

From: [REDACTED]
To: [North Wales Wind Farm Connection](#)
Subject: Responses to the Examining Authority's written questions - North Wales Wind Farms Connection
Date: 30 August 2015 22:50:52

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

Reference number: 10031310

Dear Members of the Examining Authority,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Examining Authority's written questions.

Question 0.1

I invite the inspection panel to Llys Hedydd, LL16 5DE. Below is a brief summary regarding why this is a particularly sensitive location for an accompanied site inspection.

I am writing these statements on behalf of my family and my home. I would like to highlight the effort that it takes for a busy household to keep up with the demands of providing continuous feedback, comments and information to defend what seems to be an almost futile fight against a giant corporation. I trust that the planning inspectorate will fully and fairly assess this submission on behalf of the community as opposed to a foreign company with foreign shareholders exploiting our country.

Below I will discuss several points that seem relevant considering that the sources of information are so vast that it is difficult to digest all the details. These support my case that I disagree with SP Manweb's conclusion that the benefits of undergrounding are outweighed by their cost and other impact (**Question 8.1**)

First, the application by SP Manweb analyses the visual impact that the pylons would have on the properties of the affected area. It seems that according to SP Manweb the negative effect of the pylons is either insignificant or moderate. There are no clear cut explanations for the reasons that lead to make such judgements. Instead, SP Manweb has made (not surprisingly) a biased judgement to almost convince the planning authority that all the damage is inconsequential. I invite the planning authority to come to my property (Llys Hedydd, LL16 5DE) to make a thorough assessment of the impact of the visual effect and price of the property that the pylons would have. Similarly, I propose the following properties for which to my own rational judgement, the effect of pylons has been understated by SP Manweb: Berain (grade2* historical building), Pen Parc Llwyd (Centre for Personal Development; a retreat which has been attended by over 12000 people) and Hafod (with a planning application for a new property in close proximity to the pylons). The 'Hafod' route (from Tywysog Bach to Berain), which was outside SP Manweb's preferred corridor, is a particularly sensitive stretch of the route, and should be undergrounded. Pylons will be visible for long distances, cut through ancient woodland, will skyline next to the Hafod wood, and will have a devastating effect on our visual amenity.

Second, I believe that the value of my property will decrease if there are pylons in close proximity. There is no mention on the planning application of the risks of this happening. I present two examples that show that property values are affected by the presence of pylons. One, Tywysog Bach (which is visible from our house) has been reduced from £750,000 to about half a million since the announcement of pylons in the area. Two, there is no doubt that pylons damage the desirability of a property. As a personal experience, we were looking at buying a house in Tremeirchion (Summer Hill Court), however, we

thought that it was totally overpriced considering that there are pylons around. Therefore, we bought our current house, whereas the house in Summer Hill Court was on the market for several years and forewent several price reductions over that time. SP Manweb has ignored to comment on the value of properties in its application. I propose to the planning authorities to look at the empirical evidence presented in academic journals to judge whether pylons are a significant factor on property prices; and subsequently analyse whether the economic loss on property values (together with loss on tourism, impact on historic sites, health impact (including mental health), agriculture, among others) would be less than the cost of underground cabling.

Third, we have recently invested our savings on an extension where we spend long hours facing the window on a desk, as we frequently work from home. This will now directly face the route of the pylons, as will our living room, two bedrooms, and main garden which mean that we will be overlooking pylons for most of the day, even during our leisure time. I find difficult to believe that as developed as this country can be, there is still allowance for powerful companies to impose negative externalities, when there is the option of avoiding them. The planning application does mention that trees will be planted in specific locations. However, to build the pylons in the first instance, mature trees in close proximity will have to be cut down, and new trees will cover the pylons only after several years, during which time the lifespan of the wind farms would have ended (25 years according to SP Manweb's application). I propose that the planning authority considers the real necessity for the use of pylons considering that the long term impact of damaging the unspoiled countryside might be even irrelevant, considering that: i) there will no longer be government subsidy to wind farms. Therefore there is no assurance that one new wind farm will substitute another that has reached the end of its lifespan; and ii) one out of the four planned wind farms will not be built anymore.

Fourth, SP Manweb has stated that the cost of the undergrounding surpasses the benefit. However, there are doubts on the validity of their costing, as their planning application has already presented several mistakes in the calculations which have already been highlighted by Pylon the Pressure group. I trust that the planning authority will assess the real cost of the undergrounding by undertaking a thorough cost-benefit analysis from an independent source. Transparency at this stage is of utmost importance given that there are dubious parts on the planning application.

Finally, I find it incredulous how a high voltage pylon line would even be considered to pass close to buildings of historic significance. This is a clear case of contempt of Welsh heritage and culture of national importance. Three properties along the 'Hafod' route are:

- i. Pen Parc Llwyd, thought to be the birthplace of Twm o'r Nant, often referred to as the "Welsh Shakespeare"[\[1\]](#). It is inconceivable that such a development would be permitted next to Shakespeare's birthplace at Stratford-upon-Avon.
- ii. Berain, a Grade II* listed building, having recently been featured on TV for its historic importance, as the home of Catrin o Ferain, descendent of Henry VII and friend of Shakespeare[\[2\]](#).
- iii. Llechryd, traditionally taken to be the birthplace of Iolo Goch (c1320-c1398), the great medieval Welsh poet and is Grade II listed.

[\[1\]](#)

https://archive.org/stream/gweithiauuiologo00ashtgoog/gweithiauuiologo00ashtgoog_djvu.txt

[2] http://www.s4c.co.uk/ffeithiol/e_mamwlad4.shtml

Kind regards

Dr Jannine Poletti Hughes

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