



PI Reference : EN020014 - North Wales Wind Farms Connection Project

Written Representation Submission

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015- Without Prejudice

### **Background**

I am John Mars Jones, of Berain, a farm based in Llanefydd, Denbigh, North Wales. The following letter represents the views of the following Registered Interested Parties of the Jones family namely;

John Mars Jones – Reference No: NWWFC-AFP047

Margret Eirian Jones – Reference No: 10031307

Elin Mars Jones– Reference No: 10031316

Richard Mars Jones – Reference No: 10031308

Elinor Iona Jones – Reference No: 10031309

who reside and are farming the Berain farm estate and adjacent land, extending to a land holding of over 300 acres.

A section of the current proposed route for the overhead power-line on the SP Manweb North Wales Wind Farms Connection Project crosses and dissects the farm holding and is proposed to be located adjacent to the Grade II \*listed Berain Property.

As an interested party I am submitting the following observations on behalf of Jones family, as part of the Planning Act 2008 – Section 89 and the Infrastructure Planning Rules 2010 – Rules 8 by the deadline of mid-day on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

### **Improper Use of Process**

I feel that the manner in which the overall scheme is being handled, is an improper use of process because the environmental impacts of the combined development (ie the establishment of wind turbines and the transmission of the resultant electricity generated by the turbines to connect with the existing national grid) are not being assessed as a composite single development. I would like to know the legal basis upon which the overall development has been divided into separate projects (ie wind turbines and transmissions) and thus avoiding an all-embracing integrated single environment impact assessment?

I acknowledge that Scottish Power are not responsible for the wind turbines/electricity generation but are responsible for providing a quotation and carrying out the works for an accepted electrical grid connection offer for that generated, however, we nevertheless wonder whether the issue could be potentially a matter for judicial review given there will be no single Environmental Impact Assessment of the overall scheme.

Regarding our specific issues in relation to our contact with Scottish Power relating to the land at Berain farm, the correspondence and information received from Scottish Power is unclear and not reflective of our discussions and considerations. The letter received from Scottish Power related to the land and proposed route plan does not;

- reflect our objection to the grid connection crossing the land at Berain farm as the preferred route,
- reflect our objection to the chosen route crossing the land at Berain farm and dissecting the individual fields and farm land in half without consideration for routing along existing field boundaries,

- state our objection to the proposed overhead line being preferable to an underground grid connection,
- identify and cross-reference the proposed land take within the letters and maps,
- quantify the land-take for the proposed overhead electricity line,
- identify the intentions for areas highlighted as ecological improvements,
- quantify the land-take for the proposed ecological improvements,
- demonstrate the determination of the derogatory value sated for an undeterminable area of land for grid connection line, way-leaves and ecological improvements.

I would consider that Scottish Power is responsible to conduct the development of the proposal in a clear and evaluated manner. Their assessment of the proposal and provision of specific information should be clear and demonstrate the evaluation of the decision process. I consider that the information and correspondence provided is unclear and misrepresentative of the specific location at Berain. Due to the questionable process conducted by Scottish Power I wish to understand why the consultation process is not questioned and assessed for appropriate due process and therefore questioning the validity of the planning application prior to even considering the planning application.

### **Opposed to the Scheme on Grounds that its Economic Sustainability has not been assessed and consequently not taken into account**

I believe that the eventual long term cost to the government and consumers of generating electricity from wind farms will not be sustainable, so we would like to register our opposition in principle to the project. We feel that economic sustainability should be a key factor in any decision making process for such infrastructure schemes.

### **Least Intrusive Option**

If the Scheme is given the go ahead, the Jones family would prefer that only underground transmission cables be used along the section past Berain farm, given how an overhead power-line will permanently blight the features mentioned below. The proposed route of the overhead power-line dissect historic and established existing fields with no consideration of field boundary lines.

### **Preferred Improved Overhead Route**

If the construction of an overhead transmission line does proceed, it will inevitably have a wide range of different impacts on the various properties, businesses, activities, features and landscape characteristics along its proposed route.

