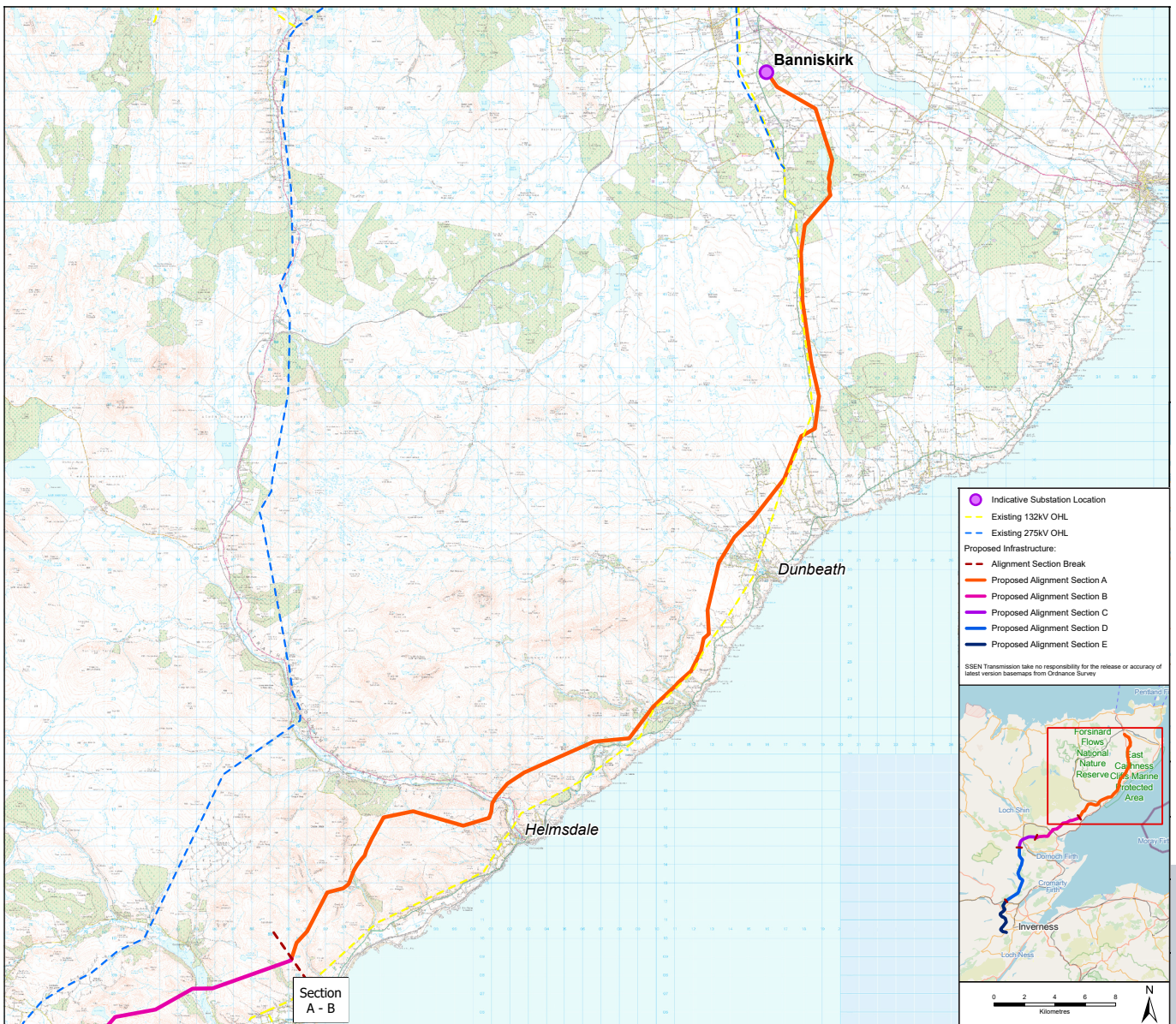


# Section A: Spittal to Brora



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## Alignment Options Considered

In June 2024, we presented our Alignment Options for Section A. This section was split into 5 sub-sections for the purpose of alignment development and consultation (A1.1, A1.2, A1.3, A1.4 and A1.5). Within Section A1.1 and A1.3 we presented a Potential Alignment and an Alternative Alignment. The Potential Alignment options in these sections had been selected as on balance it is the least constrained option from both an environmental and engineering perspective. Due to a range of environmental and technical constraints, there was no Alternative Alignment option within sections A1.2, A1.4 and A1.5.

The Potential Alignment has now been subject to further review following consultation, to ensure feedback has been considered fully and changes made where required.

### Feedback

Concerns were received from the local community regarding visual amenity (particularly near Berriedale), access arrangements and traffic (particularly around Gartymore/West Helmsdale), impacts on ancient woodland (particularly at Learnaich Hill), wildlife (particularly near Rangag Loch), cultural heritage impacts (particularly around Helmsdale) and flood risk.

### Response

From our studies and based on feedback, the Potential Alignment options continue to provide the best balance between environmental protection and engineering requirements for construction and operation.

The location of Ancient Woodland (AW) was a key consideration during the OHL design process. As much as possible the Route options sought to minimise the impact on AW. Our approach to AW as an Irreplaceable Habitat is by restoring a greater area of AW than has been lost. This will be in addition to Biodiversity Net Gain calculations and commitments.

We are continuing to liaise closely with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in relation to minimising impacts on Cultural Heritage assets at key points along the route.

A full suite of ecology, landscape and cultural heritage surveys and assessments is being undertaken and will be provided in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) accompanying the s37 consent application.

## Construction Access Strategy

We have now determined our proposed access routes for each tower location and established which of these are planned to be upgrades to existing access tracks or new temporary or permanent access tracks. In general, proposed construction site access would make use of existing forest and estate tracks as far as practicable, upgraded as required.

Maps showing our proposed access routes are available from [ssen-transmission.co.uk/SLBB](https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/SLBB)

## Conclusion

The Potential Alignment in all sub-sections will be taken forward to consent application as Proposed Alignment Section A, as per the map overleaf. Given the lack of options in this Section, we are progressing on the Potential Alignment and are continuing to refine the design to minimise impacts on protected assets and ecologically sensitive areas.

For further details on the consultation process and feedback received you can download our Alignment Report on Consultation and Summary Report on Consultation from our website: [ssen-transmission.co.uk/SLBB](https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/SLBB)

