



The Planning Inspectorate Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

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To interested parties, statutory parties
and other persons invited to the
preliminary meeting

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN020014

Date: 4 August 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) – Section 89 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 8 (as amended)

Application by SP MANWEB for an Order Granting Development Consent for the North Wales Wind Farms Connection

Examination timetable and procedure

We write to tell you about the procedural decisions following the Preliminary Meeting held on 28 July 2015 at Denbigh Town Hall. This letter also provides you with the examination timetable, a link to the initial questions that we are asking in the examination and other matters.

All documentation associated with this project, including a note of the Preliminary Meeting and the audio recording taken at that meeting, can be found using the following link:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/NWWFConnection>

Procedural decisions and examination timetable

We have made our procedural decisions about the way in which the proposal is to be examined. The examination timetable is attached as **Annex B** and includes the deadlines by which certain information should be submitted. This examination timetable replaces the draft examination timetable that was included with the Rule 6 letter dated 2 July 2015. Procedural decisions and changes to the draft examination timetable made after the Preliminary Meeting are explained in **Annex C**. The examination timetable has sought to accommodate requests made at the Preliminary Meeting wherever possible.

If we consider it necessary to vary the timetable (set out in **Annex B**), we will notify interested parties and 'other persons' invited to the Preliminary Meeting (reference

numbers beginning with NWWFC-OP) in writing and publish the changes on our website. We will also do this if the date, time and place of any hearing is changed, except in the event of an adjournment.

Revisions to application documents

Prior to the Preliminary Meeting, the applicant, SP MANWEB, provided minor revisions to a number of previously submitted application documents. These include photomontages submitted at a higher resolution than the original submission. These documents have been accepted by the Examining Authority (ExA), who now invite comments on them for Deadline 1. The documents can be viewed on our website:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/NWWFConnection>

During the Preliminary Meeting the applicant stated that it is intending to submit documents which will propose amendments to the application on 28 August 2015. The applicant's letter of 24 July 2015 to the ExA explaining their reasons for submitting these amendments is at the following link:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/3323624>

When these documents are received, they will be considered by the ExA and if they are accepted into the Examination we will write again explaining how Interested Parties will be given further opportunities to submit representations on these new documents.

The Planning Inspectorate has recently published Advice Note 16 'How to request a change which may be significant'. This can be viewed at the following link:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Advice-note-16.pdf>

Deadlines for receipt of submissions

It is important to note that if you do not submit the information by the dates specified in the timetable, we may disregard them.

Any submissions that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary. This summary should not exceed 10% of the original text. The summary should set out the key facts of the written representation and must be representative of the submission made.

All deadlines are at noon on the date stated. We request that interested parties send, where practicable, electronic copies of their submissions as email attachments, to NWWFConnection@pins.gsi.gov.uk on or before the applicable deadline. Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with subject title and not exceed 12MB for each email. Should electronic submissions include documents of 300 pages or more, or any pages which are A3 size or larger, interested parties are advised to send to the Planning Inspectorate four additional full paper copies of their submission by post. Timely submissions in advance of the deadlines set in the timetable are encouraged. If interested parties prefer to issue submissions in hard copy by post, please ensure they arrive by the deadline.

Below we have explained some of the submissions requested in the timetable in greater detail for your information, however please refer to **Annex B** for all submission deadlines for this proposal.

Examining Authority's Written Questions

We have decided to ask a number of written questions. These questions are now published on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed using the following link:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/3331893>

If you wish to receive an email updates about the project, including when any further questions are published, you can register on the project website to do so. The deadline for responses to these questions is listed in the examination timetable in **Annex B**.

Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) and Local Impact Reports (LIRs)

In our Rule 6 letter dated 2 July 2015, we requested SoCGs. We now formally invite submission of completed SoCGs, and any draft SoCGs, by the deadline listed in the examination timetable at **Annex B**.

Local authorities defined in s56A of the PA 2008 are invited to submit LIRs by the deadline specified in **Annex B**.

Written representations

We also invite all interested parties to submit written representations and comments on relevant representations already submitted by the deadline specified in **Annex B**.

There is no prescribed form for written representations. Written representations can deal with any relevant matter. They are not restricted to the matters set out in our Initial Assessment of Principal Issues which was discussed at the Preliminary Meeting, nor restricted to the questions we have asked. Please note that under Rule 10(4) of the Examination Procedure Rules any person, other than the Applicant, who submits a written representation must identify in their written representation those parts of the proposal with which they agree and those parts with which they do not agree, and must state the reasons for such disagreement.

