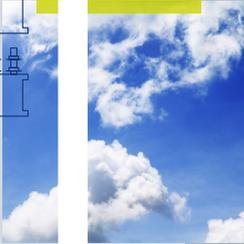
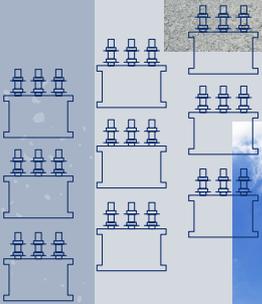
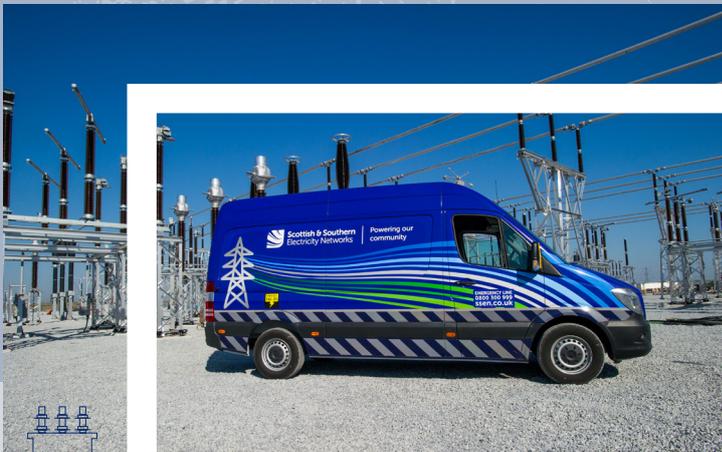


Elgin Newbuild Substation

Site Selection Consultation

March 2026



Contents

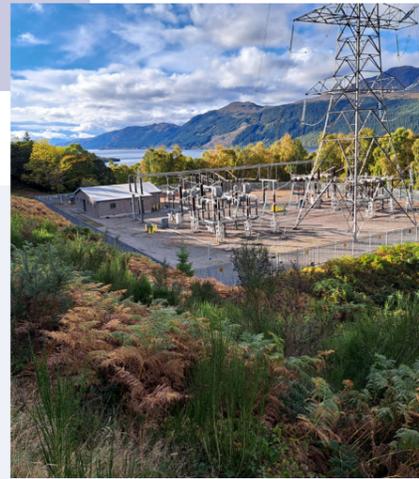
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The Consultation Event will be taking place on:

Thursday 26 March 2026, 2–7pm
Elgin Sports and Community Centre, Trinity Road, Elgin, IV30 1UE



Powering change together



The time has come to further enhance Scotland's energy infrastructure, providing power for future generations as we move towards net zero.

The shift to a cleaner, more sustainable future is about more than climate change. It's about ensuring future generations have the same opportunities to thrive as we have all had.

Countries around the world are investing in their energy infrastructure to support the demands of modern economies and meet net zero targets. The UK is leading the way in building a modern, sustainable energy system for the future.

We all have a part to play

When it comes to net zero, we have to be in it together. The UK and Scottish governments have ambitious net zero targets, and we're playing our part in meeting them.

We work closely with the National Energy System Operator (NESO) to connect vast renewable energy resources—harnessed by solar, wind, hydro and marine generation—to areas of demand across the country. Scotland is playing a big role in meeting this demand, exporting two thirds of power generated in our network.

But there's more to be done. By 2050, the north of Scotland is predicted to contribute over 50GW of low carbon energy to help deliver net zero. Today, our region has around 9GW of renewable generation connected to the network.

At SSEN Transmission, it is our role to build the energy system of the future.

We're investing over £20 billion into our region's energy infrastructure this decade, with the potential for this to increase to over £30 billion. This investment will deliver a network capable of meeting 20% of the UK's Clean Power 2030 target and supporting up to 37,000 jobs, 17,500 of which will be here in Scotland.

Who we are

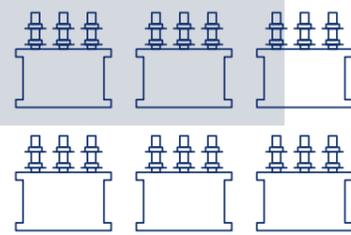
We're responsible for maintaining and investing in the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland. We're part of SSE plc, one of the world's leading energy companies with a rich heritage in Scotland that dates back more than 80 years. We are also closely regulated by the GB energy regulator Ofgem, who determines how much revenue we are allowed to earn for constructing, maintaining and renovating our transmission network.

What we do

We manage the electricity network across our region which covers a quarter of the UK's land mass, crossing some of the country's most challenging terrain. We connect renewable energy sources to our network in the north of Scotland and then transport it to where it needs to be. From underground/subsea cables and overhead lines to electricity substations, our network keeps your lights on all year round.

Working with you

We understand that the work we do can have an impact on communities. So we're committed to minimising our impacts and maximising all the benefits that our developments can bring to your area. We're regularly assessed by global sustainability consultancy AccountAbility for how we engage with communities. That means we provide all the information you need to know about our plans and how they will impact communities like yours. We want to hear people's views, concerns, or ideas and harness local knowledge so that our work benefits their communities: today and long into the future. You can share your views with us at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/talk-to-us/contact-us/



About the project

As the transmission license holder in the north of Scotland, we have a duty under Section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to facilitate competition in the generation and supply of electricity. We have an obligation to offer non-discriminatory terms for connection to the transmission system, both for new generation and for new sources of electricity demand.

Elgin 132/33kV Substation is located to the north of Elgin, 6.4km from the Moray Coast. This substation constructed in 1970 is a two-transformer site that provides a connection to SSEN Distribution (Also known as Scottish Hydro Electric Distribution or SHEPD).

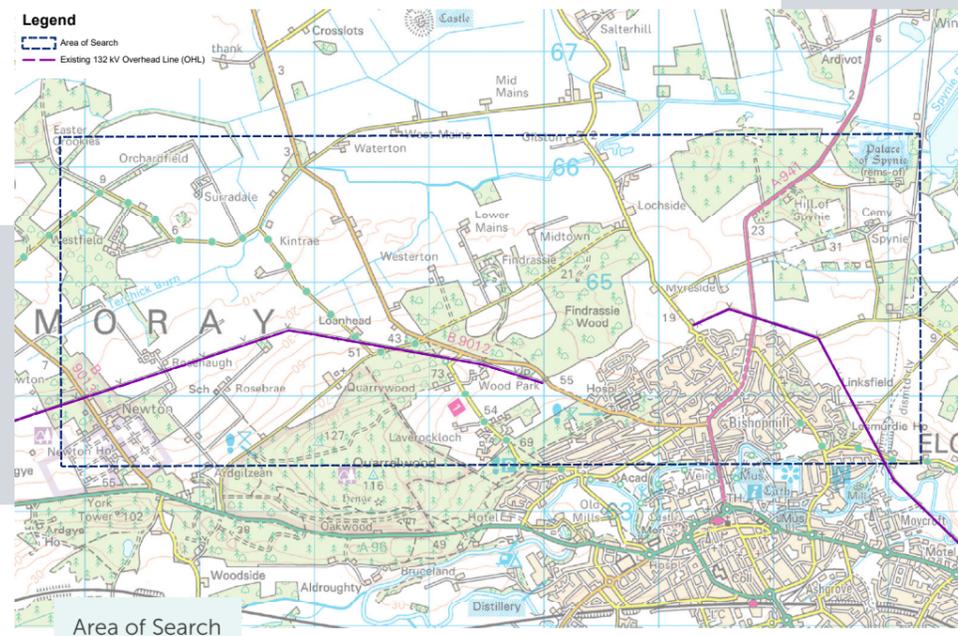
Why do we need a new substation?

