



# Welcome

Thank you for taking the time today to visit our consultation event. SP Energy Networks is consulting on the proposed Gala North substation and ZA overhead line diversion planned near Blainslie, south of Lauder.

Your views are important to us, so please take the time to view the exhibition and ask any questions from the project team present. You'll find further information on ways to provide feedback on the proposals on the banner "How to Get Involved" displayed within this venue.

## About SP Energy Networks

SP Energy Networks is the Transmission Network Operator managing the electricity network across Central and Southern Scotland. We do this through the network of overhead lines and underground cables which we maintain and develop.

 For more information on SP Energy Networks, please visit our website at [www.spenergynetworks.co.uk](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk) 

## Our impact in Scotland

SP Energy Networks is responsible for the transmission of electricity in Central and Southern Scotland. We take electricity from where it is generated and transport it through our vast transmission network for use in homes and businesses across the country.

Our systems are crucial to the delivery of the Scottish and UK governments' clean energy ambitions due to their location in an area of outstanding renewable resource and our geographical location and we have a unique role in connecting renewable generation and bulk transfer of renewable energy.



Figure: ZA overhead line diversion location plan

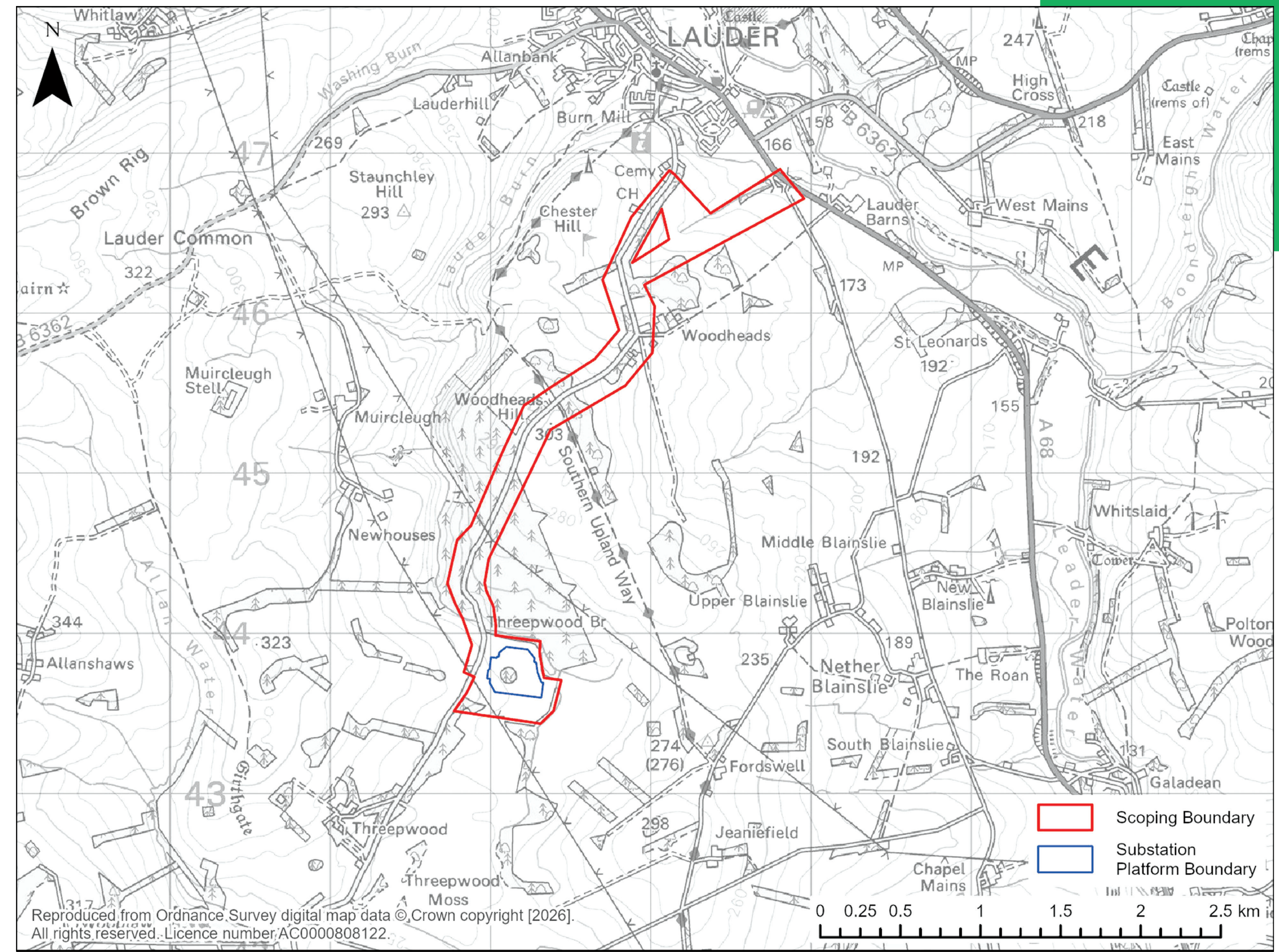


Figure: Substation location plan

 Scan the QR code to visit our project website or visit our dedicated Gala North substation website at: [www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/gala\\_north\\_substation.aspx](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/gala_north_substation.aspx) 

