Welcome

Welcome and thank you for attending this public exhibition for the **Cloich Forest Wind Farm Connection Project** (the Proposed Development).

The purpose of this exhibition is to provide you with an opportunity to learn about the project, ask questions and provide us with feedback on the preferred route.

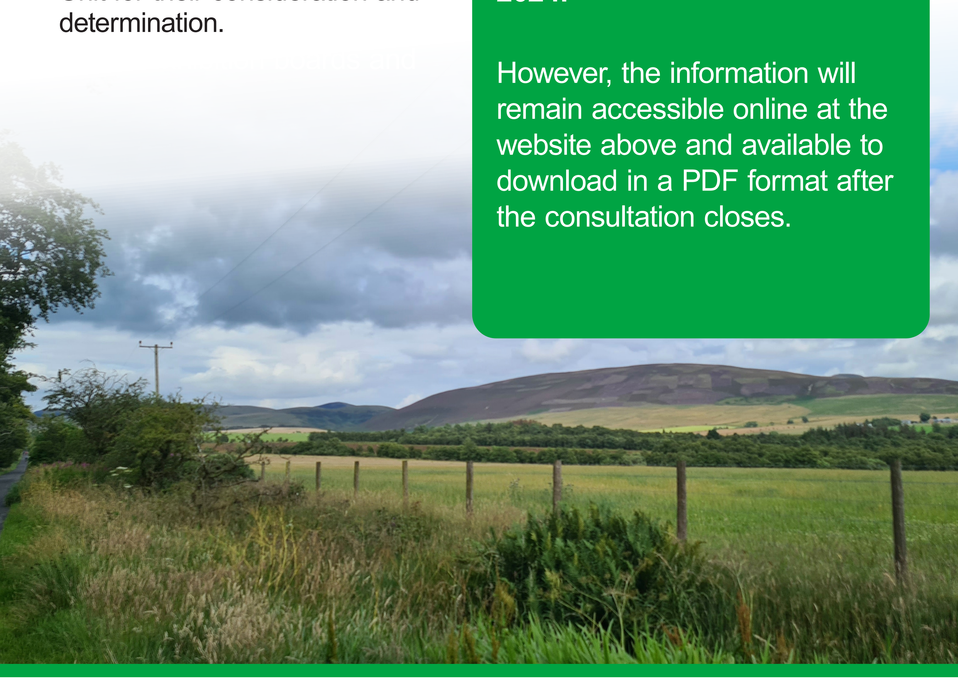
Following this consultation, the proposed route will be finalised and a detailed Section 37 application, which will include an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), will be submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit for their consideration and determination.

A copy of the Routeing and Consultation Report (May 2024) ia also available for download from

www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/cloich.aspx

Our consultation runs from **13th May to 17th June 2024** and includes three in-person public exhibition events on **Tuesday 28th May, Wednesday 29th May,** and **Monday 3rd June 2024.**

However, the information will remain accessible online at the website above and available to download in a PDF format after the consultation closes.



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Background

Need for the Proposed Development

SP Energy Networks received a request to provide a grid connection to the Cloich Forest Wind Farm. The connection is required to allow the Cloich Forest Wind Farm to input into the electricity network if approved.

To comply with its statutory and license obligations, SP Energy Networks must provide the Cloich Wind Farm with a connection to the transmission system.

