unable to attend an exhibition, or prefer to view the documents in person.

5.1.6 How to Comment

People will be able to submit their feedbacks and comments via:

- In person at an exhibition;
- In writing; or
- By email.

In Writing

SPEN invites comments related to this consultation round in writing. Please send letters to the following address, ensuring they are received no later than Tuesday, 30th September 2025:

Millmoor Rig Overhead Line Grid Connection Project
Land and Planning Team
SP Energy Networks
55 Fullarton Drive
Glasgow
G32 8FA

If submitting feedback by post, please allow up to 7 days for delivery. Comments received after this deadline may not be considered.

Email

SPEN also invites comments related to this consultation via email at MillmoorRigProject@spenergynetworks.co.uk, to be submitted no later than midnight on Tuesday, 30th September 2025.

5.2 Next Steps

The responses received from the consultation process will be considered in combination with the findings of this report to enable SPEN to decide on the 'proposed' route to be progressed to the next stage.

A Consultation Feedback Report will be prepared, detailing how the responses were considered and how they influenced the route selection. This report will be made available on the project website.

At the same time, SPEN will request an EIA Screening Opinion from the Scottish Ministers to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is necessary.

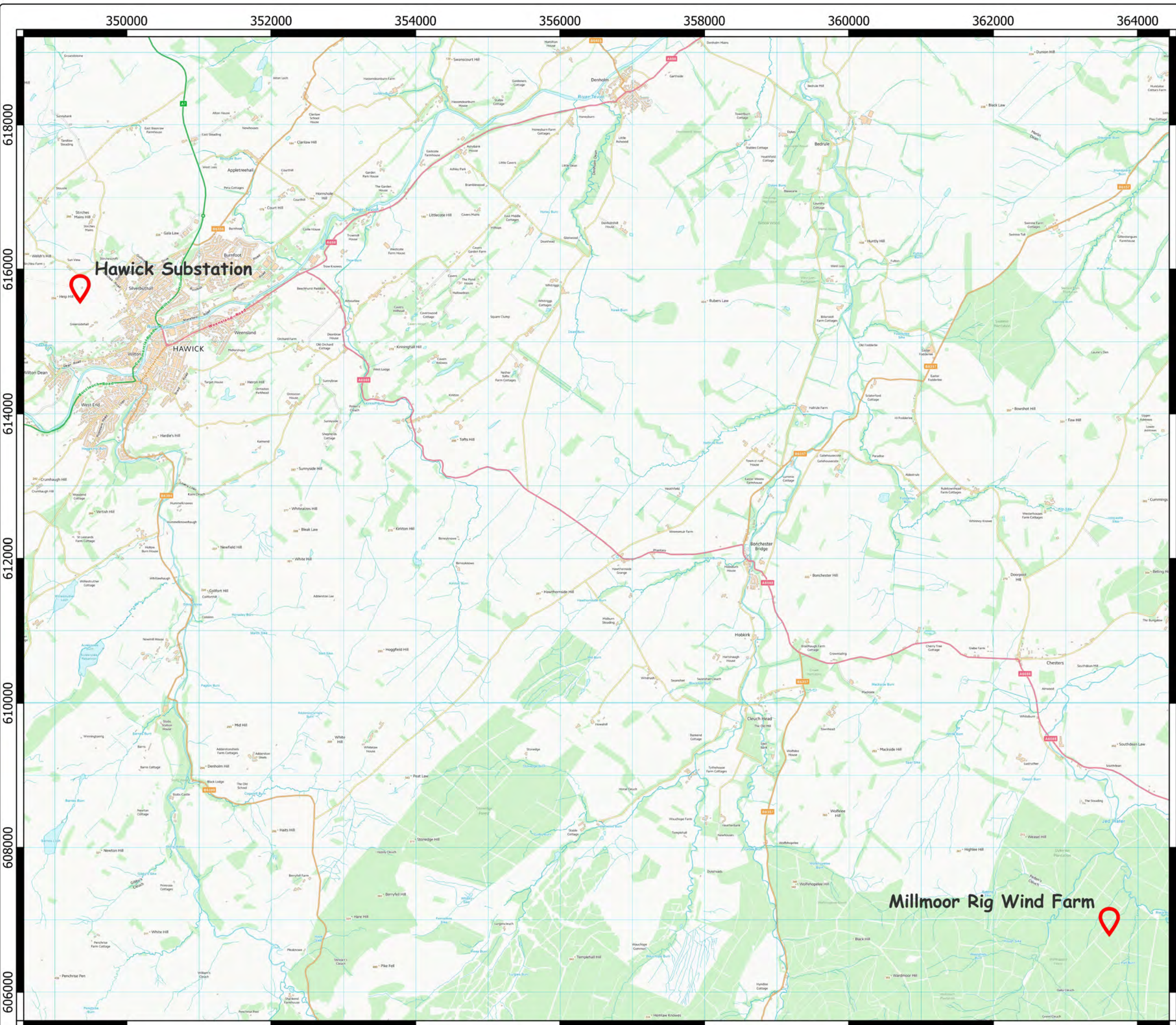
The proposed route will then proceed to the next phase, where the proposed route alignment will be selected. A second round of public consultation will be held, and further details will be shared. Once that is achieved, then an Overhead Line (OHL) alignment will be defined which would involve determining the positioning of individual poles, informed by environmental appraisals, engineering surveys, and consultations with landowners.

This alignment, along with any associated developments, will be included in the application for Section 37 Consent and the planning permission.

Throughout the process, SPEN will continue to engage fully with affected landowners and occupiers, providing opportunities for them to offer feedback as the project progresses.

APPENDICES

A FIGURES



Legend

 Points of Connection

Do not scale this map

Client
SP Energy Networks

Project
Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title
Location Map

Status		
FINAL		
Figure No. 01	Revision -	Date 12 May 2025
Drawn JSH	Checked GD	Approved GD

