Spirebush Renewable Energy Project Grid Connection

Routeing and Consultation Document: Addendum

30 August 2024

Land & Planning

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1. Addendum

Following the first round of public consultation events for the Spirebush Renewable Energy Project Grid Connection held between 11th and 12th June 2024 in person (and 4th June and 3rd July online), an enquiry was received on an alternative route corridor option to Route Option 1-A that was not identified during the routeing phase of this project. As a result, this additional route option ('Route Option 1-B') has been considered and assessed. It is shown in Figure A1.

Route Option 1-B starts to the south of the Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands Special Protection Area (SPA) and Muirkirk Uplands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and travels in a south easterly direction crossing a small patch of native woodland, Greenock Water and the B743. The route option then passes to the south of Black Hill before joining with Route Option 1-A.

A summary of the assessment of Route Option 1-B is presented in Table A1. Following this assessment, it was determined that Route Option 1-A would remain the preferred route option (see Figure A2). This is largely because a patch of native woodland located in the west of Route Option 1-B spans the width of the corridor (see Figure A3). Though aerial imagery shows there is a small gap between the route option boundary and the woodland, it is highly likely some trees would need to be felled to accommodate twin wood pole lines.

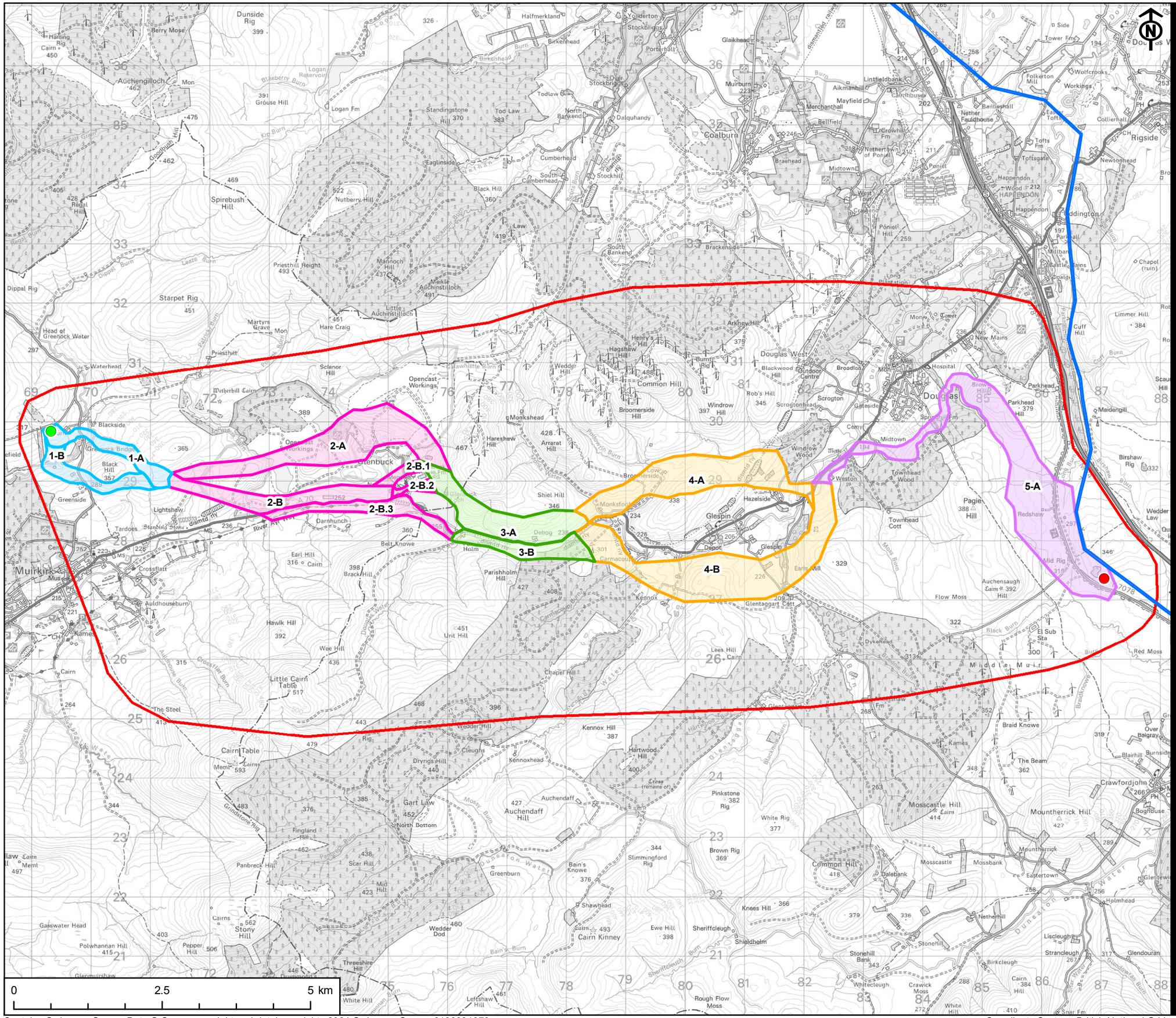
In addition, whilst Route Option 1-B would be further from the nearest isolated properties than Route Option 1-A, Route Option 1-B would be closer to the settlement of Muirkirk, and therefore would have the potential to visually impact a larger number of properties to the north of Muirkirk which have views of the southern side of Black Hill. This is illustrated in Figure A3.

