

# Contin early works

## An update on the mainland cable route

Contin

4 December 2025

Presented by Ryan Stewart and Calum Murray



**Scottish & Southern**  
Electricity Networks

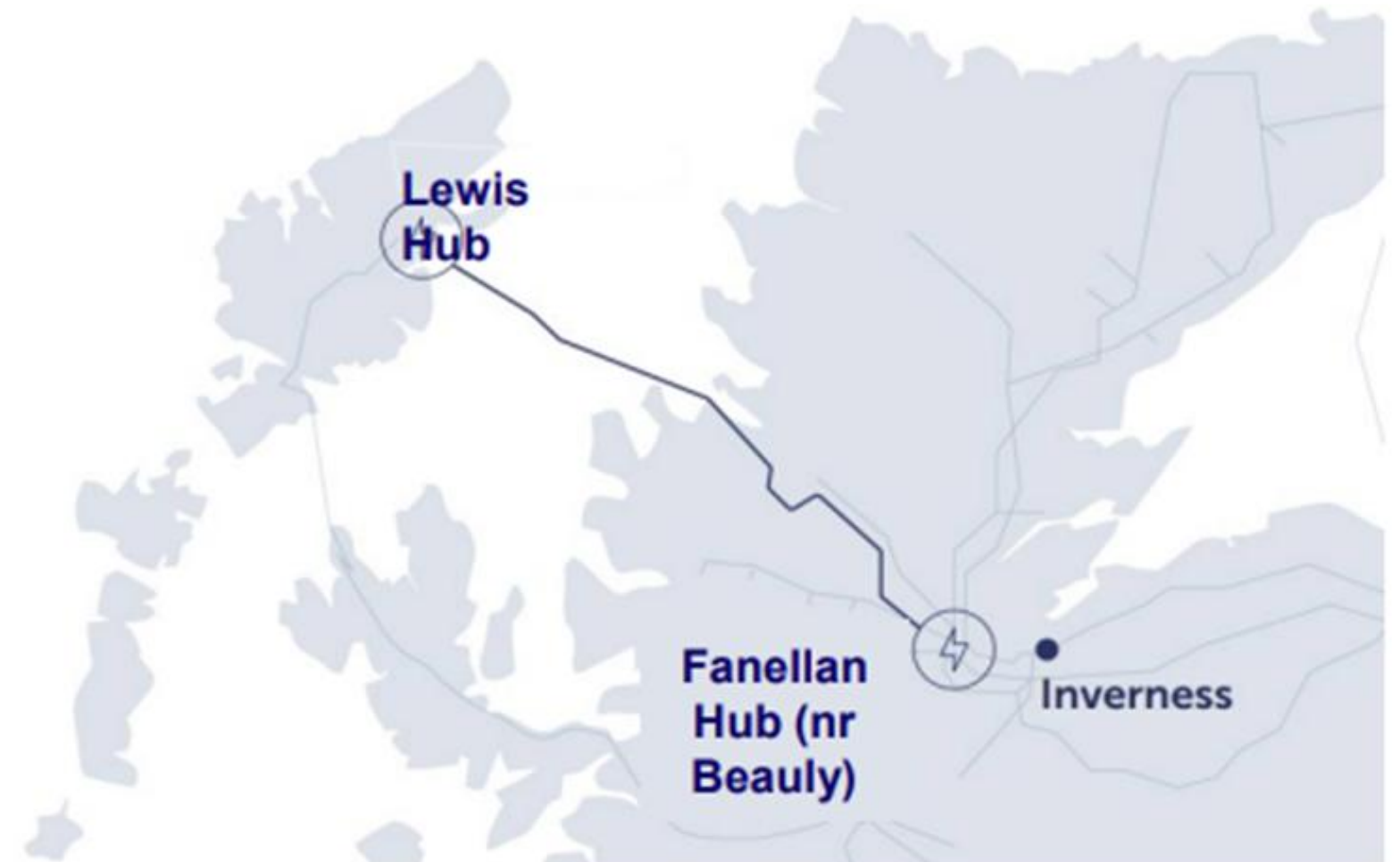
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TRANSMISSION