The existing transformers on the old substation were installed in the 1970s and are now beyond their expected lifespan. Although they are still operational, the risk of failure increases with every year. Modern replacements are larger and cannot be accommodated on the existing substation. The surrounding housing development also means that the substation cannot be expanded. For these reasons, constructing a new substation is the only practical long-term solution to ensure a safe and reliable electricity supply for the community, and to accommodate future upgrades to the network.

A new substation will be required to enable power to be transmitted to the grid via the 132kV overhead line (OHL) between Beauty and Keith. SSEN Transmission will now assume responsibility for delivery of the required Elgin Substation. As such there is a requirement to undertake a site selection exercise following SSEN Transmission procedures to ensure that the site location is the most appropriate.

The proposed search area is located within 5km of the existing Elgin substation site as shown in the image below. This is to minimise the length of the connection required between the new substation and the existing site.

SSEN Transmission is currently reviewing the potential requirement for overhead line elements to be incorporated to this project depending on the final proposed site. If any additional overhead line elements would be required these would be subject to a separate consultation.



Our consultation process

The work we have planned has the potential to deliver benefits in your community, Scotland, and beyond. Yet we know that achieving our goals will require a lot of work that may impact your local community. That's why we want to work with you every step of the way throughout the planning and delivery stages of these essential works.

We're committed to delivering a meaningful consultation process that actively seeks the views of everyone affected by our plans. That means making our plans clear and easily accessible, so that you can give us input throughout each stage of the development process.

Throughout the consultation, we'll present our approach to developing the project. We will also provide some maps to show you where everything will be located.

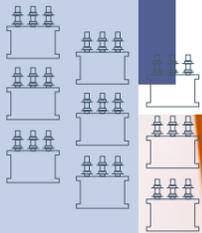
We want you to share your thoughts and opinions on our plans, where you think we can make improvements, concerns about the impact of our work and as we develop the project, what you think of any changes and refinements we make.

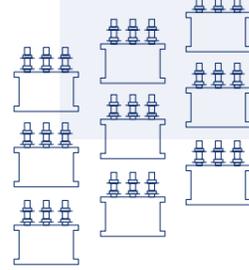
By telling us what you think, you will help shape our proposals. We want to harness your local knowledge so that we spot any unforeseen challenges early and maximise the potential benefits and opportunities for your communities.

Because, ultimately, we want you to work with us to ensure that the energy infrastructure we build will be the best it can possibly be.

Who we are consulting with

As well as communities, we are keen to hear feedback from a broad range of other stakeholders such as landowners, businesses, non-statutory consultees and statutory consultees such as local authorities, NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS).

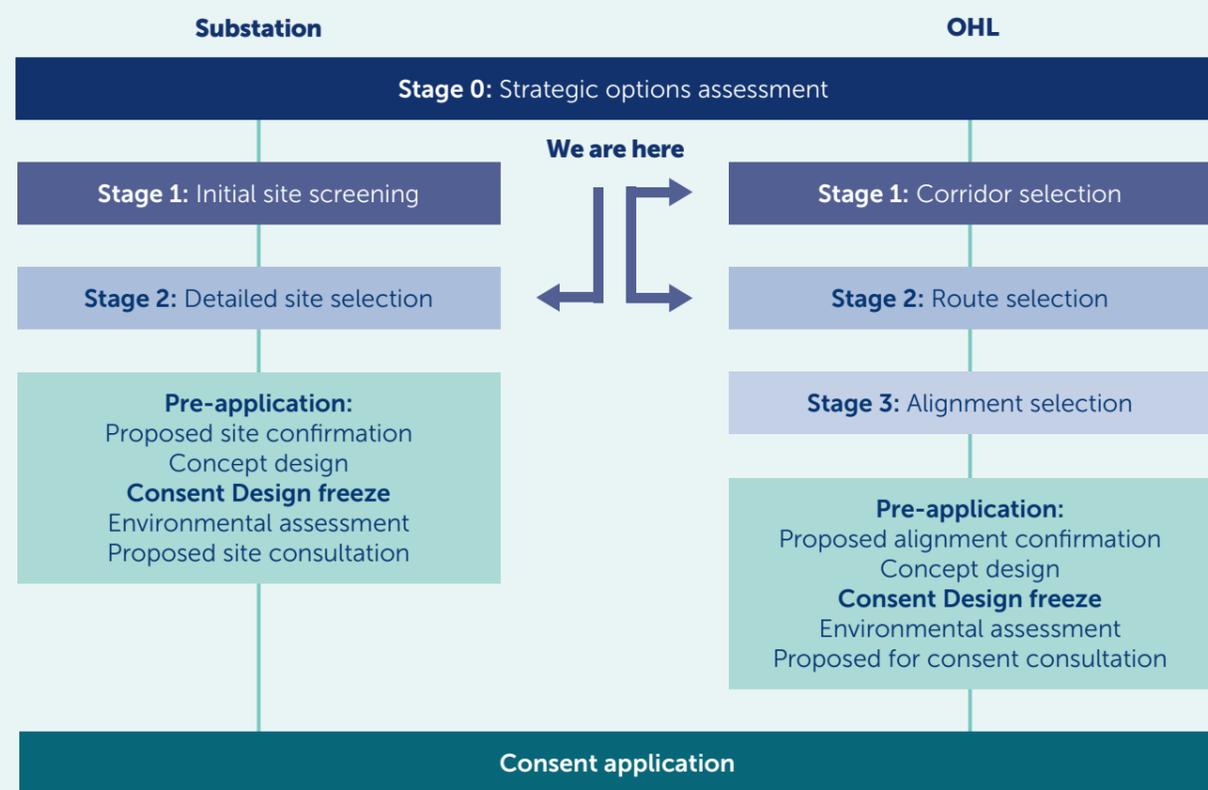




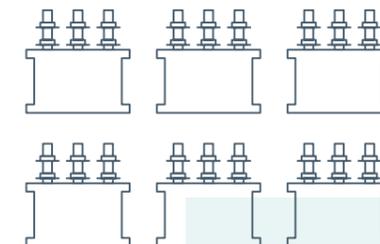
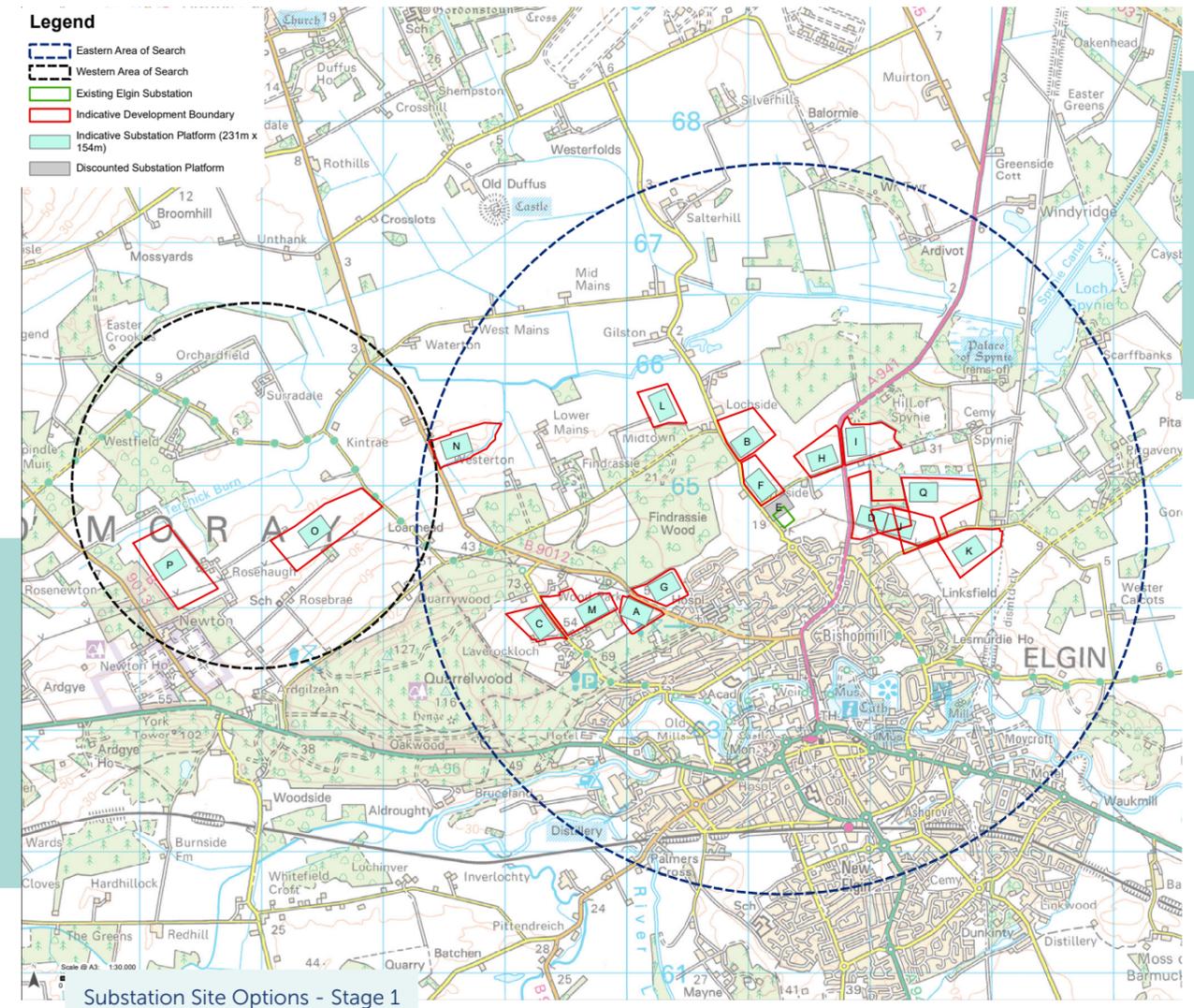
Our site selection process