# A Renewable Future

**Scotland is committed to becoming net zero in all greenhouse gases by 2045, with England and Wales committed to net zero by 2050.**

To meet our target, we need to increase the capacity of the electricity network between Scotland and its reserves of renewable energy, and the rest of the UK.

## What is net zero?

Net zero refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. We reach net zero when the amount we add is no more than the amount taken away. It is important because achieving net zero will make a significant contribution to tackling climate change.

## The role of substations

Substations play a crucial role in transforming electricity into various voltages, essential for its transmission across the nation and subsequent distribution into local communities, households, and businesses. Within substations, specialised equipment facilitates the transformation, or ‘switching,’ of voltage levels. This process involves using transformers positioned within substation premises to either step up or step down the voltage as required.



Figure: Example substation



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# The Project

## The Gala North substation & ZA overhead line diversion project

The proposed Gala North substation will be built on a site located near Blainslie approximately 4 km south of Lauder and 8 km north of Galashiels, in the Scottish Borders. The substation will have a permanent footprint of approximately 6 ha.

The site was selected for the proposed substation for a number of factors including:

- Limited visibility from the surrounding area.
- Distance from nearby residential dwellings.
- Proximity to existing overhead lines, significantly reducing the length of new overhead line tie-ins.

The Gala North substation will consist of several elements, including a combination of:

- A 400 kV, gas insulated switchgear (GIS) in which electrical components are enclosed in metal casings filled with insulating gas.
- A 132 kV, air insulated switchgear (AIS) in which electrical equipment is arranged in open air compartments with air as the primary insulating medium.