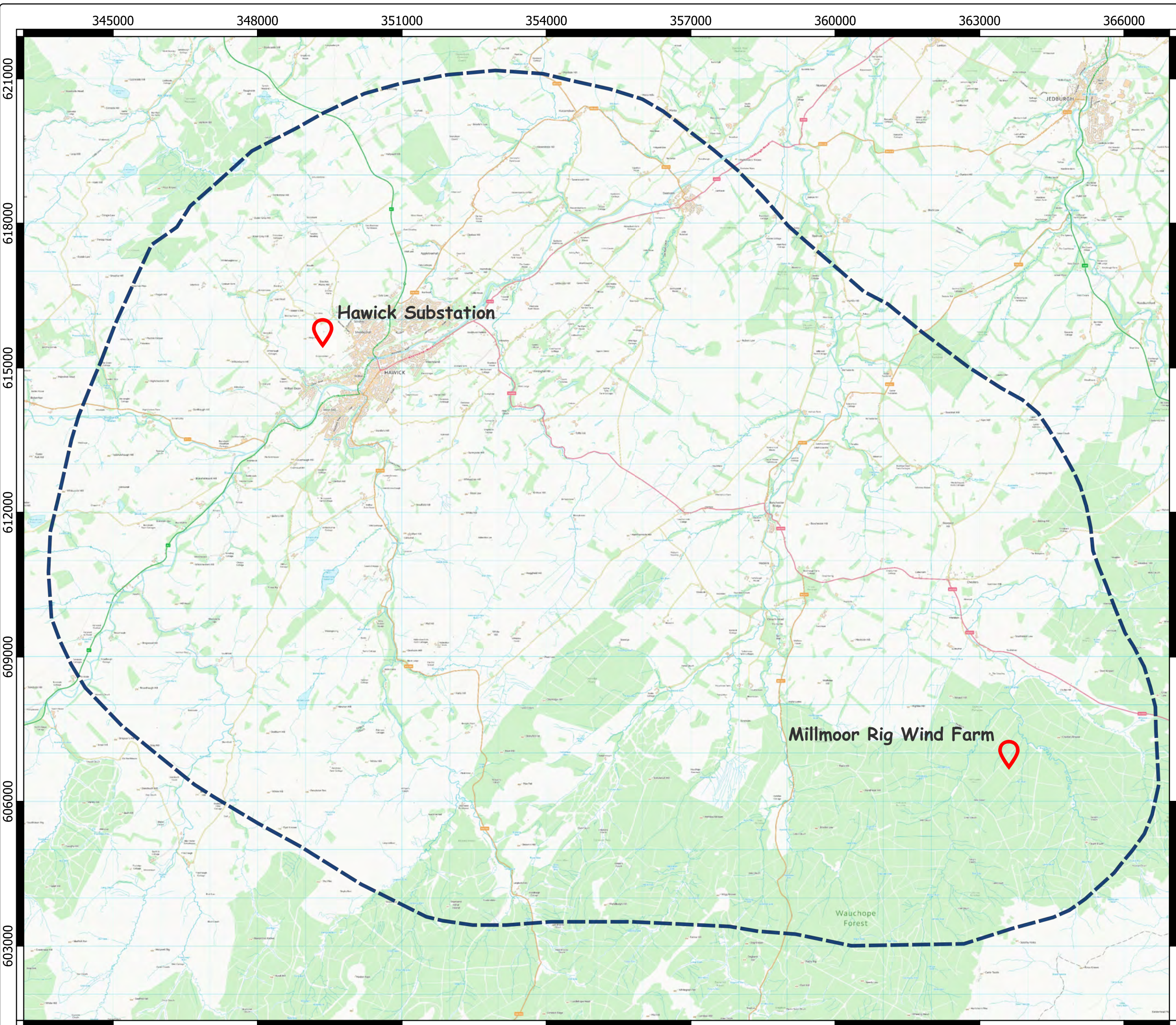
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Rev	Date	Amendment	Initials
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Legend

-  Points of Connection
-  Study Area

Do not scale this map

Client
SP Energy Networks

Project
Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title
Study Area Map

Status
FINAL

Figure No. 02	Revision -	Date 12 May 2025
Drawn JSH	Checked GD	Approved GD

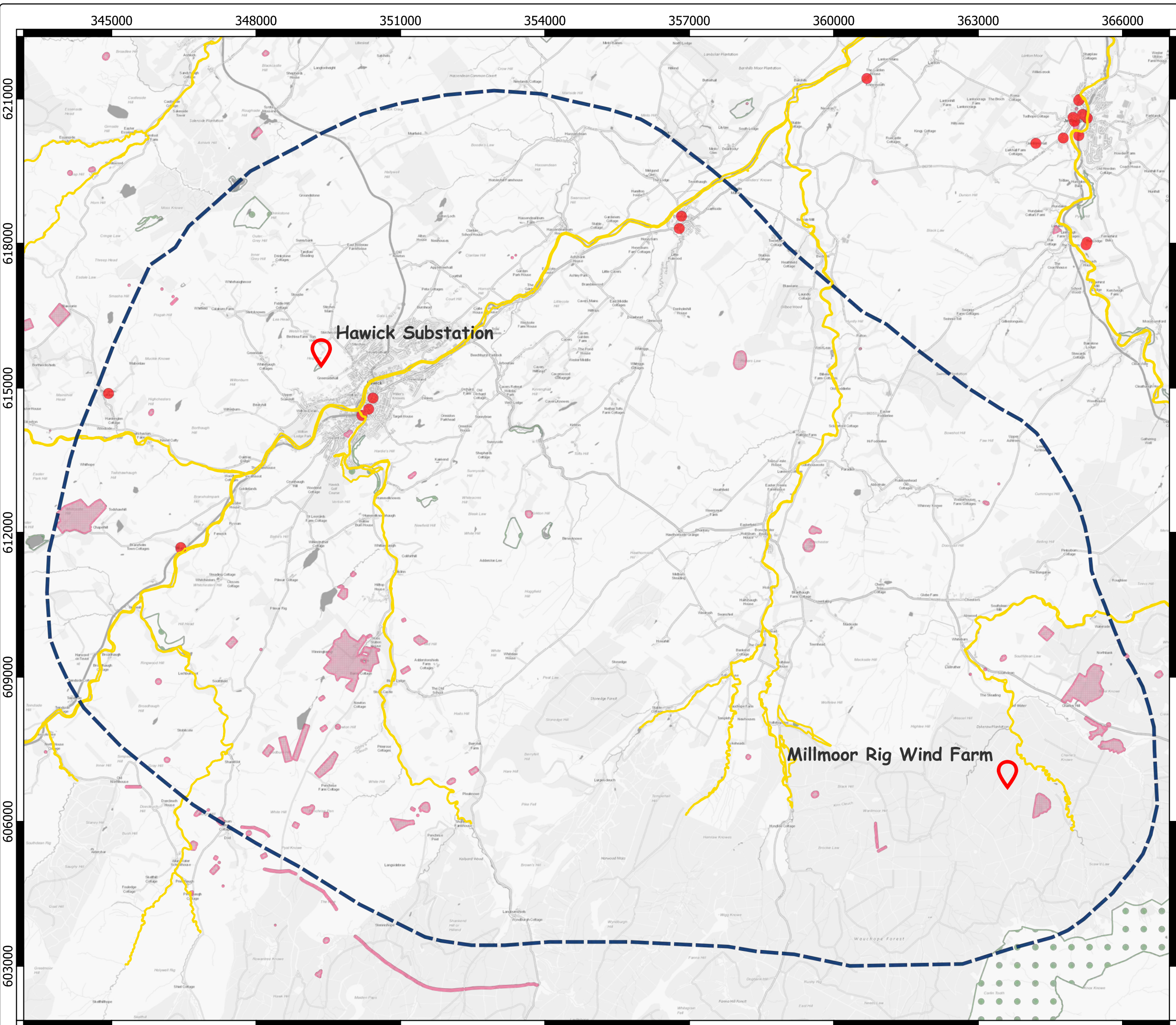
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Legend