Furthermore, in accordance with DCLG 'Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008): Guidance for the examination of applications for development consent for nationally significant infrastructure projects (April 2013)' <http://bit.ly/1Bf8qFY>, participants should provide with their written statements, 'the data, methodology and assumptions used to support their submissions'.

Notification of a wish to attend a hearing

Notice of hearings planned for September and October 2015 is set out at **Annex D**. We will provide further notification if hearings in November are required. We now request notifications from

- (a) any interested party who wishes to be heard at an **open floor hearing**.
- (b) any affected person who wishes to make oral representations at a **compulsory acquisition hearing**.
- (c) any interested party who wishes to make oral representations at an **issue specific hearing** listed in **Annex D**.

These notifications must be received by the deadline 1 September 2015, as specified in **Annex B**.

If an interested party wishes to make an oral representation at an open floor or issue specific hearing they should indicate which topics they wish to address at the hearing. Similarly, any affected person wishing to make an oral representation at a compulsory acquisition hearing should identify clearly the plots of land about which they wish to speak.

Procedure at hearings and notification of wish to speak at hearings

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in Rule 14 of the Examination Procedure Rules <http://bit.ly/1wLTj8E>. Any oral representations must be based on either the relevant or written representations made by the person by whom or on whose behalf the oral representations are made. We shall be responsible for the oral questioning of a person giving evidence but your attention is drawn to Rule 14(5) of the Rules and the circumstances that apply to cross-questioning between parties.

Our examination will be principally undertaken through a written process, and we will decide whether a hearing on a particular issue or topic is necessary. This decision is not connected to how relevant or important we consider an issue or topic to be.

Site inspections

We have undertaken (and will continue to undertake) unaccompanied site inspections at times convenient to us.

We will consider, as set out in the examination timetable, any requests to inspect other sites. Nominations of additional locations to be inspected must be received by the deadline of 1 September 2015. You must indicate the reason for the nomination and whether the Examining Authority can proceed with the inspection unaccompanied (and if not, why not). Please be aware that we cannot carry out unaccompanied inspections on private land or where special measures with regards to safety must be followed.

Please note that the site inspection is not an opportunity to make any oral representations on the proposal. However, we may invite participants to indicate specific features or sites of interest.

An itinerary for the accompanied site inspection will be published on our website one week in advance of the visit. If no requests for such a visit are received, a notice of cancellation will similarly be published.

Welsh language/Y Gymraeg

The Planning Inspectorate welcomes contributions in both Welsh and English. Welsh to English translation facilities will be available at each hearing, but please let us know in advance if you intend to make use of these.

Please let us know if you wish to receive future correspondence in both English and Welsh. This letter is available in Welsh using the following link:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/3327705>

Mae'r Arolygiaeth Gynllunio yn croesawu cyfraniadau yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Bydd cyfleusterau cyfieithu o Gymraeg i Saesneg ar gael ym mhob gwrandawriad, ond rhowch wybod i ni o flaen llaw os ydych yn bwriadu defnyddio'r rhain.

Rhowch wybod i ni os ydych yn dymuno derbyn gohebiaeth yn y dyfodol yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Mae'r llythyr hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg gan ddefnyddio'r ddolen ganlynol:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/3327705>

Award of costs

You should be aware of the possibility of the award of costs against parties who behave unreasonably.

To assist understanding of what 'unreasonable behaviour' means in the context of an examination under the PA 2008 you may find it helpful to read the Government guidance: 'Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent orders (July 2013)' which can be found on the National Infrastructure Planning website (<http://bit.ly/1zV1wSq>).

Future notifications

If you are an interested party (reference number beginning with 100 or NWWFC-AFP) you will continue to receive correspondence from the Planning Inspectorate about the examination throughout the process.

If you have received this letter because you were invited to attend the Preliminary Meeting, but you are not an interested party (reference number beginning with NWWFC-OP), you will **not** receive any further communication from us relating to this proposal. You can, however, visit the relevant project page on the National Infrastructure Planning website to stay informed of the progress of the examination of the proposal using the following link:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/NWWFConnection>

If you are a statutory consultee, or a local authority without direct responsibility in the proposed development area, and have not made a relevant representation (reference number beginning with NWWFC-SP), then you should inform the case manager if you wish to become a registered party by **1 September 2015**. **Statutory consultees who have not made a relevant representation and do not notify the case manager of their wish to become an interested party will not receive any**

further correspondence.

