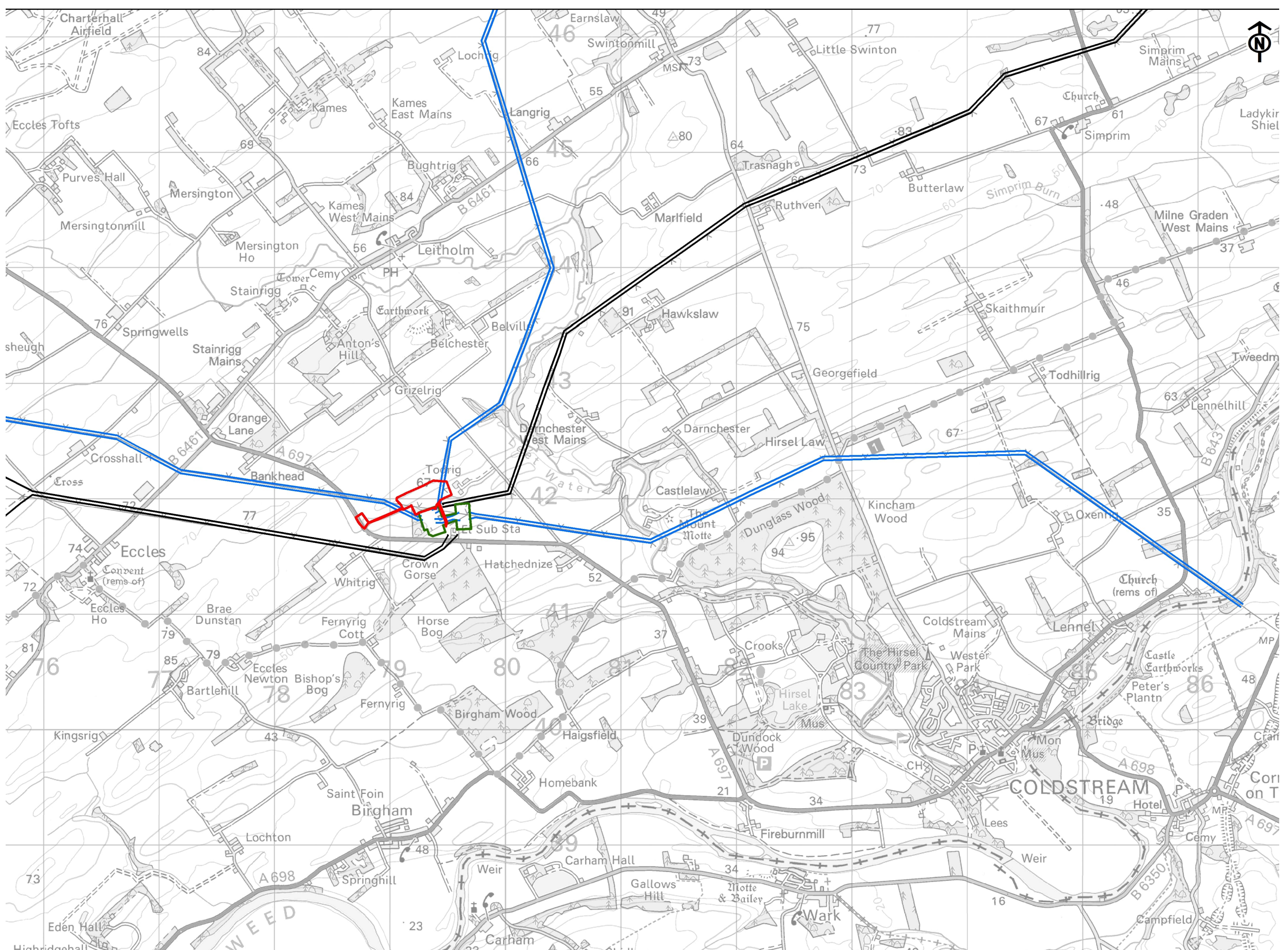


Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to our consultation event

We are pleased to welcome you to this public consultation event which presents our proposals to extend Eccles Substation.

The purpose of the event is to explain how feedback received from the first consultation has been addressed, present updated details of the Proposed Extension and forthcoming planning application as well as provide you with an opportunity to provide further feedback.