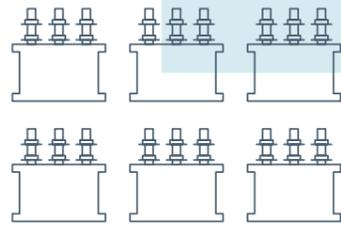
SSEN Transmission has developed and implemented a formal process for the selection of sites for new substations of 132kV and above. The main aim of the process is to provide a consistent approach to the selection of new substation sites and is underpinned by our statutory licence obligations. Our site selection process ensures the design, consenting, construction and operation of a substation is done in a manner that is technically feasible and financially viable, whilst causing on balance the least disturbance to the environment and the people who live, work and use those areas for recreation.

Current Project – Stage 2

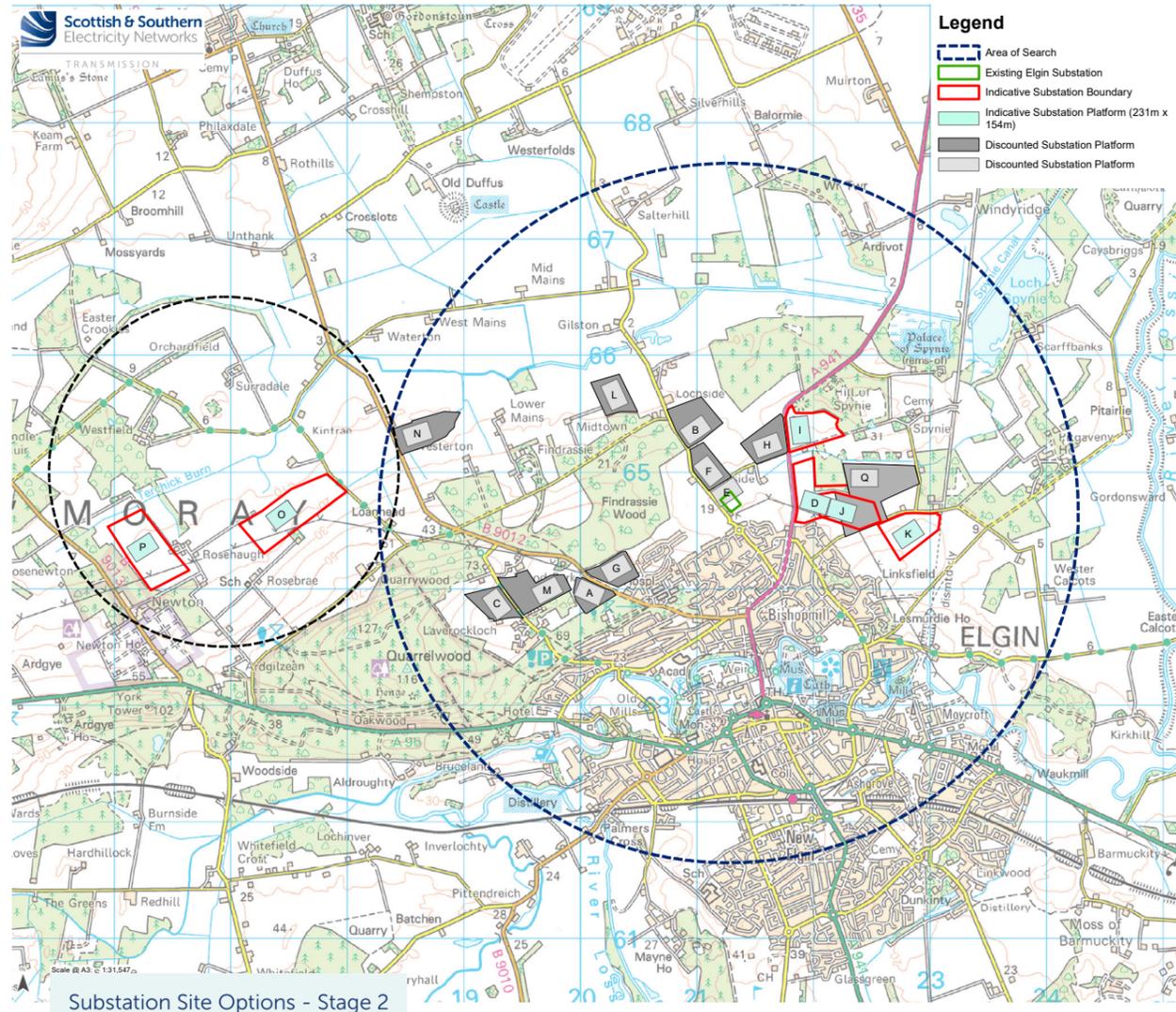


To identify potential site locations for the new substation, we initially set a search radius of 3km from the existing Elgin Substation site. This is to minimise the length of the connection required between the new substation and the existing site. However, following a review of the technical constraints we extended the Area of Search to the west, in proximity to the existing 132 kV OHL infrastructure. Using a Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) and Geographic Information System (GIS) 16 potential sites were identified as shown in the map below.





After further desk top study and analysis of the search area and site options, a site walkover was undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team in early 2026. This enabled the 16 sites to be filtered to 6 sites, as identified in the image below. The early-stage assessment included consideration of landscape impacts, proximity to nationally designated sites, opportunities for the site to accommodate the substation platform and ways to connect to the existing Elgin substation.



5 sites are currently being assessed as part of the Detailed Site Selection Process. The key aim of this process is to identify a short list of proposed substation sites, which avoids where possible physical, environmental and amenity constraints, is likely to be acceptable to stakeholders, and is economically viable, considering engineering and connection requirements.