# Welcome, an introduction to the project and meet some of the team

## Introduction

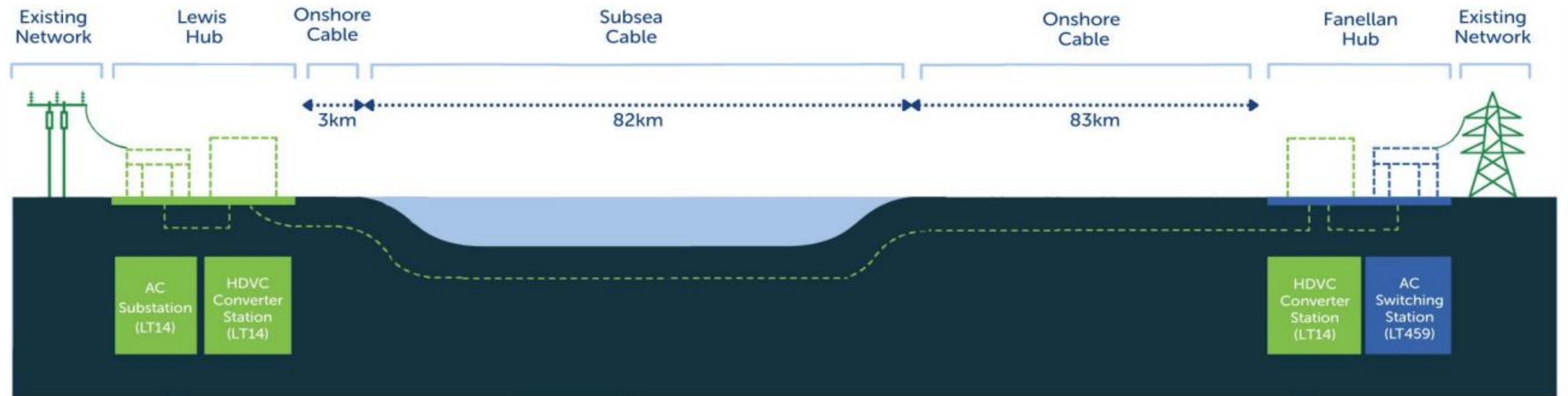
- Thank you to everyone who attended June's event and provided feedback on our plans.
- The focus of tonight's presentation is on the mainland cable construction works in and around the Contin area. We are not here to discuss other projects, such as the proposed overhead line, however we are happy to direct any questions to the appropriate team(s).
- After tonight's presentation there will still be an opportunity to provide further feedback.
- Our early enabling works begin after the new year and run until the summer.
- Meet some of the team:
  - Ryan Stewart, Deputy Project Director
  - Calum Murray, Senior Forestry Manager
  - John Douglas, Senior Project Manager
  - Gordon Bell, Stakeholder Manager
  - 2 Kevin Morrison, Communities Liaison Manager



# Why is this cable needed?

The subsea cable will go across the Minch from Arnish Point on the Isle of Lewis to landfall at Dundonnell.

- The HVDC Link is a nationally significant project to unlock the vast renewable energy potential of the Western Isles that will help meet the country's clean power and energy security targets.
- The route has been carefully developed over many years through extensive engineering, ecological, and ground investigations, and also shaped by consultation.
- To mitigate impact on communities we have reduced cable routing on the public road network from 50km to just under 5km. This has resulted on much of the section between Garve and Contin being routed through forestry tracks.





# Summary of this evening's presentation

We will update you on our early enabling works in and around Contin. This includes:

- Tree felling/forestry clearance
- Formation of the temporary Kinellan compound. This is one of three compounds and will be used for buildings and machinery required for operations in connection with the installation of the mainland cable.
- Our environment and ecological mitigation plans

**RTS Forestry** – will be carrying out all tree felling and forestry clearance.

**RJ McLeod** - Civils contractor who will be carrying out the civils works.



# Tree felling

An update on our tree felling plans

- We need to create a corridor up to 40m wide to allow construction of a wider road, facilitate construction, and for the safe delivery of materials. This largely follows the route of the existing forest roads.
- Felling boundaries have been carefully assessed and, wherever possible, reduced to the absolute minimum required. We'll continue to refine this as we mark out tree by tree.
- Contin felling and de-stumping works will take place from 6 January to the middle of May.
- All works will stop for key events (such as from 8-12 January for Strathpuffer).
- The up to 40m corridor width includes the current forest road and adjacent open space, which reduces the amount of felling.
- As this forest road is in many places across sloped ground, we also need to reprofile bankings to ensure they remain stable.
- All recoverable timber, brash and stumps removed will go to normal, mostly local, markets.