The Proposed Extension

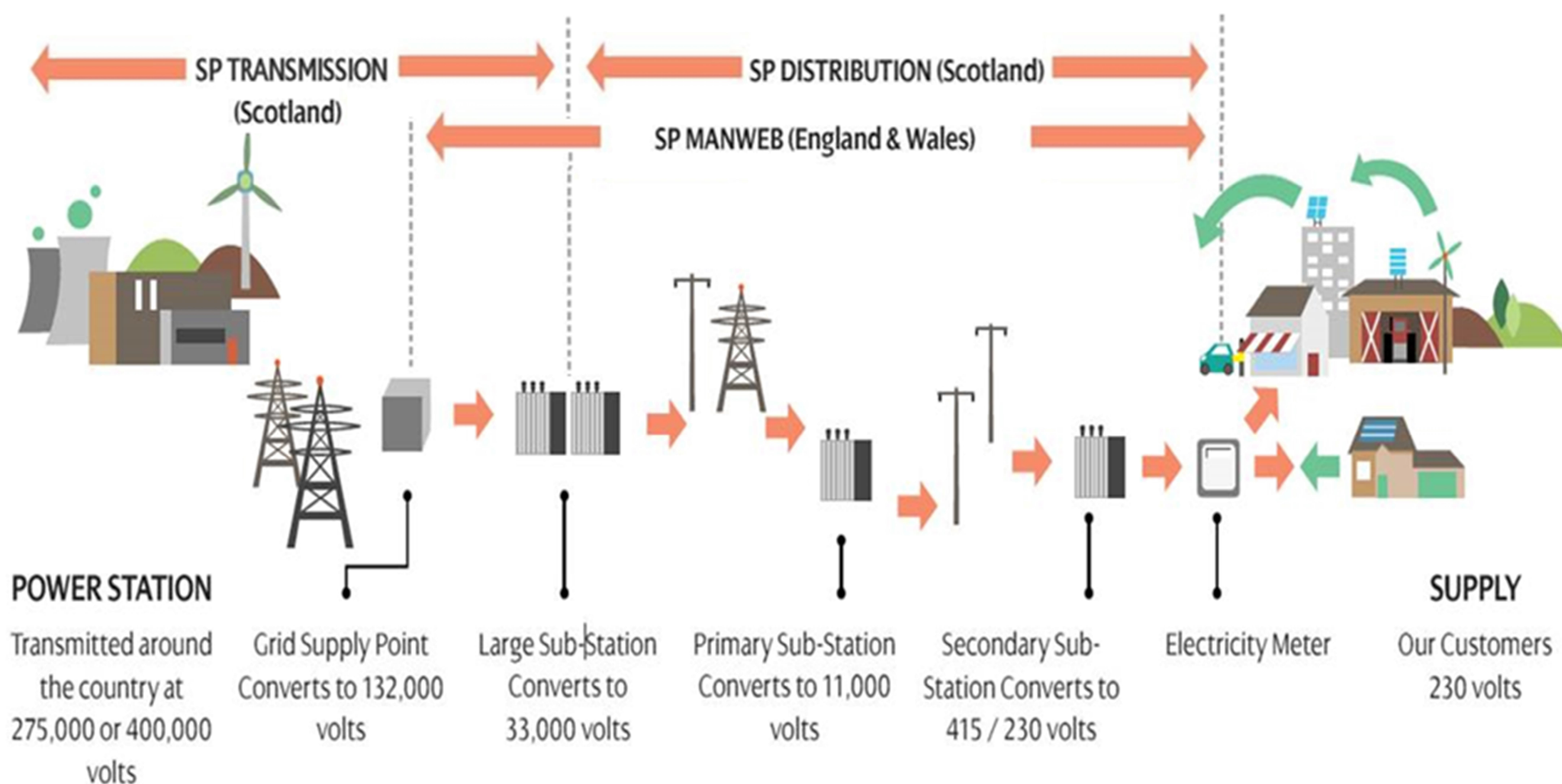
We are preparing proposals to extend Eccles Substation located approximately 5 km north west of Coldstream adjacent to the A697. The Substation was originally constructed in the mid-1990s and forms a key part of our electricity network enabling cross-border electricity transmission via the Anglo-Scottish 400 kilovolt (kV) circuits as well as supplying electricity to homes and businesses via the 132 kV circuits between Eccles and Galashiels.

Who are SPEN?

SP Energy Networks is part of the Scottish Power group of companies. It owns three regulated electricity network businesses in the UK including SP Transmission, SP Distribution and SP Manweb.

These businesses are 'asset-owner' companies holding the regulated assets and Electricity Transmission and Distribution licenses of ScottishPower. As part of this, SP Energy Networks operates, maintains and develops the network of cables, overhead lines and substations which transport electricity to connected homes and businesses in Southern and Central Scotland.

Under Section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 SPEN has a legal duty to safeguard electricity supplies by keeping its network up to date and to enable new connections for the generation and supply of electricity.



About the Project

Need for the Project

As electricity demand increases and renewable energy replaces generation from fossil fuel power stations, SPEN's network is increasingly important for meeting government emission reduction targets including the Scottish Government's targets to meet 'Net Zero' by 2045.