At this stage in the process our multi-disciplinary team was responsible for analysing each of the sites and recording this within an Environmental Site Selection Report against the predetermined MCA. This iterative process allows all sites to be scrutinised in increasing detail, bringing cost, technical and environmental considerations together in a way which seeks the best balance. This process has identified 2 preferred site areas, and 5 total sites which we are seeking feedback on as part of our consultation process.

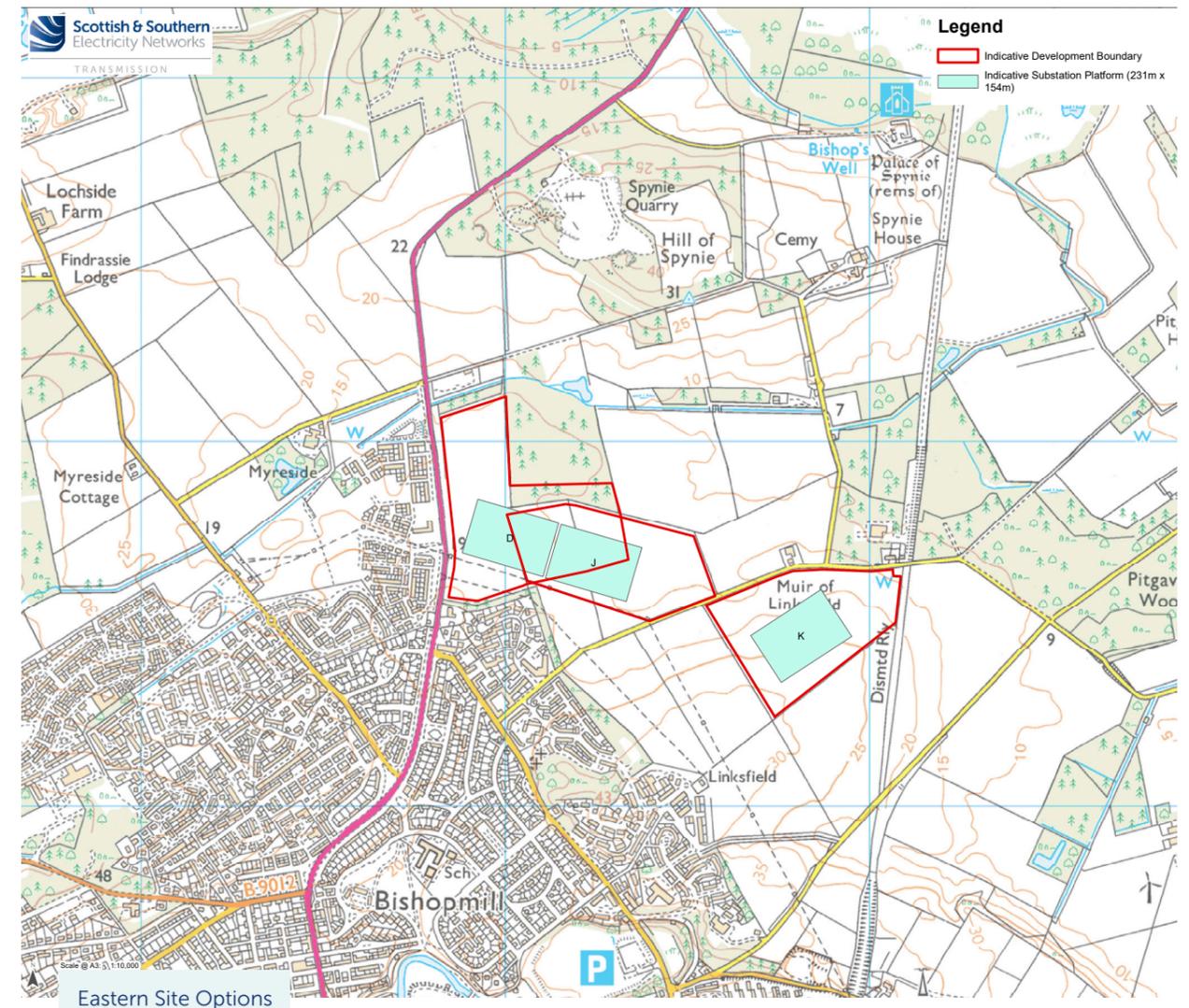
Site Options

SSEN Transmission seeks feedback on the western and eastern site options shown in the images below. The western site options comprises of Site O and Site P. The eastern site options comprises of Site D, Site J and Site K. These sites could accommodate the substation design and a Substation platform approximately measuring 231m x 154m. These site options would also offer a degree of flexibility with regards to future renewable energy connections to the site.

The red line boundaries for the western and eastern site options in the images below will allow for all anticipated construction activities however these sizes are subject to change as we complete our detailed design phase of the project.

The eastern site options (site D, J and K) are located on agricultural land that joins the A941 to the west. The sites sits in the central-to-eastern extent of the Area of Search. These site options are located between approximately 550metres and 1.2km south-east of the existing Elgin Substation.

The western site options, Site O and P, are located on agricultural land to the east of B9013. The site sits south of the Terchick Burn. These option are located between approximately 3.6km and 4.7km west of the existing Elgin Substation, and is located in close proximity to the existing overhead line.



Environmental considerations

Any potential environmental impacts will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or voluntary Environmental Appraisal (EA), which will be submitted as part of the planning application to Moray Council in Q4 2026. The requirement for an EIA will be established with the local authority prior to an application for planning permission being made. Thereafter, the EIA/EA will be available for members of the public to view and comment on, along with all other supporting documentation, as part of the planning application.

Landscape and visual

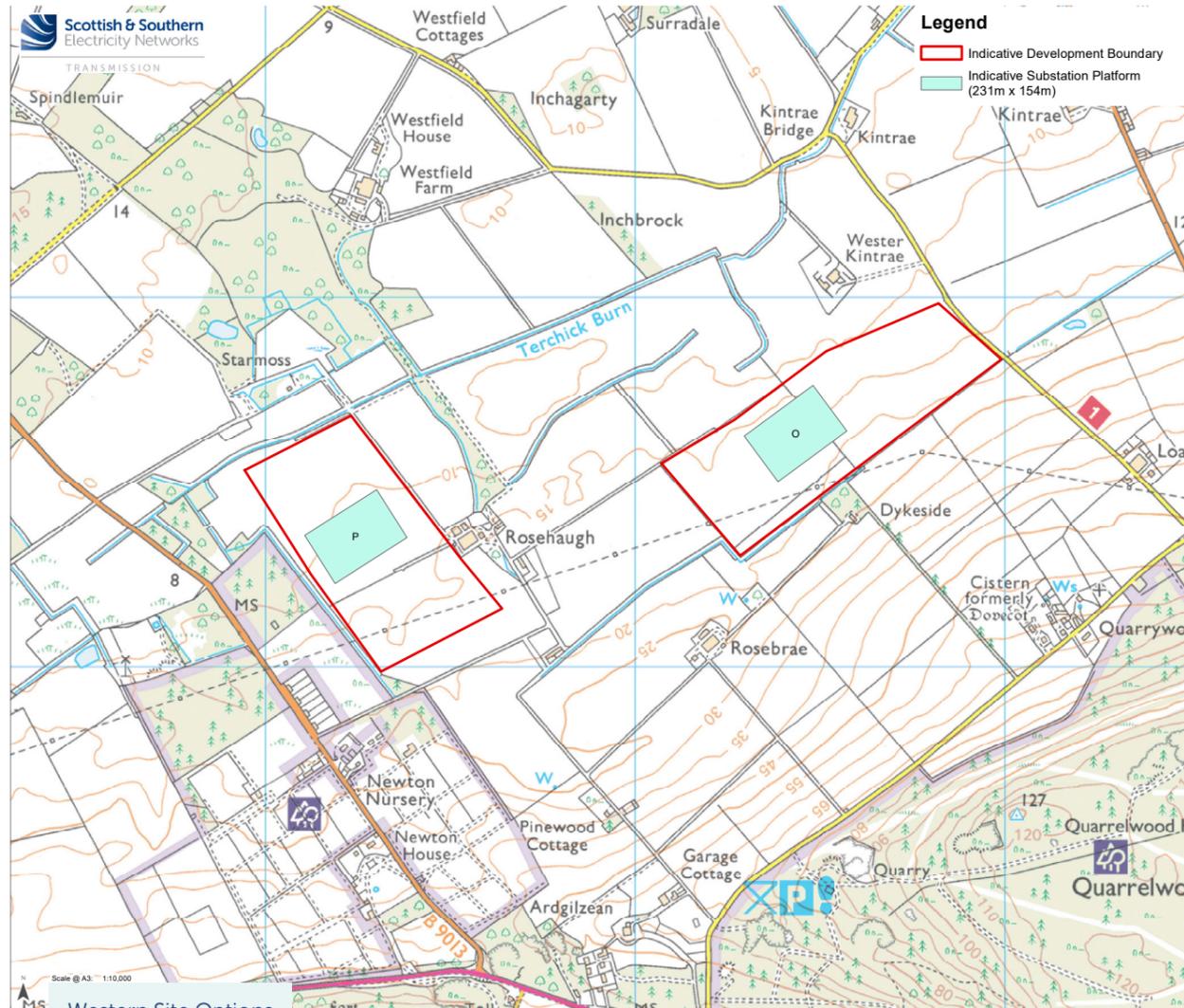
There are two Special Landscape Areas (SLA) located within the site selection area. These are SLA Spynie and SLA Quarrelwood, where SLA Spynie is located approximately 400 metres north of Site J and approximately 5.2km west of Site P. Given the landform and vegetation, the proposed Site Options are considered unlikely to compromise the special qualities or key characteristics of the SLA Spynie and SLA Quarrelwood.