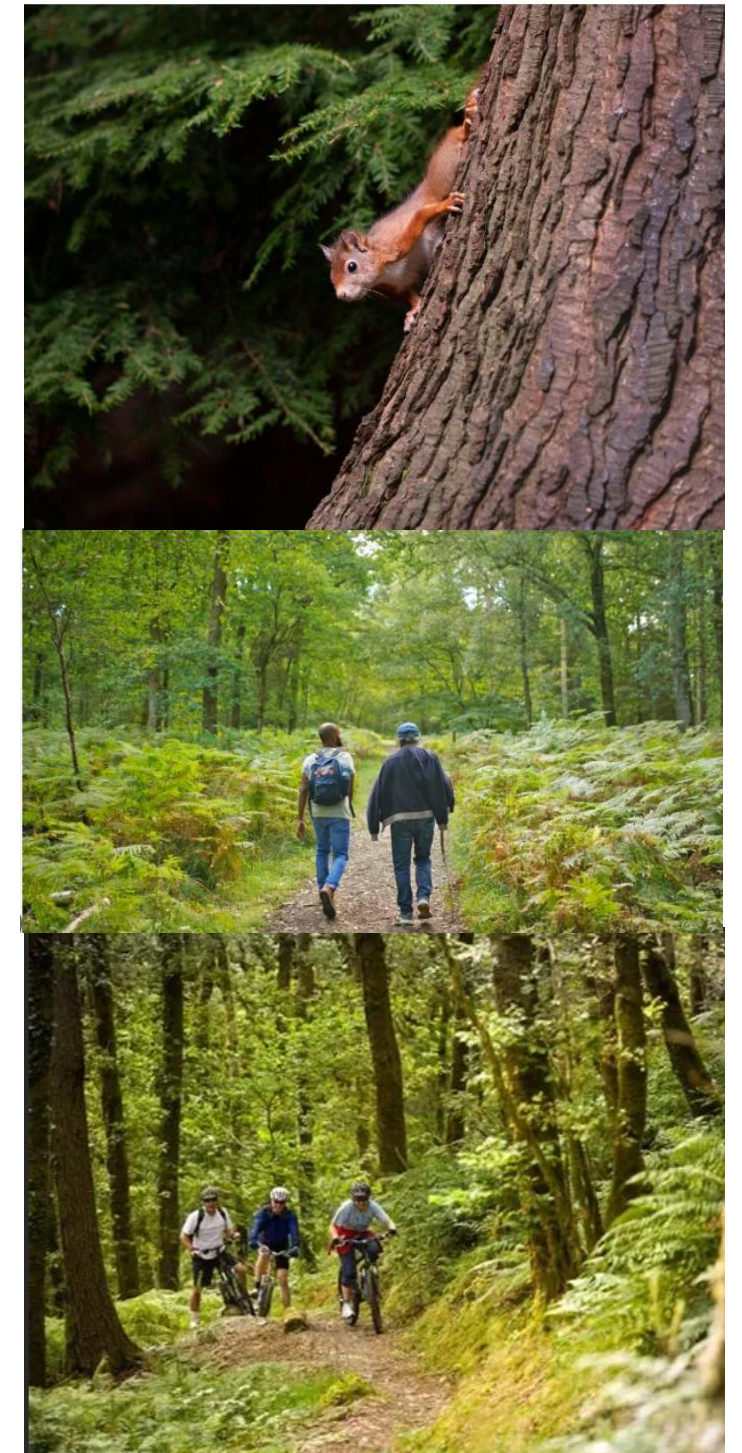
# Tree felling – mitigating environmental impact

