

Mr A Fitch

Address

14 June 2011

Dear Mr A Fitch

Thank you for your letter received 14 June 2011, which has been passed to me for response. I believe that your letter is in response to consultation being undertaken in the Mid Wales and Shropshire by National Grid and Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN). The National Grid Mid Wales Connections and SPEN Mid Wales Connections projects are currently at the 'pre-application' stage of our process, as set out in the Planning Act 2008. During the pre-application stage, there is a duty on the developer to undertake consultation with people living in the vicinity of the proposed project, and to have regard to responses to that consultation. In order for comments to be taken into account at this stage, comments and responses should be directed to National Grid and SPEN as the developers of the projects.

The Infrastructure Planning Commission's (IPC) role at the pre-application stage is to provide advice about the process of making an application, or the process of making a representation about an application. Whilst we are happy to be copied in on any comments you make to the developer, we are unable to provide legal opinions or comment on the merits of the project or national policy. This ensures the impartiality of the IPC and protects the interests of all parties involved in the application process. All advice that we give is recorded via an advice log, in line with s.51 of the Planning Act 2008. This log is published on our website. <http://infrastructure.independent.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/register-of-advice/>

With the above in mind, may I therefore suggest that the queries set out in your letter are raised directly with the developers of the Mid Wales Connection projects is appropriate. The National Grid project team can be contacted on 0800 019 5325 or by email at nationalgrid@midwalesconnection.com. There is also a project website; <http://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/Electricity/MajorProjects/MidWalesConnection/>. The SPEN project team can be contacted on 0800 988 9174 or by email at: enquiries@spmidwalesconnections.

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Your local council also plays a role in the process at the pre-application stage and we would encourage you to copy to the council any comments you send to the developer at the pre-application stage. Further information on this and how you can be involved in the developers' consultation is detailed in advice note 8.2, this can be found at:

<http://infrastructure.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Advice-note-8.3-web.pdf>.

Once the pre-application consultation duties are complete, the developer may submit an application to the IPC. The IPC has 28 days to decide whether to accept the application to proceed to the examination stage. This decision is based on whether, amongst other matters, the pre-application consultation has been adequate. When making a decision on whether the pre-application consultation has been adequate, the IPC will have regard to:

- National Grid and SPEN's consultation reports;
- Any comments on the adequacy of consultation submitted by relevant Local Authorities; and
- The extent to which National Grid and SPEN have followed the guidance published by the IPC and the Secretary of State.

If an application is accepted for examination by the IPC, you are able to become directly involved in the examination of an application. A suite of advice notes has been published providing information on how and when members of the public can become involved in the planning process and have their say. In particular, advice note 8.3 provides information on how to register and make a written representation. This can be found at:

<http://infrastructure.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Advice-note-8.3-web.pdf>.

I hope that this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact us again with any further queries.

Kind regards,

Katherine Chapman
Case Officer

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Mobile: 07527751100

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The IPC gives advice about applying for an order granting development consent or making representations about an application (or a proposed application). The IPC takes care to ensure that the advice we provide is accurate. This email message does not however constitute legal advice upon which you can rely and you should note that IPC lawyers are not covered by the compulsory professional indemnity insurance scheme. You should obtain your own legal advice and professional advice as required.

We are required by law to publish on our website a record of the advice we provide and to record on our website the name of the person or organisation who asked for the advice. We will however protect the privacy of any other personal information which you choose to share with us and we will not hold the information any longer than is necessary.

You should note that we have a Policy Commitment to Openness and Transparency and you should not provide us with confidential or commercial information which you do not wish to be put in the public domain.