Sites D, J and K are located within the Findrassie Master Plan Area and are allocated. Site D is allocated for industrial use and site J and K are located for long term housing in the Moray Local Plan. Site O and P are located outside the Findrassie Master Plan Area and is not allocated.

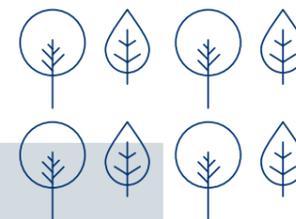
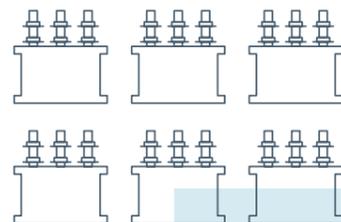
Areas of established streets, housing estates and localised areas of more recent and on-going construction characterising the northern edge of Elgin town which is located south of Sites D, J and K. Sites P and O are located in an area with mainly agricultural land and there are some residential properties and a farm located near Site P both to the West and East.

There are five Scheduled Monuments within 2km of the eastern Site Options, Elgin Cathedral, Elgin Castle, Spynie Place, Muirton, bank barrow, souterrains and enclosures, and Duffus Castle. There are no Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes, and Inventory Battlefields. The closest Scheduled Monument to sites D, J and K is Spynie Place which is located approximately 1.3km north of the Site. The closest Scheduled Monument to Sites O and P is Quarrywood henge which is located approximately 1.2km south east of the Site. In addition, Rosehaugh Farmhouse, which is a Grade B Listed Building, is located in the middle of the western search area.

There are no non-inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes. There are two Conservation Areas located within 2km of the eastern site options, Elgin High Street and Elgin South. There are also 13 Category A Listed Buildings, 125 Category B Listed Buildings and 113 Category C Listed Buildings within 2km of the Site selection area. A majority of the Listed Buildings and both of the Conservation Areas are located within the Built-up area of Elgin. All site options could provide a good opportunity to accommodate development with limited landscape and visual effects, subject to a landscape and visual assessment will be carried out to understand and identify any significant effects and propose recommendations to mitigate these effects. For example existing surrounding woodlands near some of the sites could be used as screening with opportunities for additional planting where required. Consultation will be carried out with Moray Council to identify any on-site archaeological investigation that would be required before construction works commence and if required a Written Scheme of Investigation would be prepared which would set out a strategy for archaeological mitigation in advance of the construction works.



Western Site Options



Natural Heritage

There is one Special Protection Area within the eastern area of search, Loch Spynie. Loch Spynie is also designated as a Ramsar Site and is located within the north eastern extent of the Area of Search. Loch Spynie is located approximately 1km north-east from the eastern site options (site D, J and K).

The Western Area of Search (Site O and P) is an area of low-lying farmland, woodland and scattered farmsteads. The Terchick Burn is present across the central part of the search area, along with a number of field drains.

There are also three additional Special Protection Areas which lie beyond the study area, these are Moray Firth, Moray and Nairn Coast and Darnaway and Lethen Forest. There are five Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the area of search Loch Spynie, Spynie Quay, Findrassie, Cutties Hillock and Quarry Wood. The closest Site of Special Scientific interests is Spynie Quarry which is located approximately 450 metres north of the eastern site options (site D, J and K).

The majority of the search area falls within the built-up area of Elgin or agricultural land. The majority of the Area of Search falls within land classified as Class 3.2. However, the western search area is located on Grade 2 agricultural land that is classified as 'best most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land. Therefore, loss of agricultural land could be a constraint depending on the site location.

SSEN Transmission will aim to avoid any impact upon the woodland area and if required SSEN Transmission will compensate for any loss of woodland, including commercial forestry, and will engage with FLS and other landowners to identify land suitable for forestry and improvement.

Further ecological and environmental surveys and assessments will be carried out to understand and identify and significant effects and propose recommendations to mitigate these effects upon the natural habitats.

Land Use and Recreation

The majority of the search area falls within the built-up area of Elgin or agricultural land. Site P is located on Grade 2 agricultural land that is classified as 'best most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land. Therefore, loss of agricultural land could be a constraint.



Engineering considerations

Key engineering factors influencing the preferred site location include accessibility to Transmission circuits, availability of land, suitability of ground conditions, and the need to address environmental constraints alongside potential community impacts. The proposed 132kV Elgin Substation has been strategically located close to existing transmission infrastructure, enabling efficient integration into the network. Future development requirements, such as connections for wind farms and Network Rail electrification, have also been considered to reduce the likelihood of requiring additional substations and land in the local area.

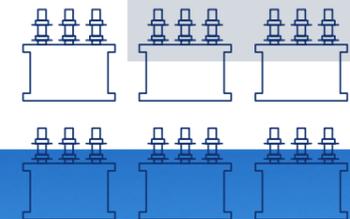
Site character

The new Elgin substation will be a 132kV Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) substation forming part of the SSEN Transmission network. The site will include a control building, high-voltage switchgear, and provision for up to four grid transformers. A key siting principle was proximity to the existing substation, overhead lines (OHL), and underground cables (UGC) assets. By positioning the substation close to these assets, the extent of new OHL and UGC works is minimised. This reduces the need for major diversions, additional towers, or large-scale cable re-routing, which would otherwise be required if the site were located further away.



What next?

Today's consultation and feedback will inform our final site selection and project design. Our team will consider your feedback in advance of progressing our design and development through the statutory planning process outlined below.



