

Question	Durand Hotham’s WR	SPManweb’s response
0.1	<p>I would be grateful for an accompanied visit to Plas Newydd, Cefn Meiriadog. The reason for this request is that Plas Newydd sits high above the affected Elwy Valley commanding a ringside seat of the proposed 132kV overhead line. Despite being shown as only 180 metres from the proposed line and designated as a Visual Receptor no evaluation has been made by the applicant from the site of Plas Newydd itself which has caused their assessment of the impact upon the Grade II Star property and it’s setting to be erroneous.</p>	<p>SP Manweb considered the potential effects of the Proposed Development on Plas Newydd whilst developing its Residential Amenity Assessment. The Technical Assessment in Appendix 7.1 of the ES (DCO document reference 6.20.1) sets out the assessment of Plas Newydd and concludes that the combination of distance, intervening vegetation and outbuildings, and presence of other wood pole structures means the predicted magnitude of change would be small. Therefore, no significant effect was predicted. SP Manweb considers the Proposed Development boundary to be 255m from the boundary of the property. As such it is not considered that it is necessary for the site visit to include this property in the itinerary, but SP Manweb would have no objection if the ExA considered it would be appropriate.</p>
Durand Hotham’s further comment	<p>a. The applicant considers the proposed OHL to be 255m from the curtilge of Plas Newydd whilst their own plan (included with my WR) shows the distance to be 180m. In other documents further lack of accuracy is illustrated by the applicant quoting varying distances of up to over 300m away.</p> <p>b. These distances are not relevant as they are still part of the all important setting of a Grade II Star property which is an aspect that the applicant persistently fails to recognise. From its commanding position overlooking the OHL Plas newydd would still have a very significant view of the OHL to the detriment of its setting. The CADW “Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in the Planning and Development Process” (Revised 2nd edition 2007) says <i>“There is no statutory definition of setting, but it could be considered as having two principal dimensions. Firstly, there is the immediate or essential setting which, in the case of a building, would be the ancillary land used with it or the curtilage. Secondly, there is the wider setting that, in the case of a building, may or may not be legally attached to it, may or may not be used with it, and is often part of the built environment or part of the countryside. . . . . Setting should not be interpreted too narrowly, and for the purposes of this process, impacts on settings will be categorised as ‘indirect’ impact”</i></p> <p>c. An example is Eddington Hall is featured in The Inspector’s Report on SP Manweb’s proposal for the The Llandinam 132Kv line in Mid Wales. The Inspector made the following observations:  “Eddington Hall is one of the listed buildings brought to my attention by the Alliance [A7,12.68]. It is listed as a fine example of a Regency style <u>house exploiting a commanding position</u>. It is built on a rise in the ground facing Powis Castle across the River Severn. It is clearly designed and laid out to take advantage of the landscape, and to see (and be seen from) Powis Castle. Its setting therefore makes an important contribution to its special historic interest.  The proposed OHL would pass between it and Powis Castle. On the basis of the evidence before me and my observations on my site visits, it is the building most at risk of harm to its special interest as a consequence of the proposed OHL.  However, I saw at my inspection that the OHL would be some distance from the building, would be at a lower level, and would be back-dropped against trees. It would not intervene in sightlines between the Hall and the Castle, and its effect on the historic</p>	

character of the landscape would be largely absorbed amongst other late 19th and 20th century changes to the setting of the Hall. I therefore do not consider that the proposed OHL would have a significant effect on the special historic interest of Eddington Hall or its setting;" The fact that Eddington Hall was some distance from the OHL below is very different from Plas Newydd where it is very close.

- d. Referring again to SP Manweb's proposal for the The Llandinam 132Kv line in Mid Wales, in the Report on Listed Buildings & Conservancy Areas. para 450. The Inspector "expressed concern that the 2013 ES does not provide list descriptions, and that the assessments of effect appear to derive from brief general descriptions of the buildings and their proximity to the OHL, rather than the special architectural or historic interest of the buildings and the contribution of the setting to their special interest. The relevant list descriptions were subsequently provided, and updates to the assessments for a number of key listed buildings were provided in a note to the inquiry" The absence of such detailed information by the applicant in this case does not do justice to the stature of the buildings affected by their plans and this has had an effect on the standard of their grading of effects and impacts which, it was noted, were much higher in the Mid Wales application. The CADW listing for Plas Newydd does not enter into the matter of its setting but the importance of it is amply endorsed by the author of that listing in his letter (Appendix A of my WR).
- e. In the applicants Scoping Report "Significant Effects" are described as: 5.16 **Moderate beneficial or adverse** – where *the development would cause a noticeable improvement or deterioration to the existing environment* and 5.17 **Minor beneficial or adverse** – *where the development would cause a barely perceptible improvement or deterioration to the existing environment*. Given the planned view from Plas Newydd it cannot possibly be described as barely perceptible. i.e Minor and Neutral.
- f. I can not agree with the repetition of the statement that there is a "combination of distance, intervening vegetation and outbuildings, and presence of other wood pole structures" obscuring the view of the proposed pylons. There is one intervening tree, the house sits high above its own yard buildings, high above the height of more distant trees which can not shelter the OHL as it will be considerably higher than them (not forgetting that all of the trees, for they are deciduous, are bare for half the year anyhow) and the existing wood pole structures are insignificant compared the proposed ones.

The architectural uniqueness of Plas Newydd's Upper Chamber (or Solar) and its interdependence with its setting, the visual link to the limestone ridge of the Bryn, The Elwy Valley, The Clwydian Hills, Denbigh Moors and beyond to end of the Vale of Clwyd, along with the cultural link to the ancient way to Llanefydd, does not lend itself to be prefaced by industrial furniture. Nor locally does Berain, just across the Elwy from Plas Newydd, of the same post medieval period and of immense Welsh historical importance.