SPEN is investing to reinforce its network to tackle the rising challenges and to meet future demands. This includes providing system stability to address the intermittency of renewable energy generation and increasing network capability to aid the flow of power between Scotland and England.

Our Proposals

The Proposed Extension lies to the north of the existing site as shown opposite. It comprises:

- ◆ An extension of the existing substation comprising four new 'bays' which enable connections to the electricity network. All of the electrical equipment will be located outdoors.
- ◆ Installation of two Hybrid Synchronous Compensators to the east and west of the extended substation. These will be located in buildings up to a maximum of 15m tall.

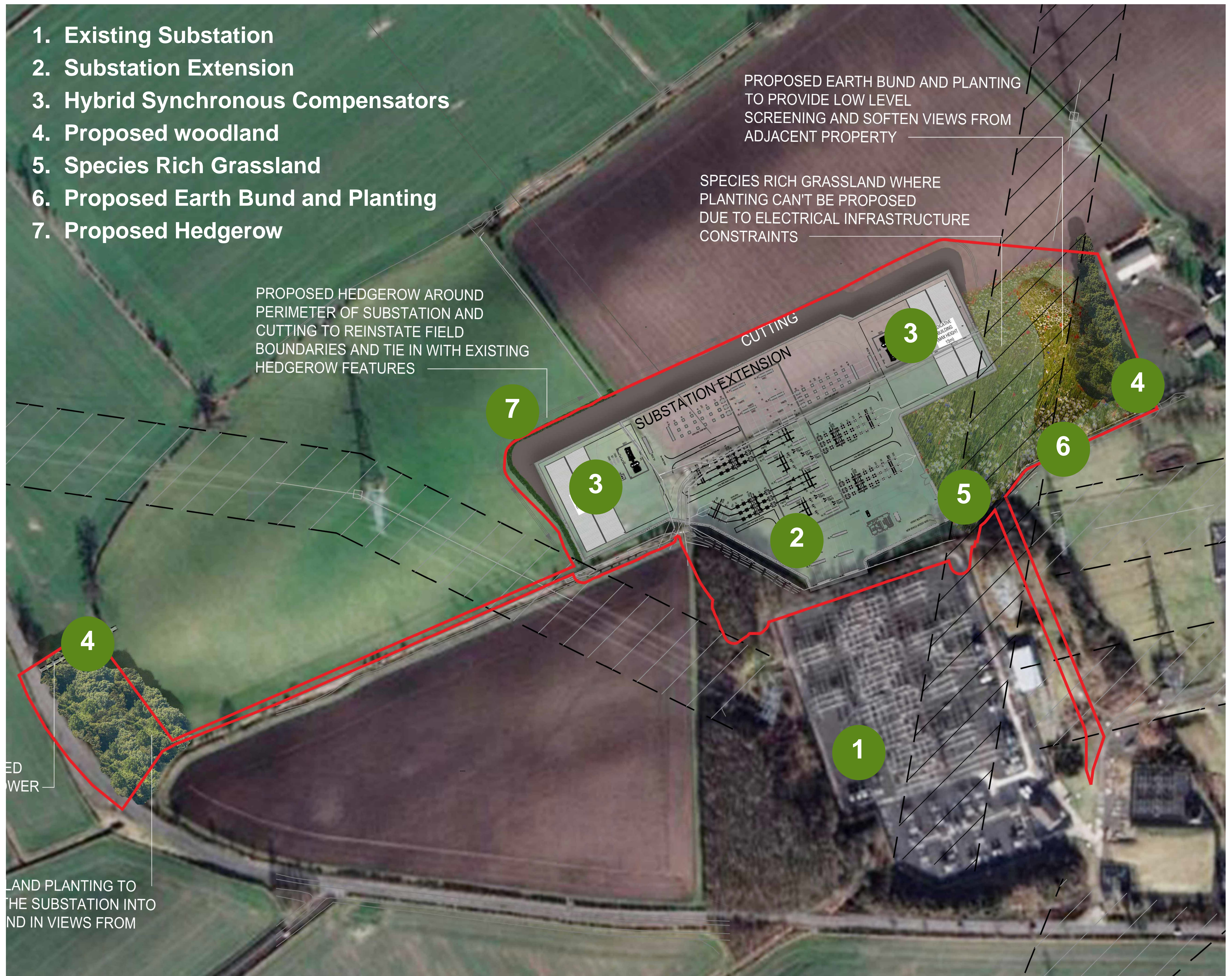


As part of the Proposed Extension the following works will be undertaken:

- ◆ Sections of the unnamed watercourse which flows into the Leet Water will require to be culverted so that the substation may be located above it.
- ◆ Cut/fill earthworks will be required to establish a level platform on which the Proposed Extension is located and prevent the risk of flooding.
- ◆ Landscape mitigation following Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) principals will be incorporated to provide some additional screening and habitat improvement.
- ◆ Access to the site will continue to be via the existing access road/junction with the A967 but temporary roads and compounds or laydown will be required for construction.

