



Meeting note

File reference	EN020014 and EN020008
Status	Final
Author	Caroline Harvey
Date	27 February 2014
Meeting with	SP Manweb
Venue	Temple Quay House
Attendees	Kathryn Powell – Planning Inspectorate Will Spencer – Planning Inspectorate Steffan Jones – Planning Inspectorate Caroline Harvey – Planning Inspectorate Alison Down – Planning Inspectorate Linda Rossiter – Planning Inspectorate Claire Duffy – SP Energy Networks Steven Edwards – SP Energy Networks
Meeting objectives	General project update for the North Wales Wind Farms Connection Proposal and the Mid Wales Connections Proposal
Circulation	All

SP Manweb was made aware of the Planning Inspectorate's openness policy (that any advice given will be recorded and placed on the Planning Inspectorate's website under s51 of the Planning Act 2008, as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (PA 2008)). Any advice given does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) can rely.

North Wales Wind Farms Connection

SP Manweb stated that the route length was previously proposed as 20km and is now 17km. The site red line boundary will be narrower at application stage than it was at scoping stage. Both of the two route options currently proposed at Henllan will be assessed but only one will be taken forward for the application. SP Manweb is now able to confirm that the whole route will be placed on wooden poles of 15m in height with the possibility of some undergrounding. It's not yet decided if the poles will be single or double structures.

During the Environmental Impact Assessment scoping stage the Civil Aviation Authority stated their view that the structures would have a detrimental impact on aviation. However, SP Manweb contacted the Civil Aviation Authority who confirmed that this had been an error and sent a further communication confirming that they consider the structures would **not** have a detrimental impact. SP Manweb will forward the correspondence to the Planning Inspectorate, who will publish it on the planning portal website.

Regarding construction of the wooden pole supports, SP Manweb confirmed that each pole would require a 2m excavation pit, and that vibration impacts as a result of excavation activities will be taken into account. The majority of the excavated material will be used as backfill. The poles would be lifted by excavator and positioned in the pit; it is unlikely that the poles will require concrete foundations and it is not envisaged that piling would be required for the majority of the project. Concrete would be used if steel poles were being used, or if there were particular problems with the soil.

The Planning Inspectorate was informed that the majority of the area is not affected by flooding and that the proposed route corridor does not run through any designated landscapes.

The statutory pre-application consultation starts on 20 March 2014 and SP Manweb confirmed that notices will be issued and the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) has been amended and finalised following responses from Conwy County Council and Denbighshire Council. The notices are being produced in English and Welsh.

SP Manweb is holding events for the public over 2 weeks which includes a Saturday event. Events will be attended by staff from SP Manweb, including engineers, who will be available to answer questions from the public. There will be exhibition boards detailing the project and information points detailing libraries which will have project information on display. Dates for consultation have been extended due to the Easter break and notices regarding the extension will be openly displayed to the public and tourists who may be visiting the area. The close of the statutory consultation is 18 May 2014.

SP Manweb stated that the section 48 publicity notice was currently being drafted. The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant to ensure a copy of this notice is sent to all relevant EIA bodies in accordance with the EIA Regulations. Section 42 and section 47 consultation will be undertaken at the same time. SP Manweb stated that the section 47 Statement of Community Consultation will be available to the public and feedback forms will also be sent out. The preliminary environmental information will be a summary of the environmental issues and will not comprise of a draft Environmental Statement. SP Manweb has a project-specific website which contains all of the documents and the Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion.

SP Manweb advised that 92 landowners with plots of land over the length of the route have been sent conveyancing documentation, with 46 responses received to date. Further letters will be sent to landowners who have not yet responded. SP Manweb stated that they do not propose to acquire land through their application, instead they propose to acquire or agree rights over land. Some farms along the corridor were isolated and talks were underway as to whether rights of access through farm land may be required. It was intended to make the agreements on a voluntary basis which would also be included in the Development Consent Order (DCO).

SP Manweb stated that the cabling from the new line's terminal structure to the St Asaph substation will be by underground cable using permitted development rights. SP Manweb intends to liaise with the local authorities to ascertain whether any proposed undergrounding of the connection route would be considered as permitted development.

A discussion was had regarding the PA 2008 thresholds and the minimum distance of 2km (at a minimum of 132kV) for a new electric line to be considered a nationally significant infrastructure project.

SP Manweb is likely to submit a planning application in summer 2014 to the local authority to construct a collector substation adjacent to the proposed Clocaenog forest wind farm substation.

An assessment of the St Asaph underground cable section and any other underground cable stretches of the route will be included as appendices to the ES, and the results will be included in the ES under cumulative impacts.

The timing of the 2015 elections and purdah was discussed, SP Manweb should be aware of the timings in relation to their proposal.

SP Manweb advised that it intends to submit its application to the Planning Inspectorate in late Q4 2014. The Planning Inspectorate advised SP Manweb to be mindful of the Christmas period when submitting their application as local authorities will be asked to provide comments on the adequacy of the pre-application consultation within a period of 14 calendar days. In the event that consent is granted, SP Manweb anticipate an 18-month construction period, completing in mid-2017.

Mid Wales Connections

SP Manweb explained that the SP Mid Wales Connections Project comprises 132kV overhead electricity lines approximately 70km long.

SP Manweb will shortly publish their feedback on their stage 3 consultation which ended on 6 December 2013. Stage 3 community consultation was undertaken by SP Manweb as statutory consultation.

SP Manweb intends to submit an application for a substation to the local authority under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Planning Inspectorate advised that any development matters considered to be associated with (and not integral to) the NSIP should be discussed with Welsh Government. Applicants should submit a draft DCO for comment to Welsh Government at the pre-application stage.

Environmental and technical surveys programmed for Spring/Summer 2014 are planned. There were ongoing issues with Councils and NWR regarding engagement on the project.

From lessons learned from the Mid Wales Public Inquiry, regard had to be given to listed buildings, undergrounding and whether views from homeowners would result in adverse effects on the amenity. From Stage 3 Consultation SP Manweb explained that there had been some good responses with comments on sections of the route. All suggestions were being considered.

SP Manweb intends to submit a scoping report in March 2014 and statutory consultation is likely to commence at some point between July and September 2014 on the final proposed route corridors. The Planning Inspectorate explained the recommended approach to submitting the scoping request, including for the GIS shapefile to be submitted 2 weeks in advance, in order for the Planning Inspectorate

to prepare the list of scoping consultees. Attention was also drawn to PINS Advice Note 7 in this respect.

SP Manweb advised that it intends to submit its application to the Planning Inspectorate in Q1 of 2015.

A discussion was had regarding the PA 2008 thresholds and the minimum distance of 2km (at a minimum of 132kV) for a new electric line to be considered a nationally significant infrastructure project.

Post meeting update: the anticipated date for the scoping request has been delayed and SP Manweb intends to submit the GIS shapefile to the Planning Inspectorate in early April 2014.