It is clear that we as landowners have real concerns as to the adverse impact that the proposed route would have on such matters as cultural heritage, historic buildings, arable farming, leisure activities, tourism and associated business, mature parkland landscape etc.

Given the many features that would be directly impaired by the immediate or close proximity of the power-line, the conclusion was that it would be impossible to significantly reduce the adverse impact by mitigation measures, such as tree planting. It is suggested that the only answer was to seek a route which would be undergrounded past the particularly sensitive and susceptible features and activities mentioned above.

### **Location Specific Considerations**

#### 1) Cultural Heritage

The proposed route takes the power-line within the immediate proximity of Grade II \* listed building at Berain which is of national heritage importance and should be considered as an exceptional case. The property at Berain should not only consider the residential building but should also include the historic and listed 'group farm buildings'. Details of the listing for the residential property are provided below

### Location

At the foot of a low hill near the cross-roads of the lanes leading from Bont Newydd and Henllan to Llannefydd village; set partly behind low rubble forecourt walls with a partly rock-cut and partly cobbled open courtyard in front.

### History

Berain was a medieval gentry house at least as early as the C14, though its most significant phase was the Tudor period. Here c1535 Katherine of Berain was born, one of the most charismatic and colourful figures in Tudor Wales. A substantial heiress in her own right, her four marriages allied her to some of the most powerful North Walian families and, as a result of her numerous descendants, she has subsequently been called 'Mam Cymru' (the Mother of Wales); in addition she was a cousin of Queen Elizabeth I and is said to have been the queen's ward. She was the heiress of Tudor ap Robert (of Berain), whose wife Jane (Katherine's mother) was the sole heiress of Sir Rowland Velville, Governor of Beaumaris Castle and illegitimate son of King Henry VII; the latter was consequently her great grandfather.

The present house has three main components, the earliest of which is a large hall range, probably of the late C15; the evidence of two hammerbeam principals and a moulded dais canopy beam show this to have originally had a three-and-a-half bay open hall of evident sophistication. The second range, adjoining roughly at right-angles with the hall, is a tall two-and-a-half storey lodgings block with projecting and gabled end chimneys. This range was probably added by Katherine's father, Tudor ap Robert c1530; its closest parallel in inspiration and function is to be found a generation earlier, at Gwydir Castle, Llanrwst. Interestingly, the addition of this range provided the hall range with a fine lateral fireplace, located at the dais end; thus the right-hand end chimney of the lodgings block serves the hall fireplace and not the latter. Also of the C16, and probably near-contemporary, are a series of inserted openings in the hall range and a storeyed addition to its W end. Whatever other ranges there might have been to complete this once highly important unit-planned house, they have left no trace; however, given that timber framed construction remained the most common form of vernacular expression in this region until the C17, and given the very elevated status of Berain's owners in the Tudor period, it is not inconceivable to imagine that the present T-shaped house represents a reduction in size. The NE end of the hall range was rebuilt in brick in the second-quarter C18 (apparently it was formerly dated 1736) and at that date partly converted to agricultural use. The hall range was probably floored over in the C17.

Berain was restored for A Foulkes-Roberts by Harold Hughes, architect of Bangor c1924.

### Interior

The hall range has a wide lateral fireplace at the dais end with fine moulded bressummer of second-quarter C16 character. Associated with this is a moulded oak doorcase leading to the additional range at the SW. To the L of the fireplace is a Tudor-arched stone entrance. This leads to a narrow lobby, now enclosed, in the angle between the hall and adjacent lodgings range; this was originally a porch, open to the front court-yard and with stone roof corbelling. Opposite the hall entrance is a similar Tudor-arched entrance to the lodgings tower. Within the C20 porch addition on the NW side of the hall range is a Tudor-arched wooden entrance with fine early Renaissance figurative relief carvings to the spandrels. On the present first floor 2 fine hammerbeam trusses are visible, their brackets of semi-octagonal profile and the hammerbeams themselves with crenellated brattishing; the ends (perhaps originally with shield decoration) have been sawn. Projecting pegging survives to the finely-chamfered arched-braced trusses. At the SW end is a fragmentary moulded dais canopy beam, cut off about 1m from the wall.