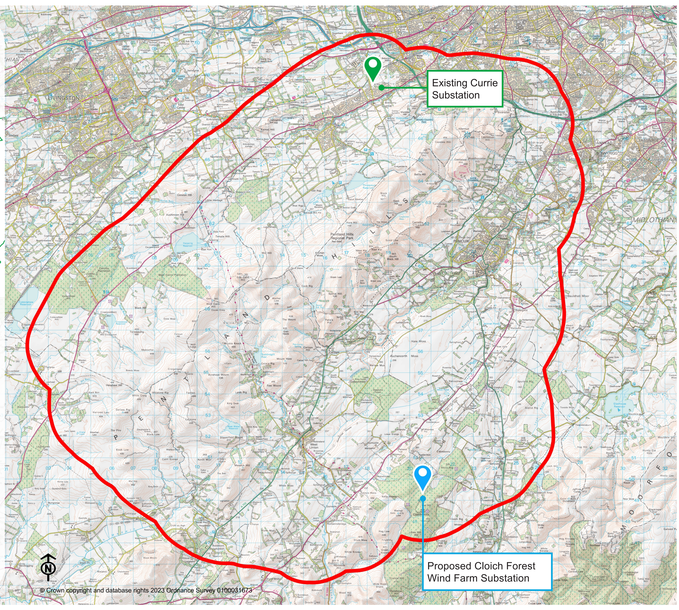
Identifying the Proposed Route

The Cloich Forest Wind Farm Connection Project involves a 132 kilovolt (kV) overhead line (OHL) supported on wood poles, located between the proposed Cloich Forest Wind Farm substation in the Scottish Borders Council area and the existing substation at Currie in the City of Edinburgh Council area.

A study area was identified, and the project team appraised four broad route options in which an OHL could be located between the two substations. Following a detailed appraisal of all the route options, a preferred route was selected, which achieves the best balance between minimising the impact on the environment and people, as well as meeting our technical feasibility requirements.

Study Area

The preferred OHL route will be almost 40 kilometres (km) in length, subject to final routeing.



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What will the Overhead Line look like?

The OHL is proposed to be supported by wooden trident poles with galvanised steelwork cross arms supporting aluminium conductors on insulators. These are suitable for supporting single circuit lines operating at 132 kV.

Wood poles have a standard height above ground of approximately 14 metres (m), but these can be increased or reduced as required where circumstances dictate, e.g. over elevated land, structures or features.

The distance between wood poles will average between 80 m to 100 m but can be increased if there is a requirement to span a larger distance due to the presence of a feature in the landscape, such as a reservoir. The precise pole configuration, height and span will be determined after a detailed line design has been agreed.

In terms of operation and maintenance, whilst most OHL components are maintenance free, exposed elements which suffer from corrosion, wear, deterioration and fatigue may require inspection and periodic maintenance. A wayleave corridor typically 60 m wide (30 m either side of the centre of the OHL) will be sought for access to the OHL, which would be kept clear from obstruction at all times.

A typical trident wood pole structure.

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Climate Emergency

The effects of climate change are widely acknowledged as one of the biggest global, economic, environmental, and social concerns that the world is currently experiencing.

One of the primary aims of the Scottish Government is to move the towards a low carbon economy by reducing carbon dioxide emission levels by 100% (net zero) by 2045. The Scottish Government recognises that renewable energy technologies will play a key role in the delivery of the emission reduction targets to achieve *'Net Zero'*.

The Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan Update 2020, states that by 2032 *'renewable energy generation in Scotland will account for the equivalent of 50% of our energy demand across electricity, heat and transport' and that 'our electricity system will have deepened its transformation for the better, with over 100% of Scotland's electricity demand being met by renewable sources'.*

National Planning Framework 4 (2023) identifies *'strategic renewable energy generation andtransmission infrastructure'* as a national development which will support the delivery of sustainable places, and it is acknowledged that grid infrastructure can help to reduce emissions and improve security of supply. Policy 11 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'.

The City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council, South Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Borders Council and Midlothian Council have all declared a climate emergency, and have committed to reaching net zero either by 2030 or 2045. This is in line to support the national targets for the Scottish and UK Governments.

SP Energy Networks recognises that our electricity networks are the backbone of the energy system which sits at the heart of this Net Zero transition. SP Energy Networks is currently at the forefront of decarbonising our energy system, having already connected approximately one quarter of all onshore wind in Great Britain to the distribution network. SP Energy Networks recognises our key role in helping the Government meet its climate change targets.