Points of Connection

Study Area

Special Areas of Conservation

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Scheduled_Monuments

Listed Buildings

Category A

Do not scale this map

Client

SP Energy Networks

Project

Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title

Major Environmental Constraints Map

Status

FINAL

Figure No.	Revision	Date
03	-	12 May 2025
Drawn	Checked	Approved
JSH	GD	GD

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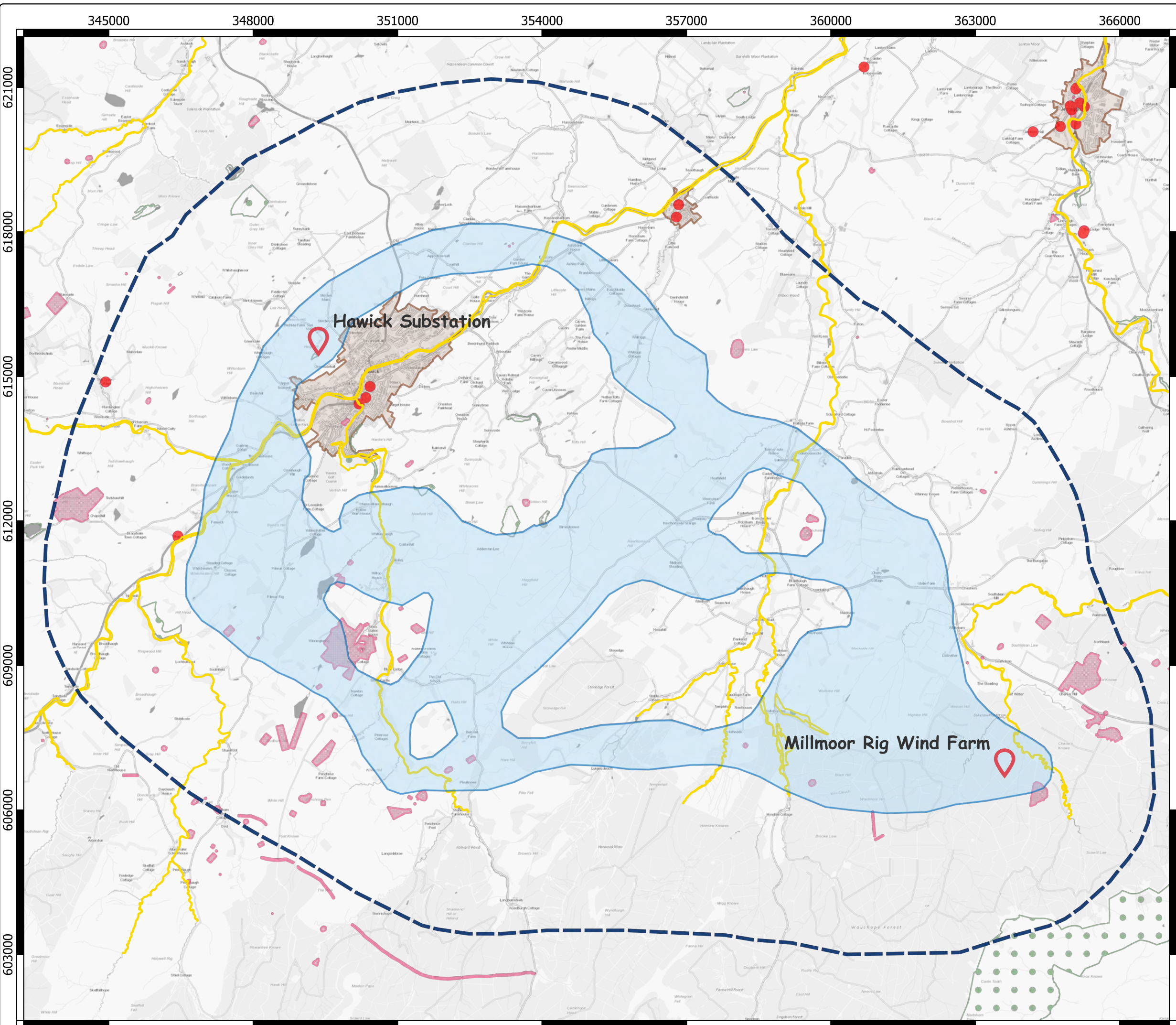
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Legend

- Points of Connection
- Strategic Corridor
- Study Area
- Settlements
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings
- Category A

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Client
SP Energy Networks

Project
Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title
Strategic Corridor Map

