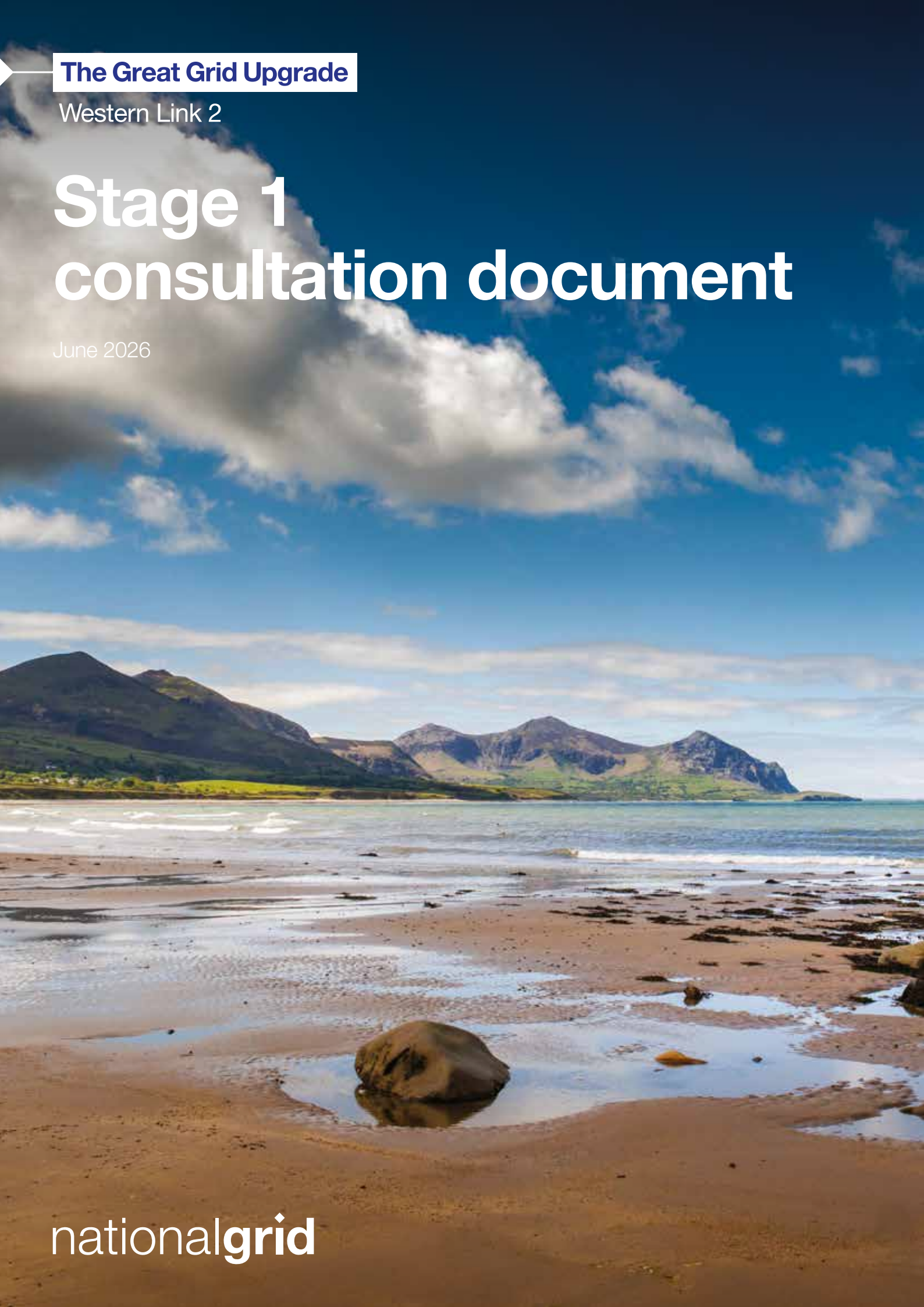
The Great Grid Upgrade

Western Link 2

Stage 1 consultation document

June 2026



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Foreword

Enabling a clean energy future for Wales

Thank you for your interest in our emerging proposals for Western Link 2, a proposed offshore and onshore High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) network reinforcement project designed to carry electricity between Scotland and Wales. Western Link 2 would reinforce the transmission network, carrying electricity both to and from Scotland and Wales. This flexibility would strengthen UK energy security, support home grown renewable generation, and help balance supply and demand as the energy system changes.

We're pleased to share our emerging proposals for this new connection and welcome your feedback as part of our Stage 1 consultation, which runs from Tuesday 23 June to Tuesday 21 July 2026.

The project is being jointly developed by National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) and Scottish Power Energy Networks (SP Energy Networks) with each company leading on different elements of the project.

This Stage 1 consultation is focused on the Welsh elements of the project only.

Electricity would be transmitted via subsea HVDC cables between Ayrshire, on the west coast of Scotland, to a single landfall location on the Gwynedd coastline, at Caernarfon Bay. From there, HVDC underground cables would connect to a proposed converter station in close proximity to the exsting Pentir substation. Electricity would then connect from the new converter station to the existing Pentir substation via a new High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) connection. An extension to the existing Pentir substation, for the purposes of connecting Western Link 2 to the existing transmission network in Wales.

The demand for electricity is set to double by 2050 as the way we power our homes, businesses, industry and transport changes. We need to upgrade the grid now to ensure we can meet this increase in demand.

Western Link 2 is part of the Great Grid Upgrade, the largest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations. Our infrastructure projects across Wales and England will enable us to carry more home-grown renewable energy from where it is generated to where it is needed, boosting Britain's energy security.

We are seeking feedback from local communities, their representatives and key stakeholders early in the project development process to ensure that feedback and local knowledge influences our plans as they continue to be developed.

Following this consultation, we will carefully consider all the feedback received. This feedback, alongside technical assessments and environmental surveys, will help us refine our proposals.

We will then hold a second, Stage 2 consultation, where we will present more developed proposals for Western Link 2 before applying for planning permission for the project.

All consultation documents are available on our project website, at **nationalgrid.com/westernlink2**. You can also request copies by contacting our community relations team at **WesternLink2@nationalgrid.com** or by phone on **0800 156 0706.**

Our consultation period runs from Tuesday 23 June 2026 until Tuesday 21 July 2026 We encourage everyone to take time to review our proposals and share feedback.

Leandro Vacirca,
Project Director

About National Grid and The Great Grid Upgrade

National Grid delivers electricity safely, reliably, and efficiently to the customers we serve – all while working towards building a cleaner, fairer energy system for the future.

National Grid is the core of Britain's energy system, delivering electricity safely, reliably, and efficiently to the customers we serve in Wales and England.

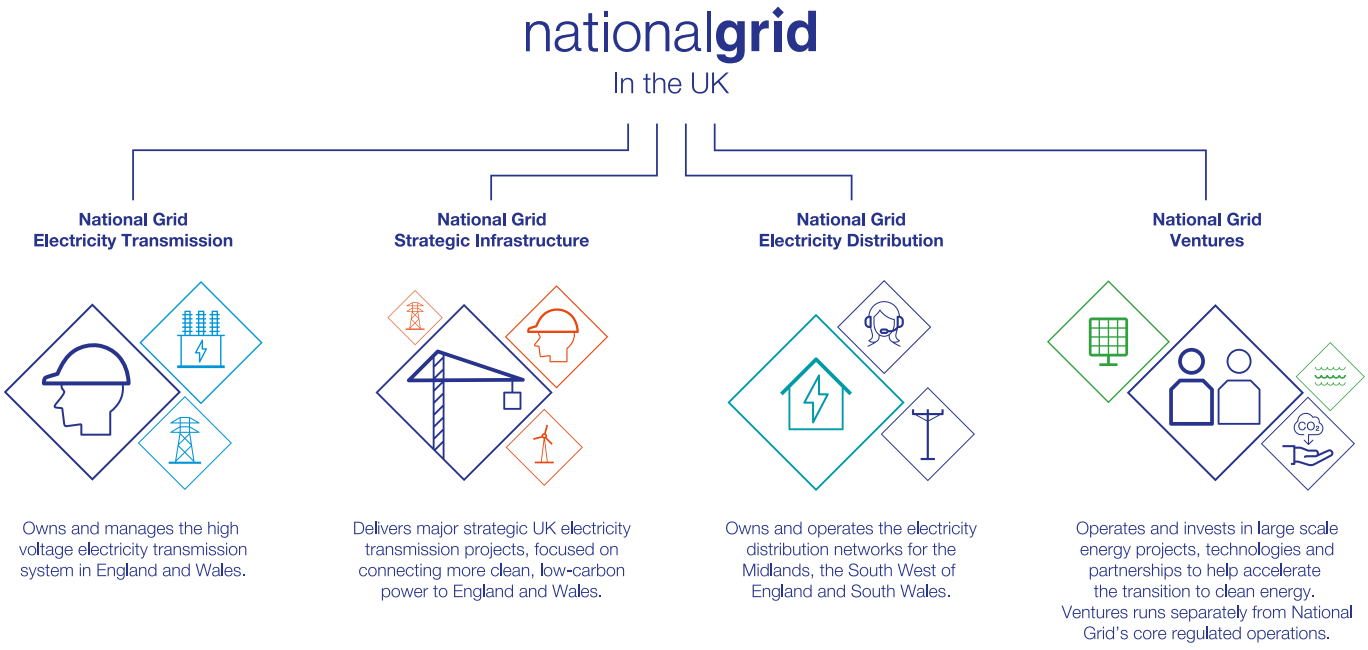


Figure 1 – Divisions of National Grid

National Grid Electricity Transmission's role

National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET)'s Strategic Infrastructure delivery unit is jointly developing the emerging proposals for Western Link 2 with SP Energy Networks. Each company's roles and responsibilities for Western Link 2 are set out on page 10 and 11.

Our emerging proposals must, under the Electricity Act 1989, be developed in an efficient, coordinated, and economical way which also considers people, places and the environment.

We have published 10 commitments on how we go about doing this in our stakeholder, community and amenity policy[1].

We don't generate electricity. We own and maintain the high voltage transmission network in England and Wales, transporting large amounts of electricity at high voltage from where it is generated to where it is needed. The local distribution network operator, SP Energy Networks in North Wales, then delivers it at lower voltages to individual homes and businesses.

The Great Grid Upgrade in Wales

The Great Grid Upgrade is the largest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations. Across Wales and England, our projects are helping to connect more affordable sources of home grown and renewable energy to homes and businesses.

As the UK moves away from fossil fuels, we will all rely on electricity more than ever before. The demand for electricity is set to double by 2050 as the way we power our homes, businesses, industry and transport changes. We need to upgrade the grid now to ensure we can meet this increase in demand.

In Wales, the Great Grid Upgrade will deliver the infrastructure needed to meet this challenge. Projects such as the Pentir to Trawsfynydd reinforcement and Western Link 2, will modernise and strengthen the transmission network.

Through projects like these the Great Grid Upgrade will allow more clean, home grown energy to be carried, from where it is generated, to where it is needed.

By enabling more renewable electricity produced in Wales and across the UK to flow across the network, the Great Grid Upgrade will support cleaner energy for communities in every part of Wales, while improving energy security and reducing reliance on imported power.

This investment will also bring benefits closer to home. Delivering major new energy infrastructure will support local economies, create jobs, provide new skills opportunities and represent long term investment in communities across Wales. A modern, resilient grid is essential to securing a cleaner, more affordable and reliable energy system for the future.

[1] National Grid's commitments when undertaking works in the UK: Our stakeholder, community and amenity policy (National Grid, December 2016) – Available at nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/81026/download

The Great Grid Upgrade will:

Help the UK transition to secure, cleaner and more affordable sources of energy.

Support hundreds of thousands of jobs and contribute an average of £18.4bn to GDP.