Subject to securing planning permission, construction would commence in late Spring 2023 and take place over a three year period finishing in Spring 2026.

About the Project



What is a substation?

Substations play a key role in the electricity network. Substations transform the voltage of electricity from high to low or vice versa for example generators may connect at a substation and voltage be increased for onwards transmission or reduced so that it distributed to homes and businesses.

What is a Hybrid Synchronous Compensator?

Hybrid Synchronous Compensators are rotating electrical machines used to maintain stability of the electricity network. The compensators will provide dynamic voltage control, inertia and short circuit level and help manage the reduction in inertia which is lost as synchronous generation such as fossil fuel coal and gas plants are replaced by renewable energy.

Environmental Considerations

The results of a number of specialist studies will accompany the planning application. These include studies assessing whether the Proposed Extension may affect the environment and which set out measures to be included in its design as well as how it is to be constructed.

The following environmental aspects have been considered:

Landscape and Visual Amenity

The potential for landscape effects have been assessed, informed by desk-based studies and field work of the surrounding area and representative viewpoints. The proposed landscape mitigation seeks to integrate the substation extension into the landscape and provide a degree of screening from the adjacent farm and in views from people travelling along the A697. The landscape proposals will be developed to provide Biodiversity Net Gain, using native species and reinstatement of hedgerow field boundary planting. Earth bunding will be provided along with shrub and tree planting to partially screen views from the farmhouse to the immediate east and to soften views of the eastern synchronous compensator building. From the west, the pocket of woodland planting will assist in screening views of the western synchronous compensator building particularly in views from the A697.

Ecology

There are no statutory or non-statutory nature designated sites on or within 1km of the proposed extension. A number of ecological surveys around the site have been undertaken to establish the presence of any habitats and species. The results of surveys have confirmed the presence of a badger sett, an otter holt or potential resting place as well as trees showing suitability for roosting bats while surveys of the Leet Water have confirmed it hosts a range of fish species including a juvenile lamprey, European eel and fish from the salmon family. Mitigation measures have been identified to minimise the loss of habitat and reduce the impacts on species. This includes pre-construction surveys, the timing of certain construction activities to avoid sensitive periods such as breeding birds or spawning fish and retention of important habitats such as trees which may be suitable for bat roosts.

Water Environment and Flood Risk

As part of the design, the Proposed Extension will require culverting on a section of the unnamed tributary of Leet Water. A Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the Proposed Extension is not at risk of flooding as well as ensuring it does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The Proposed Extension will be constructed on a platform located at approximately 49.5m Above Ordnance Datum. Because the Proposed Extension is located on undulating land the platform will be formed by cut and fill minimizing the amount of material to be imported to site reducing vehicle movements.

Archaeology and Heritage

There are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites for heritage on or within 1km of the Proposed Extension. Desk based and field work archaeological studies of the site have been undertaken and identified the presence of a number of undesignated assets including a roman coin, a 19th century milestone and a medieval farmstead. None of these will be directly affected by the Proposed Extension. There is the potential to encounter previously unknown buried archaeology so an archaeological evaluation will be undertaken before the start of construction.



Providing your feedback & next steps

Providing Feedback

This consultation event is an opportunity for you to make comments to us on our proposal before we make our application. The feedback received will be addressed as we finalise our proposals and prepare the planning application.

You can provide your feedback by:



Email via ecclesexextension@spenergynetworks.co.uk



Write to the postal address at: Eccles Substation Extension Project, Land & Planning, SP Energy Networks, 55 Fullarton Drive, Cambuslang, G32 8FA



Telephone 07516461129 (There will be an option to leave a voicemail with your comments)



Fill the feedback form on the SPEN web page at <http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/ecclessubstationextension.aspx>

The information provided within this consultation is accessible on the SPEN website and will remain online until submission.

Please provide any comments by 9th December 2022.

Please note that comments made in response to this consultation are not representations to the Scottish Borders Council. When the application is submitted there will be an opportunity to make representations to Scottish Borders Council as part of the planning process.

Next Steps

We will continue to undertake specialist environmental, technical and engineering studies to inform the design of the Proposed Extension as well as our planning application. As part of this process we will also review feedback received from this consultation.

Subject to the feedback received to this final consultation event it is anticipated that we will submit our application for planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act (Scotland) 1997 to Scottish Borders Council in December 2022.