Table A1 Summary of Assessment: Route Option 1-B

Topic	Route Option 1-B
Landscape	The route option lies predominantly within the Plateau Moorland Landscape Character Type, except for a short section which crosses into the Upland River Valley Landscape Character Type to join up with Route Option 1-A. The landscape character features a comparatively level topography, with gentle rising slopes covered by blanket bog, heather and grass moorland. The route option does climb the gentle slope of Black Hill, reaching 340 m at its highest point, before sloping back down to link with Route Option 1-A. An 11kV overhead line (OHL) distribution wood pole line runs almost parallel to the B743, both vertically crossing the route option, as well as connecting to the isolated properties to the north of this route option. Greenock Water, a river flowing out of Dippal Burn, crosses the route option following a narrow, winding course, before joining the River Ayr about 4 miles west of the small town of Muirkirk.
Visual Amenity	There are no settlements within this route option. There are some properties further south of this route option, north of Muirkirk, which have views of the southern side of Black Hill, and routeing in this option may impact these views. For users of the B743, views will be temporarily impacted whilst travelling along this road as the route option crosses the B743.
Cultural Heritage	There are no cultural heritage designations within this route option. However aerial imagery shows a ruin of a building situated in the west of this route option.
Ecology	There are no national or local ecological designations within this route option.
Woodland	There is a small patch of native woodland located in the western section of this route option near Greenock Water. Routeing to the west of this route option would provide the least amount of impact to trees as the woodland is less dense, therefore fewer trees would need to be felled.
Tourism and Recreation	There are no recreational paths within this route option.

Land Use and Other Infrastructure	The western section of this route option is located within an area with a land capability for agriculture of 4.2 (not prime agricultural land), indicating this area is capable of producing a narrow range of crops. As this route option moves east, the land becomes less capable of producing crops, with the area having a land capability for agriculture of 5.2 and 5.3. An 11 kV OHL and the B743 intersect the eastern section of this route.
The Physical Environment	Route Option 1-B crosses Greenock Water, a river that flows out of the Dippal Burn, which has a high likelihood of flooding every year according to Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) data. The topography of this route option is relatively level with a slight gradient due to the slope of Black Hill. The Carbon and Peatland Map indicates that most of Route Option 1-B is underlain by mineral soils, with a small area of the route option, when it slopes around Black Hill, underlain by predominantly peaty soil with some peat soil.
Conclusions	Unlike Route Option 1-A, there is a section of native woodland located in the west of Route Option 1-B that spans the width of the corridor and some felling would be required if an OHL was routed in this option. Other key constraints that need to be considered when routeing this option are the crossing of the B743 and Greenock Water.

Project Management Initials: DR Designer: LC Checked: ER Approved: SW



Coordinate System: British National Grid

AECOM

PROJECT
Spirebush Renewable Energy Project Grid Connection

CLIENT
SP Energy Networks

KEY
- Study Area
- Indicative Point of Connection
- Indicative Redshaw Substation Location