The lodgings tower has two rooms to each of its three floors, with the surviving original partitions. These are of post-and-panel type to the ground and first floor, the former with a Tudor-arched entrance with fine Tudor rose spandrel carving; the second floor (attic) partition is of wattle and dawb (now obscured). The ground-floor L room (S) has a large end fireplace with small broach-stopped, chamfered reveals and stopped-chamfered bressummer (partly obscured). The ceilings of both ground-floor rooms are heavily beamed with wide, closely-spaced stopped-chamfered joists of early character. The first-floor southern chamber was the solar, and is still traditionally called 'Lloft-y-Marchog' (the Knight's Chamber). This has a fine ceiling framed in three ways with moulded beams; there is evidence for a former ladder access from this to the upper floor.

The western addition to the hall range has a lateral fireplace with stopped-chamfered bressummer on shallow

projecting corbels (the bressummer has recently been heightened); stopped-chamfered ceiling beams, the ceiling framed in 3 ways (the joists are plastered over). On the first floor an original framed partition survives with wattle-and-daub infill panels and a central Tudor-arched wooden entrance. In the SW chamber the late (?) C17 plastering to the walls and purlins survives, one of the latter with a plastered stopped-chamfer.

#### Exterior

Large storeyed house of irregular T-plan, consisting of a tall, gabled end-chimney range with a lower L-shaped primary range adjoining. Mostly of local rubble construction, the gabled, lodgings block with rough-dressed front and gable faces; finely-tooled limestone dressings. There is evidence of former external render. The roofs are slated, that to the latter section with slab-coped and kneelered gable parapet to the road-facing (SE) gable; that to the NW gable has been lost. This range has finely-roll-moulded eaves, a chamfered plinth and large projecting, gabled end chimneys, that to the SE with off-set stack. The entrance to this block is to the R, and consists of a pointed cyclopean arch with recessed C20 boarded and studded door. To the L is a C20 16-pane 2-part casement window, in a primary opening. The first floor has 3 small windows, that to the centre a square 4-pane window in a reduced opening; the outer openings are primary. That to the R has chamfered reveals and shows evidence of having originally been a 2-light mullioned window, though now it is glazed as before; that to the L is larger and has a 9-pane window. The SE gable has a blocked primary window to the first floor, at R, and 2 further blocked windows to the attic level, that to the L a slit-light and that to the R a slightly larger rectangular light, with chamfered reveals as before.

The rear of this block has a square 9-pane window to the first floor with a larger 12-pane casement to the R, both in altered openings and with C20 glazing. The attic floor has 2 large modern gabled dormers with slate-hung gables and 9-pane windows. A large, out-of character, single-storey modern addition occupies the whole length of the ground floor.

The former hall range adjoins roughly at right-angles to the NE and has a plain brick central chimney. This block also has a roll-moulded eaves course (though of sandstone) and has a boulder plinth, especially notable on the SE side. Here there is a blocked, pointed-arched cyclopean entrance at the far R, similar to that in the lodgings block and probably a contemporary alteration. To the R of this is a pronounced masonry break and beyond this point is rebuilding of the C18. Various blocked openings and masonry disturbances are visible above and to the L of the cyclopean entrance, including two early rectangular upper lights. To the L of the range are two gabled dormers to the upper floor, with windows breaking the eaves and with exposed timber lintels; that to the R is a C19 near-flush 12-pane sash, whilst that to the L is modern sash assimilation. Below this is a further C19 12-pane sash, contained within an early opening with chamfered reveals as before (originally a 2-light mullioned window); R of this is a small square leaded window in an altered opening. The gable end is an C18 brick rebuilding on a tall rubble plinth; this has 3 tiers of ventilation slits, a central boarded loading bay and an oculus to the gable apex.