Status
FINAL

Figure No. 04	Revision -	Date 12 May 2025
Drawn JSH	Checked GD	Approved GD

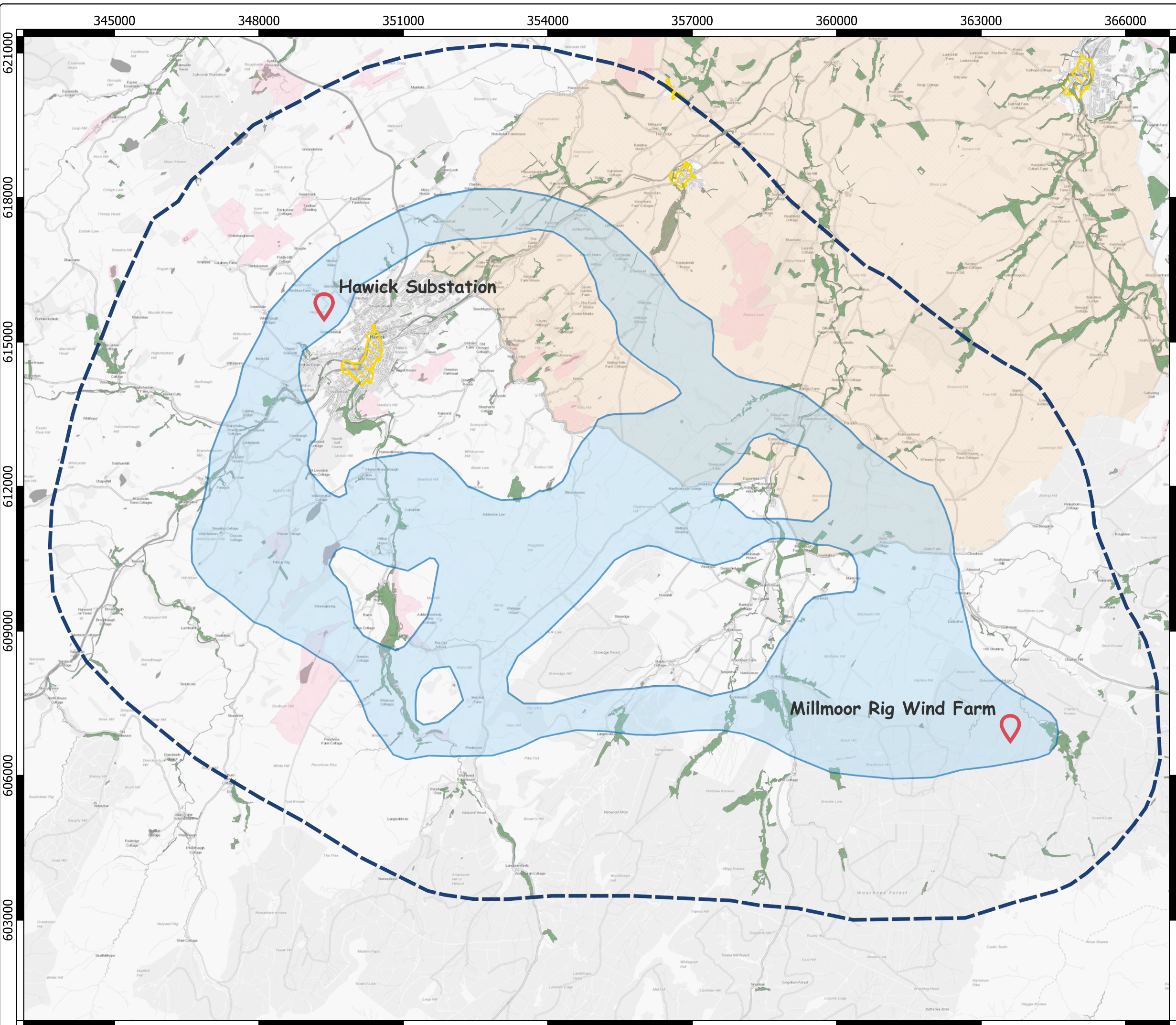
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Legend

- Points of Connection
- Strategic Corridor
- Study Area
- Local Nature Conservation Sites
- Native Woodland Survey of Scotland
- Conservation Areas
- Local Landscape Area

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Client
SP Energy Networks

Project
Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title
Minor Environmental Constraints Map

Status		
FINAL		
Figure No.	Revision	Date
05	-	12 May 2025
Drawn	Checked	Approved
JSH	GD	GD

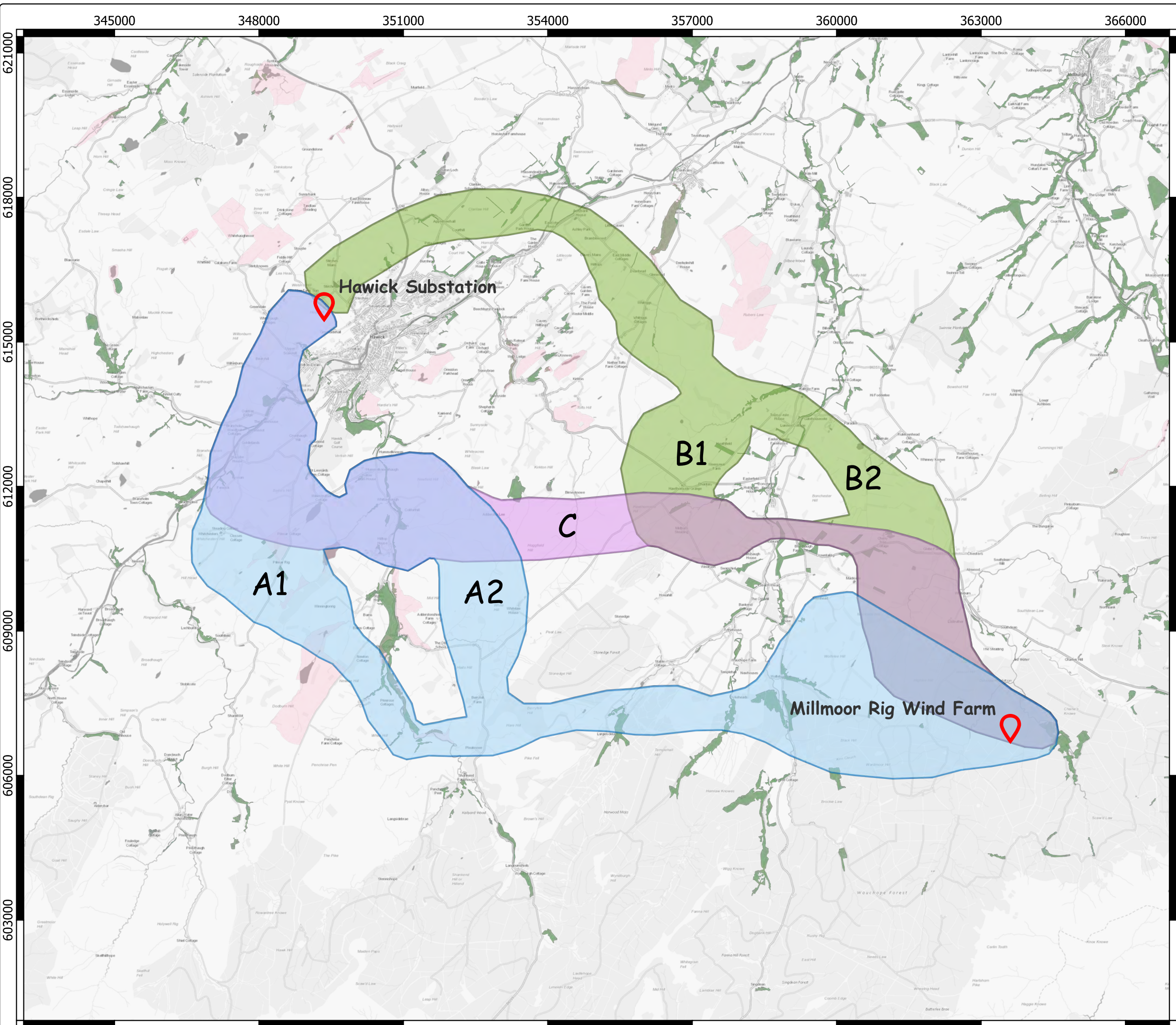
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Legend

 Points of Connection

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Client

SP Energy Networks

Project

Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

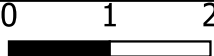
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Route Options Map

Status		
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Figure No.	Revision	Date
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Drawn	Checked	Approved
JSH	GD	GD

Scale

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Rev	Date	Amendment	Initials
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Legend