The Town and Country Planning Process

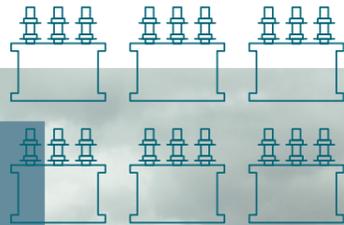
The legislation that enables the planning of the Elgin Substation project, is the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Engaging the right people

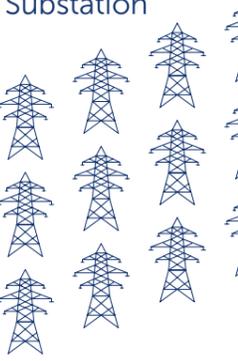
Local Planning Authorities determine the outcome of any applications made under the Town and Country Planning Act and establish the planning pathway our substation projects must take, including which consents are required. This involves confirming whether projects require Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) under the relevant legislation. If our project is deemed non-EIA (due to its scale or potential environmental impacts), a voluntary Environmental Appraisal (EA) may be produced by us to support the consent application. These assessments would be made publicly available once submitted in support of a planning application.

The substation proposed as part of this project is classed as "National Development" under the Town and Country Planning process; therefore, pre-application consultation is required with the public and interested parties. There will be further opportunities to provide feedback to SSEN Transmission during the formal pre-application consultation process.

Comments made through the pre-application consultation process are not formal representations to Moray Council. When a planning application is submitted there will be an opportunity to make formal representations to Moray Council.



Other projects in the local area



As the transmission operator in the north of Scotland, we need to maintain and invest in the high voltage electricity transmission network in our area to provide a safe and reliable electricity supply to our communities.

We also need to offer terms for connections to the transmission network for new generation such as wind farms and pumped storage schemes and for new sources of electricity demand.

Therefore, as well as Elgin Substation, we have a number of other projects within the local area we are currently progressing, described below.

Beauly – Blackhillock – New Deer – Peterhead 400kV Overhead Line (BBNP)

This project spans a significant length of the northeast of Scotland and will involve the construction of a new 400kV overhead line (OHL) between new proposed substations near Beauly, Blackhillock, New Deer and Peterhead. The connection will be delivered via an overhead line of steel lattice towers (commonly referred to as pylons) likely to average around 57m in height, with the overhead line spanning a total length of approx. 185km. Since the project was first consulted upon in September 2022, our project team have been working to refine our proposals, considering feedback from local stakeholders and we are now able to share our Proposed Alignment which will be taken forward in our consent application. The project also includes the permanent diversion of the existing Blackhillock to Rothienorman 400kV OHL into the proposed Coachford substation site. We have now developed our final Proposed Alignment for the Coachford OHL diversions, which will be included in our consent application. Additionally, following construction of the proposed 400kV overhead line, the existing 132kV OHL between Beauly substation and Knocknagael substation will be removed.

Local renewable developments:

We know that local stakeholders are keen to understand the full extent of renewable developments being proposed in their local area.

Applications to connect to the transmission network in our licence area are made to National Grid ESO and undergo a lengthy process of assessment before we begin to develop a network connection for those developments.

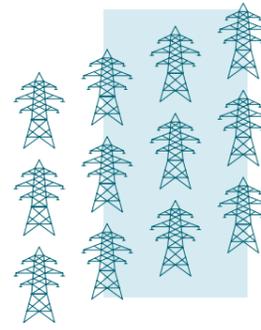
We aim to be transparent about the renewable developments looking to connect to our network but are not permitted to disclose any details of these developments until they are in the public domain.

A list of projects that hold contracts for Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) with National Grid, the Electricity System Owner is available from their website: [Transmission Entry Capacity \(TEC\) register | ESO \(nationalgrideso.com\)](https://www.nationalgrideso.com)

Search Projects



Finding common ground with landowners



We recognise that landowners and occupiers are key stakeholders in the development of our projects. At all levels, we will be transparent about our proposals and keep the conversation open and constructive when it comes to those affected and reaching effective compromise.

From the outset of the project, our land team have been identifying and contacting landowners and occupiers who may be affected by our proposals. If you are a landowner who is affected by the proposals and have not yet had contact from us, please get in touch via the contact details for the dedicated project land managers found on the relevant webpages: www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/elgin-substation/

We work with landowners and occupiers to mitigate the effects of our infrastructure on their properties and our team of Land Managers will be on hand to answer queries and address concerns throughout this process.

As part of this, we need to carry out various engineering and environmental surveys to inform what we design and how we build it. We will always seek consent from affected landowners and occupiers in advance for these surveys.

Once we have finalised the design, we will be required to secure the appropriate land rights from landowners and occupiers in order to secure planning consent.

Our land managers will endeavour to reach a voluntary agreement with landowners and occupiers, however, as a statutory undertaker, we might need to underpin voluntary discussions with an application to Scottish Ministers for a Necessary Wayleave or Compulsory Purchase Order.

Ultimately this is to ensure nationally significant infrastructure projects are delivered on time and in line with our licence obligations. We also have a duty to protect the interests of the UK bill payer. Statutory powers are not used lightly as we aim to work with landowners and occupiers to secure the necessary land rights voluntarily.

All potentially affected landowners and occupiers have the opportunity to provide feedback at our in-person consultation events and by submitting a feedback form. We would encourage all those with an interest to submit their views through this consultation.



Delivering a positive environmental legacy

On every project we deliver, we always need to consider how we impact the environment in that area. As we enhance the transmission network, we have a responsibility to design and build our projects to protect and enhance the environment. We will always look to minimise the potential impacts from our activities and achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

As the first developer to consult upon and implement an award-winning approach to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on all new sites, we're committed to delivering a "greener grid", focusing on habitat restoration and creating biodiversity growth as we invest in our network. We are committed to delivering 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on all sites gaining consent going forward. This ensures that we don't just restore our natural habitats but actively improve them for the benefit of local communities, wildlife, flora and fauna.

During the development, construction and operation of our projects, we will leave the environment in a measurably better state than before development started, ensuring a positive environmental legacy at all our sites.

As this project progresses through the development process, we will actively seek ways to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity, through careful routing and site design to avoid impacting areas of highest biodiversity value.

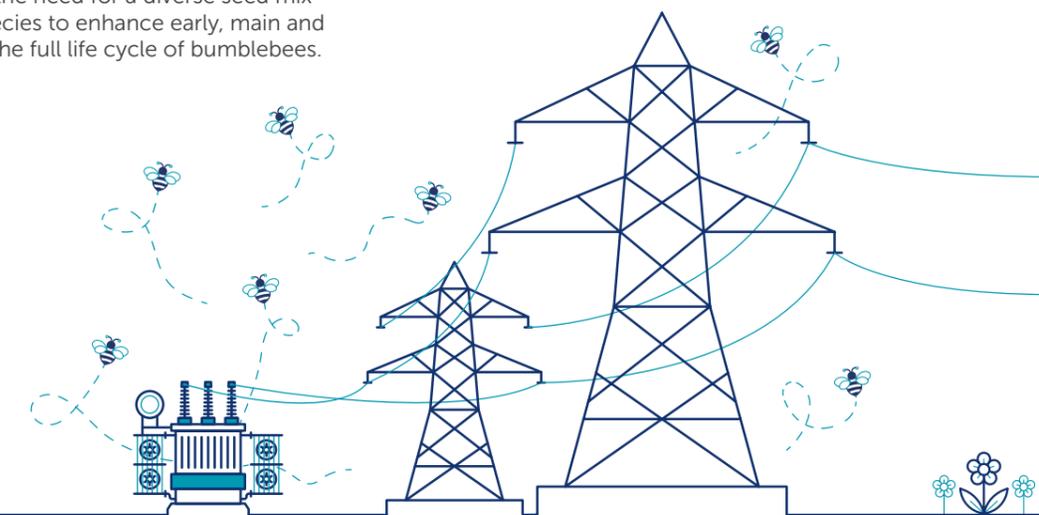
Where avoidance is not possible, we will offset this by introducing new habitats along with restoration efforts. These can be achieved within the boundary of the development site, or by providing support to local groups involved with habitat restoration or creation projects, within the locale of the development site.

If there are biodiversity improvement projects in your local area that we could get involved with, please contact the Community Liaison Manager.

