



Overview - Transboundary screening undertaken by the Secretary of State	
Project name:	North Wales Wind Farms Connection
Address/Location:	Clocaenog Forest to St Asaph, Denbighshire, North Wales
Planning Inspectorate Reference:	EN020014
Date(s) screening undertaken:	1st screening – 17 March 2014, following the applicant’s request for a scoping opinion. Scoping opinion issued by the Secretary of State in February 2014.
EEA States identified for notification:	1st screening: None identified

FIRST TRANSBOUNDARY SCREENING UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE	
Document(s) used for transboundary Screening:	North Wales Wind Farm Connections EIA Scoping Report Natural Resources Wales Scoping Report consultation response (10 February 2014)
Date	January 2014
Screening Criteria	Secretary of State Comments
Characteristics of the Development	<p>The proposed development is a single circuit 132kV overhead line, approximately 20km long, which would provide a connection to the national transmission network for four proposed/consented wind farms in the TAN 8 Strategic Search Area. These are located at Clocaenog, Brenig, Nant Bach and Derwydd Bach.</p> <p>The connection would run from a proposed new collector substation in Clocaenog Forest to a terminal tower near an existing substation at St Asaph. It is proposed that underground cables would then be used to connect the terminal tower at the northern end of the overhead line to the St Asaph substation. It is indicated that underground cables may be used for some sections of the connection where there are technical or environmental constraints (to be determined following environmental assessment). Neither the new collector substation, the underground cables to the St Asaph substation, nor any underground sections of the connection would form part of the proposed development.</p> <p>It is anticipated by the applicant that the supports for the overhead line would be double wood poles, although steel poles or steel towers could also be used in some locations (to be determined following environmental assessment). The wood poles would be up to 15m in height, 285mm in diameter on average, and spaced up to 100m apart. The steel poles would be of a similar height and 600-660mm in diameter. Steel towers would be approximately 26m in height and be spaced approximately 180m apart.</p>

	<p>Temporary working areas would be needed throughout the construction process along the route, and temporary storage areas may be required for plant and equipment.</p> <p>Traffic generation is likely to be light vehicles and vans bringing construction staff to site; deliveries of components, including wood poles, steel work, conductors, ducts and cable drums; and deliveries of plant at the start and finish of the construction period including tractors and tree felling equipment, excavators, tensioners and mobile elevated working platforms. It is anticipated that existing road accesses would be utilised where practicable and include the use of temporary trackways, comprising metal plates or hardcore of approximately 5m width.</p> <p>It is anticipated that, were a DCO to be granted in 2016, construction works would start as soon as possible after that and continue for a minimum of 18 months.</p>
Geographical area	<p>The Scoping Report does not identify any potential impacts on any area under the jurisdiction of another EEA State.</p>
Location of Development (including existing use)	<p>The connection would run between Clocaenog Forest and a point near an existing substation at St Asaph. It would straddle Denbighshire and Conwy County Councils' (DCC's and CCC's) administrative boundaries.</p> <p>The area is predominantly rural, made up of a mix of grazing and arable land. The connection route passes through fields, woodland and forest, watercourses and roads, and near some residential properties.</p> <p>Snowdonia National Park and the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are in the local area.</p> <p>The Elwy Valley Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are located to the north-west of the route. The distance is unspecified in the Scoping Report, however Natural Resources Wales' (NRW's) scoping consultation response suggest that the route overlaps the SAC boundaries. They are identified on the Environmental Constraints plans at Figures 2.1a – 2.1d of the Scoping Report. The Mynydd Hiraethog SSSI lies approximately 2.3 km west of the route.</p>
Cumulative impacts	<p>Paragraphs 5.20 – 5.24 of the Scoping Report refer to potential cumulative impacts, and identify schemes that will be considered in the cumulative impacts assessment as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clocaenog Wind Farm and substation • Brenig Wind Farm and substation • Nant Bach Wind Farm • Derwydd Bach Wind Farm • Mynydd Mynllod Wind Farm

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burbo Bank Extension: onshore connection to the National Grid substation at Bodelwyddan • Gwynt y Mor substation • Bodelwyddan Key Strategic Site • North Wales Connection: 400kV reinforcements to the National Grid <p>None of the identified schemes are within the jurisdiction of another EEA State.</p> <p>It is also stated in the Scoping Report that those elements that will be related to, but not form part of, the proposed development will also be included in the cumulative impacts assessment, i.e. the new collector substation, the underground cabling to the St Asaph substation, and any sections of the connection that are undergrounded.</p>
Carrier	<p>Potential impact pathways include the transmission of pollutants by air, land or water, primarily during the construction phase as a result of, for example, excavation activity, disturbance of watercourses, or construction traffic.</p>
Environmental Importance	<p>Snowdonia National Park, the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, and an Area of Outstanding Beauty (AOB), designated by DCC, are in the local area.</p> <p>The Elwy Valley Woods SAC and SSSI are located to the northwest of and potentially straddled by the route. The Mynydd Hiraethog SSSI lies approximately 2.3 km west of the route.</p> <p>There are five Registered Parks and Gardens in the local area.</p>
Extent	<p>Potential impacts on the features of environmental importance described above are discussed in the Scoping Report, and will be assessed in the Environmental Statement (ES), although little information is provided on potential impacts on the Elwy Valley Woods SAC. Paragraph 6.16 of the Scoping Report states that it is considered unlikely that the SAC would be significantly affected.</p> <p>At this stage, no potential effects have been identified which would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment of another EEA State.</p>
Magnitude	<p>At this stage, no potential effects have been identified which would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment of another EEA State.</p>
Probability	<p>At this stage, no potential effects have been identified which would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment of another EEA State.</p>
Duration	<p>At this stage, no potential effects have been identified which would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment of another EEA State.</p>

Frequency	At this stage, no potential effects have been identified which would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment of another EEA State.
Reversibility	At this stage, no potential effects have been identified which would be likely to result in significant effects on the environment of another EEA State.

Transboundary screening undertaken by the Secretary of State

Under Regulation 24 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended) ('the EIA Regulations') and on the basis of the current information available from the Applicant, the Secretary of State is of the view that the proposed development **is not likely** to have a significant effect on the environment in another EEA State.

In reaching this view the Secretary of State has applied the precautionary approach (as explained in the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 12: Transboundary Impacts Consultation), and taken into account the information currently supplied by the Applicant.

Action: No further action required at this stage.

Date: 23 April 2014

Note:

The Secretary of State's duty under Regulation 24 of the EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process.

Note:

1. The Secretary of State's screening of transboundary issues is based on the relevant considerations specified in Annex 4 to Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 12 available on the Planning Inspectorate's website at <http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>