Scan this code for more information on The Great Grid Upgrade, or visit our website at

www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade

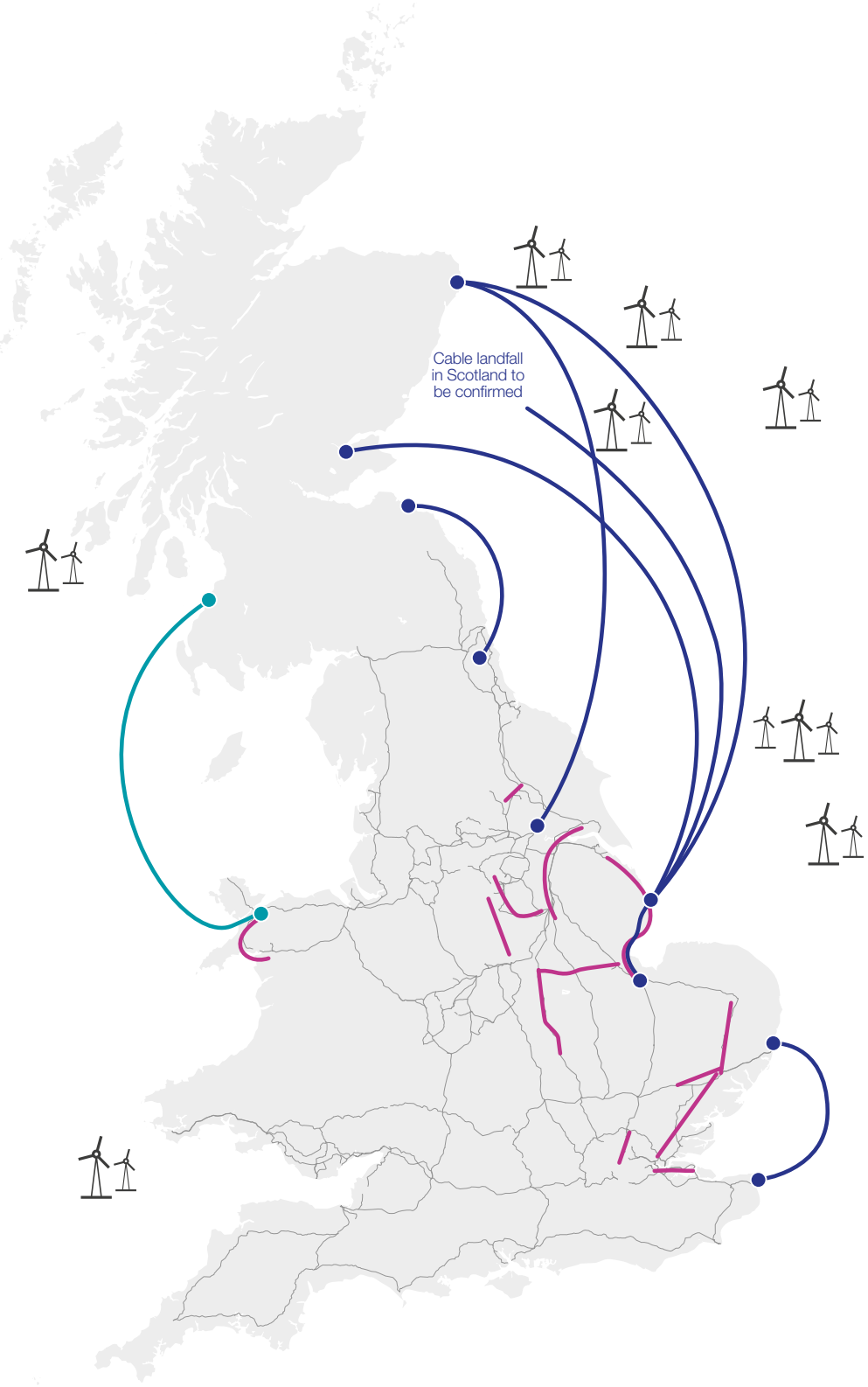


Figure 2: Map of existing high voltage electricity transmission network and projects proposed as part of The Great Grid Upgrade

Key

- Onshore lines
- Subsea cables
- Proposed Western Link 2 project
- Existing English and Welsh 400 kV transmission lines

The proposed project

As we develop our emerging proposals for Western Link 2, it is important that we fully understand and consider the views of local communities, their representatives and key stakeholders.

National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) and SP Energy Networks are working together to upgrade the electricity transmission network between Ayrshire, Scotland and Gwynedd, Wales. This will enable the connection of new renewable and low-carbon energy generation in Scotland and its transportation to homes and businesses in Wales and beyond.

To do this, National Grid and SP Energy Networks are jointly developing a new 2-gigawatt high voltage direct current (HVDC) link; the link will be approximately 390 km in length and will be predominantly offshore. This project is known as Western Link 2 and would transport enough electricity to power 2 million homes.

Western Link 2 will pass through numerous national jurisdictions, and several consents, permissions and licences will be required from multiple authorities to deliver the project. Although National Grid and SP Energy Networks are developing the project together, they will take the lead for the development and consenting of different parts of the Western Link 2 project. This is set out below:

SP Energy Network's onshore proposals

SP Energy Networks are leading on the development of the onshore proposals in both East and South Ayrshire and undertook an initial consultation on these proposals in November 2025. In due course, SP Energy Networks will apply for planning permission for these onshore proposals to both East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Councils as the relevant local planning authorities, under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act.

SP Energy Network's Onshore Proposals comprise the following elements:

- a new converter station next to existing Kilmarnock South substation in Ayrshire;
- a new 13 km underground HVDC cable linking the new converter station with a landfall location on the Ayrshire coastline, near Monkton; and
- a new switching station at Grangestone, north of Girvan in Ayrshire

National Grid is not leading on these proposals.

For further information on SP Energy Network's onshore proposals for Western Link 2, please visit https://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/pages/western_link_2.aspx

SP Energy Network's nearshore proposals

SP Energy Networks is also leading on the development of the nearshore proposals that fall within Scotland's territorial seas. In due course, SP Energy Networks will apply for a marine licence for these nearshore proposals from Scottish Government's Marine Directorate (Licensing Operations Team).

SP Energy Network's Nearshore Marine Proposals comprise the following elements:

- a new 42 km marine HVDC cable starting at a landfall location on the Ayrshire coastline near Monkton, then routeing south to another landfall location at Grangestone, north of Girvan, in Ayrshire
- a further 55 km of new marine HVDC cable from the landfall location at Grangestone, north of Girvan, in Ayrshire, routeing south to the southern limit of Scotland's territorial seas

National Grid's Wider offshore proposals

The new offshore HVDC cable will continue to route south from the limit of Scotland's territorial seas through several other territorial seas and jurisdictions, specifically those of Northern Ireland and Isle of Man. National Grid will develop and consent the Western Link 2 project through these seas and jurisdictions.

National Grid's wider offshore proposals comprise the following elements:

- approximately 195 km of new offshore HVDC cable, starting from the southern limit of Scotland's territorial seas and routeing further south through both Northern Ireland's and Isle of Man's territorial seas, until it reaches and enters Wales's territorial seas

National Grid will consult with the relevant authorities in Northern Ireland and Isle of Man, and obtain the necessary consents, permission and licences from the relevant authorities for the wider offshore proposals.

National Grid's nearshore proposals

Western Link 2 would then extend into Wales's territorial seas, which extend out to 12 nautical miles from the Welsh coast. National Grid has a number of options for consenting these nearshore proposals, it could obtain a marine licence from Natural Resources Wales under the Marine and Coastal Access Act, or, through a deemed marine licence in an Infrastructure Consent Order from the Welsh Government under new Infrastructure (Wales) Act. A decision on the consenting process will be made at a later date, following our consultation.

National Grid's nearshore proposals comprise the following elements:

- Approximately 65 km of new nearshore HVDC cable, starting from the limit of Welsh territorial seas to a new underground transition joint bay at a landfall location on the Gwynedd coastline, at Caernarfon Bay

National Grid is particularly interested to hear your feedback on these proposals. Additional details about the nearshore and offshore proposals in Wales can be found further on in this document, including the different options under consideration for locating the proposed infrastructure, and our emerging preferences.

National Grid's onshore proposals

National Grid is leading on the development of the onshore proposals in Gwynedd, Wales. National Grid has a number of options for consenting these onshore proposals, it could obtain a planning permission from Gwynedd Council under the Town & Country Planning Act (Wales), or, through an Infrastructure Consent Order from the Welsh Government under new Infrastructure (Wales) Act. A decision on the consenting process will be made later, following consultation.

National Grid's onshore proposals comprise the following elements:

- a new underground transition joint bay at a location on the Gwynedd coastline, at Caernarfon Bay, where the new offshore HVDC cable will connect to the new onshore HVDC cable
- three options for potential landfall locations on the Gwynedd coastline (with one emerging preferred option identified)
- a new underground HVDC cable route of approximately 25 km from a landfall location on the Gwynedd coastline to a new converter station (presented as a 'graduated swathe' with the darker shaded area showing our preferred emerging cable route)
- two siting zone options for a new converter station in close proximity to the existing Pentir substation (with an emerging preference for Pentir East zone), including a new short length of underground HVAC cable connection from the converter station to the existing Pentir substation
- an extension to the existing Pentir substation, for the purposes of connecting Western Link 2 to the existing transmission network in Wales

National Grid is particularly interested to hear your feedback on these proposals. Additional details about the onshore proposals in Wales can be found further on in this document, including the different options under consideration for locating the proposed infrastructure, and our emerging preferences.

Consulting on our emerging proposals

We are seeking feedback from local communities, their representatives and key stakeholders early in the project development process to ensure that feedback and local knowledge influences our proposals as they continue to be developed.

Western Link 2 is at an early stage of the development process and feedback from this Stage 1 consultation will – along with the outcomes of ongoing technical and environmental surveys and assessments – allow us to refine our proposals ahead of a second stage of consultation in 2027.

We have already started engaging with key local stakeholders such as Cyngor Gwynedd, the Isle of Anglesey County Council, Eryri National Park Authority, Conwy Country Borough Council and Natural Resources Wales. We will continue to work closely with them as our proposals continue to be developed.

Our approach to consulting with communities

All infrastructure projects have impacts and benefits locally and nationally. We will work with local communities, their representatives, and key stakeholders through all stages of the planning and construction process. Our aim is to reduce impacts, where possible, and maximise the benefits for local communities.

As part of the Great Grid Upgrade, Western Link 2 will contribute to its overarching aims; delivering social and economic benefits as well as providing a vital contribution to decarbonising the electricity network.

Public consultation stages

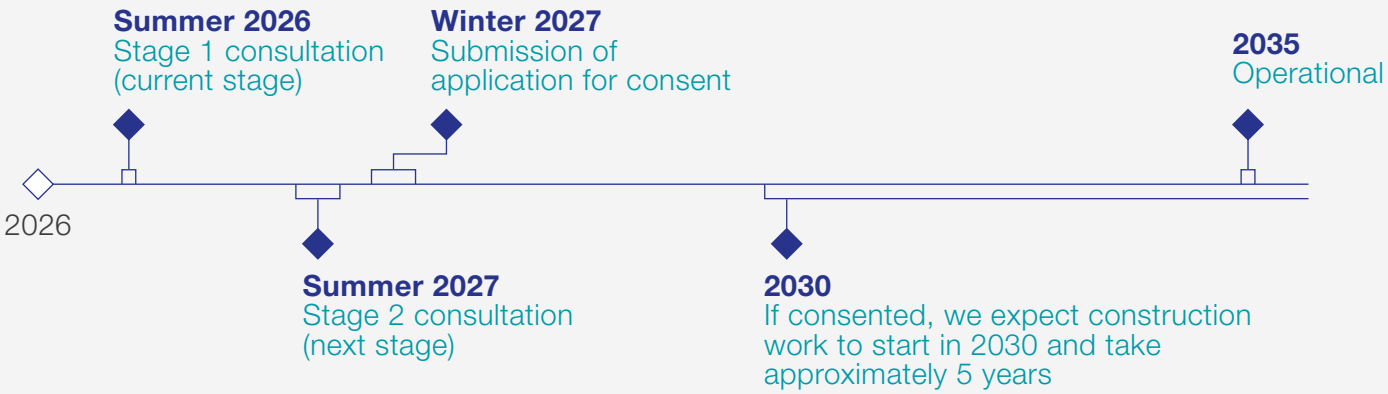
Consultation on Western Link 2 is planned to take place over two stages.

This Stage 1 consultation – running for four weeks from **Tuesday 23 June to Tuesday 21 July 2026**. It is a first stage of consultation, designed to introduce our emerging proposals and gather early feedback so that we can consider themas our proposals continue to be developed.

We are seeking feedback from local communities, their representatives and key stakeholders early in the project development process to ensure that feedback and local knowledge influences our plans as they continue to be developed. The deadline for providing feedback is **11:59pm on Tuesday 21 July 2026.**

There will be a second stage of consultation on the project, expected in 2027, known as Stage 2 consultation and will take place ahead of applying for planning permission for the project. This consultation will present our refined proposals, including how feedback from Stage 1 consultation has been considered in the latest design, alongside the outcomes of technical assessments and environmental surveys. This Stage 2 consultation will offer a further opportunity to share your views and local insight on our proposals. We will produce a summary of the findings from Stage 1 consultation in advance of Stage 2 consultation.

Western Link 2 – indicative project timeline



Please note this project timeline is indicative and may be subject to change.