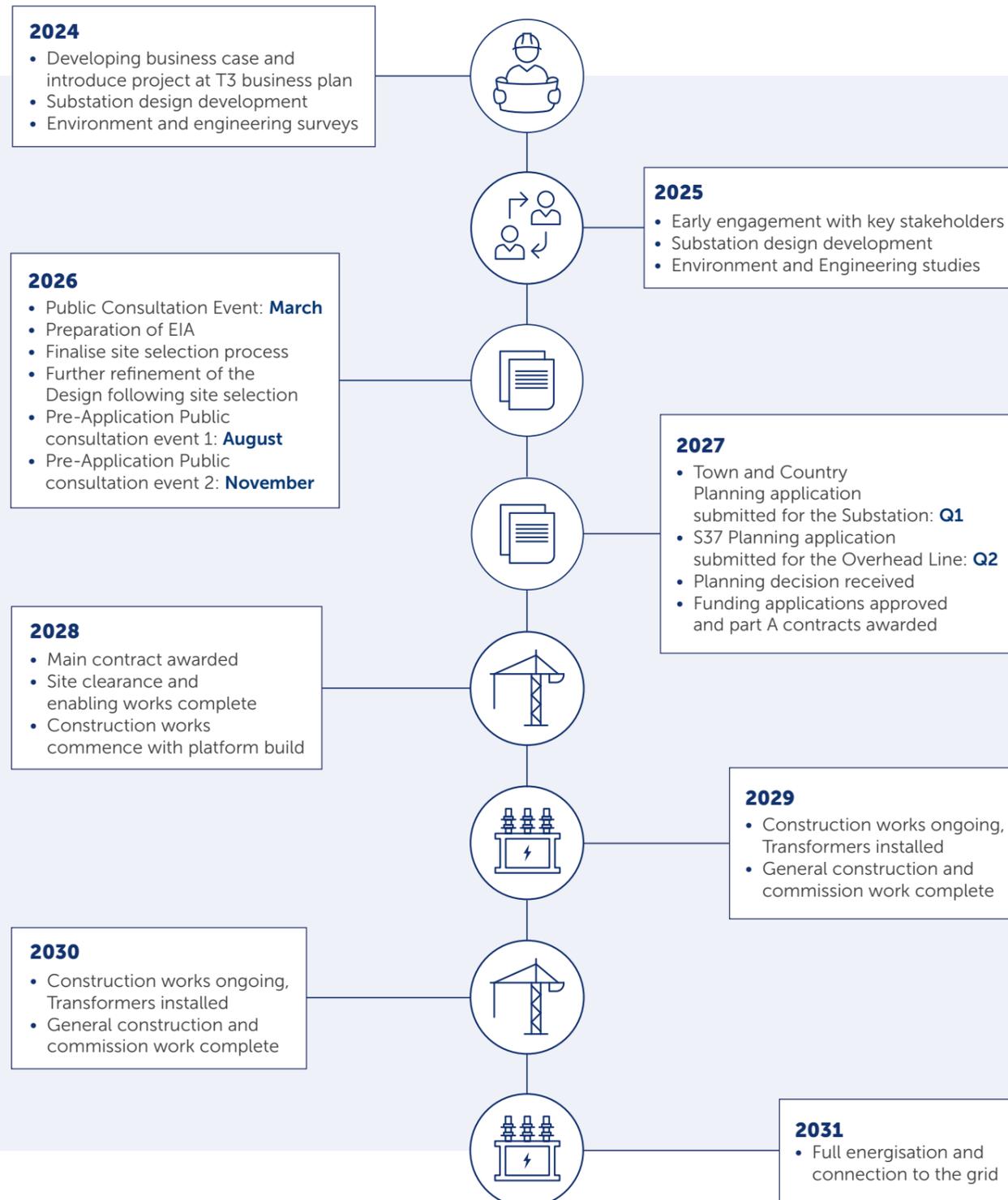
Example projects

Thurso South substation and The Bumblebee Conservation Trust:

We created approximately 10 hectares of bee-friendly habitat to support the pollination of the rare endemic great yellow bumblebee. This contributed to wider conservation efforts for this bee species. A collaboration with The Bumblebee Conservation Trust facilitated research on food availability for bumblebees, identifying the need for a diverse seed mix containing key flowering species to enhance early, main and late food supply to support the full life cycle of bumblebees.



Project Timeline



Have your say

We value community and stakeholder feedback. Without this, we would be unable to progress projects and reach a balanced proposal.

The feedback period

We will accept feedback from now until **Friday 8 May 2026**.

How to provide feedback:

Submit your feedback online by scanning the QR code on this page or via the form on our project webpage at: ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/elgin-substation/

Email the feedback form to the Community Liaison Manager. Or write to us enclosing the feedback form at the back of this booklet.

Our Community Liaison team

Each project has a dedicated Community Liaison Manager who works closely with community members to make sure they are well informed of our proposals and that their views, concerns, questions or suggestions are put to our project teams.

Throughout the life of our projects, you will hear from us regularly. We aim to establish strong working relationships by being accessible to key local stakeholders such as community councils, residents' associations and development trusts, and regularly engage with interested individuals.

To support everyone online, we provide accessibility and language options on our website through 'Recite Me'. The accessibility and language support options provided by 'Recite Me' include text-to-speech functionality, fully customisable styling features, reading aids, and a translation tool with over 100 languages, including 35 text-to-speech.

Please select "Accessibility" on our website to try out our inclusive toolbar."

What we're seeking views on

We want you to share your thoughts and opinions on our plans, where you think we can make improvements, concerns about the impact of our work and any changes or refinements we can make.

We'll be actively looking to mitigate the impacts of the site as much as possible over the coming months, but it would be helpful to understand what you believe we should be doing to help minimise these impacts and if there are any opportunities to deliver a local community benefit you would like us to consider.

We encourage all interested community members to fill in a feedback form when submitting feedback, however if you prefer, you can email us to provide your feedback or ask any questions.

Community Liaison Manager

Gordon Gilfillan

- SSEN Transmission, 10 Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1 1SN
- elgin.substation@sse.com
- 07389 754 548

Additional information:



The best way to keep up to date is to sign up to project updates via the project webpage:

ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/elgin-substation/

You can also follow us on social media:



Your feedback

Thank you for taking the time to read this consultation booklet. In order to record your views and improve the effectiveness of our consultation, please complete this short feedback form.

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS. (Please tick one box per question only)

Q1. Do you feel sufficient information has been provided to enable you to understand what is being proposed and why?

Yes No Unsure

Comments:

Q2. Are there any factors, or environmental features, that you consider may have been overlooked during the site selection process?

Yes No Unsure

Comments:

Q4. Do you have any other comments (positive or negative) or concerns in relation to the project, or about the potential sites?

Yes No Unsure

Comments:

Full name: **Email:**

Telephone: **Address:**

We would like to send you relevant communications via email such as invitations to stakeholder events, surveys, updates on projects, services and future developments from the Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks group listed below. If you are happy to receive email updates please opt in by ticking the box below. You can unsubscribe at any time by contacting us at stakeholder.admin@sse.com or by clicking on the unsubscribe link that will be at the end of each of our emails.

If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project, please tick this box

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form. Please submit your completed form by one of the methods below:

Post: SSEN Transmission, 10 Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1 1SN

Email: elgin.substation@sse.com

Online: www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/elgin-substation/

For information on how we collect and process your data please see our privacy notice available at today's event. This can also be obtained online at: ssn-transmission.co.uk/privacy

Comments forms and all the information from today's event will also be available to download from the project website.