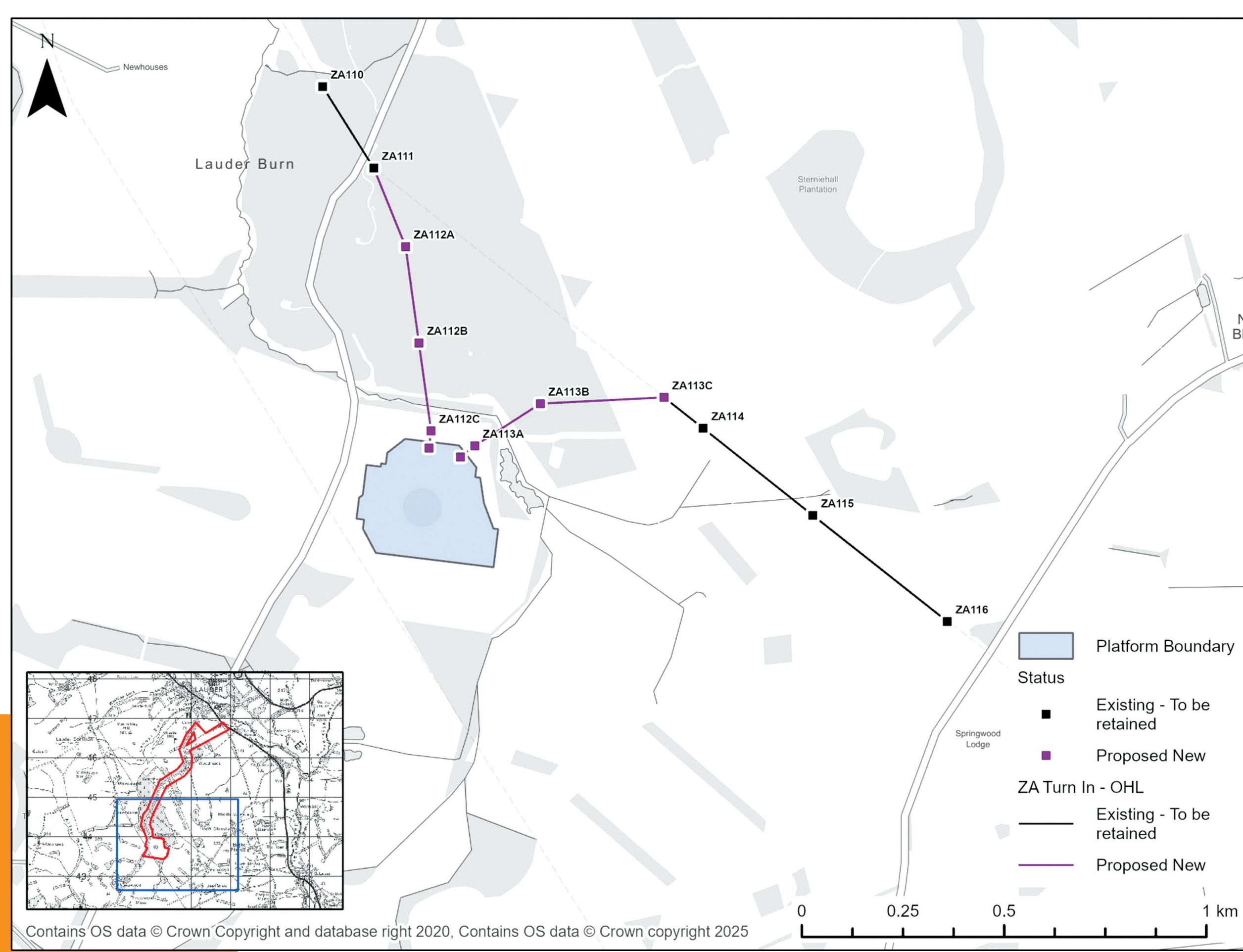


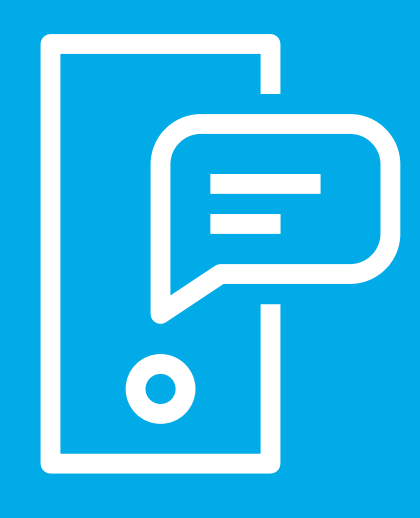
Figure: ZA overhead line diversion



Figure: Substation red line boundary

To connect the proposed substation to the electricity network, an existing overhead line will be diverted into the site (ZA overhead line site works). The turn-in will require the removal of some existing towers as well as the construction of new ones. This will result in an overall reduction in length of existing overhead line.

An Access Route Assessment has evaluated the most appropriate route for the delivery of materials and for the movement of construction traffic. A temporary haul road will be required during construction connecting the A68 via the C76 and connect to the C77 Lauder-Galashiels Road and will minimise the impact of construction traffic on Lauder and the surrounding area. The temporary haul road will be approximately 1.2 km long and will be removed once construction is complete. Further information on the temporary haul road can be found on the banner “Access” displayed within this venue.



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# Need for the Project

## Why is the Gala North substation needed?

With the increasing level of demand for electricity, additional capacity is needed within transmission systems, creating the need for greater power transfer capability and upgrades within the network.

A number of energy generation and storage projects are contracted to connect into the Gala North substation. Two strategic, network reinforcement, 400kV overhead line projects will also be connecting into the substation. As these projects are in the early stages of development, these are subject to separate consultations.

## Why this site?

The site is preferred from a landscape and visual perspective because it would occupy a lower-lying terrain and would have the potential for both embedded and additional mitigation provided by the existing landform, minimising earthworks.

The site is not situated within any nationally or locally designated landscapes and it is not located in close proximity to any existing residential properties. In addition, the site is relatively flat and provides access from the adjacent minor C77 road between Lauder and Galashiels.

## Why is the ZA overhead line diversion needed?

A key consideration in the identification of the site was the proximity to an existing 400kV overhead line (known as 'ZA route'). This is because the substation requires to be connected to the existing electricity transmission system and increased proximity to ZA route reduces the requirement for new overhead line infrastructure.