Other National Grid projects in the region

Across the UK, we are upgrading and developing new infrastructure to meet the challenges of rising demand for energy and changes to the way electricity is being generated.

In North Wales, there are already a number of projects underway to upgrade and change the network in the area. These include:

Dinorwig to Pentir	The replacement of the existing underground cable connecting Dinorwig Power Station near Llanberis to the existing substation at Pentir.
Pentir to Trawsfynydd	Reinforcement and refurbishment works across parts of the existing high voltage power network in North West Wales.
Bodelwyddan substation extension	An extension to the existing substation to facilitate new grid connections
Penrhos substation project	A new substation and cable replacement project to facilitate new grid connections.
Connah's Quay to Bodelwyddan	Overhead line refurbishment project
Eryri / Snowdonia	Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project
Penrhos Substation project	On Ynys Môn /Anglesey.

As we progress our proposals for reinforcements in the region, we will continue to consider how we can coordinate all projects in our approach to surveys and stakeholder engagement, and also in our environmental and construction management plans.

Supporting local communities

National Grid believes that communities should benefit from hosting new electricity transmission infrastructure. This infrastructure is essential to delivering homegrown, cleaner and more affordable power. The government has introduced recent guidance which sets a clear framework for working in partnership with communities.

We want to ensure we deliver meaningful, long-lasting benefits.

More details can be found at: gov.uk/government/publications/electricity-transmission-network infrastructure-community-funds

Stage 1 consultation materials

Our emerging proposals are outlined in this Stage 1 consultation document, along with information about where to find out more and how to get involved in the consultation.

As part of this consultation, we have published the following materials which are available in both Welsh and English:

- **Community Newsletter:** summarising details of the Western Link project and our public consultation
- **Consultation Strategy:** outlining our approach to this Stage 1 consultation
- **Feedback Form:** to gather your comments and feedback on our emerging proposals.
- **Stage 1 Consultation Document:** this document, outlining our emerging proposals and the background to those, along with information about where to find out more and how to get involved in the consultation

We encourage you to provide feedback after reviewing our consultation materials.

More technical information is available in the following documentation:

- **Strategic Options Report (SOR):** explaining the strategic options considered, and the strategic option proposed, to deliver the necessary network upgrade
- **Terrestrial Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study report (TCPRSS):** providing detailed information on the components of Western Link 2 including the options appraisal approach, the routeing and siting options assessed, and our proposed options
- **Marine Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study report (MCPRSS):** providing detailed information on the components of Western Link 2 including the options appraisal approach, the routeing and siting options assessed, and our proposed options
- **Summary of Landfall and Terrestrial routeing and siting options:** providing a summary of the routeing and siting options
- **Bridging notes for the MCPRSS and TCPRSS documents:** providing further information on the development of routeing and siting options.

These documents are published on our project website: **www.nationalgrid.com/westernlink2**

Printed copies of our consultation documents are available on request by emailing **WesternLink2@nationalgrid.com** or by calling **0800 156 0706**. Some detailed technical documents may be subject to a printing charge.

Key consultation documents will also be available to view at local information points (see page 18) and at our public information events (see page 16).

Alternative formats

We are committed to making project information accessible to all users. If you need any information or documents in an alternative format, or if you would like a paper copy of any of our consultation or technical documents, please get in touch using the details in the ‘Contact us’ section of this document. Please note there may be a charge for printed copies of technical documents. All alternative format documents will be available in both Welsh and English.

How to find out more

As part of this Stage 1 consultation, we are holding five public information events (see Table 1).

At these events we will present information about the emerging proposals and members of the project team will be available to answer your questions.

You will also be able to view copies of our maps and technical documents. There will be both Welsh speaking and English speaking members of staff at the public information events.

Table 1: Public information events

Venue	Address	Date
Clynnog Fawr Village Hall *What 3 Words location: chicken.arranges.item*	Llys Eben, Clynnog Fawr, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 5AQ	Thursday 25 June, 2–7pm
Penygroes Memorial Hall *What 3 Words location: insist.manly.processes*	2 Market Place, Penygroes, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 6NN	Friday 26 June, 2–7pm
Menter Cymunedol Bethel (Bedol) *What 3 Words location: elevator.northward.region*	Bethel, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1AX	Thursday 09 July, 12–4.30pm
Rhiwlas Village Hall *What 3 Words location: ditched.countries.cakewalk*	Rhiwlas, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 4GA (follow road signs to the village hall)	Friday 10 July, 2–7pm
The Centre Bontnewydd *What 3 Words location: match.uptake.stoppage*	Bontnewydd, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 2UF	Saturday 11 July, 10am–1:30pm

Table 2: Webinars

During this Stage 1 consultation, we are also hosting two webinar sessions, where we will present our emerging proposals and hold an open question and answer session.

To sign-up for a webinar please visit our project website or contact us on **0800 156 0706** or by emailing **WesternLink2@nationalgrid.com**

Welsh speaking webinar	**Tuesday 7 July**	**6–7pm**
English speaking webinar	**Tuesday 7 July**	**7–8pm**

Table 3: Local information points

Paper copies of the Community Newsletter, Stage 1 Consultation Document, feedback form, freepost envelopes and reference copies of the technical documents are available at the locations listed below.

Please note that the technical documents will only be available in English.

Venue	Address	Opening times	
Bangor Library	Gwynedd Road, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 1DT	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday Wednesday & Friday Saturday Sunday	9:30am–6pm 9:30am–6pm 9:30am–5pm 9:30am–1pm Closed
Bethesda Public Library	Dyffryn Ogwen Community Library, Ffordd Coetmor, Bethesda, Gwynedd, LL57 3DP	Monday Tuesday & Saturday Wednesday Thursday Friday Sunday	2–6pm 10am–12pm Closed 10am–12pm 2–5pm 2–5pm Closed
Byw'n Iach Plas Silyn (Leisure Centre in Penygroes)	Plas Silyn, County Road, Penygroes, Gwynedd, LL54 6HJ	Monday & Thursday Tuesday & Wednesday Friday Saturday & Sunday	9am–9pm 9am–10pm 9am–7pm 9am–3pm
Byw'n Iach Plas Ffrancon	Ffordd Newydd, Coetmor, Bethesda, Gwynedd, LL57 3DT	Monday – Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	7:30am–9pm 7:30am–8pm 9:30am–3pm 10am–4pm
Caernarfon Library	Lôn Pafiliwn, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1AS	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday Wednesday & Friday Saturday Sunday	9:30am–6pm 9:30am–6pm 9:30am–5pm 9:30am–1pm Closed
Inigo Jones Slate Works	Tudor Slate Works, Y Groeslon, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 7UE	Monday – Saturday	9am–5pm
Menter Ty'n Llan	Ty'n Llan, Llandwrog, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 5SY	Monday – Thursday Friday Saturday & Sunday	12–11pm 10.30am–11pm 12–11pm

*Please note, local information point opening hours are subject to change. We recommend checking with the relevant venue for the most up to date opening hours.

How to give feedback

Our Stage 1 consultation runs from **12pm on Tuesday 23 June until 23:59 on Tuesday 21 July 2026.** You can respond in several ways:

Online
You can fill in an online feedback form to give your feedback, available at **nationalgrid.com/westernlink2**

Email
You can send written feedback via email to **WesternLink2@nationalgrid.com**

Paper feedback form
You can download and print a copy of our feedback form from our website and post it back to us at **FREEPOST W LINK 2** (no stamp or other address details needed).

You can also pick up a paper feedback form from any of the public information events or local information points listed on page 18.

Alternatively, you can request a copy of the consultation pack (newsletter, feedback form and freepost envelope) by emailing us at **WesternLink2@nationalgrid.com** or calling us at **0800 156 0706**.

Feedback forms and consultation packs are available in Welsh and English.

You are welcome to provide feedback in Welsh or English.

Important – We can only accept written feedback via the methods above as this helps us to avoid any misinterpretation and to ensure we have an accurate record of what we have received. You are still welcome to use our community information line 0800 156 0706 or speak to us at our events for information on the project. Both Welsh and English communication methods are available.

The need for Western Link 2

Western Link 2 would reinforce the transmission network, carrying electricity both to and from Scotland and Wales. With this flexibility we would strengthen the UK's energy security, support home-grown renewable generation and help balance supply and demand as the energy system changes.

The project provides strategic connections for multiple projects, facilitating the delivery of clean energy to areas of demand in Wales and beyond, and supporting the decarbonisation of the electricity system.

Together with the proposals that SP Energy Networks are developing, Western Link 2 has been identified as one of several essential Holistic Network Design projects within the National Energy Systems Operator's (NESO) 'Pathway to 2030' (2022) and 'Beyond 2030' (2024).

The National Energy System Operator (NESO) is the public body that plans, manages, and operates the UK's energy systems. It is an independent body that does not form part of the government and is not part of National Grid.

The objectives of these NESO reports are to provide recommendations which support the large-scale delivery of electricity generated from renewables, mainly offshore wind, via a reinforced electricity transmission network between Scotland, Wales and England.

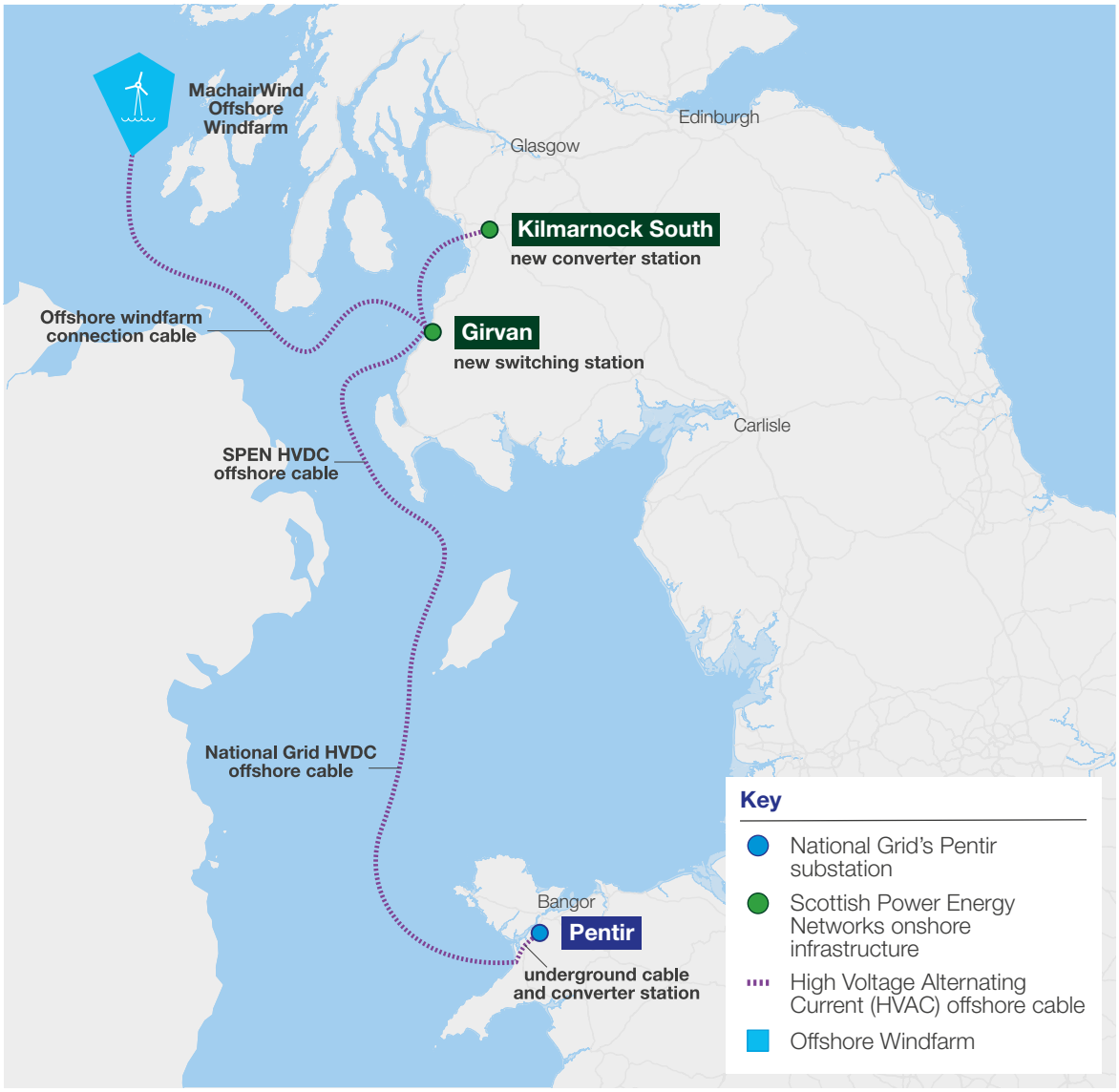
NESO's Holistic Network Design recommends that additional links between Scotland and Wales are needed to meet the UK's electricity grid decarbonation targets, put in place by the government, whilst also fulfilling the energy needs of citizens and businesses. This is the need that Western Link 2 is fulfilling as a project.