- Environmental surveys to identify any ecological, archaeological or other constraints have been carried out and will continue throughout the works.
- Surveys have looked at every nook, cranny and wet hole for all manner of species from bats, badgers, newts and other species.
- Precautionary camera trapping and tree climbing has also been undertaken.
- Bird and red squirrel nesting and roosting sites for highly protected species have been noted and will continue, particularly over nesting season.
  - Should presence be identified then appropriate agreement and licencing will be obtained from NatureScot for any disturbance works.
- Any signs of archaeology have been identified, assessed and protected via exclusion zone.



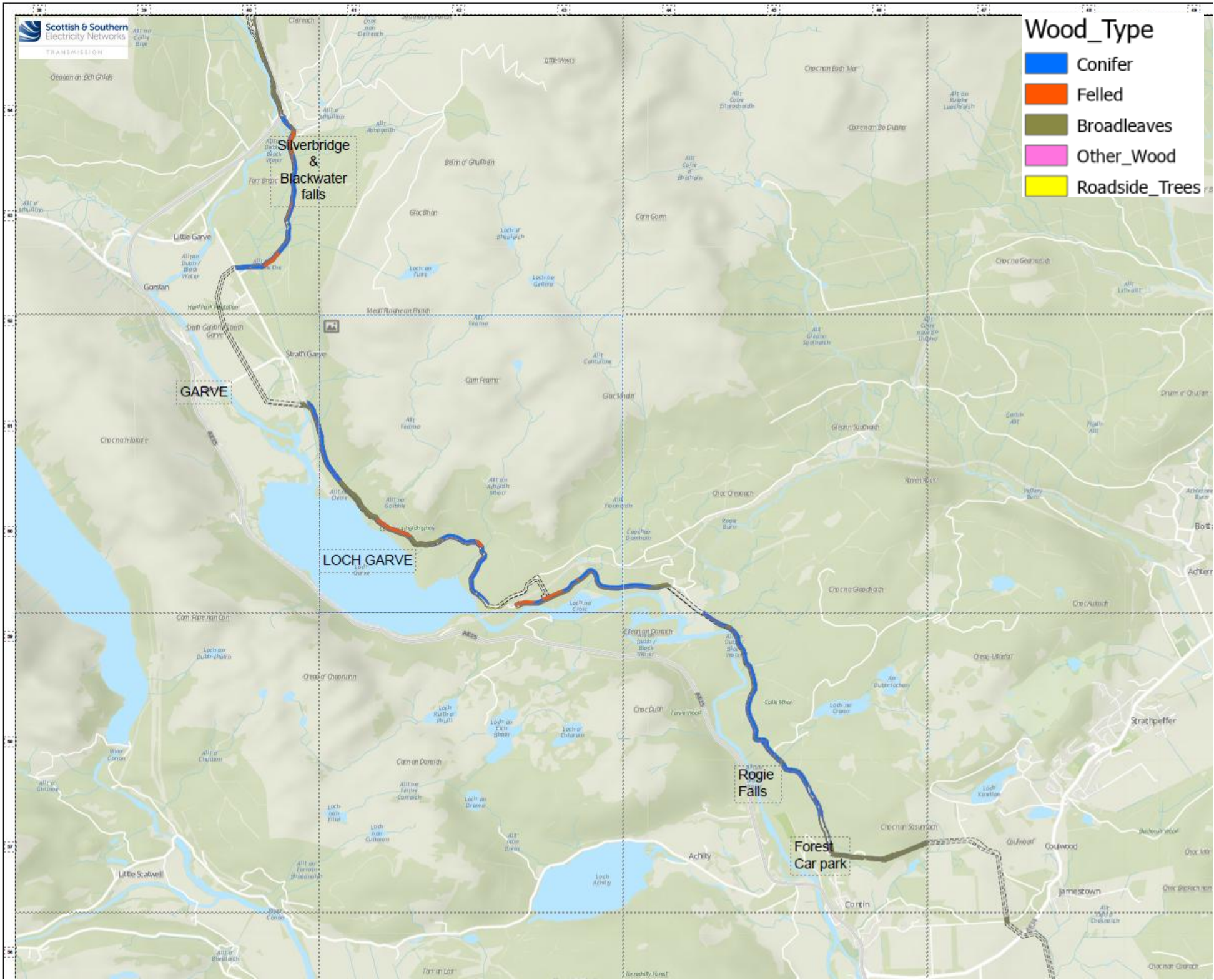
# Tree felling – Facilitating public access