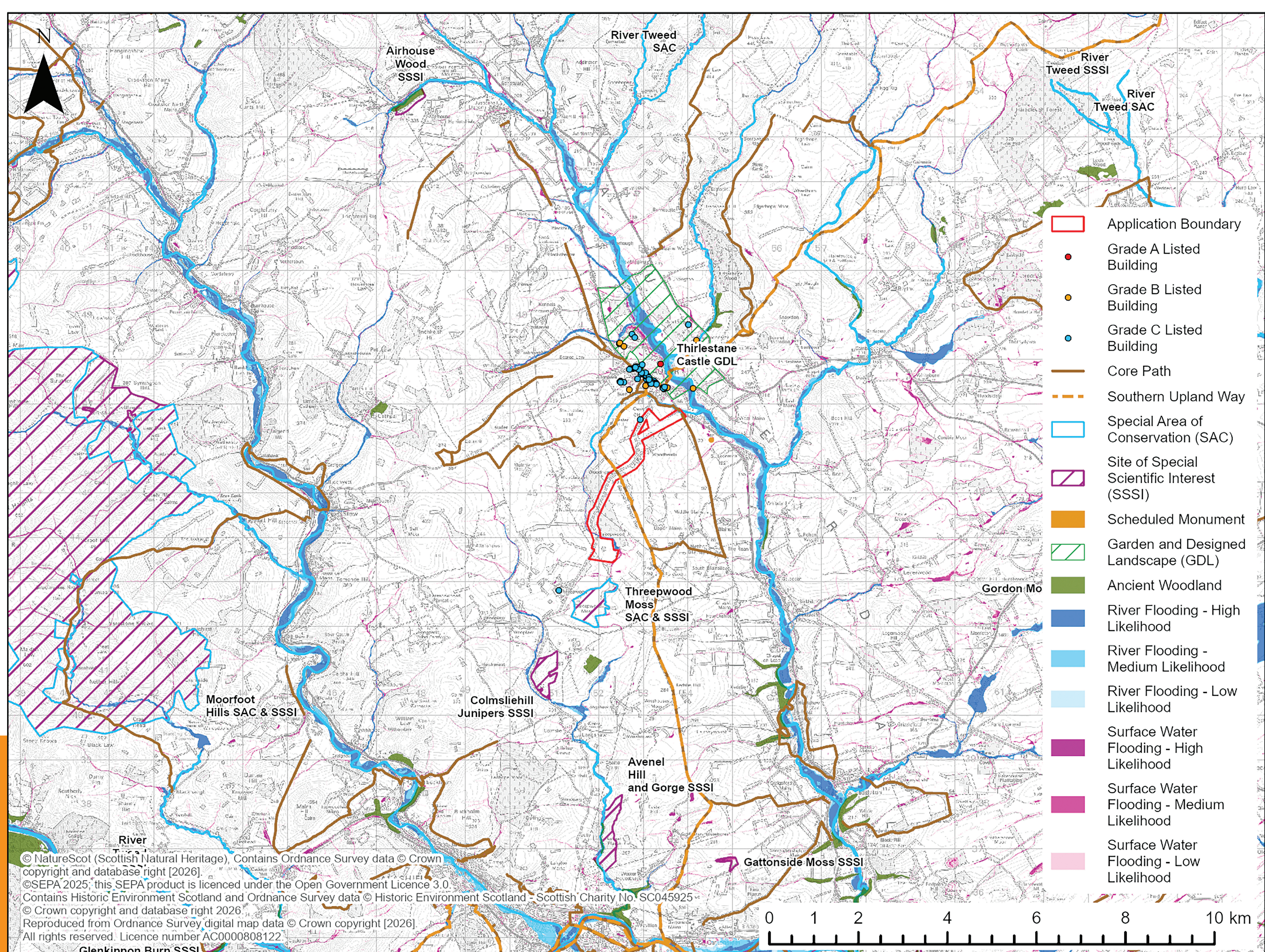


Figure: Constraints



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# Access

## Gala North preferred route access option

**SP Energy Networks assessed all nearby public roads to find the safest and most suitable access routes for both abnormal load deliveries and general construction traffic. A site visit in October 2025 was carried out to determine potential routes and gather additional information on the feasibility of each route.**

SP Energy Networks' preferred option includes a 1.2 km temporary haul road connecting the A68 to the C77 Lauder-Galashiels Road. This option was selected as it is approximately 4 km shorter than alternative options considered, meaning construction vehicles would use fewer public roads and far fewer upgrades, like widening or adding passing places, would be needed, if required.