The NW side of this range has a cambered-headed entrance to the L with boarded door and brick voussoirs, with a similar window to the R. Beyond this is a 12-pane C19 sliding sash window with similar head with, to the R, a rough masonry break (suggesting the rebuilding of the L section of this wall). To the R of this is a small 2-pane upper window, under the eaves, and a C20 lean-to porch/WC block beyond; of brick with slated roof and entrance to the N end. Beyond this is a 16-pane window within an earlier (probably primary) opening; this has a moulded and stopped-chamfered external wooden lintel with inner moulded window lintel, probably originally associated with a 3-light wooden mullioned window. Above this is a modern gabled dormer with 2-light window.

Adjoining the hall range at the upper (W) end is a slightly taller cross-range, which advances one bay to the NW. This has (limestone) roll-moulded eaves and a large gabled, flush chimney to the rear (effectively producing an L-plan addition). This has a tall C19 entrance to the N side, with boarded door and incorporated 3-pane overlight and modern windows to the NW gable; fine dressed limestone quoins to the corners. The rear is set into a hillside.

#### Reason for Listing

Listed Grade II\* for its special architectural significance as an important early Tudor gentry house and for its special historic importance as the home of Katherine (Tudor) of Berain, 'The Mother of Wales.'

#### References

Ballinger J, Katheryn of Berain Y Cymmrodor, Vol XL, 1929, pp1-43;  
Beazant Lowe W, The Heart of Northern Wales, Vol II, 1927, pp382-6;  
Hubbard E, Clwyd, Buildings of Wales series, 1986, p201;  
Hughes H, Berain in the County of Denbigh, Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1924, pp274-283;  
Lloyd J, History of Powys Fadog Vol IV, 1884, pp101 & 343;  
Smith P, Houses of the Welsh Countryside, 1988, fig 160, maps 10, 23, 24, 28, 35, 37, 40, 43;  
RCAHMW, Denbighshire, 1914, pp130-1 (469).

## 2) Farming

The Jones family have run the farm at Berain for 100's of years. Over the years the farm has been developed into a high quality dairy, sheep and arable business. Scottish Power has been made aware of the farming practise and the detrimental affect it will have on farming practices. The installation of an overhead Power-line and its associated pylons would have a detrimental effect on the effectiveness and efficiency of farming operations due to the obstructions created.

## 3) Woodland

There are a significant number of mature trees and small scattered pockets of woodland along the Berain section of the draft route. National Grid has indicated that a considerable number of trees will have to be felled to provide sufficient clearance for the proposed draft route. Mitigation through ecological improvements have not been clearly indicated and can not be accepted as even further lost of agricultural land. It could even affect the efficiency of farming activities to the extent that existing field boundaries would need to be cleared to create new fields along the route of the proposed overhead power-line route.

## ) Farming and Associated Business

The proposed route runs directly across the farm of Berain. We aim to be a dynamic and expanding business and have worked exceptionally hard to build up this business over four generations and it would be inequitable and unjust for this to be undone by a decision to erect the power-line across the land, when a significantly less detrimental underground alternative route is available. This would have an affect on all future farming activities and will cause restrictions on developments and devalue the land.

## Summary

The Jones Family are opposed in principle to the proposed scheme on the grounds:-

- i. That the processes that have been adopted does not facilitate an Environmental Impact Assessment of the overall scheme.
- ii. That the process involved during the discussions and consultations has not been conducted effectively and properly.
- iii. That it is an infrastructure project that is economically unsustainable.
  
- iv. That the proposed route dissects the Berain land and makes for an inefficient, disruptive and detrimental effect on the farming activities.
- v. That the overhead power-line has a detrimental visual impact on the historic property and surrounding parkland landscape at Berain.

We all wish to register our wish to be represented within the following planning hearing processes;

- Notification of wish to make oral representations at the issue specific hearings
- Notification of wish to speak at an open floor hearing
- Notification of wish to speak at a compulsory acquisition hearing
- Notification of wish to attend the accompanied site inspection, suggested locations and justifications

Finally, if National Grid are not minded to accept any of the above suggestions and resolutely remain committed to their currently proposed route, then they should at least take note of the Berian house and underground this section to protect the listed and protected dwelling with its rich cultural history.

Your sincerely

John Mars Jones