 Points of Connection

 Preferred Route

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Client

SP Energy Networks

Project

Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title

Preferred Route Map

Status

FINAL

Figure No.	Revision	Date
07	-	12 May 2025
Drawn	Checked	Approved
JSH	GD	GD

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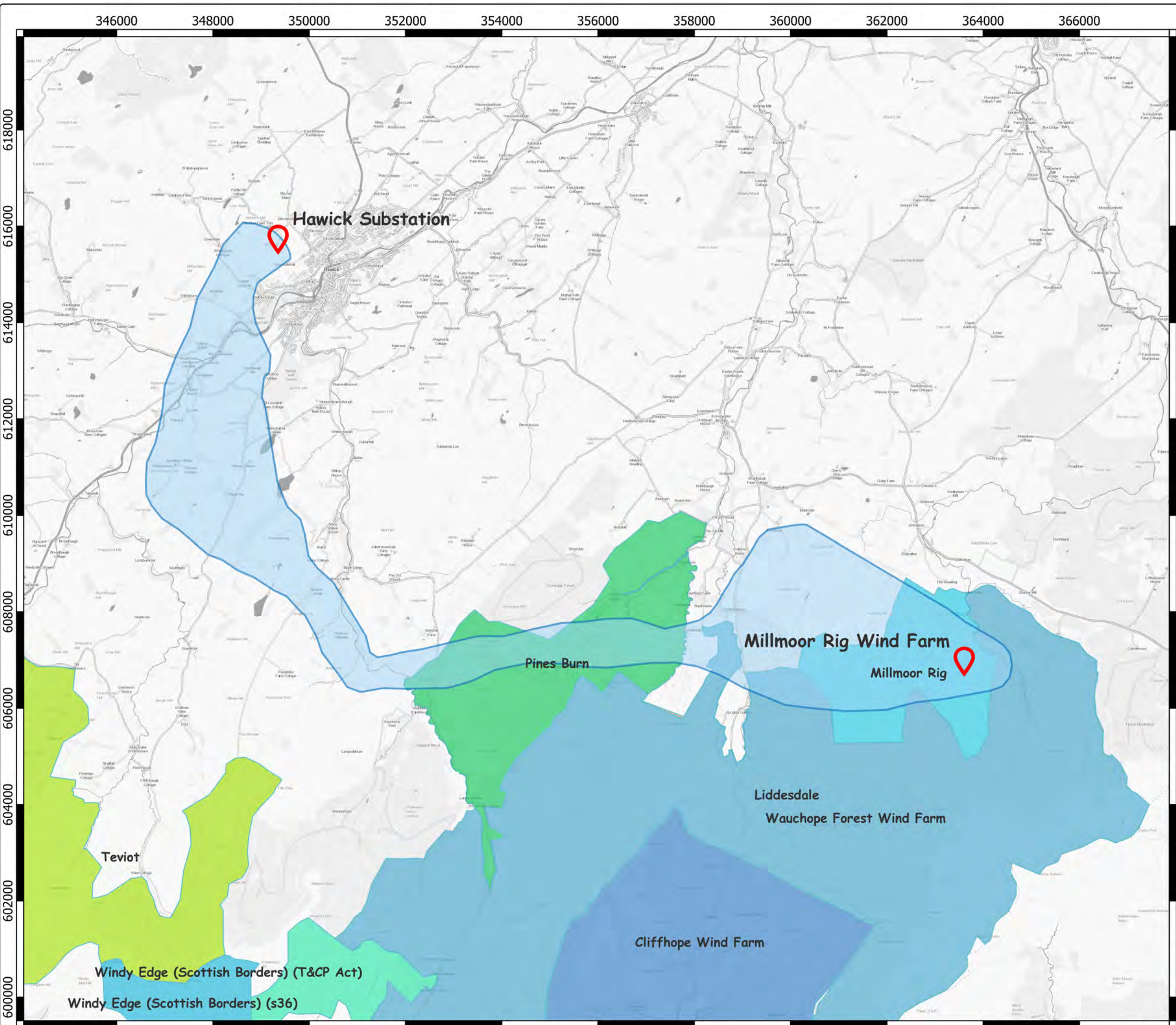
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Legend

 Points of Connection

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Client
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Project
Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Connection

Title
Windfarm locations Map

Status
FINAL

Figure No. 08	Revision -	Date 12 May 2025
Drawn JSH	Checked GD	Approved GD

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Rev	Date	Amendment	Initials
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B ROUTES COMPARISON TABLES

Table 1: Environmental Appraisal: Route A (Options A1 and A2)

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
Length of Route	Length of Route Option	3	23.8 km (approx.)	24.2 km (approx.)	Option A1: length of the line is shorter, although the difference is not significant.
Landscape & Visual Amenity	Landscape Character Types (LCTs)		Rocky Upland Fringe LCT (101) occurring around Hawick on the fringes of the middle Teviot Valley. It is a strongly undulating upland fringe landscape characterised by angular pasture-covered hills with rugged knolls and rock outcrops. Whilst there are many 3-dimensional features, such as shelterbelts, farmhouses etc which may provide screening. The strong topography frequently generates views of exposed skylines with or without features that are in front on top or just behind the skyline. But equally, the valleys create opportunity for routing without extensive visibility. Key characteristics include: ○ <i>Distinctive irregular strongly undulating and angular landform.</i> ○ <i>Small lochans and mires in depressions.</i> ○ <i>Frequent knolls, ridges and rock outcrops.</i> ○ <i>Land cover characterised by permanent pastures with patches of gorse and rushes and scattered small woodlands, giving a strong sense of place.</i> ○ <i>Farmsteads and dwellings dispersed along minor road network.</i> ○ <i>Drystone dykes common.</i> ○ <i>Diversity of scale.</i> The LCT has low susceptibility to overhead line development but visibility against/ on the skylines should be avoided.		Option A1: this Route avoids LCT 119 (Wooded Upland Fringe Valley) which has a high susceptibility to overhead line development.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
			Pastoral Upland Fringe Valley LCT (117) Key Characteristics ○ <i>Medium scale pastoral valley with flat floor enclosed by upland fringe pastures, often with rough grassland and moorland covered hills above.</i> ○ <i>Smooth large scale landform modified in places by bluffs and moraine on valley floor, scree slopes or rock outcrops on valley sides.</i> ○ <i>Narrow, often wooded tributary side valleys.</i> ○ <i>Broadleaf woodlands and scrub on bluff slopes and scattered trees along river banks, occasional coniferous plantations and shelterbelts on valley sides.</i> ○ <i>Valley floor pastures enclosed by drystone dykes with occasional hedgerows, interspersed with occasional patches of scrub, coarse grass and rushes.</i> ○ <i>Scattered villages, farmsteads and mansion houses with policy woodlands.</i> The LCT has medium susceptibility to overhead line development. Southern Uplands with Scattered Forest – Borders LCT (93) and is described in the Borders Landscape Character Assessment as an upland landscape characterised by large-scale, rolling, heather and grassland covered hills. Key Characteristics are: ○ <i>Large-scale rolling landform with higher dome or cone-shaped summits.</i> ○ <i>Significant areas of peatland and heather moorland.</i> ○ <i>Mosaic of grassland, bracken and rushes on lower ground.</i>		