There are currently two options for this haul road as shown below. The preferred option is aligned east to west, with a secondary option as a contingency routeing north should the preferred option not be technically feasible. Technical studies are underway to establish the final alignment.

In both scenarios, construction traffic would leave the A68 at Stoneyford Bridge, travel a short distance along the C76, then move onto the temporary haul road to connect to the C77. For the preferred option, the route then rejoins the C77 near Woodheads Plantation before continuing south to the substation. For the secondary option, the haul road routes north circa halfway through the field and joins the C77 north of Lauder Golf Club before continuing south to the substation.

Both options may require some localised works on the junction with the A68 to provide space for turning vehicles as well as provide appropriate visibility of approaching traffic.

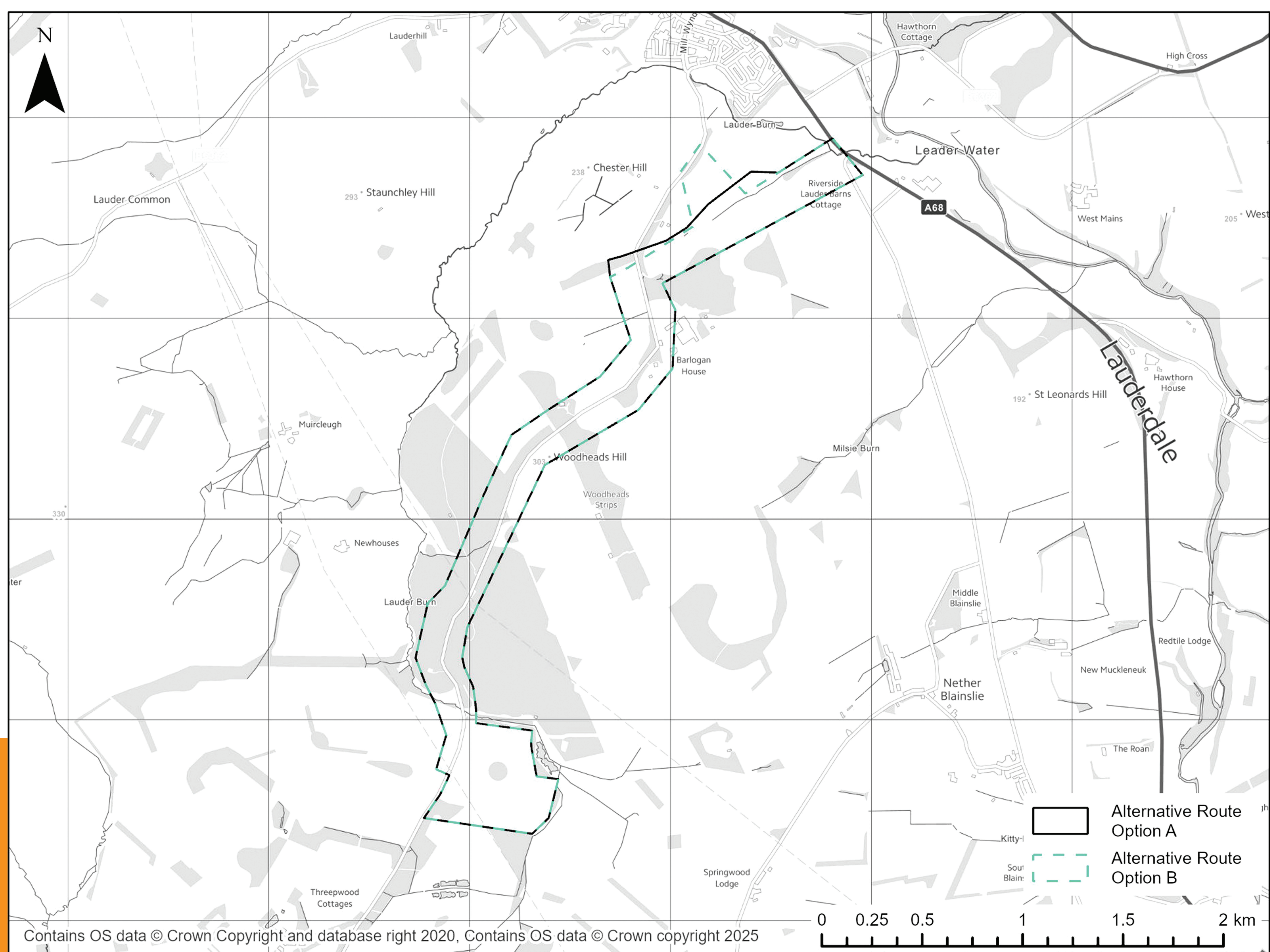


Figure: Temp haul road options



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# Protecting the Environment

