



Meeting note

File reference	EN020008 and EN020010
Status	Final
Author	Caroline Harvey
Date	25 October 2013
Meeting with	National Grid & SP Manweb
Venue	Temple Quay House, Bristol
Attendees	Kathryn Powell – Planning Inspectorate Jan Bessell – Planning Inspectorate (pre-application Examining Inspector) Steffan Jones – Planning Inspectorate Caroline Harvey – Planning Inspectorate Will Spencer – Planning Inspectorate Jeremy Lee – National Grid Jacqui Fenn – National Grid Chris Palmer – National Grid Claire Duffy – Scottish Power Energy Networks
Meeting objectives	Update meeting with National Grid and SP Manweb regarding the Mid Wales electric line proposals.
Circulation	All

The Planning Inspectorate advised that a note of the meeting will be taken and placed on the website and it is not able to provide legal advice on which applicants and others can rely.

SP Manweb – Mid Wales Electricity Connections – update

SP Manweb intends to submit the application at the end of 2014. Currently this proposal includes three separate 132kV routes to be submitted in one application. Towers (potentially covering a 2km length) and wood pole structures have formed part of the consultation, as well as undergrounding around a substation area. Statutory pre-application consultation is due to commence in summer 2014.

The Planning Inspectorate advised SP Manweb to try to avoid submitting their application over the Christmas period. Upon submission, a decision on whether the application can be accepted must be taken by the end of 28 days, of which, a 14 day deadline is given to the relevant local authorities to comment on the adequacy of the developer's consultation. Local authorities may not be resourced to respond to this deadline over the Christmas period.

SP Manweb reported that Community Councils had provided useful and alternative suggestions regarding consultation events.

There are approximately 600 landowners along the proposed routes. SP Manweb is using schedule 4 of the Electricity Act 1989 to gain access where required.

National Grid – Mid Wales Connection Project – update

The National Grid Mid Wales application is due to be submitted in Q1 of 2015. Subject to ongoing consultation, the length of the proposal is approximately 54km, with 13km proposed to be placed underground.

Statutory PA 2008 pre-application consultation will take place in the summer of 2014. National Grid have undertaken rounds of pre-statutory consultation, the latest stage will close at the end of November 2013.

National Grid reported on levels of responses to the recent pre-statutory consultation, which were not as high as in previous rounds. The Planning Inspectorate queried if this was a result of peoples efforts focused on the Mid Wales Conjoined public inquiry.

Where National Grid has not received formal responses to consultation from statutory nature conservation bodies or local authorities, the Planning Inspectorate advised that this may cause delays and difficulties during the examination of an application, if it were accepted. The Planning Inspectorate advised National Grid to consider requesting independent environmental surveys from these bodies to assist with this.

National Grid stated that they have been unable to agree Planning Performance Agreements with the local authorities, the Planning Inspectorate advised National Grid to liaise with Homes and Communities Agency/ATLAS and the Planning Advisory Service for assistance.

Contacting land owners was discussed, 70-80% of the land is registered. There are ten plots of land on which there is no information available currently.

National Grid has used and will continue to use schedule 4 of the Electricity Act 1989 for land access, a s53 application may be required if access to buildings for environmental surveys is needed.

There are just over 100 landowners associated with this proposal.

National Grid explained that they have provided their DCO consents schedule, listing the consents likely to be required for this proposal and the relevant legislation, to Welsh Government and other key stakeholders.

What constitutes a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)

National Grid explained how they are developing a policy for the whole company to follow, albeit each case will be looked at on its own merits. The Planning Inspectorate advised both SP Manweb and National Grid to view the wording of the primary legislation, and the Electricity Act 1989 may assist in their understanding. The Planning Inspectorate also advised both applicants to liaise with Welsh Government on this matter and to ensure that a draft DCO is submitted to Welsh Government for comments at the pre-application stage.

Environmental Impact Assessment and Preliminary Environmental Information

SP Manweb intends to submit a scoping request at the end of 2013/early 2014.

National Grid intends to submit a scoping request in early 2014. Currently National Grid has almost completed a phase 1 survey across most of the site and stated the proposal is not likely to affect European Sites.

The Planning Inspectorate advised both applicants to submit a shapefile of the proposal at least two weeks in advance of the scoping submission to allow time to identify all relevant scoping consultees.

Process for the Planning Inspectorate's review of draft documents

The Planning Inspectorate advised it can review draft documents, for example the draft DCO, explanatory memorandum, land plans and works plans and the consultation report. The Planning Inspectorate advised that all draft DCOs should be submitted in the standard Statutory Instrument format.

Planning Inspectorate's Meetings

Both developers enquired as to whether the Planning Inspectorate would hold joint meetings with the developer and local authorities to explain the process and answer queries. It was agreed that if required, the most appropriate time to commence such meetings would be prior to statutory consultation and not after.

The Planning Inspectorate requested updated local authority contact details for all projects to be submitted following this meeting.

Welsh Translation

The developers queried which documents should be produced bilingually. They have attempted to produce public facing documents in Welsh and landowner letters. The Planning Inspectorate advised the developers to liaise with the Welsh language Commissioner and Welsh Government for advice. Translation is likely to be required at hearings, the developer pays for both the hearing

venues, translation and audio recordings. Where possible, plans should also be produced bilingually.