Do you want more detail?

You can learn more about how we identified developed our options appraisal process in the:

- Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) – terrestrial
- Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) – marine
- Strategic Options Report (SOR)
- Summary of Landfall and Terrestrial routeing and siting options
- Bridging notes for the MCPRSS and TCPRSS documents

You can find these documents at nationalgrid.com/westernlink2


MachairWind Offshore Windfarm
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Kilmarnock South
new converter station
Offshore windfarm connection cable
Girvan
new switching station
Carlisle
SPEN HVDC offshore cable
National Grid HVDC offshore cable
Key
National Grid's Pentir substation
Scottish Power Energy Networks onshore infrastructure
High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) offshore cable
Offshore Windfarm
Bangor
Pentir
underground cable and converter station

Our emerging proposals

Quick guide to terminology

- **High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables** – HVDC cables can be used to transport large amounts of power over long distances, both onshore and offshore. When used onshore, these cables are installed underground.
- **High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) cables** – Power is normally generated, transmitted and distributed by Alternating Current, which is an efficient means of transporting energy to homes and businesses. HVAC can also be transported by underground cables.
- **Landfall** – The location at which the offshore HVDC cables connect to the terrestrial HVDC cables. The connection is made through a terrestrial underground transition joint bay (TJB).
- **Converter station** – Converts power from HVAC to HVDC and vice versa. These are above ground facilities and comprise both buildings and outside electrical plant and equipment.
- **Substations** – Connect the converter stations to the transmission network and ultimately to the distribution networks that supply homes and businesses. They also provide a connection point for energy generators inputting power into the network, and for the distribution companies taking power from the network to supply homes and businesses. Substations are also above ground facilities comprising electrical plant and equipment.
- **Three-ended connection** – Enables a third connection point for a HVDC cable route (most have one connection point at each end) to provide greater flexibility and resilience in the network. The additional connection would join the existing network via a direct current switching station and a converter station. Typically, the converter station and direct current switching station would be located adjacent to each other.
- **Direct current switching stations** – Equipment used to tie together two or more electric circuits through switches, allowing electricity to be sent to two or more locations. It is a key piece of infrastructure to enable a three-ended link and are constructed above ground.
- **Transition joint bays** – Located onshore, near to the coast to connect offshore and onshore cables together. Transition joint bays are located in underground chambers.
- **Link boxes** – Predominantly located below ground, along the cable route, enabling the performance of the cables to be monitored.
- **Cable joint bays** – Used to connect different sections of underground cables together along the route. These can be located underground or above ground depending on the type of cable.
- **Marker posts** – Located above ground, to confirm the presence of a cable route where it crosses roads, field margins or changes direction.

Identifying the location and developing our emerging proposals

The need for all network reinforcements is established by NESO, the National Energy Systems Operator, who set out where there is need to upgrade and reinforce the electricity transmission system.

NESO's Holistic Network Design recommends that additional links between Scotland and Wales are needed to meet the UK's electricity grid decarbonation targets, put in place by the government, whilst also fulfilling the energy needs of citizens and businesses.

Once NESO has identified this need, we study and evaluate the potential options for addressing it. We are bound by government policy, legislation, regulation and industry rules which inform the balance that needs to be struck between benefits and potential impacts when developing our emerging proposals.

Following an assessment of a range of options, set out in our Strategic Options Report (SOR), making landfall on the Gwynedd coast, has the least effect on marine designations in the area compared to the other options. Additionally, it has the best opportunity for potential environmental mitigations.

Having identified the need for network reinforcement through underground HVDC cables, a converter station, and HVAC cables, we explored options for their locations by identifying a 'study-area' which was informed by identifying the locations of built-up areas, natural features, protected sites and existing transmission corridors – and mapped key environmental features within it. The 'study-area' refers to the broad area where the new underground HVDC cables will be laid, from a landfall location on the coast, to the siting of a new converter station near the existing substation at Pentir.

As well as the routeing of the HVAC cables from the new converter station to the substation at Pentir.

Factors informing this study area include:

- The location of large towns and other built-up areas;
- The location of physical features such as estuaries, or protected sites like National Landscapes, National Parks or nature conservation areas; and
- Policy, cost and technical factors, limitations and guidance.

We then carried out environmental and technical assessments to identify areas that may be sensitive to the introduction of new infrastructure within our initial study area. This allowed us to identify several preliminary corridors in which the new HVDC cabling and the new converter station could be situated.

These areas were then further refined to select possible landfall locations, corridors for the HVDC underground cables and the HVAC underground cables, and potential converter station siting zones. For all elements of our emerging proposals, we have sought to minimise potential impacts on residential properties, landowners, the natural and built environment and communities.

More detail on this process is available in the terrestrial Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) on our project website: nationalgrid.com/westernlink2

Presenting our emerging proposals

To help you provide feedback, we have produced a series of maps which show:

Graduated swathe

A graduated swathe shows a broad area where our infrastructure **could** be located, rather than a single fixed route or site.

The graduated swathe is not a final design. It is early and indicative and will be refined as we carry out further technical and environmental assessments, surveys and as we consider feedback from communities and stakeholders.

The shading shows how likely it is that infrastructure such as cables, landfall locations, converter stations or substation extensions would be located in different parts of that area, based on the work we have done so far.

1. Darker shading shows areas where the infrastructure is more likely to be located
2. Lighter shading shows areas where it is less likely to be located

We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.

Emerging preferred corridor

The emerging preferred corridor is an area within which infrastructure for Western Link 2 may be located. Within the corridor we have used a graduated swathe to show where infrastructure is more or less likely to be located.

We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.

Siting zones

A siting zone is a large area of land within a study area where infrastructure could be located.

Sources: Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Esri Community Maps contributors, Map layer by Esri

A quick summary of our emerging proposals

Landfall

Western Link 2 will come ashore in Caernarfon Bay in Gwynedd, this is called ‘landfall’. It is the general area within which the cable transitions to an onshore environment.

Following a desktop landfall feasibility assessment, which included a range of offshore, engineering and environmental considerations, we are seeking views on three potential landfall locations.

Our initial feasibility assessment suggests that Landfall location B is currently the emerging preferred option.

Landfall location A is also being considered as a potential alternative option and would be progressed if further offshore and engineering work shows that Landfall location B is no longer feasible.

Landfall location C is considered technically feasible but is less preferred than Landfall locations A and B when assessed against offshore, engineering and environmental considerations.

More information about landfall is available on page 28.

Underground cabling

We are proposing approximately 25 km of HVDC underground cabling from a landfall location on the Gwynedd coastline, to a new converter station situated in close proximity to the existing Pentir substation.

A robust and carefully balanced decision will be made on the proposed siting of infrastructure and construction activity, giving serious consideration to the location of designated sites, while also considering traffic, access, ground conditions and other projects that may exist in the surrounding areas.

The exact location of the proposed cable route has not yet been decided, instead, a cable corridor has been proposed at this stage within which the new transmission infrastructure could be located. Within this cable corridor, we have used a graduated swathe to show where infrastructure is more or less likely to be located, with the darker sections indicating where infrastructure is more likely to be located. We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.

Following consultation, we will review the feedback we receive which, along with further environmental and technical assessments and surveys, will be used to develop a final route forthe underground cable.

More information on the cable corridor is available on pages 28-44.

Converter Station

We are proposing a new converter station in close proximity to the existing Pentir substation.

A converter station converts electricity between Alternating Current (AC) and Direct Current (DC). AC is used across most of the UK's transmission network, while DC is used to efficiently transmit electricity over long distances, such as subsea cables.

Electricity would be transmitted from the converter station to the existing Pentir substation via underground HVAC cabling.

When we identify potential locations for a converter station we take into account a range of considerations, including proximity to communities, potential environmental impacts such as landscape and visual, and the nature of surrounding roads and access.

Two potential siting zones have been located for the converter station based on our desktop assessment.

Pentir East is currently our emerging preferred siting zone for the converter station due to engineering and environmental considerations, with an area to the south of the zone confirmed as our emerging preferred siting location within this zone.

We are also seeking views on the associated underground HVAC cable connection between a new converter station and the existing Pentir substation. The area most likely to be required for this cable connection is reflected in the graduated swathe.

We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.

More information on converter stations is available on page 40-43.

We will also need to extend the existing substation at Pentir for the purposes of connecting Western Link 2 to the existing transmission network in Wales. more information is available on page 44.

Offshore proposals and nearshore proposals

Approximately 195 km of new offshore HVDC cable, starting from the southern limit of Scotland's territorial seas and routeing further south through both Northern Ireland's and Isle of Man's territorial seas, until it reaches and enters Wales's territorial seas.

Western Link 2 would then extend into Wales's territorial seas, which extend out to 12 nautical miles from the Welsh coastline.

More information is available on page 46-47.

Route Section 1:
Caernarfon Bay – landfall location

Landfall

We are currently considering three potential sites for landfall. The landfall options span the boundary between Dinas Dinlle and Clynnog-fawr on the north west coast of Gwynedd.

Our proposed cable landfall is where the offshore, nearshore and onshore elements of the project would meet. The landfall site would extend to a transition joint bay, where the nearshore and onshore cables would be connected. This is done via a permanent underground concrete chamber which houses a transition joint bay and associated earthing and monitoring equipment.

A transition joint bay is a permanent underground chamber constructed of reinforced concrete that houses the cable joints and a fibre chamber/ link pit. A single transition joint bay typically comprises an area of 60 sq.m.

A larger area will be required temporarily during construction and installation of the transition joint bay to accommodate temporary construction equipment and storage areas.

Where offshore cables come ashore, the suitability of ground conditions is critical, along with consideration of traffic and access, interaction with existing infrastructure and protected species and habitats.

Landfall locations

Three sites have been identified through a range of desktop and offshore surveys to determine their suitability for potential development.

The three options we are seeking feedback on are:

Landfall location A

Landfall location A is located near the Pontllyfni coast along a more open, rural stretch of the shoreline between Dinas Dinlle and north of Aberdesach. The area includes relatively flat pastureland behind a low embankment and a narrow beach.

The surrounding land is primarily grazed farmland, with stone walls, hedgerows and drainage ditches generally running parallel to the coastline.

Access to the site would be from the A499, with short sections of single-track lanes, using existing farm gateways where possible.

Landfall location B

Landfall location B is located north of the Aberdesach frontage, where the coastline transitions from a shallow sandy and shingle beach to areas of low beach cliffs.

The surrounding land is predominantly undulating farmland surrounded by low dune grasslands and field banks.