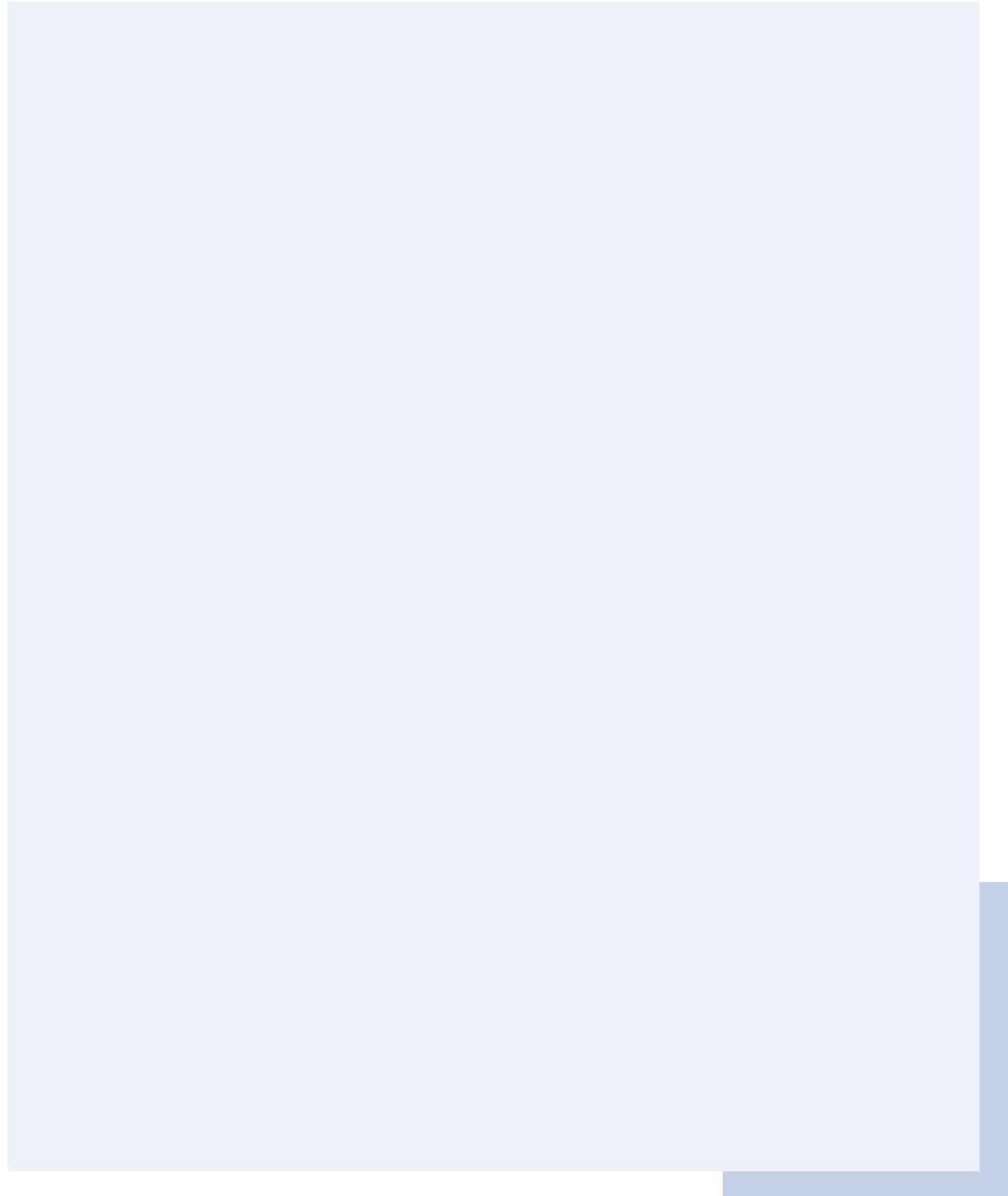
We intend to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist our experienced teams in the analysis of your feedback, so we can categorise key points raised more quickly. You can learn more about how we're utilising AI at: ssn-transmission.co.uk/AIFAQ

Any information given on the feedback form can be used and published anonymously as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks consultation report. By completing this feedback form you consent to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks using feedback for this purpose.

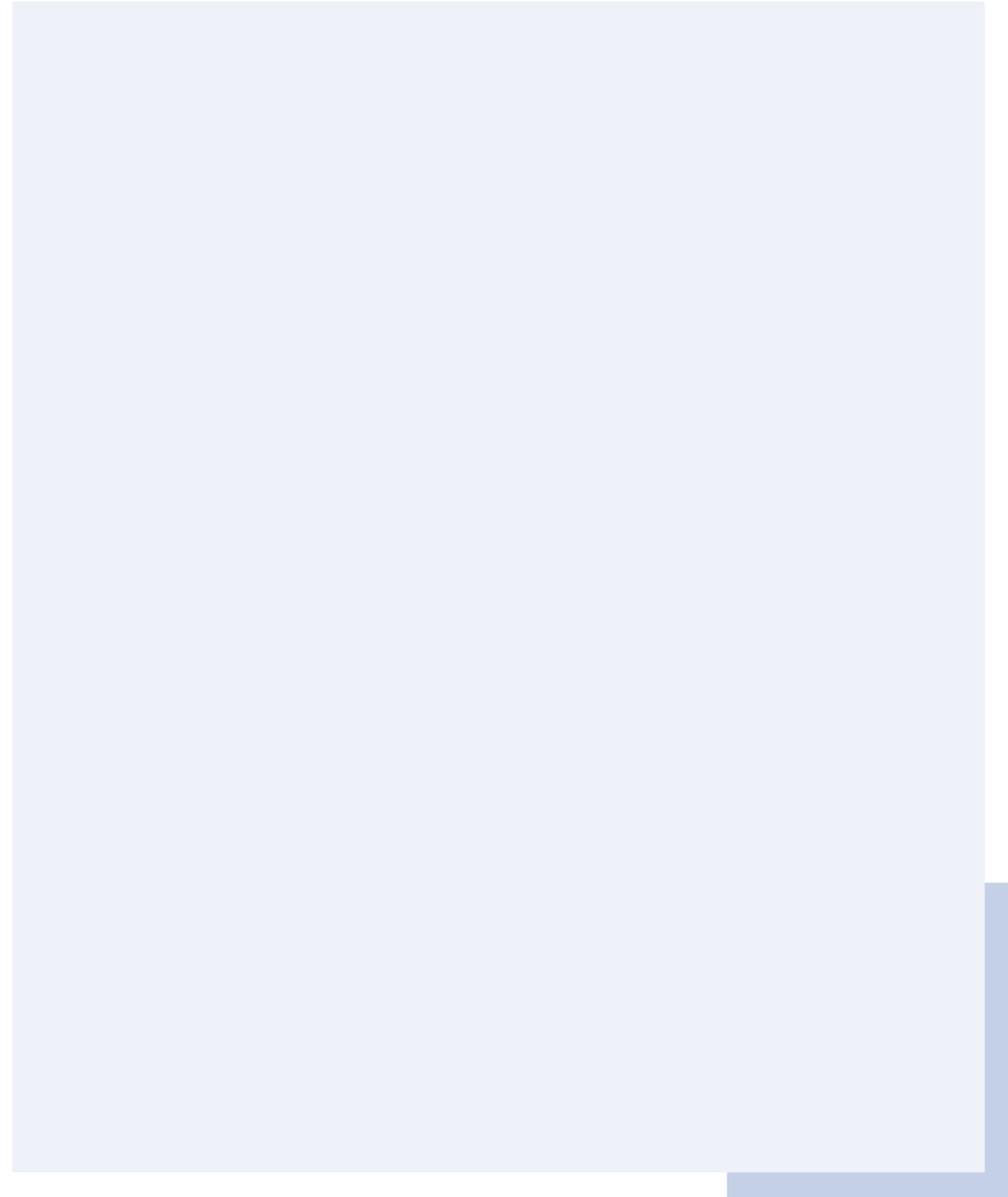
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