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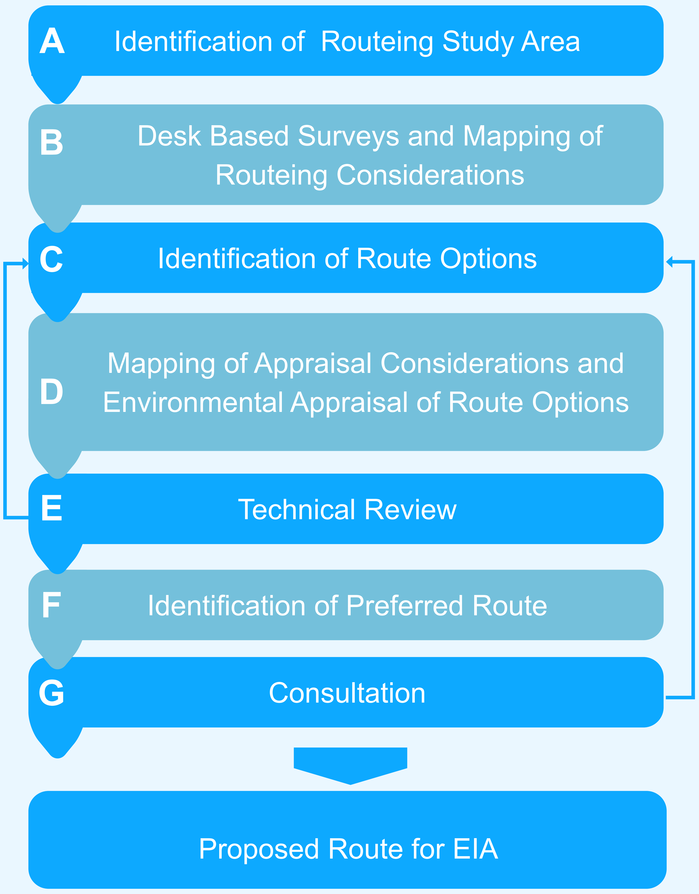
Routeing Methodology

SP Energy Networks has been working with independent consultants to identify potential route options for the new OHL between the proposed Cloich Wind Farm substation and the existing Currie substation. Our objective is to identify a route for the new OHL which meets the technical requirements of the electricity system, which is economically viable and causes, on balance, the least disturbance to the environment and the people who live, work and enjoy recreation within it.

An overview of the routeing methodology for the new OHL is illustrated below, with full details included in the Routeing and Consultation Document (May 2024).

Routeing Methodology



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Routeing Considerations

Given the nature of OHLs, the primary environmental effects are likely to be landscape and visual effects. The best way to limit adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity is to have a landscape led approach to routeing, reflecting the Holford Rules (guidelines for routeing OHLs) and taking account of the other routeing considerations.

A study area was established, and areas of national and regional value were mapped and avoided where possible in the identification of route options. The presence of the Pentland Hills Regional Park proved to be the driving factor in identifying routes, posing both a technical constraint, and sensitive landscape feature.

The routes were also appraised for their impact on a range of criteria including:

Landscape and visual amenity, including local views and the character of the landscape.

Biodiversity, including ecology and ornithology.

Cultural heritage, including heritage asset.

Forestry and woodland, including ancient woodland.

Hydrology and peat, including flood risk and hydrogeology.

Other land uses, including planning allocations, recreation and tourism.

SP Energy Network's technical considerations, including topography, existing infrastructure and distance.

Maps are available on the desks nearby illustrating the constraints faced within the study area for this connection project.

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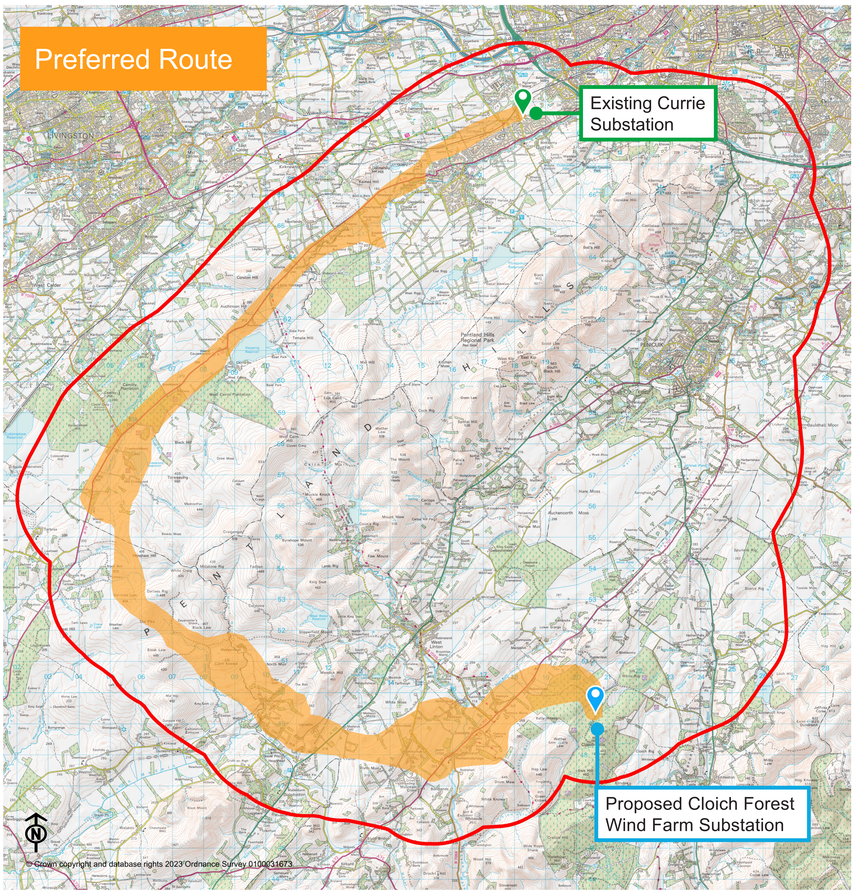
The Preferred Route