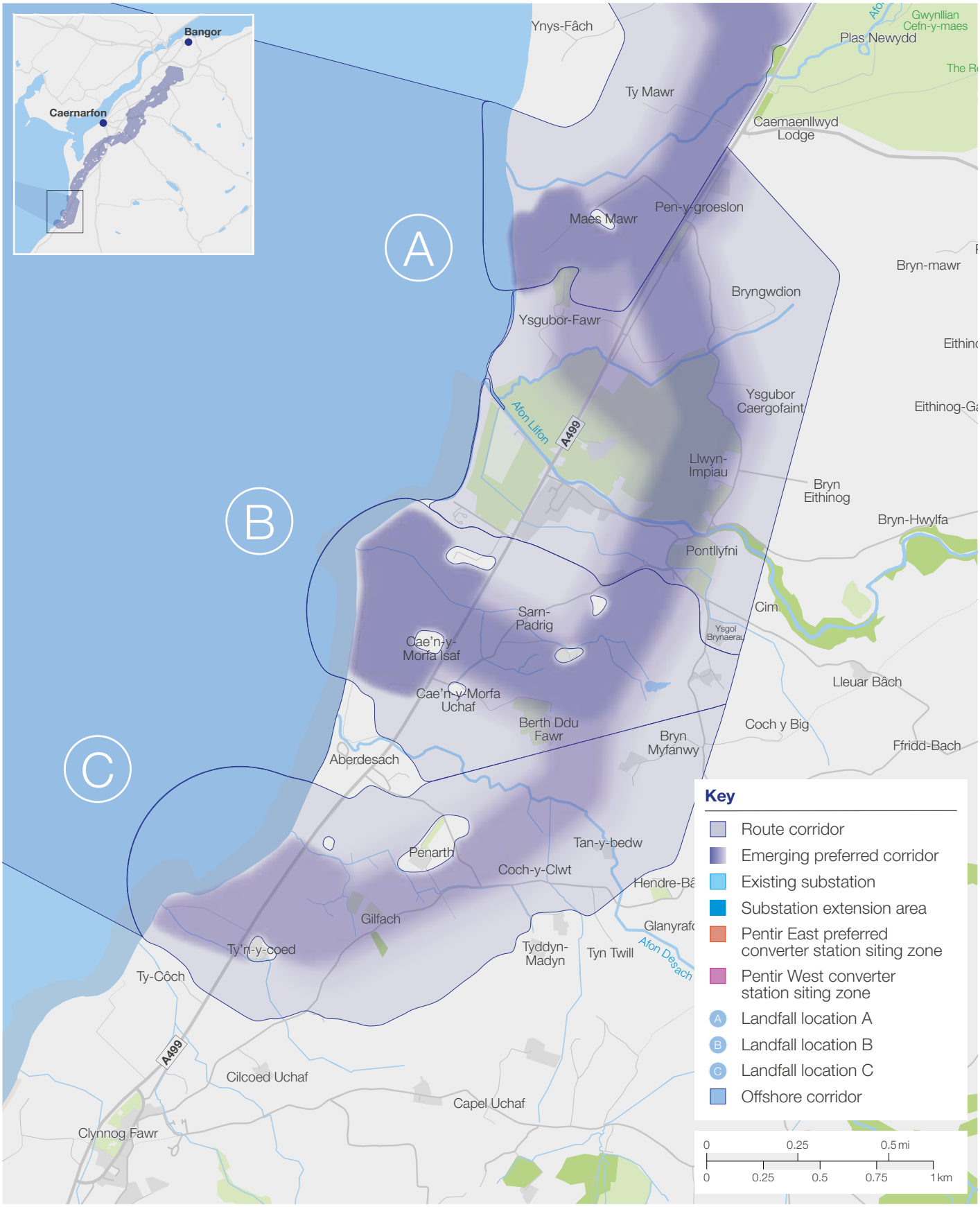
Access would be via short lanes from the A499, passing through dispersed farmsteads.

Landfall location C

Landfall location C is located close to Clynnog Fawr (south of Aberdesach) and faces a more exposed section of the north coast of the Llŷn Peninsula.

The surrounding area is predominantly low-lying agricultural land behind the coastal edge.

Access to the site would be provided directly from the A499. Temporary construction compounds may be required and would, where possible, connect to the site using existing field entrances.



Sources: Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Esri Community Maps contributors, Map layer by Esri

Our initial feasibility assessments suggest that Landfall location B is currently the emerging preferred option.

Landfall location A is also being considered as a potential alternative option and would be progressed if further offshore and engineering work shows that Landfall location B is no longer feasible.

Landfall location C is considered technically feasible but is less preferred than Landfall locations A and B when assessed against offshore, engineering and environmental considerations.

Landfall feasibility assessments

We assessed four potential landfall locations, referred to in our technical documentation as LF1, LF2, LF3 and LF4.

This high-level assessment considered:

- Potential construction methods at each location
- Local environmental and physical constraints
- A preliminary (desktop) ground model
- Initial landfall cable design drawings

The findings indicated that three of the locations (Landfall A, B and C) were potentially suitable for the project. Landfall location B is our emerging preferred option, based on the following offshore and engineering considerations:

- More favourable water depths, making construction more straightforward
- Better access to the beach, reducing potential construction impacts
- A shorter horizontal directional drilling (HDD) distance, which may reduce costs and minimise potential environmental effects
- More challenging environmental constraints at Landfall locations A and C.

These are the locations we are referring to in this consultation as Landfall location A, Landfall location B and Landfall location C.

Based on these assessments Landfall location B is currently our emerging preferred option.

Landfall location A is also being considered as a potential alternative option and would be progressed if further offshore and engineering work shows that Landfall location B is no longer feasible.

Landfall location C is considered technically feasible but is less preferred than Landfall locations A and B when assessed against offshore, engineering and environmental considerations.

You can provide feedback on route section 1 on page 8 of our feedback form.

For the purposes of this consultation, we are referring to these locations as:

LF2: Landfall location A

LF3: Landfall location B

LF4: Landfall location C

Please note that they are still referred to as LF2, LF3 and LF4 in our technical documents.

Onshore cable corridor route

With a connection location identified and potential landfall locations assessed, we considered the potential route of the cables. This work identified a series of route corridors and siting zones and is described in detail in our TCPRSS document. Key activities in this process include:

- definition of a study area – based on the broad start and end points of Western Link 2 and informed by the locations of built-up areas, natural features and protected sites, offshore activities, and existing transmission corridors
- mapping key features in the study area where contact should be avoided or limited
- using computer modelling to devise potential routes (for example on one side of a town or the other) as well as zones for the location of other onshore elements.

Based on these assessments we have produced an emerging preferred corridor. This corridor is an area within which infrastructure for Western Link 2 may be located. Within the corridor we have used a graduated swathe to show where infrastructure is more or less likely to be located. The darker shading in the graduated swathe indicates the areas that are likely to be more suitable for new infrastructure, while lighter shading indicates areas we believe are less appropriate. We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.

The cable corridor is split into two sections for ease of referencing and to aid discussions. These sections are labelled A (at landfall) to B at converter siting zone. For each we are looking for feedback on the emerging preferred corridor, including what local issues and mitigation measures we should be considering as we refine our proposals. The feedback we receive will, along with further environmental and technical assessment, help inform our final route for the cable.

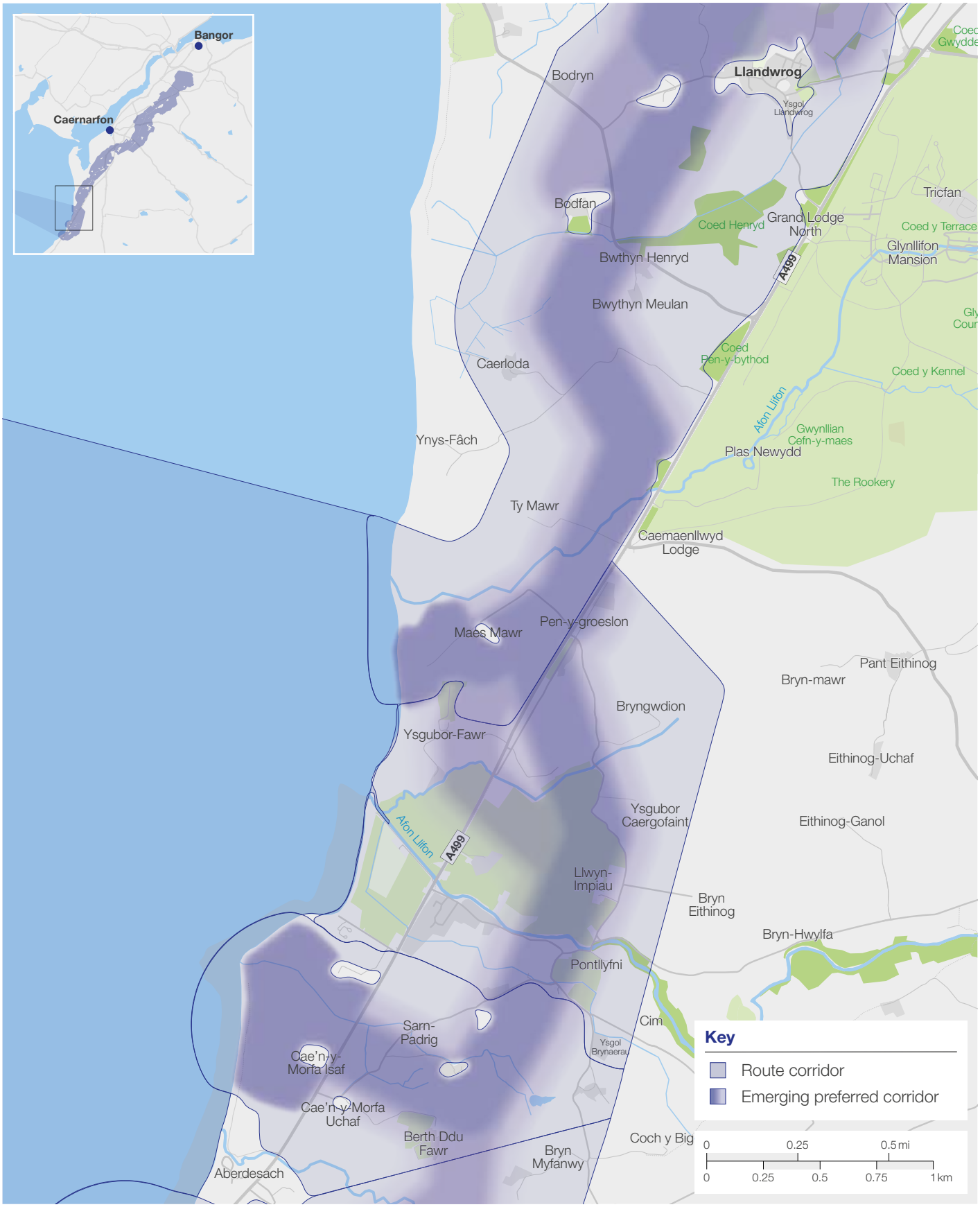
Route section 2:
Caernarfon Bay to Bontnewydd – cable route

Depending on the final location of landfall (see previous section), route section 2 of the emerging preferred corridor as presented at this consultation runs inland from the Gwynedd coastline, navigating around sensitive ecological and cultural heritage sites, while avoiding the most constrained sections of high-quality agricultural land and floodplain areas.

The corridor heads north east towards Caernarfon, keeping to the west of Rhostryfan and crosses the A487 south of Llanfaglan and north of Dinas.

You can provide feedback on route section 2 on page 11 of our feedback form.

The emerging preferred corridor contains within it a graduated swathe with the darker areas indicating where we are most likely to locate the cable route. We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.



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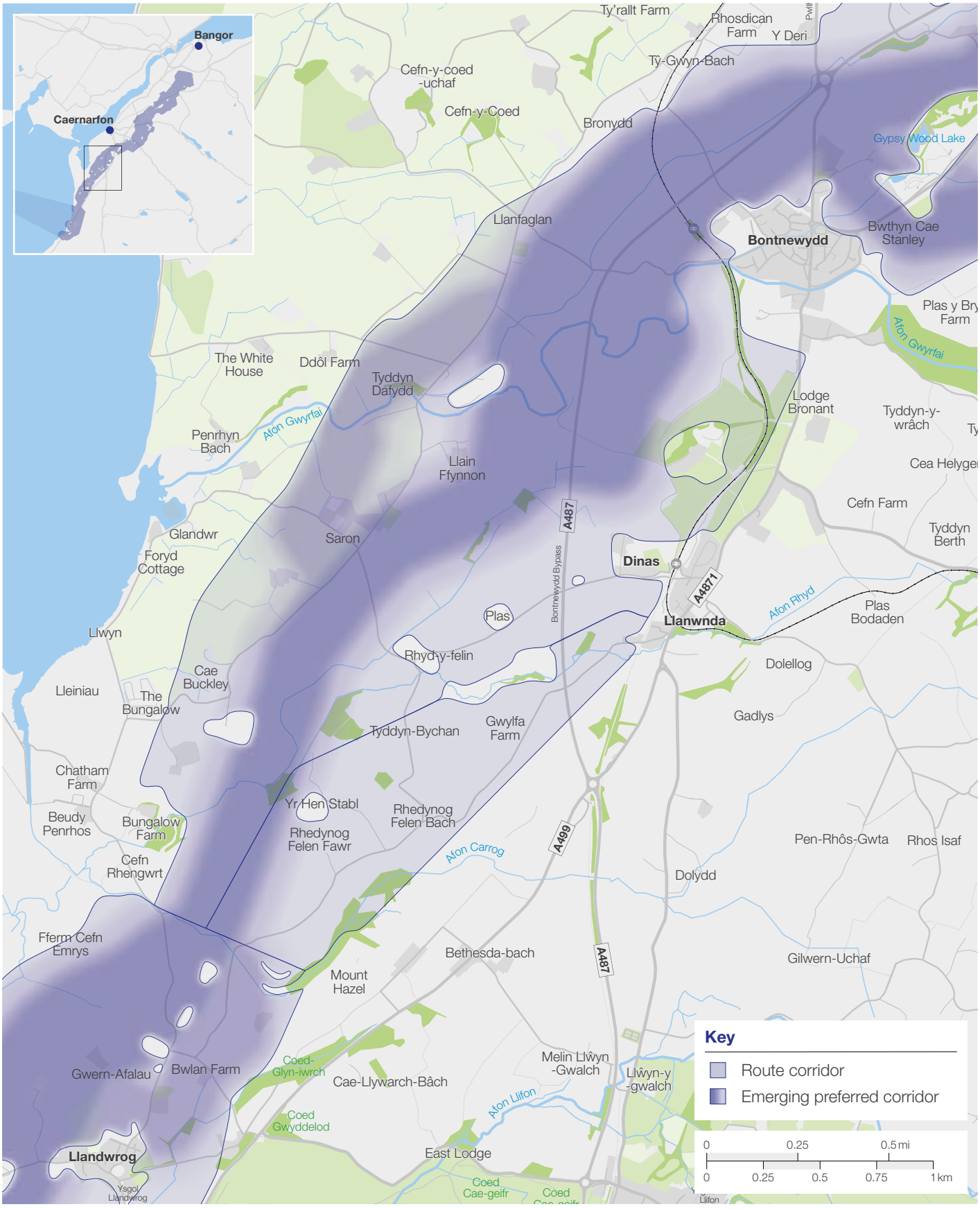