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
			- Locally-prominent scattered large areas of forestry. - Degree of remoteness, wild character and grandeur of scale unique within the region. This LCT has a low susceptibility to overhead line development, but because of its openness, the visibility of overhead line is likely to be more extensive than in in landscapes with more vertical features. Southern Uplands with Forest – Borders LCT (96) Key Characteristics are: - Large scale rolling landform with higher dome or cone-shaped summits. - Dominant coniferous forest cover characterised by Sitka spruce plantations with occasional areas of pine and larch. - Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and forestry buildings, mainly within sheltered valleys. - Scattered pockets of past landuse from prehistoric to post-medieval times - Simple, uniform character. - Strong sense of enclosure, quietness and tranquillity. This LCT has a low susceptibility to overhead line development, although visual effects through forestry should be considered. Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills LCT (102). Key Characteristics are: - Typically steep, cone or dome-shaped hills, frequently of volcanic or igneous rock giving strong landform identity. - Diverse surrounding landform types, ranging from smooth undulations to strongly elongated ridges and hollows.		

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
			- Land cover dominated by permanent pasture. - Locally frequent woodland cover. - Generally low settlement density with isolated farmsteads and occasional small settlements. - Rich in visual contrasts, with individual hills as dominant focal points of views. - Diversity of landscape scale. Susceptibility to overhead line development of this LCT is: high. In addition, Option A2 also passes through Wooded Upland Fringe valley LCT (119). Key Characteristics are: - Small scale, intimate, enclosed character. - Strong visual containment. - Deeply-incised river channels with frequent cliffs and steep slopes. - Heavily wooded valley floors and lower valley sides. - Contrasting open rolling slopes at higher levels above rivers. - Generally tranquil, unspoilt character. Susceptibility to overhead line development of this LCT is: high.		
	Visual Amenity (Residential)		Using aerial photographic imagery, “perceived” residential buildings were extracted from the NT Buildings dataset, in order to ascertain approximate number of residential potentially impacted. It was found that: - Option A1: 132m (approx.) residential properties - Option A2: 180m (approx.) residential properties		The preferred Route is A1 as fewer residential properties are within 1km
	Recreation: including core paths, long distance walking		Romans & Reivers is a circular walking and horse-riding trail around Hawick, and approx. 5.7 km of the trail passes through the upper region of Option A. Option A2 crosses a further 5.2 km of footpaths. Option A also has approx. 7.5km of core paths in its Route.		The preferred Route is Option A1 as there are fewer recreational routes present.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
	paths, Sustrans routes & views from prominent hilltops		Option A2 has an additional approx. 7.7 km. No additional km's of walking/horse-riding trails are present in Option A1. At the eastern end of Option A, the following National Forest Estate Recreation Routes are crossed; Hyndlee Red Squirrel low level walking trail, Hyndlee Cauldrons MTB Blue/Moderate route, of approx.4km, both of which are connected into the wider Hyndlee walking & MTB trails.		
	Cumulative		Pines Burns Windfarm_ under construction		There is no material difference between Options A1 & A2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
Biodiversity	Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	1	The upper part of Route A crosses approx. 4.0 km of the River Tweed SAC, with option A1 crossing an additional 3.0km, and A2 crossing an additional 2.4 km approx. The easterly end of Route A crosses approx. 2.7km of the River Tweed in addition to the Borders Woods SAC.		There is no material difference between Options A1 & A2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1	The River Teviot previously identified as an SAC (River Tweed) in the upper part of Route A is also designated as a SSSI, crossing an approx. 4.0km. The southern section of the 4.18 ha Hummelknowes Moss SSSI lies within Option A2. The previously identified Borders Woods SAC in the easterly end of Route A are also designated as SSSI's, known as Craigbank & Wolfhopelee.		There is no material difference between Options A1 & A2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
	Local Nature Conservation Sites	2	The following LNCS are wholly within Option A1, (approx. hectares): - Sea Croft and St Leonards Mosses, (24) - Winnington Moss, (9) The following LNCS are partly within Option A1, (approx. hectares): - Barnes loch, Stobs Mire and reservoirs, (33) - Stobs Castle Wood and Meadow, (22) The following LNCS is partly within Option A2, (approx. hectares): - Denholm Hill, Stobs, (1)		Option A2 is the preferred Route

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
			The following LNCS is partly in both A1 and A2, (approx. hectares): Acreknowe Reservoir, (3, 3) Total hectares of LNCS are as follows: Option A1: 91 Option A2: 4		
Cultural Heritage	Scheduled Monuments	1	The following scheduled monuments are present in Option A1: - Chester Knowe, earthworks - Stobs Camp, prisoner of war camp and cemetery (covering an area of approx. 377,000 m²) - Barns Burn, fort - Pleaknowe, fort & homestead - Berryfell Farm, earthworks The following scheduled monuments are present in Option A2: - Acreknowe training trenches, Stobs Camp The following scheduled monuments are present at the eastern end of Route A: - Dykeshead, Homestead moat - Black Hill, settlement - Wheel Causeway - Tamshiel Rig, fort, settlement & field system		Option A2 is the preferred Route as fewer scheduled monuments are present.
	Listed Buildings (Category A, B & C)	1	There are two Category B listed buildings within Option A1, and one within Option A2		There is no material difference between Options A1 & A2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
Forestry & Woodland	National Forest Inventory	5	Within Option A1 there are a total of approx. 800 hectares of woodland, of which 58% is conifer/mixed mainly conifer, and 12% is broadleaved/mixed mainly broadleaved.		There is no material difference between Options A1 & A2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option A1	Option A2	Preference
			Within Option A2 there are a total of approx. 750 hectares of woodland, of which 57% is conifer/mixed mainly conifer, and 11% is broadleaved/mixed mainly broadleaved.		
	Ancient Woodland Index (AWI)		There are parcels of Ancient Woodland present in both options; for A1 55 ha, and A2 19 ha		Option A2 is the preferred option as there is less Ancient Woodland in the Route.
Peat	NatureScot Peatland Habitats (Class 3, 4 & 5)		Option A1 Peat Class 3: 4.0 km² Peat Class 4: 1.7 km²	Option A2 Peat Class 3: 5.8 km² Peat Class 4: 1.7 km²	There is no material difference between Options A1 & A2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
Land Use	Landscape Capability for Agriculture (LCA): Class 1, 2 or 3.1		There is no LCA Class 1, 2 or 3.1 present	There is no LCA Class 1, 2 or 3.1 present	There is no preferred Option
	Windfarm development		Both Options A1 and A2 Millmoor Windfarm itself lies immediately to the West of the proposed substation location.		There is no preferred Option
Conclusion	Option A1 is preferred				