If we require further information or written comments (a Rule 17 request) on the dates specified within **Annex B**, this will be sent to only those persons we consider it is applicable to, however it will be published on the National Infrastructure Planning Website.

Management of Information

The Planning Inspectorate has a commitment to information transparency. Therefore, all information submitted for this project (if accepted) and a record of advice which the Planning Inspectorate has given can be found on the Planning Inspectorate website together with the name of the person or organisation who asked for the advice. The privacy of any other personal information has been protected in accordance with our Information Charter.

Yours faithfully

Lillian Harrison

**Dr Lillian Harrison
Lead Member of the Panel of Examining Inspectors**

Annexes:

- A. Availability of representations and application documents
- B. Timetable for examination of the proposal
- C. Procedural decisions made after the Preliminary Meeting
- D. Notification of hearings

Advice may be given about applying for an order granting development consent or making representations about an application (or a proposed application). This communication does not however constitute legal advice upon which you can rely and you should obtain your own legal advice and professional advice as required.

A record of the advice which is provided will be recorded on the Planning Inspectorate website together with the name of the person or organisation who asked for the advice. The privacy of any other personal information will be protected in accordance with our Information Charter which you should view before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

Availability of Examination Documents

SP MANWEB, the applicant, has provided a copy of the application documents as submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for inspection and copying at Denbigh and St Asaph One Stop Shops.

All application documents including relevant representations and application documents are available on the National Infrastructure Planning website:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/NWWFConnection>

Documents can be viewed electronically at the following locations.

Electronic Deposit Locations:

Library/ Address		Opening Hours	
Denbigh Library Hall Square Denbigh LL16 3NU		Monday – 9.30am-7pm Tuesday – 9.30am-5pm Wednesday – 9.30am-5pm Thursday – 1pm-5pm Friday – 9.30am-5pm Saturday – 9.30am-12.30pm Sunday - closed	
St Asaph Library The Roe St Asaph LL17 0LU		Monday – 9.30am-4.30pm Tuesday – 1pm-4.30pm Wednesday – 9.30am-4.30pm Thursday – closed Friday – 9.30am-4pm Saturday – closed Sunday – closed	
Printing Costs	B&W printing	B&W copying	Colour printing
A4	15p	10p	35p
A3	N/A	15p	N/A
Link to all council library locations:			
www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/resident/libraries-and-archives/libraries-and-archives.aspx			
www.conwy.gov.uk/sectionextra.asp?catid=6579			

Timetable for examination of the application

The Examining Authority (ExA) is under a duty to complete the examination of the application by the end of the period of 6 months beginning with the day after the close of the preliminary meeting.

The ExA's examination of the application takes the form of consideration of all application documents, relevant and written representations. The ExA will also consider oral representations made at the hearings.

This edition of the timetable varies from the draft timetable attached to the Rule 6 letter because the Panel has been able to agree to some of the changes that were requested by the applicant and Interested Parties at the Preliminary Meeting. These include extra sessions for the Accompanied Site Inspection (in case more than one day is needed or in case of inclement weather); an additional open floor hearing in November; delaying Deadline 3 until 15 October and Deadline 4 until 30 October 2015 which results in the November hearings (and site inspection if required) now being scheduled for week commencing Monday 9 November, with later deadlines also now being slightly later than originally suggested.

Item	Matters	Due Dates
1	Preliminary Meeting	Tuesday 28 July 2015
2	Issue by ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Examination timetable · ExA's written questions (on website) 	As soon as practicable following the Preliminary Meeting
3	<p>Deadline 1</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Comments on relevant representations · Written representations (WRs) by all interested parties · Local Impact Reports from any local authorities · Statements of Common Ground requested by the ExA · Responses to ExA's written questions · Comments by interested parties in respect of the July 2015 submissions by the applicant in response to the s55 Checklist. · Notification of wish to make oral representations at the issue specific hearings · Notification of wish to speak at an open floor 	Tuesday 1 September 2015 at noon