We believe the preferred route achieves the best balance between our technical requirements and minimising the impact on the environment and the people, who live, work and enjoy spending their time in the area.



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The Preferred Route

The preferred route will run in a south-westerly direction from Currie substation along the northern settlement boundary towards Ravelrig Quarry, broadly following the A70 as far as Crosswood Burn. The proposed OHL route will then wind south-east towards Fernihaugh and Garvald, and then head north-east towards Rommanobridge, broadly following the A701 north as far as the proposed Cloich Wind Farm substation on the Cloich Hills.

The preferred route avoids crossing the dominant central landscape features within the Pentland Hills Regional Park, minimises impacts on sensitive heritage assets including conservation areas and a historic battlefield, residential amenity and core paths, and avoids priority peatland.

The reasoning for the use of these criteria and an outline of the methodology for appraising each route option against these is detailed in the Routeing and Consultation Document (2024).

The detailed location of the new wood poles within the route corridor has still to be developed through a detailed design/technical review process.

A typical trident wood pole structure.

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We want to hear your views!

Thank you for taking the time to visit this public exhibition. This event is an opportunity for you to provide feedback on the preferred route, and raise any suggestions as to further considerations and insight in the local area which you would like us to consider.

Our consultation period will run between **Monday 13th May and Monday 17th June.**

Please submit any comments to us by **midnight** on **Monday 17th June 2024.**

What we would like your views on?

1. The preferred route for the Cloich Forest Wind Farm Connection Project
2. Any other issues, suggestions or feedback you would like us to consider. We would particularly like to hear your views on your local area, for example areas you use for recreation, local environmental features you would like us to consider, and any plans you may have to build in proximity to the preferred route.

Information relating to the proposed overhead line, including the Routeing and Consultation Document (2024) and a virtual consultation room, will also be available online at:

www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/cloich.aspx

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

Email us:

Cloichprojectmanager@spenergynetworks.co.uk

Send us a letter

Cloich Project Manager
SP Energy Networks
Land and Planning
55 Fullarton Drive
Glasgow
G32 8FA

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Next Steps

Your comments will be reviewed and fed into the detailed design and alignment for the new OHL, which will be the subject of the Section 37 (S37) application to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU). The comments received in this consultation will also be collated into a report which will be made publicly available on SP Energy Networks website.

1 Detailed Design	The next stage in the design of the preferred OHL route option will involve plotting the location of the wood poles, access routes and working areas.
2 Scoping	The first step in progressing the S37 application is submitting a Scoping Opinion request to the ECU to confirm the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
3 EIA & Second Round of Consultation	We will carry out a detailed EIA and hold a second round of public consultation, so that people can give their views on the detailed route alignment, understand the findings of the EIA.
4 Section 37 Submission	After considering feedback received in the second round of consultation, we will finalise our proposals and submit an application under Section 37 to the Scottish Government's ECU for consideration by Scottish Ministers.

Thank you for taking the time to visit this public exhibition.

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