A number of environmental studies and assessments will be undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and will be reported within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). These include:

- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Ecology and Nature Conservation
- Water Environment and Flood Risk
- Traffic and Transport
- Socio-Economics, Land Use and Tourism
- Noise and Vibration
- Cultural Heritage

Desktop studies and ecology surveys for the substation site and ZA overhead line diversion have been undertaken, with additional surveys ongoing for the temporary haul road. Surveys undertaken and ongoing include habitats and wildlife surveys, including protected species and birds.

The ecological survey results of the substation site indicate that the site does not comprise of any notable habitats. The site comprises primarily grassland, with the centre of the site including a circular feature containing non-notable disturbed flora with remaining tree stumps from historical felling. No evidence of protected species or notable ornithological species were recorded within the substation site.

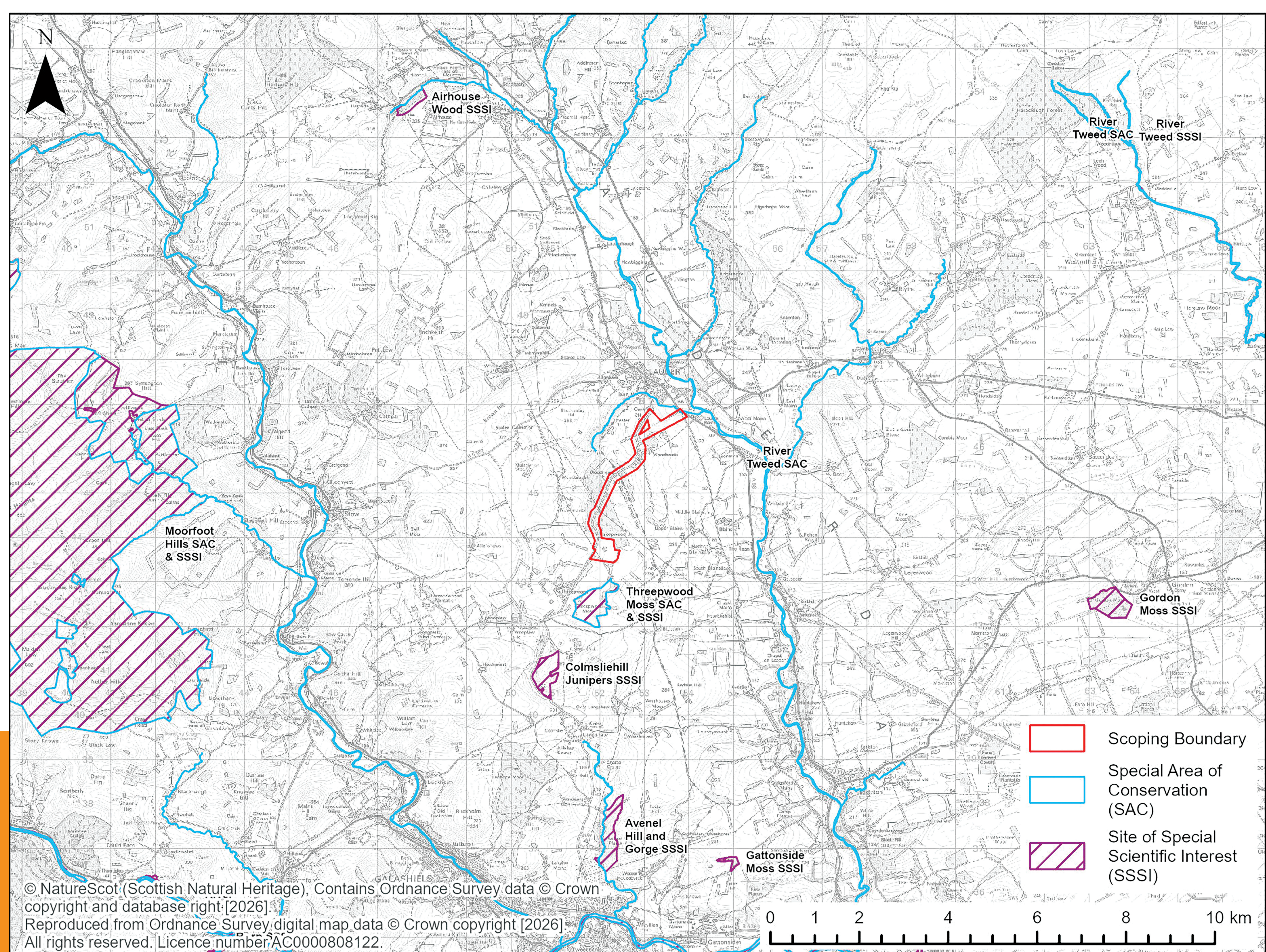


Figure: Environmental constraints

Outwith the substation site, habitats will not be impacted directly or indirectly with mitigation controls in place throughout the construction period to control and manage any pollution risk. Any protected species present in the wider area will be avoided directly and indirectly with additional protection in place where required.

Woodland through which the ZA overhead line diversion is routed is in the form of plantations, offering very limited biodiversity value. Any possible impact would be limited to where new steel lattice towers are required to connect to the proposed Gala North substation.

The results of all desktop and field surveys for the substation site, ZA overhead line diversion and the temporary haul road will be used as part of the ecological impact assessment for the EIAR to assess any potential adverse effects and associated mitigation and/or monitoring or licensing that may be required. This will include any potential impacts on designated sites for nature conservation, including Threepwood Moss SAC & SSSI and the River Tweed SAC, amongst others.



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# Community Engagement

## What has happened so far?

SP Energy Networks carried out pre-application public consultation for Gala North substation with local residents and stakeholders on initial proposals in June 2024. Since then, we have continued talking to stakeholders and conducting technical and environmental studies.

We carried out further engagement with Lauderdale Community Council in October 2024 and May 2025 and engaged with local elected representatives and landowners in the area. Since our initial pre-consultation engagement, changes have been made to the plans to reflect initial feedback and technical requirements. SP Energy Networks is now consulting on the revised proposals, which will form a new planning application to Scottish Borders Council for the proposed Gala North substation.