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Route Section 3: Bontnewydd to Pentir – cable route

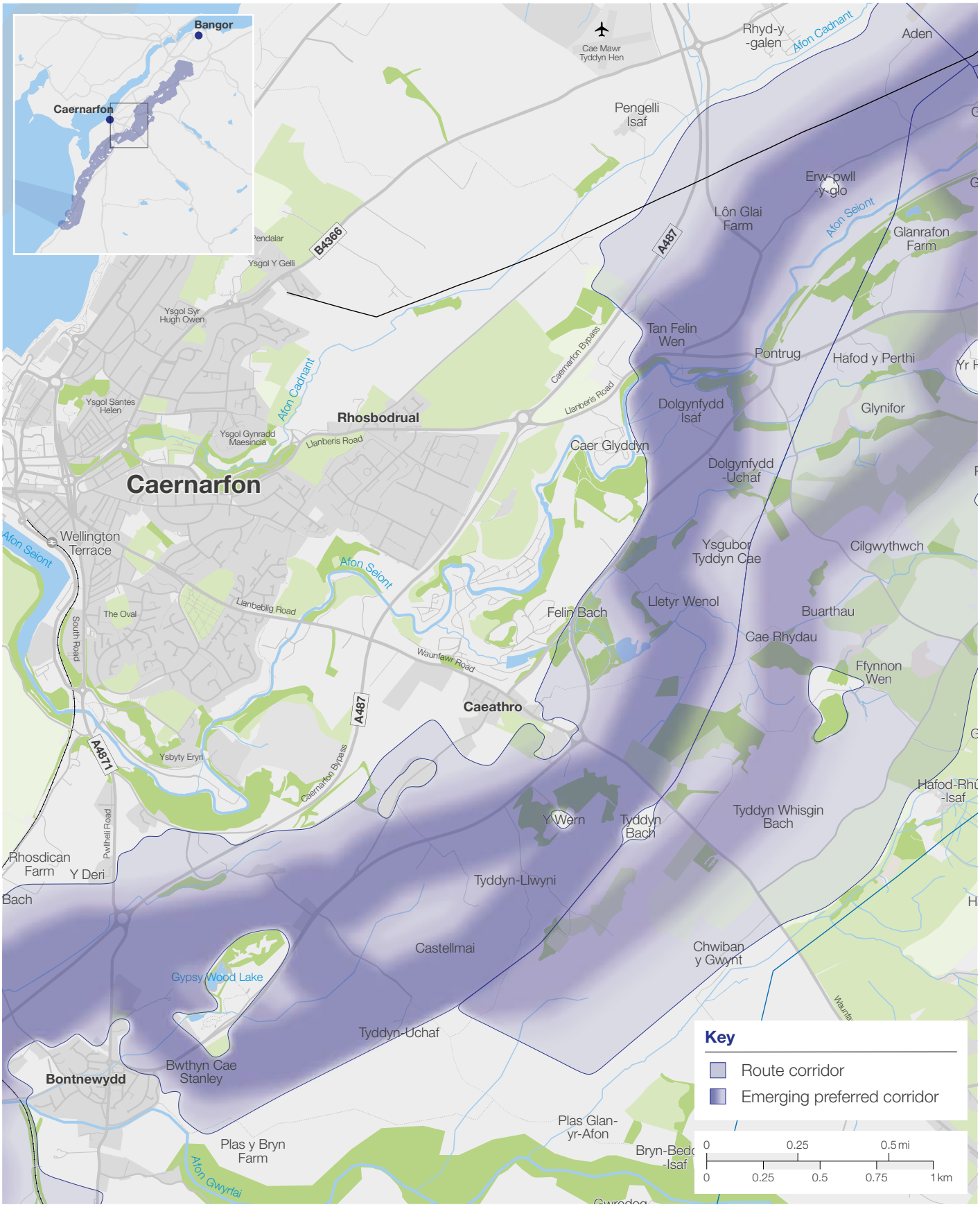
Keeping broadly to the path of the A487, the emerging preferred corridor passes to the south and south-east of Caernarfon and north of Bontnewydd, before heading more sharply north-east towards Bethel.

The emerging preferred corridor is proposed to run to the south of Bethel running in a similar direction to the B4366 while avoiding sensitive sites such as Dinas Dinorwig Hillfort in Llanddeiniolen.

From Bethel, the preferred emerging corridor will pass Seion towards Pentir substation.

You can provide feedback on route section 3 on page 14 of our feedback form.

The emerging preferred corridor contains within it a graduated swathe with the darker areas indicating where we are most likely to locate the cable route. We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.



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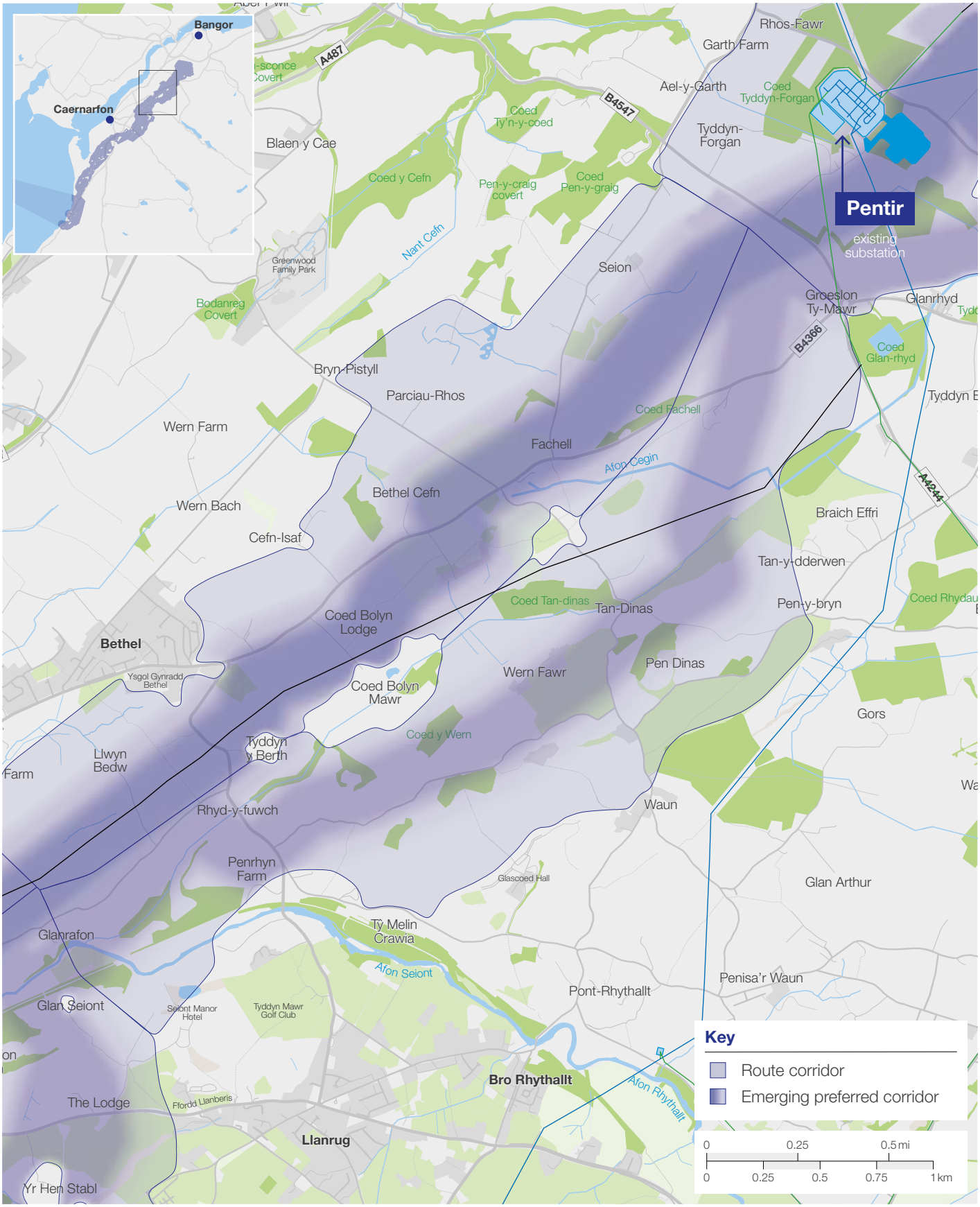


Sources: Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Esri Community Maps contributors, Map layer by Esri

Route section 4:
Pentir – Converter station siting zones and existing Pentir substation extension zone

We are in the early stages of designing our converter station. As part of this design process we are showing two potential converter station siting zones at this consultation. Read on to find out more about the siting zones. We will consider feedback from this consultation to help us select a final preferred site.

Converter stations allow us to convert DC transmission to AC transmission, so it can enter the regional and local network which will further strengthen the power network in the region and beyond.

Converter stations need to be located as close as possible to AC substations to avoid energy losses. In developing our emerging proposals for Western Link 2 we have identified two potential siting zones for a new converter station in close proximity to the existing substation at Pentir. The siting zone is much larger than the footprint of the converter station will be. The footprint for the new converter station is likely to be around 9 hectares (ha). An additional 4 ha would be required for construction.

A final preferred site will be selected as we develop our proposals.

More information on how we have identified these sites can be found in our technical documents and follows an established methodology balancing policy and technical, environmental and socio-economic factors.

A typical converter station consists of:

- a valve hall, office, outdoor plant and equipment;
- Associated temporary construction compounds;
- Internal access roads and turning areas;
- Peripheral landscaping and visual mitigation;
- Drainage and surface water attenuation infrastructure; and
- Buffer zones to allow for variations in the siting and placement of buildings and equipment.

Pentir East

Pentir East is located around 2 km to the east of the existing Pentir substation.

The siting zone is located within enclosed rolling farmland. It occupies a gentle slope, with an area of dense woodland to the west and includes an existing dwelling. An existing 400 kV overhead electricity line crosses the site. The converter station design would need to take this into account, either by designing around the existing infrastructure or by making limited changes to it where necessary. There are no public rights of way within the site and it does not directly intersect any European designated habitat sites.

The site would be accessed during construction and operation from the A4244. Some minor temporary road upgrades, such as widening, may be required during construction.

We are considering landscape screening measures, including planting of native hedgerow, thicket or tree planting to help reduce visual impacts, particularly in views from Eryri National Park.

Pentir East is our current emerging preferred siting zone for the converter station. An area in the south of the zone is currently considered our emerging preferred siting location within this zone.

Pentir West

Pentir West is located around 2 km to the west of the existing Pentir substation.

The site sits within rolling pasture farmland, which rises into upland areas of local importance.