	<p>hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Notification of wish to speak at a compulsory acquisition hearing · Notification of wish to attend the accompanied site inspection, suggested locations and justifications · Notification by statutory parties of wish to be considered an interested party 	
4	<p>Deadline 2</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Comments on WRs · Comments on Local Impact Reports · Comments on responses to ExA's written questions · Revised draft DCO from applicant · Schedule of mitigation from the applicant 	<p>Thursday 17 September 2015 at noon</p>
5	Accompanied site inspection (if required)	<p>Tuesday 22 September 2015</p>
6	<p>Alternative date for accompanied site inspection (in case of inclement weather on 22 September)</p> <p>Open floor hearing (commencing at 5.30pm)</p>	<p>Wednesday 23 September 2015</p>
7	Compulsory acquisition hearing (including, if required, s127 of the Planning Act 2008 issues)	<p>Thursday 24 and Friday 25 September 2015</p>
8	Issue specific hearings (including, if required, landscape, biodiversity and construction issues)	<p>Tuesday 29 September to Thursday 1 October 2015</p>
9	Issue specific hearing on draft DCO	<p>Friday 2 October 2015</p>
10	<p>Deadline 3</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Post-hearing documents · Applicant's revised draft DCO · Any further information requested by the ExA 	<p>Friday 16 October 2015 at noon</p>

11	<p>Deadline 4</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Comments on the applicant's revised draft DCO · Comments on the applicant's schedule of mitigation · Comments on any further information requested by the ExA 	<p>Friday 30 October 2015 at noon</p>
12	<p>Issue specific and/or compulsory acquisition hearings (if required)</p>	<p>Tuesday 10 to Wednesday 11 November 2015</p>
13	<p>Second Open Floor Hearing (if required) and if the weather is inclement for both of the dates proposed for the Accompanied Site Inspection in September, it will be rescheduled for the morning of 12 November 2015, with the second Open Floor Hearing commencing at 17:30pm.</p>	<p>Thursday 12 November 2015</p>
14	<p>Deadline 5</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Post-hearing documents (if required) · Any further information requested by the ExA 	<p>Thursday 19 November 2015 at noon</p>
15	<p>Publication of ExA's consultation draft DCO (and RIES if required)</p>	<p>Monday 30 November 2015</p>
16	<p>Deadline 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Comments on ExA's consultation draft DCO (and RIES if required) · Any further information requested by the ExA 	<p>Monday 21 December 2015 at noon</p>
17	<p>Deadline 7</p> <p>Deadline for receipt of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Responses to comments on the ExA's consultation draft DCO (and RIES if required) · Comments on any further information requested by the ExA 	<p>Monday 11 January 2016 at noon</p>
18	<p>The ExA is under a duty to complete the examination of the application by the end of the period of 6 months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.</p>	<p>Thursday 28 January 2016</p>

Publication Dates

All information received will be published on the project website as soon as practicable after the deadline for submissions.

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/NWWFConnection>

Hearing Agendas

Please note that we will aim to publish a detailed draft agenda for each hearing on the project website at least 5 working days in advance of the hearing date; but the actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subjected to change at the discretion of the ExA.

Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES)

Where the applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the DCO application, the ExA may decide to issue a RIES during the examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided to the ExA on HRA matters during the examination up to the date of the publication of the RIES, for the purposes of enabling the Secretary of State, as competent authority, to undertake their HRA. It is not the ExA's opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited by the ExA and any received will be taken into account as part of the ExA's Recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

Procedural decisions made by the Examining Authority (ExA)

The ExA has made the following procedural decisions under Section 89(3) of the Planning Act 2008:

1. Revision to examination timetable

The revised timetable is attached as **Annex B**, with details regarding the proposed examination hearings attached as **Annex D**.

An explanation regarding any changes made to the Examination timetable after the Preliminary Meeting is given in the preamble to **Annex B**.

2. Updates to application documents

The applicant, in its submission to the Planning Inspectorate prior to the Preliminary Meeting, provided documents in response to the Section 55 Checklist (dated July 2015) as well as providing updates to documents that had already been submitted, including land plans, an arboricultural survey and photomontages.

The Panel has decided to accept these documents into the Examination but has inserted further questions seeking clarification on these documents in their written questions. These should be answered by the applicant and any interested party who wishes to respond. A deadline for interested parties to comment on these documents has been added into the timetable at Deadline 1.