Table 2: Environmental Appraisal: Route B (Options B1 and B2)

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
Length of Route	Length of Route Option	3	Approx 23 km	Approx 22.9 km	There is no preferred Route as there is no significant difference in length between Options B1 and B2.
Landscape & Visual Amenity	Landscape Character Types (LCTs)		LCTs affected by Options B1 and B2 are as follows: 101, 99, 120, 102, 119, 96 Rocky Upland Fringe LCT (101) occurring around Hawick on the fringes of the middle Teviot Valley. It is a strongly undulating upland fringe landscape characterised by angular pasture-covered hills with rugged knolls and rock outcrops. Whilst there are many 3-dimensional features, such as shelterbelts, farmhouses etc which may provide screening. The strong topography frequently generates views of exposed skylines with or without features that are in front on top or just behind the skyline. But equally, the valleys create opportunity for routing without extensive visibility. Key characteristics include: ○ <i>Distinctive irregular strongly undulating and angular landform.</i> ○ <i>Small lochans and mires in depressions.</i> ○ <i>Frequent knolls, ridges and rock outcrops.</i> ○ <i>Land cover characterised by permanent pastures with patches of gorse and rushes and scattered small woodlands, giving a strong sense of place.</i> ○ <i>Farmsteads and dwellings dispersed along minor road network.</i> ○ <i>Drystone dykes common.</i> ○ <i>Diversity of scale.</i> The LCT has low susceptibility to overhead line development but visibility against/ on the skylines should be avoided.		There is no preferred Option as they both pass through the same LCT's.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
			Rolling Farmland – Borders LCT (99) Key Characteristics are: ○ <i>Undulating relief, becoming more pronounced at higher elevations.</i> ○ <i>Distinctive areas of flat or constant gentle gradients, giving wide horizons and skylscapes.</i> ○ <i>Large-scale strong geometric field pattern, enclosed by hedgerows, with scattered coniferous woods.</i> ○ <i>Mix of arable, ley pasture and permanent grazing land.</i> ○ <i>Moderately densely settled, with frequent farmsteads and small villages.</i> ○ <i>Well kempt, prosperous appearance.</i> Susceptibility to overhead line development of this LCT is low Lowland Valley with Farmland LCT (120) Key Characteristics ○ <i>Broad, shallow, flat bottomed valleys with gently sloping/undulating sides.</i> ○ <i>Neat pattern of medium to large sized arable and pasture fields divided by prominent hedgerows with some mature broadleaf tree lines.</i> ○ <i>Bluffs and terraces cut by rivers.</i> ○ <i>Occasional prominent volcanic hills, knolls and rock outcrops.</i> ○ <i>Broadleaf woodland common on strips on river bluffs and in side valleys, small blocks, shelterbelts and policy woodlands on lower slopes and valley floor.</i>		

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
			- Scattered small towns, stone built farmsteads, villages, and mansion houses along well developed road network. - Fertile, neat, prosperous appearance. Susceptibility to overhead line development of this LCT is low Upland Fringe with Prominent Hills LCT (102). Key Characteristics are: - Typically steep, cone or dome-shaped hills, frequently of volcanic or igneous rock giving strong landform identity. - Diverse surrounding landform types, ranging from smooth undulations to strongly elongated ridges and hollows. - Land cover dominated by permanent pasture. - Locally frequent woodland cover. - Generally low settlement density with isolated farmsteads and occasional small settlements. - Rich in visual contrasts, with individual hills as dominant focal points of views. - Diversity of landscape scale. Susceptibility to overhead line development of this LCT is high Wooded Upland Fringe valley LCT (119). Key Characteristics are: - Small scale, intimate, enclosed character. - Strong visual containment. - Deeply-incised river channels with frequent cliffs and steep slopes. - Heavily wooded valley floors and lower valley sides. - Contrasting open rolling slopes at higher levels above rivers. - Generally tranquil, unspoilt character.		

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
			Susceptibility to overhead line development of this LCT is high Southern Uplands with Forest – Borders LCT (96) Key Characteristics are: ○ <i>Large scale rolling landform with higher dome or cone-shaped summits.</i> ○ <i>Dominant coniferous forest cover characterised by Sitka spruce plantations with occasional areas of pine and larch.</i> ○ <i>Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and forestry buildings, mainly within sheltered valleys.</i> ○ <i>Scattered pockets of past landuse from prehistoric to post-medieval times</i> ○ <i>Simple, uniform character.</i> ○ <i>Strong sense of enclosure, quietness and tranquillity.</i> This LCT has a low susceptibility to overhead line development.		
	Special Landscape Area	2	The Teviot Valley SLA to the northwest of the study area covers approx. 52% of Route B, with Option B2 in its entirety. Thus: Option B1: 45% within the SLA Option B2: 55% within the SLA Designation statement: <i>This area covers a series of distinctive Borders valleys and hills and has been defined to draw together a number of landmark features with their pastoral and woodland settings. Visually prominent hills include Minto Crags, Peniel Heugh, Dunion Hill, Minto Hills and Rubers Law, each of which has a strong relationship with the adjacent valleys and the wider landscape. The three valleys each have their own distinctive character and scale.</i> <i>Minto Crags are a dramatic feature contrasting strongly with the gentle farmed valley Teviot below. Long views along the Teviot valley</i>		Option B1 is preferred as Option B2 is entirely within the SLA.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
			<i>are terminated by the monument on Peniel Heugh. The romantic setting of Fatlips Castle is a reminder of a historic past, when the landscape was dominated by wealthy landowning and military classes, and extensive designed landscapes make a positive contribution. The smooth, rounded grassy Minto Hills contrast with the rugged, wooded Minto Crags.</i> <i>Rubers Law has a distinctive craggy summit, dissected and rocky. Bonchester Hill is almost a reduced version of the same, while Dunion Hill is a landmark above Jedburgh.</i> <i>The Jed valley is important as a key gateway into the Borders along the A68, including the sense of sudden arrival at Jedburgh after the scenic drive through the wooded valley. Rocky cliff features of red sandstone along the Jed are particularly attractive against spring green of trees.</i>		
	Visual Amenity (Residential)		Using aerial photographic imagery, “perceived” residential buildings were extracted from the NT Buildings dataset, in order to ascertain approximate number of residential potentially impacted. It was found that: • Option B1: 146 (approx.) residential properties • Option B2: 146 (approx.) residential properties		There are no preferred Options as the number of residential properties within each Route is the same.
	Recreation: including core paths, long distance walking paths, sustrans routes & views from prominent hilltops		Romans & Reivers circular walking and horse-riding trail circumnavigates Hawick, and approx. 1.6 km of the trail passes through the western end of Route B. In addition, there are approx. 3.8km of core paths within this area. Option B1 crosses a further approx. 4.7 km. No additional km’s of walking/horse-riding trails are present in Option B2.		The preferred Route is Option B2 as there are fewer recreational routes present.
Biodiversity	Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	1	The River Tweed is a designated SAC of which the western section of Route B crosses approx. 0.7 km. Option B1 crosses an additional 0.53 km, and B2 an additional 1.1 km approx.		There is no significant difference between Options B1 & B2, thus