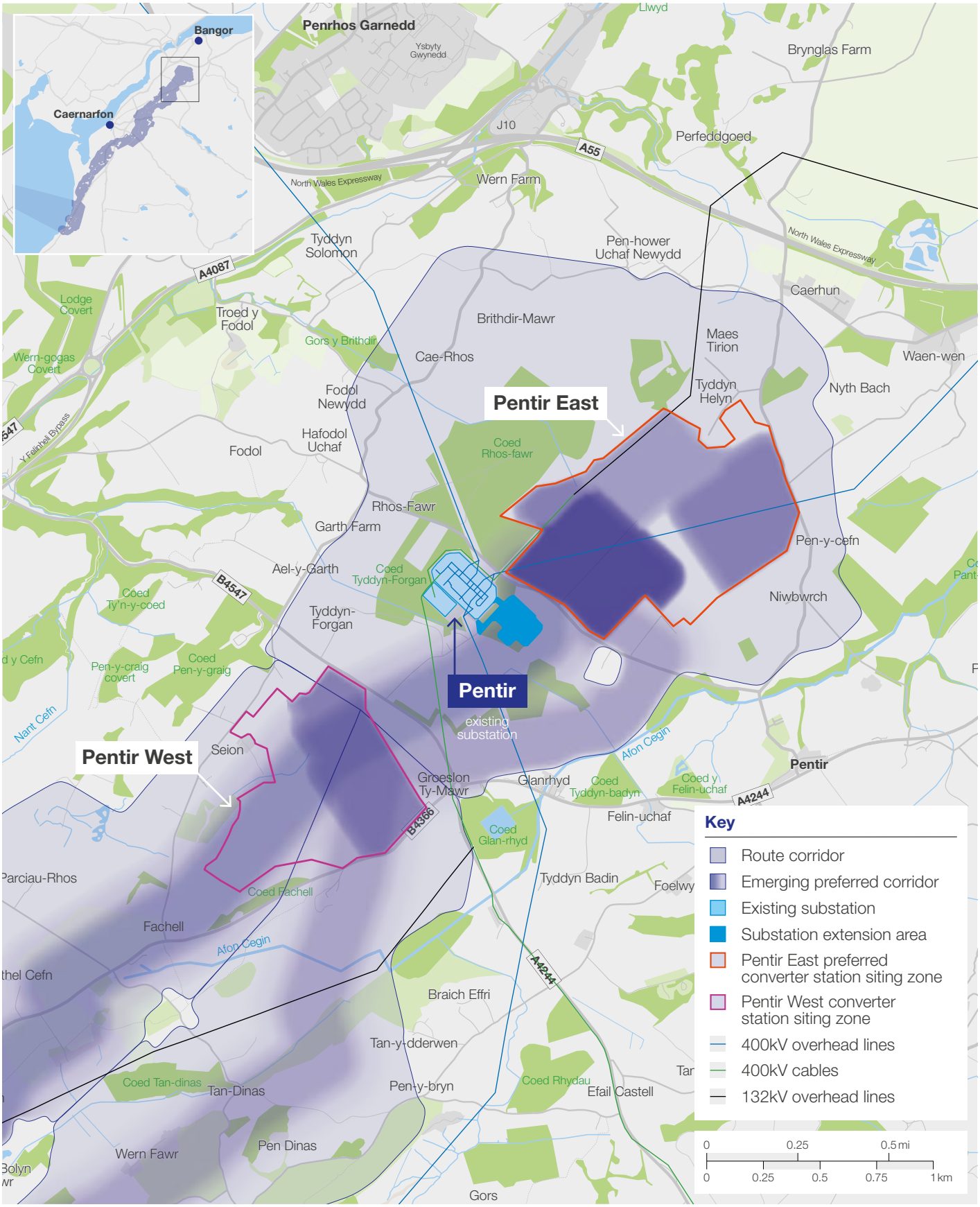
The site benefits from good access to both the B4547 and B4366. For access via the B4366, an existing farm access would need to be upgraded and improved or a new access would need to be formed.

We are considering potential landscape and visual mitigation measures, including planting, to help reduce potential visual impacts, particularly from Eryri National Park where feasible.

In engineering terms, Pentir West is considered slightly more complex than the Pentir East option. Development at this location would require additional ground engineering and careful coordination with existing utilities, including telecommunication infrastructure and a minor watercourse within the siting zone.

Pentir West is being considered as an alternative option for a converter site location.

The converter station siting zone contains within it a graduated swathe with the darker areas indicating where we are most likely to locate the converter station. We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.



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Converter station design

We anticipate that the converter station would have a footprint of approximately 350 metres by 250 metres (approximately 9 ha), with a temporary construction compound of approximately 200 metres by 200 metres (approximately 4 ha).

Some specialist electrical equipment must be located within buildings on the site.

These buildings could be up to 30 metres in height from platform level, excluding any aerials, lightning protection, earthworks or platform raising that may be required.

Permanent access would be needed to the new converter station, together with peripheral landscaping, drainage, and other related works.

At this stage, we are at an early point in the design process. We will be exploring potential design approaches for the converter station in more detail at later stages.

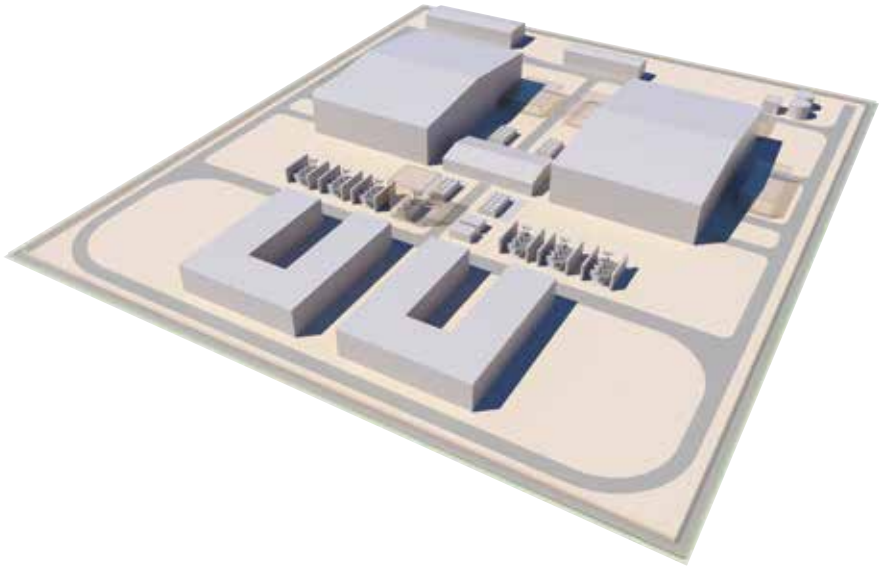
As we develop our proposals, we are keen to incorporate local feedback where possible. Examples of converter station design and appearance are included below:

National Grid takes safety extremely seriously and our priority is to keep the public, our contractors and employees safe. All converter stations are fenced off from the public with appropriate warning signage where necessary. By design, all converter stations limit electromagnetic fields (EMF) in line with independent safety guidelines, set to protect us all against exposure. The weight of evidence concludes that there are no health risks of EMFs below the guideline limits, after decades of research has been carried out.

HVAC cable corridor

The cable corridor for the HVAC underground cabling will run from the new converter station to the existing substation at Pentir.

The areas where we are most likely to locate the HVAC cable are shown on the cable corridor graduated swathe available on page 42. We will not need all of the area shaded for Western Link 2.



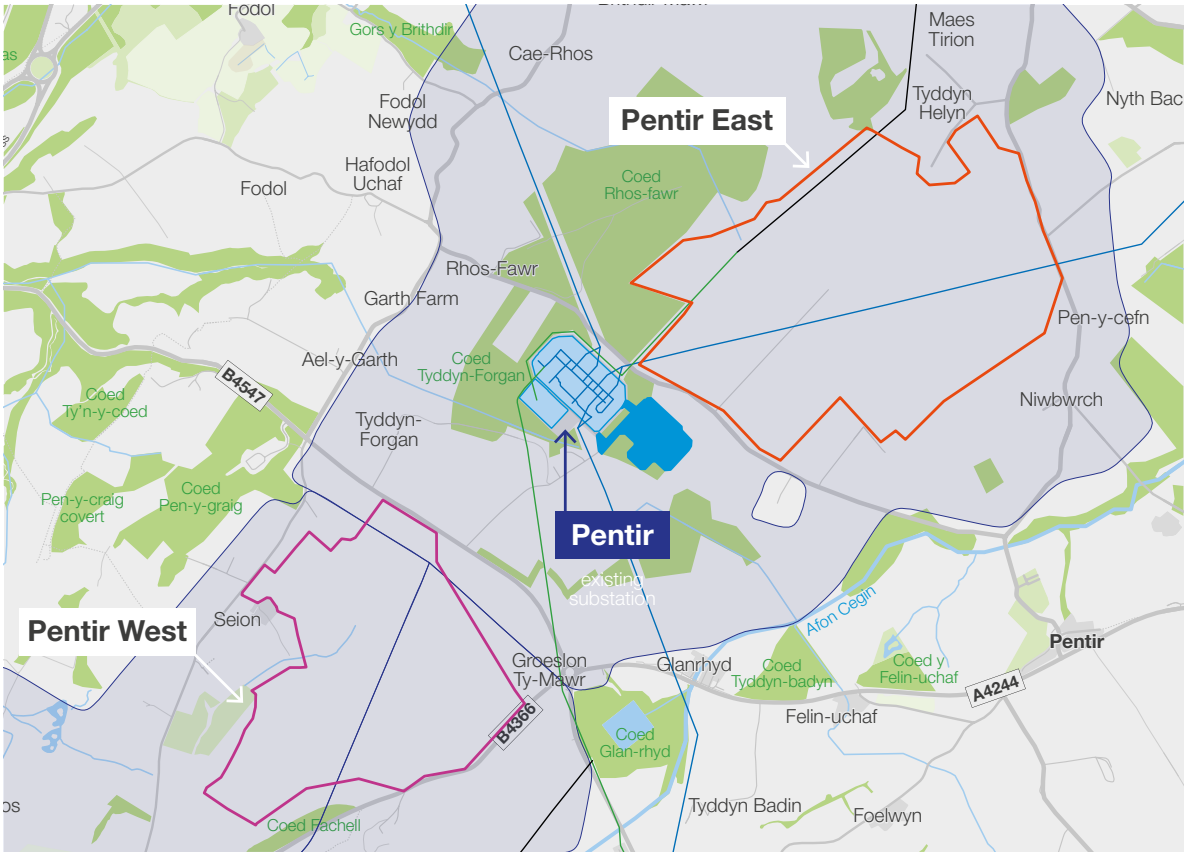
Works at Pentir substation

To facilitate the connection between the converter station and the existing electricity network, we would need to do some additional works at our existing Pentir substation.

We are at an early stage of developing these emerging proposals. Any extension would be designed to be similar in layout and height to the existing substation.

Please see below for a map of the proposed area for the extension.

You can provide your feedback on route section 4 on page 17 of our feedback form.



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Key

- Route corridor
- Existing substation
- Substation extension area
- Pentir East preferred converter station siting zone
- Pentir West converter station siting zone
- 400kV overhead lines
- 400kV cables
- 132kV overhead lines

Wider offshore proposals

The new offshore HVDC cable will continue to route south from the limit of Scotland's territorial seas through several other territorial seas and jurisdictions, specifically those of Northern Ireland and Isle of Man. National Grid will develop and consent the Western Link 2 project through these seas and jurisdictions through a separate process.

National Grid's Wider Offshore Proposals comprise the following elements:

- approximately 195 km of new offshore HVDC cable, starting from the southern limit of Scotland's territorial seas and routeing further south through both Northern Ireland's and Isle of Man's territorial seas, until it reaches and enters Wales's territorial seas

The proposed offshore route for Western Link 2 has been carefully routed to avoid ecologically important areas and minimise interactions with designated sites as much as possible. This has been balanced with finding routes that are technically feasible, as well as considering infrastructure and activities for other industries and sectors.

The subsea cables and associated infrastructure would be installed along our proposed offshore corridor, with the exact alignment of the cables informed by further offshore surveys and consultation feedback. Our routes have been developed through consultation with offshore stakeholders and a range of technical and environmental surveys.

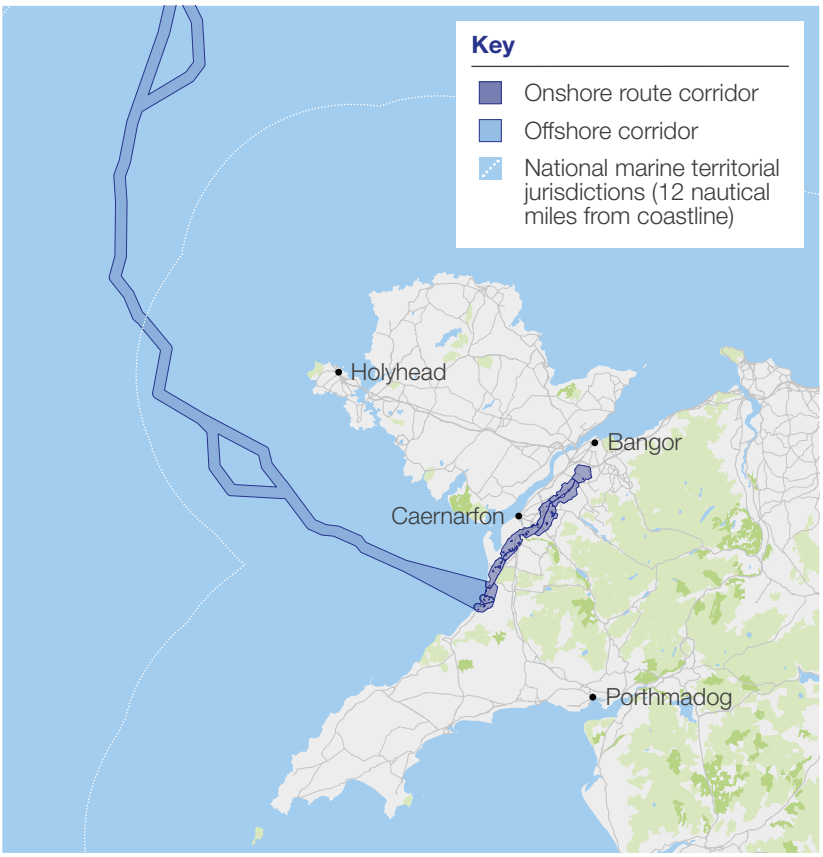
For more information on how we selected our preferred offshore route, please see our Marine Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (MCPRSS) which is available on our project website.