## How your feedback has shaped the project

We are grateful to everyone who attended our drop-in sessions in 2024 and took the time to share their views. Your input has helped to further develop the proposals.

## Headline feedback

### Visual impact on the local community

Residents raised concerns about the substation's potential visual impact. The site was chosen for its lower-lying position and distance from nearby properties, helping to reduce visibility. Existing landforms will be used to provide both embedded and additional mitigation. As part of the EIA process, we are developing a landscape and ecological mitigation plan to incorporate planting to the southwest and southeast of the substation site to further integrate the proposals into the surrounding environment by providing additional screening and enhancing ecological biodiversity through the planting mix.

### Sensitivity to flooding in the area

Residents raised concerns about flooding in the area. A Water Environment Assessment will be included as part of the EIA, including a qualitative assessment of flood risk, and submitted as part of the Application. Consultation with SEPA will be carried out as part of the EIA process. The findings will inform any required design changes or mitigation and or monitoring that may be required.

### Impact on the environment and biodiversity

We are committed to protecting local ecosystems and will integrate mitigation measures into the project design as noted above by means of a landscape and ecological mitigation plan. We will conserve and enhance biodiversity on and around the site, leaving it in a better ecological state, with ongoing management to support this.

### Impact on the local road network

Concerns regarding traffic and road conditions were raised by some residents. An access survey has been undertaken to identify the most appropriate and shortest route to the proposed substation site whilst avoiding routing through sensitive areas such as Lauder. Further information on the temporary haul road can be found on the banner "Access" displayed within this venue. We will continue to work closely with local authorities throughout the EIA process and results will be reported within the Traffic and Transport chapter of the EIAR.



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## Next Steps

### What happens next?

Following this pre-application public consultation, SP Energy Networks will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the substation and ZA overhead line diversion. The EIA will cover landscape and visual amenity, ecology, forestry and nature conservation, water environment, traffic and transport, socio-economics, land use and tourism, noise and vibration and cultural heritage.

In tandem with undertaking the EIA, SP Energy Networks is developing the detailed design. This will be informed by the EIA and feedback from public consultation. This public exhibition is an opportunity for you to make comments to us on our proposals for both the substation and ZA overhead line diversion project before we submit consenting applications. Your comments, along with the results of ongoing environmental studies will inform the submitted design.