Notification of hearings

As set out in the examination timetable (Annex B), those interested parties who wish to speak at hearings should notify Nicholas Coombes at NWWFConnection@pins.gsi.gov.uk or using the postal address on the front page of this letter. Please notify us by noon on 1 September 2015. It would assist with organisation of the hearing if you could tell us of any special needs you may have (eg disabled access, hearing loop etc). Please also inform us in advance if you wish to speak in Welsh or make use of translation services. Ensure that you include your interested party reference number in your correspondence, and make it clear which hearing(s) you wish to participate in.

The Examining Authority (ExA) provides notice of the following hearings, in compliance with Rule 13 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended).

1. Open Floor Hearing

Date of hearing: Wednesday 23 September 2015

Time of hearing: 17:30pm.

Venue: Denbigh Town Hall, Crown Lane, Denbigh
Denbighshire LL16 3TB

The purpose of an open floor hearing is to allow interested parties to address the ExA on relevant matters of their choosing. Speaking time will be shared between interested parties who register in advance. Parties who do not register in advance may be heard at the end of the meeting if there is time available, at the discretion of the ExA.

The venue will open to the public half an hour prior to the start of the hearing. The hearings will close earlier than the advertised end time if there are no remaining parties present wishing to speak.

2. Compulsory acquisition hearing

Date of hearing: Thursday 24 to Friday 25 September 2015

Time of hearing: 10.00am

Venue: Denbigh Town Hall, Crown Lane, Denbigh
Denbighshire LL16 3TB

The purpose of the compulsory acquisition hearings is for discussion about the merits of the case for acquisition of rights over individual plots of land. The hearings will be led by the ExA, with involvement from affected persons (landowners, tenants, etc) and the applicant. Affected persons should register in advance their desire to participate (and which day they would prefer to attend) and identify the specific plots that would be affected. Parties should expect to be questioned by the ExA and to justify their statements.

3. Issue specific hearings – to include:

- Construction impacts;
- Impacts upon biodiversity interests;
- Impacts upon flood risk and water resources;
- Impacts upon heritage interests;
- Land management
- Landscape and visual impacts;
- Monitoring, management and mitigation plans and provisions; and
- Operational impacts and decommissioning;
- Principle of development: assessment approach and policy background;
- Socio-economic impacts

Dates of hearings: Tuesday 29, Wednesday 30 September and Thursday 1 October 2015

Time of hearings: 10.00am

Venue: Denbigh Town Hall, Crown Lane, Denbigh
Denbighshire LL16 3TB

The purpose of an issue specific hearing is for discussion on the relevant issues led by the ExA. Parties should expect to be questioned by the ExA and to justify their statements.

The agenda for these hearings will be published on our website 5 days prior to them commencing and every effort will be made to ensure that the issues will be discussed on the days that they are scheduled for. This may mean that the hearings continue after 5:00pm. The ExA reserve the right to rearrange the agendas for these hearings at short notice, if necessary, or if they take longer than anticipated, certain issues may have to be adjourned to the later hearings scheduled for November 3 and 4 2015.

4. Issue specific hearing – draft Development Consent Order

Date of hearing: Friday 2 October 2015

Time of hearing: 10.00am

Venue: Denbigh Town Hall, Crown Lane, Denbigh
Denbighshire LL16 3TB

This hearing will concentrate on the specific issue of the draft Development Consent Order (DCO). This is the order which the Secretary of State would make if she wished to consent the application. Discussion at this hearing is 'without prejudice'; this means that parties may make contributions to improve the quality of the draft DCO without invalidating their own positions of support or opposition to the scheme as a whole.

Irrespective of its recommendation, the ExA is required to present a draft DCO to the Secretary of State. Discussion about the specifics of the draft DCO does not indicate that the ExA has made up its mind about the application.

The hearing into the draft DCO is likely to be of a technical nature and will be based on the specific wording of the draft DCO.

Notification of site inspection

The ExA provides notice of the following accompanied site inspection, in compliance with Rule 16 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended).

Date of inspection: Tuesday 22 September 2015 (and/or Wednesday 23 September if the weather is inclement on the 22 September or additional time is needed).

Time of inspection: 10.00am

Departure point: Denbigh Town Hall, Crown Lane, Denbigh
Denbighshire LL16 3TB

This site inspection is dependent on requests being made by the deadline of 1 September 2015. If no requests are made, the visit may be cancelled. An itinerary or notice of cancellation will be provided one week in advance on the project webpage at:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/NWWFConnection>