- We recognise that some of our safety measures may be a temporary inconvenience to path users and we appreciate your patience and understanding.
- We will facilitate public access to core paths throughout the forestry works.
- Appropriate signage for awareness will be used to ensure safety.
- Minor delays may be experienced while we make routes safe for people to pass through.
- Outside of normal operation hours (7am to 7pm Monday to Friday) it is possible timber haulage may also occur.
- As with any other forestry timber haulage, please stop and wait until the operator has finished loading or clearly signals that it is safe to pass.





# Felling plan





# Watch out for signs



# Plant and machinery



**WARNING**  
Tree felling in progress





# Temporary Kinellan compound

An update on our plans for temporary Kinellan compound

**Transport route / location:** Access to the temporary compound will be via the existing A834 near Jamestown, utilising a privately owned access track that extends from the A834 and passes the planned compound location.

**Landowner agreement:** A Licence Agreement is in place, with agreement to complete reinstatement once the project is complete.

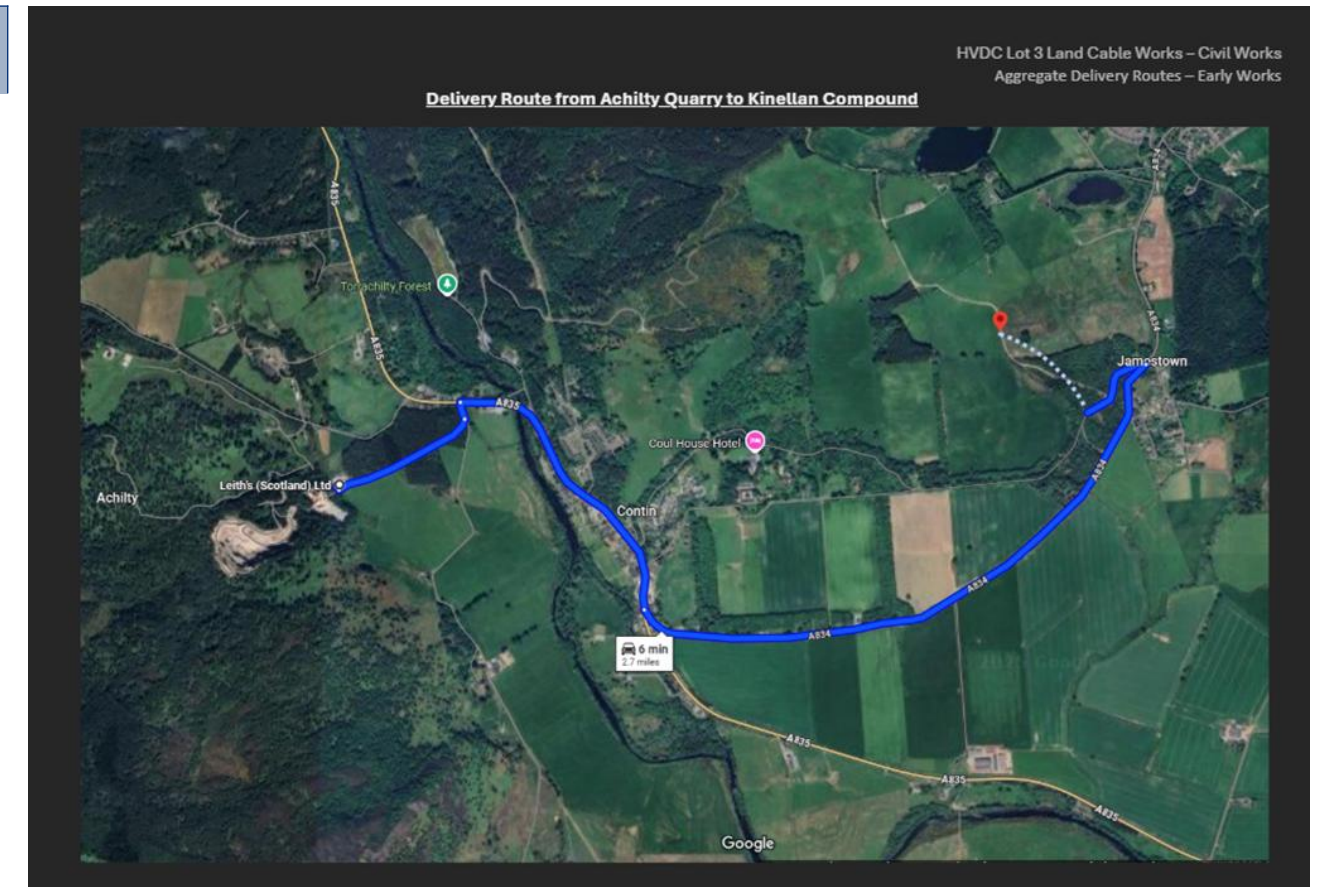
## Reasons for choosing:

- Quiet area, away from residential properties
- Good ground conditions
- No tree felling required and not an environmentally sensitive area
- Location to the cable route

**The temporary Kinellan Compound is one of three compounds supporting the cable. The temporary compound includes:**

- Storage for 52 cable drums
- Cable ducting storage
- Batching plant for backfill material
- Recycling units
- Office space and parking for staff
- Catering facilities

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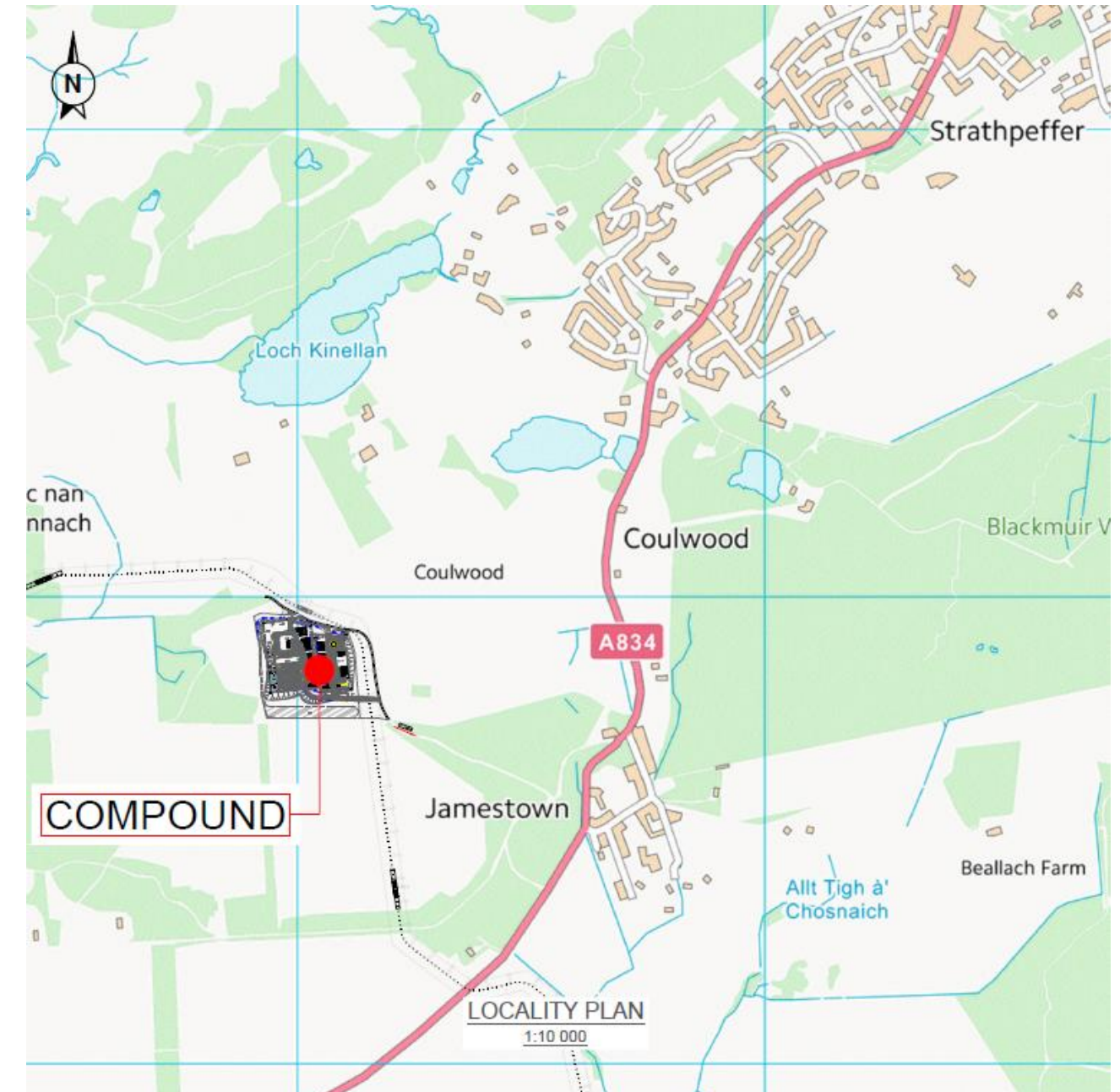
The above map shows the delivery route that will be taken from nearby Achilty quarry to Kinellan compound.