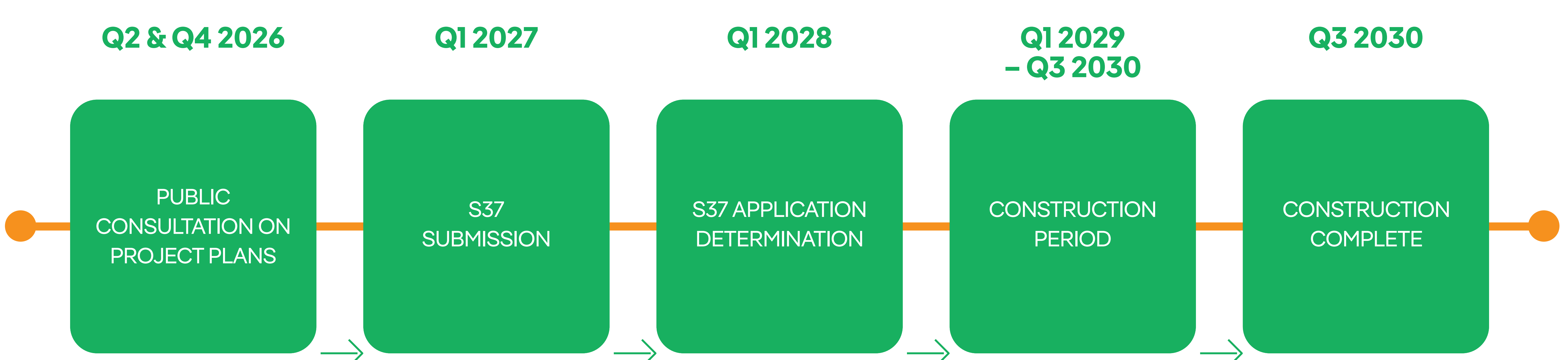
On completion of the EIA and design, SP Energy Networks will submit a planning application to Scottish Borders Council for the substation, and a section 37 (s37) application to Scottish Ministers for the ZA overhead line diversion.

The determining authority will then invite representations from local communities and stakeholders before deciding whether to grant permissions, and to inform any conditions that may be required under permissions.

### Indicative timeline for Gala North substation application



### Indicative timeline for ZA overhead line diversion application



Construction of the ZA overhead line diversion is proposed to start in 2029 with construction activities expected to be completed in less than two years.

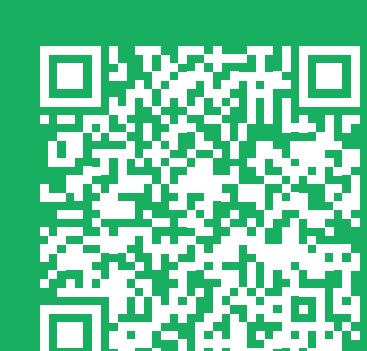
### Community benefit

SP Energy Networks' aim is to deliver lasting social, economic and environmental benefits, ensuring local people share in the opportunities created by our work to deliver a transmission network fit for the future.

**The Gala North substation project will attract community benefit funding. Scan the QR code for further information on SP Energy Networks' community benefit funding.**



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# How to Get Involved

## How to share your feedback

We encourage you to provide feedback on our proposals. There are several different methods you can use:

- Get in touch by speaking to a member of the project team here today.
- You can find more information and respond online at:  
[www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/gala\\_north\\_substation.aspx](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/gala_north_substation.aspx).
- You can also share your views by phone on: **020 3861 3733**. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am until 5.30pm (except bank holidays). An answering service is available outside these times. Remember to include your name, address and a phone number if you need us to phone you back.
- Email us at: [info@galanorth.com](mailto:info@galanorth.com).
- Or you can **write to us free of charge**. Address your correspondence to:  
Gala North, Grayling, 33 Castle Street, Edinburgh, Freepost RUCR-BSLH-JEKY.

No stamp or any other details are needed, but make sure you include your name and address if you need us to send you anything. Please allow up to a week for posting.

**Please provide any comments by Friday 10th July 2026.**

We cannot guarantee consideration of feedback provided via methods not listed above (such as on social media).

If you would like a hard copy version of any consultation materials, please contact us. Any materials can also be made available in large print format.

Please note that any data collected through your consultation feedback will only be used to help understand views regarding the Gala North substation & ZA overhead line diversion project. The data will not be used for any other purposes. The data will be collated and analysed to help in the reporting of consultation feedback. We do not, and will not, sell personal information.



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