

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Brechfa Connection](#)
Subject: 151124 EN020016 Leslie and Pearl Birch - Written representation and Notification of attendance and intention to speak at Open Floor Hearings
Date: 24 November 2015 12:01:58
Attachments: [15.11.22 letter to PI. signed.odt](#)
[signed.pdf](#)

For the attention of Ms. Katherine King.

Further to your letter dated 5 November 2015, your ref: EN020016, our ref: BFC-AFP079, we wish to inform you that we will be attending and would like to speak at the Open Floor meetings on 30th November and 1st December 2015.

We would also like the attached letter to be passed on the the Planning Inspectorate for inclusion in the process.

Kindest Regards,

Leslie & Pearl Birch

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Pearl & Leslie Birch

22nd November 2015

FAO Ms Katherine King

The Planning Inspectorate,
3/18 Eagle Wing,
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Bristol, BS1-6PN

Your Ref: EN020016
Our Ref: BFC_AFP035

Dear Ms King,

BRECHFA FOREST CONNECTION

We would be grateful if you would forward our correspondence to Mr M Broderick and ask if he would please formally include this letter in the procedure.

As landowners who are affected by the routeing of the proposed OHL, we are worried about this project as we do not understand the complexities of the matter. Many of us have spent our life savings to obtain our little bit of 'heaven', others have invested their blood (in some cases), sweat and tears, with back-breaking toil to bring up families and, preserve the land and its flora and fauna for future generations. It is no accident that the scenery is beautiful and visitors wish to visit Wales.

Unfortunately, in the past, as you will witness for yourself if you travel by road along the M4 to Carmarthenshire, the countryside has been abused in the extreme by a myriad of lattice type towers carrying electrical power lines from Port Talbot to Pont Abraham and onto the hills towards Llanelli. Though they are not within your scope of interest, the new £68 million by-pass from St Clears to the holiday resorts of Tenby and Saundersfoot also have lattice towers greeting holiday-makers for a very long distance alongside the road. These are fantastic welcomes to Wales, are they not?

In addition to this obvious and unsightly industrialisation, there is hardly a place in the Welsh countryside where one can get away from some sort of utility poles as they are obviously the default solution for the cheapest. This seldom occurs in a suburban area.

We understand that tourism is the second largest industry in Wales welcoming about 11 million visitors annually spending some £1.75 billion and, some two-thirds come for holidays with the rest being day or business visitors. Of these visitors 1 million are apparently international guests who spend around £400 million p.a. The service sector for these visitors obviously provides livelihoods for a huge number people.

To assist with this major contribution to the Welsh economy we must all do our part and, it

is no accident that advertisements promoting tourism do not display the OHL we all see daily.

It is understood that farming is the largest industry in Wales and is part of the UK's 78% self sufficiency in food production, but even then, remarkably, we have a deficit in dairy products. It can therefore be argued that any land taken up unnecessarily could be detrimental to these endeavours.

Western Power Distribution's proposed project for OHL will therefore make many areas of valuable land economically unusable, especially were the project requires multiple poles and guy-wires. These areas will not be accessible to machinery and will require individual attention with herbicides, cutting, etc., so as not to adversely effect the adjacent land.

It is understood that farming is the second most dangerous occupation to the construction industry. Installing OHL pylons, poles and guy-wires can only increase this danger. With the presence of OHL on their land a farmer's insurer may require the landowner to ensure that all the named persons who will be using machinery near the poles be properly trained in accordance with the H&S at work Act, including themselves, their employees and contractors to ensure that should an incident occur whilst operating machinery that brings down wires and making a machine 'live', that the operator is fully aware of the procedures necessary to avoid their own fatality. How does the landowner ensure contractors have been properly trained? This may be expensive. Who pays? How many operators presently know how to exit a 'live' machine safely?

We all understand that electrical transmission projects are necessary National Infrastructure requirements but, so is farming and tourism, especially in Wales if the Country is to prosper when its aspirations of self determination come to fruition. One National Infrastructure Project should not jeopardise two others.

We wish to state that we are not against the principal of power transmission, but we do object to the cheapest form being employed (OHL) for purely profit reasons when the undergrounding alternative can obviate all the obvious shortcomings of the OHL.

It is believed that WPD have over emphasised the complexities of undergrounding the transmission cables including access to carry out repairs to the cables. In WPD 'Overview Report Nov 2014' they show an illustration with three 10cm cables buried with stone dust being the only protection, whereas information that we have been given is that conduits can be installed underground whilst the cable is manufactured and the cable then put into the conduits later. To repair a cable therefore it can be withdrawn onto a carousel or drum until the fault is located, repaired and, put back into the conduit. It is understood that a communications duct also buried alongside the cable ducts indicates the location of any cable problem. The photograph in WPD 'Guide to payments for landowners 132,000 volt underground cables' we believe illustrates this method together with the very narrow width required for earthworks.

Apparently, underground cables not subject to storms, falling trees and other damages are very reliable and do not present the dangers to the repair personnel who are required to turn out in stormy weather to get saturated and cold, chop up downed tress, climb poles, work off cherry-pickers or even helicopters, but work in the relative comfort of perhaps a hut on Terra-firma.

We received our 'Heads of Terms' from WPD on 14th November 2015, and various things

therein are not consistent with previous information received from WPD and, are very vague and are definitely of a unilateral nature giving WPD all sorts of Rights. In our experience terms of business is a negotiated document.

To conclude, presently our view is dominated by the 10 Alltwalis turbines to the North, when Brechfa West 28 turbines are installed we may see may of these to our East and, if the OHL is approved, power lines to the West. In short, we will almost be corralled. Not a very good prospect for enjoying our retirement.

Other utilies have an ombudsman that we can appeal to, but in the absence of one in this matter, we are looking to the 'Planning Inspectorate' to look after our interests.

Kindest Regards,



Leslie & Pearl Birch