# Temporary Kinellan compound

An update on our plans for the temporary Kinellan compound

- We will keep noise to a minimum as the temporary compound is established.
- Once the compound is fully set up, there will be a mains connection (so generators will not be used)
- We are carrying out a lighting design exercise to ensure appropriate lighting levels on site which are sympathetic to the area
- Working hours will be 7am to 7pm each day, on a 10 day on four days off rolling shift pattern. We expect the majority of site personnel to arrive between 6.30am and 7am and depart during the final working hour.
- All construction traffic signage located on the public highway will be agreed upon with both Highland Council and Transport Scotland as appropriate. This includes warning, direction, information and road works signs.
- There will be no accommodation at the Kinellan compound.



# Ecological mitigation

## Consents, Licenses and Survey Activity

The cable route benefits from deemed planning permission under Class 40 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992.

We have discharged conditional requirements associated with that through Regulation 62 of the Habitat Regulations and are obtaining SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) consents and other licences as necessary and are individually obtaining permission for access points from Trunk or Classified Roads as required by legislation.

### RJM Surveys

#### Culvert and Habitat Surveys:

- Habitat surveys and fish habitat & migration assessments

#### Protected Species (PS) and Ecology

- Ground Truthing, Bat Surveys and Ornithology

#### Water and Environmental Monitoring

- Water Quality Monitoring (WQM)
- Private Water Supplies (PWS)

### RTS Surveys

- Contin and Strathgarve woods (collectively 'Torrachilty')
- Silverbridge south of the A835 at Black Water Falls
- 20 days of surveying in this area for protected species:

- Bat, Wildcat, Pine Marten
- Otter, Badger, Red Squirrel
- Wolverine, Great Crested Newt, Golden Eagle
- Goshawk, Red-Kite, Hen Harrier, Merlin
- Osprey, Crossbill

Areas of hydrological or Archaeological importance have been noted for appropriate mitigations to be put in place prior to works taking place

Further detailed surveys are ongoing, and all findings are being shared with NatureScot to inform the necessary survey licences and the preparation of mitigation proposals for the works



## Next steps

**In addition to the early enabling works outlined in this presentation, we expect to begin main construction works at the beginning of June 2026.**

- A further in-person information event will be scheduled prior to the commencement of the main construction works. Full details will be shared in due course once the date and time are confirmed along with a mail letter drop.
- By subscribing to our mailing list, you will receive timely updates about our project.
- The project team can be contacted at [LT14MainlandCable@sse.com](mailto:LT14MainlandCable@sse.com)