SPT Overhead Transmission Network
- Existing 400kV

Route Options
- Section 1
- Section 2
- Section 3
- Section 4
- Section 5

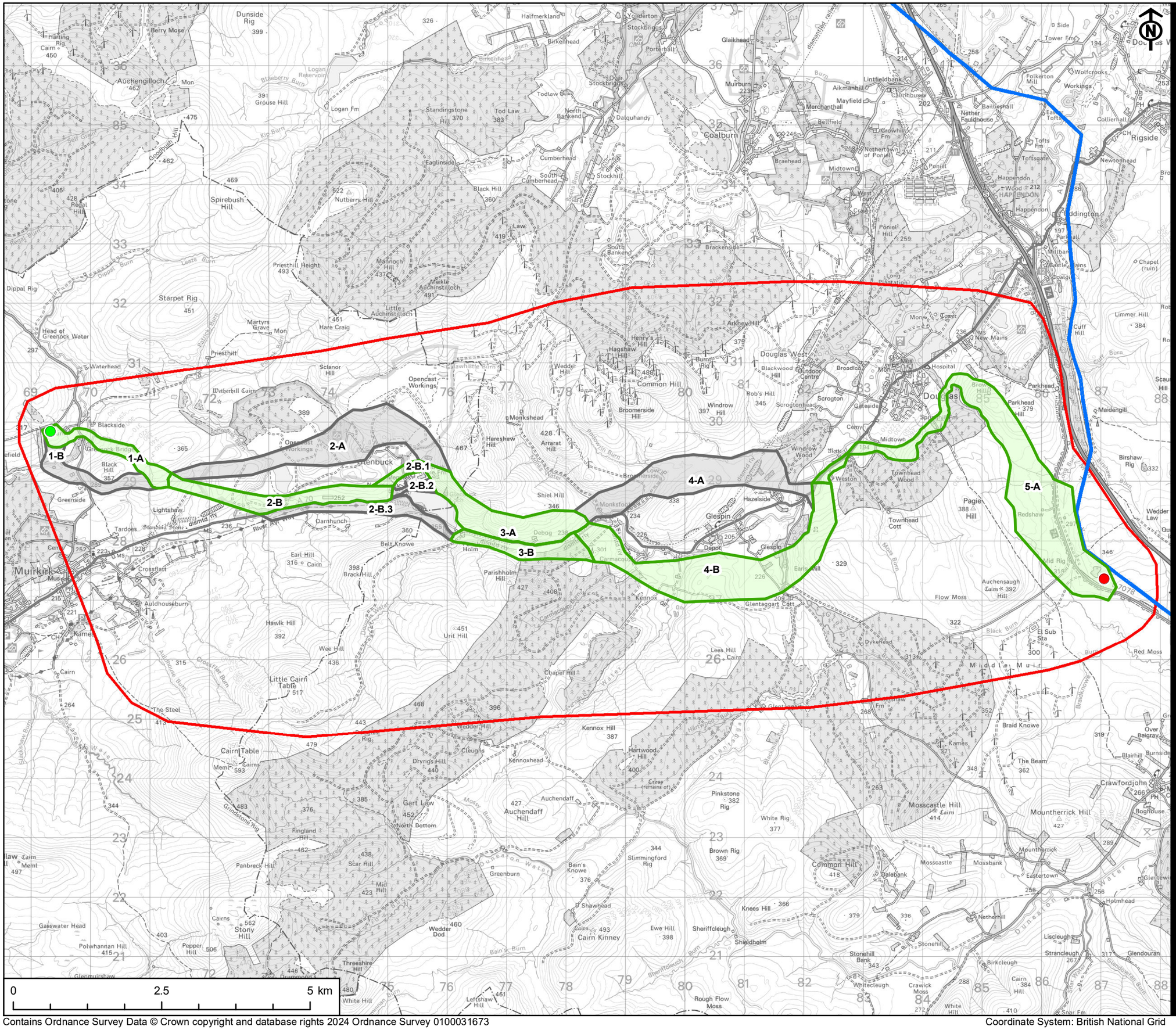
TITLE
Figure A1
Route Options

REFERENCE
SB_20240731_RCA_1_v2

SHEET NUMBER
1 of 1

DATE
31/07/24

Project Management Initials: DR Designer: LC Checked: ER Approved: SW



Coordinate System: British National Grid

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PROJECT
Spirebush Renewable Energy Project Grid Connection

CLIENT
SP Energy Networks

KEY
- Study Area
- Indicative Point of Connection
- Indicative Redshaw Substation Location
- Preferred Route Option
- Discounted Route Option

SPT Overhead Transmission Network
- Existing 400kV

TITLE
Figure A2
Preferred Route Option

REFERENCE
SB_20240731_RCA_2_v2

SHEET NUMBER
1 of 1

DATE
31/07/24

Project Management Initials: DR Designer: LC Checked: ML Approved: SW

1-A

1-B

2-A

2-B

2-B.3

Scale @ A3 1:20,000

0 0.5 1 km

Coordinate System: British National Grid

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PROJECT
Spirebush Renewable Energy Project Grid Connection

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KEY

- Study Area
- Preferred Route Option
- Discounted Route Option
- Local Authority Boundary
- Indicative Point of Connection
- Category B Listed Building
- Category C Listed Building
- Wind Turbine Location
- Wind Turbine Location - 2x Rotor Diamter
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Ancient Woodland
- Native Woodland
- Local Nature Conservation Site
- Scheduled Monument
- Residential Dwelling - 150m Trigger for Further Review

TITLE
Figure A3
Key Routeing Considerations

REFERENCE
SB_20240820_RCA_3_v2

SHEET NUMBER
1 of 1

DATE
20/08/24


SP Energy
Networks