National Grid's nearshore proposals

Western Link 2 would then extend into Wales's territorial seas, which extend out to 12 nautical miles from the Welsh coastline.

National Grid's Nearshore Proposals comprise the following elements:

- Approximately 65 km of new nearshore HVDC cable, starting from the limit of Welsh territorial seas to a new underground transition joint bay at a landfall location on the Gwynedd coastline, at Caernarfon Bay

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Construction

Should consent be granted for Western Link 2, we anticipate construction would start by 2030 and take approximately 5 years.

As we are at an early stage in the development of Western Link 2, this section outlines our typical, and relevant, construction methods for projects of this type and scale.

We will be able to share more detail on our proposed construction methods, their likely temporary and permanent impacts, and measures we would put in place to reduce these at our next stage of consultation. Documents detailing how we will manage construction will be submitted alongside our application for consent.

Onshore construction

How we install onshore underground cables

Before installing electricity cables on land, we carry out detailed technical studies and surveys and work closely with landowners and occupiers to plan the most appropriate route. This helps ensure the work can be carried out safely and to mitigate disruption, as far as reasonably possible.

There are a number of ways underground high voltage direct current (HVDC) and high voltage alternating current (HVAC) cables can be installed, including trenchless techniques and ducted installations. For Western Link 2, cables would typically be installed in trenches alongside a temporary access road, known as a haul road, which is used during construction.

Work begins by carefully removing and storing the topsoil so it can be replaced once installation is complete. Subsoil is stored separately to preserve soil quality. Trenches are then excavated on either side of the haul road, usually in sections of up to 1,500 metres. Electricity cables are normally buried with a few metres of cover below protective tiles, although this may vary depending on ground conditions, drainage, and soil surveys and potential disruption to agricultural operations.

A layer of cement bound sand is laid into each trench to support the cables and help manage the heat they generate. Depending on the final design, cables may be laid directly into the trench or installed within protective ducts, with each cable having its own duct.

At intervals along the route, wider excavations called joint bays are constructed. These are used to connect sections of cable together. Where ducts are used, cables are pulled through between joint bays from large cable drums.

Once cables or ducts are installed, the trenches are carefully backfilled in stages, with subsoil and topsoil returned to their original positions wherever possible. This approach helps ensure land is restored once construction is complete.

Converter station construction

First, we clear and level the area, then we excavate the earth to make way for the foundations – sometimes this earth is used to re-landscape the surrounding terrain. All building structures are built with steel beams. We finish the construction by cladding the buildings in accordance with agreements made during the planning process, and this depends on characteristics of the surrounding area.

Trees, hedges, and shrubs may be planted on the re-landscaped area surrounding the site to help screen the converter station from view. An electrical connection is installed between the converter station and the National Grid network – we are proposing HVAC cables to make this connection.

Haul road construction

A temporary haul road is a type of road constructed specifically for use during construction to facilitate the movement of materials, machinery, and people within the site. These roads are designed to handle heavy construction traffic and are typically removed after we've finished the work.

The first stage of haul road construction is to carefully remove the topsoil and store it in line with a bespoke soil management plan. We undertake tests to determine ground conditions before installing drainage. We then lay a membrane on the ground, before installing stone to the required depth. The stone is then rolled and compacted. Finally, a hardwearing and weather resistant top layer is applied and compacted to a smooth layer.

Offshore construction

How we lay new subsea cables out at sea

The subsea cables themselves are made from reinforced material and are, for the most part, buried to be further protected from shifting seabed sediments, tidal movements and ship anchors.

The cables are loaded onto large reels on a specialist cable laying vessel. As the vessel advances along the route the cable is lowered onto the seabed and is buried. If our offshore cables cross existing cables or pipelines, then a concrete mattress can be laid on top of the existing cable before a new cable is laid on top.

Rock protection can then be used in discrete locations to cover it for protection. Rock can also be used to protect the cables if we have been unable to bury it to an optimal depth due to local ground conditions.

How we make cable landfall

When cables come ashore, our preference is to use a trenchless construction method, such as horizontal directional drilling (HDD) to reduce disruption and potential environmental impacts. Consultation with key stakeholders, and ground investigation works are required to confirm whether this is possible.

Managing and mitigating effects

Feedback from consultation, along with the results from our ongoing environmental assessments, will help shape the emerging proposals for Western Link 2.

We follow best practice environmental impact assessment techniques to assess the potential impacts of our works and identify opportunities for mitigation measures and for delivering Net Benefit for Biodiversity.

Protecting the environment during construction

Our detailed environmental surveys and assessments will help us understand potential effects and how they can be reduced or mitigated during construction and operation.

Where mitigation is not possible, we would seek to offset – or compensate for – effects by planting or enhancing the environment near to the area of works. We will work closely with local authorities and relevant stakeholders in the Gwynedd area.

Environmental impact

When we make an application for planning consent, we will carry out an environmental impact assessment and submit a full environmental statement and non-technical summary.

Our second stage of consultation, expected in 2027, will include greater design detail and more advanced environmental information that has been collected and assessed by the date of that consultation, along with the measures that may need to be put in place to avoid, reduce and mitigate any significant environmental effects.

Protecting soil and agricultural land

We understand the significance of the agricultural land affected by our project's proposals, and would put the following measures in place to reduce our impact:

- The careful removal of topsoil to be stored adjacent to the working area, meaning topsoil of the same texture, organic matter content and nutrient status can be reinstated in the same area it was removed from to match the existing topsoil profile as far as possible.
- Implementing a soil management plan to ensure there is no drop in soil quality as a result of construction works. As part of the plan, soil will be tested before and after construction;
- Protection of livestock by erecting suitable fencing; and
- Soil handling works will be supervised by appropriately qualified and experienced individuals, and an appropriate aftercare period and plan will be set out.

By implementing these mitigation measures we aim to reinstate land to its original condition and land grade.

Information for landowners

When developing our emerging proposals it is important we understand who has a legal interest in the land in and around the areas being considered as part of the project.

Whist much of the information we need is available on public registers, we have appointed Dalcour Maclaren, as agents for all land matters relating to Western Link 2, to contact individual landowners to verify the publicly available information and to ensure that we have made best efforts to identify any potentially impacted parties.

Dalcour Maclaren also has and will continue to contact landowners and occupiers to arrange access for non-intrusive and intrusive surveys.

More detailed information for landowners, along with relevant contact information can be found on our project website.

Contact our dedicated Lands Team

Call our freephone
0333 038 5710
between 9am and 5:30pm
(Monday to Friday)

Email us:
wl2@dalcourmaclaren.com

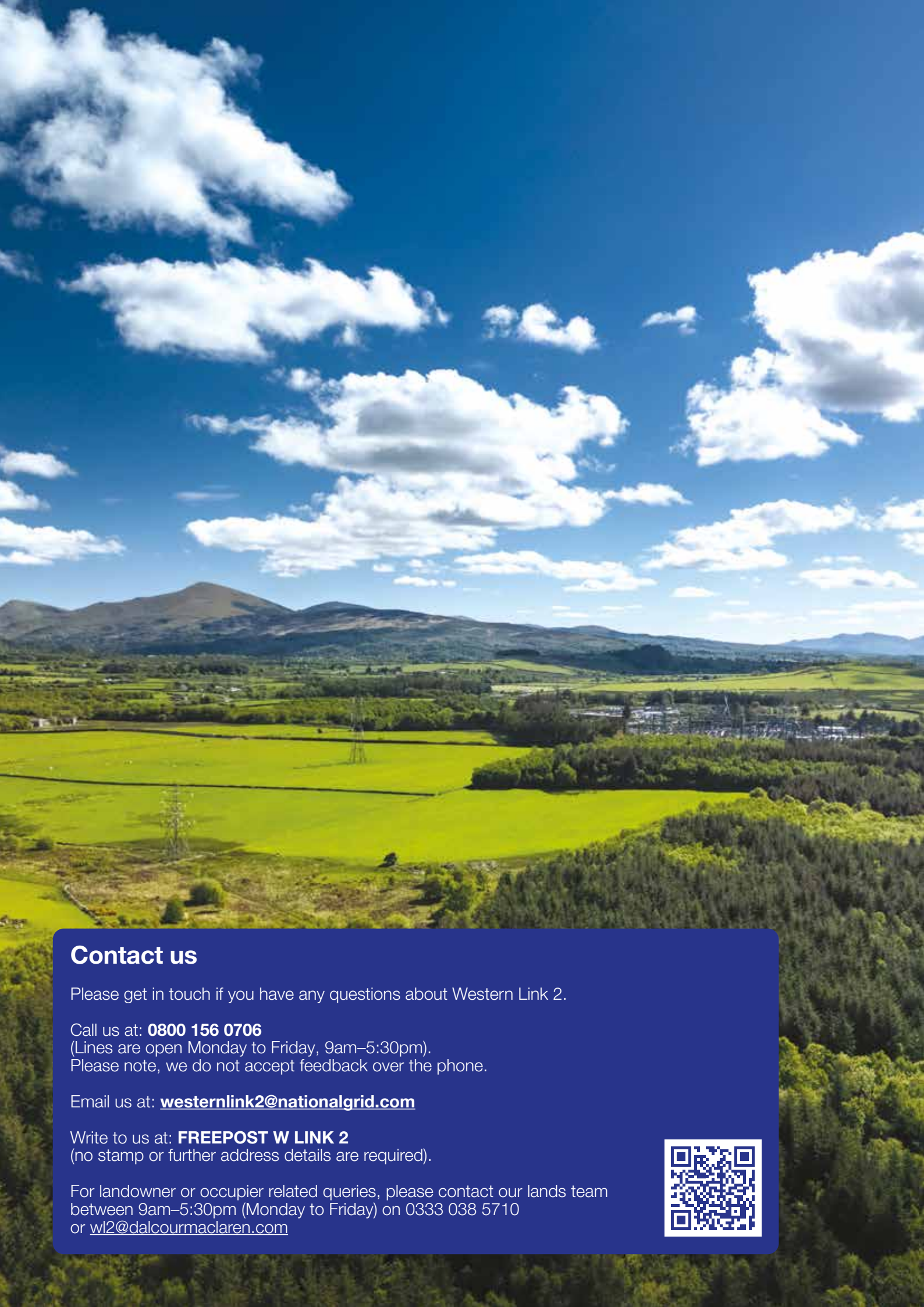
Next steps

Following this consultation, we will carefully consider all the feedback received. This feedback, alongside technical assessments and environmental surveys, will help us refine our proposals.

We will then hold a second, Stage 2 consultation, where we will present more developed proposals for Western Link 2 before applying for planning permission for the project.

During this time we will also;

- Continue discussions with affected landowners
- Continue briefing local elected representatives
- Continue working with local authorities and other stakeholders
- Continue carrying out environmental surveys and technical studies
- Provide newsletter updates
- Provide updates to those who have asked to be kept updated on our proposals. You can register for these updates at nationalgrid.com/westernlink2
- Post updates on our project website nationalgrid.com/westernlink2
- Update our Grid Engage app



Contact us

Please get in touch if you have any questions about Western Link 2.

Call us at: **0800 156 0706**
(Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am–5:30pm).
Please note, we do not accept feedback over the phone.

Email us at: **westernlink2@nationalgrid.com**

Write to us at: **FREEPOST W LINK 2**
(no stamp or further address details are required).

For landowner or occupier related queries, please contact our lands team between 9am–5:30pm (Monday to Friday) on 0333 038 5710 or wl2@dalcourmaclaren.com