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
			The easterly end of Route B crosses approx. 1.3km.		neither Route is preferred over the other.
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1	The main tributary of the River Tweed is designated as a SSSI, of which approx. 0.7km is crossed in the upper section of Route B, the same section having a SAC designation as above.		There is no difference between Options B1 & B2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
	Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS)	2	Route B passes adjacent to the southeast boundary of LNCS site Rubers Law of approx. of 180 hectares. Located just prior to the split between options B1 & B2		There is no difference between Options B1 & B2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
Cultural Heritage	Scheduled Monuments	1	The following scheduled monuments are present at the western end of Route B: Midshiels, mound and Midshiels, standing stone. There are no scheduled monuments present in Options B1 or B2		There is no difference between Options B1 & B2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
	Listed Buildings (Category A, B & C)	1	There is 1 Category B listed building in the western end of Route B, and both Options B1 and B2 have a Category C listed building on the boundary.		There is no difference between Options B1 & B2, thus neither Route is preferred over the other.
Forestry & Woodland	National Forest Inventory	5	Within Option B1 there are a total of approx. 300 hectares of woodland, of which 78% is conifer/mixed mainly conifer, and 17% is broadleaved/mixed mainly broadleaved. Within Option B2 there are a total of approx. 280 hectares of woodland, of which 79% is conifer/mixed mainly conifer, and 18% is broadleaved/mixed mainly broadleaved.		Although there are approx. 20 hectares more woodland in B1, it is not considered to be significantly different to B2, and therefore neither Route is preferred over the other.
	Ancient Woodland Index (AWI)		There are parcels of Ancient Woodland present in both Options; for B1 11 ha, and B2 8 ha		Although there are approx. 3 hectares more woodland in Option B1, it is not considered to be significantly different to Option B2, and therefore neither Route is preferred over the other.

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Holford Rule	Option B1	Option B2	Preference
Peat	NatureScot Peatland Habitats (Class 3, 4 & 5)		Option B1 Peat Class 3: 2.6 km ² Peat Class 4: 0.4 km ²	Option B2 Peat Class 3: 1.9 km ² Peat Class 4: 0.1 km ²	Option B2 is preferred as there is less Peat within this area, although the difference is not significant.
Land Use	Landscape Capability for Agriculture (LCA): Class 1, 2 or 3.1		There is no LCA Class 1, 2 or 3.1 present	There is no LCA Class 1, 2 or 3.1 present	There is no preferred Route
Conclusion	Option B1 is preferred as option B2 is entirely within the SLA, otherwise any other differences are immaterial.				

C COPY OF ADVERTISEMENT

Millmoor Rig Wind Farm Overhead Line (OHL) Connection Public Consultation



We want your views!

Scotland is a world leader in the fight against climate change

Our country has a target of Net Zero carbon emissions by 2045, with the UK aiming for Net Zero by 2050.

To help meet those targets, SP Energy Networks needs to provide connections to new clean energy producers so that they can be connected to Scotland's electricity transmission network and the clean, green energy is transported from where it's produced to where it's needed.

The proposed development includes the installation of a new 132kV overhead line, connecting Millmoor Rig Wind Farm to the existing Hawick 132kV substation.

We have identified a 'Preferred Route' for the connection, and we would like to hear your views to help us develop our plans.

We are holding a public exhibition at Hawick Town Hall on 26th August 2025 and Southdean Community Hall on

27th August 2025 between 2.30pm and 7pm, where you can view our plans, talk to the project team and share your thoughts about the proposed development with them.



You can also find more information [on our website](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/millmoor_rig_wind_farm_connection.aspx). Scan the code or enter the address:

http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/millmoor_rig_wind_farm_connection.aspx

This consultation period will end at midnight on 30th September 2025.

At this stage, your comments are not representations to the planning authority. If we do make an application for development consent in future, you will be able to make formal representations at that stage.

Other ways to contact us:

You can leave comments on the website, and you can also contact us in the following ways:

Phone: 0800 021 7890

Email: MillmoorRigProject@spenergynetworks.co.uk

Post: Millmoor Rig Wind Farm
Connection Project
Land and Planning Team
SP Energy Networks
55 Fullarton Drive
Glasgow G32 8FA

Public Exhibitions

26th August 2025 | 2.30pm – 7.00pm

Hawick Town Hall, Cross Wynd, Hawick TD9 9EF

27th August 2025 | 2.30pm – 7.00pm

Southdean Community Hall, Southdean, Hawick, Roxburghshire TD9 8TH

D LIST OF CONSULTEES

S/N	Statutory
1.	Scottish Borders Council
2.	Historic Environment Scotland
3.	Nature Scot
4.	SEPA
5.	Scottish Government Library
6.	Energy Consents Unit
	Internal Scottish Government Advisors
1.	Transport Scotland
2.	Scottish Forestry
	Non-statutory
1.	Fisheries Management Scotland
2.	Scottish Water
3.	Scottish Wildlife Trust
4.	Scottish Wild Land Group
5.	The Coal Authority
6.	West of Scotland Archaeology Service
7.	British Horse Society
8.	BT
9.	Civil Aviation Authority
10.	Defence Infrastructure Organisations
11.	Scottish Badgers
12.	Game & Wildlife Conversation Trust
13.	Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage (SGLH)
14.	John Muir Trust
15.	National Farmers Union of Scotland
16.	NATS Safeguarding
17.	National Trust for Scotland
18.	Network Rail
19.	Ramblers Association (Scotland)
20.	Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels
21.	Scottish Outdoor Access Network (SOAN)
22.	Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays)
23.	Sustrans Scotland
24.	Crown Estate Scotland
25.	The Woodland Trust
26.	Visit Scotland
27.	RSPB
	Community Councils
1.	Denholm and District Community Council
2.	Hawick Community Council
3.	Hobkirk Community Council
4.	Southdean Community Council
5.	Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage Community Council
6.	Upper Teviotdale and Borthwick Water Community Council
7.	Community Councils:

