



Meeting note

File reference	EN020016
Status	Final
Author	Steffan Jones
Date	5 August 2014
Meeting with	Western Power Distribution (South Wales) plc (WPD)
Venue	Conference Room 5, Temple Quay House, Bristol
Attendees	Kathryn Powell – The Planning Inspectorate Nicholas Coombes – The Planning Inspectorate Steffan Jones – The Planning Inspectorate Jill Warren – The Planning Inspectorate Andrew Hubbard – WPD Geraint Griffith - WPD Christian Hjelm - WPD David Kenyon - AMEC Victoria Robinson - RSK Jason Pacey – Copper Consultancy Neil Bromwich – Osborne Clarke Jonny Gait - Osborne Clarke
Meeting objectives	Brechfa Forest Electricity Connection – project update meeting
Circulation	All

Western Power Distribution (South Wales) plc 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.

Where this note refers to the developer, it refers to Western Power Distribution (South Wales) plc.

Project Evolution

The Planning Inspectorate advised the developer that it may wish to consider providing more than the minimum of 28 days for consultation allowing a contingency to ensure it complies with regulation and that those persons being consulted felt they have had sufficient time to respond to consultation material.

[Post meeting note, the Planning Inspectorate clarified that there is a requirement to publish a notice for two successive weeks in relation to section 48 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) regarding the duty to publicise the proposal at the pre-application stage. Refer to Regulation 4 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 which states that the applicant must publish a notice for at least two consecutive weeks in one or more local newspapers circulating in the vicinity in which the proposed development would be situated. The regulation also states that the notice should be published in a national newspaper and other newspapers where appropriate. The last sentence in regulation 4 states that the notice must include a deadline for receipt of responses by the applicant, being not less than 28 days following the date when the notice is last published.]

Approach to Undergrounding

The developer introduced its methodology to determine areas in which its route could be potentially undergrounded. Those areas which the developer has identified are areas of 'serious concern' in terms of landscape and/ or visual criteria and have been considered for undergrounding.

Where an area has been identified for potential undergrounding, the developer intends to carry out open-cut trenching where possible due to cost implications; however the developer stated that the Horizontal Directional Drilling method would also need to be considered should the route cross a major river.

Project Description

The developer explained to the Planning Inspectorate that the Bryn Llywelyn Wind Farm appeal decision had resulted in RES withdrawing their connection offer agreement. This has had no impact on the proposed route alignment; other than the removal of the northern section of line from the proposal which had been proposed to connect Bryn Llywelyn. The developer was reminded to evidence this within the application for development consent submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

20km of current overhead line between Llandyfaelog and Swansea has been identified as having spare capacity which the developer intends to use. The current line includes a connection to an existing substation; the Planning Inspectorate was informed by the developer that there would be no need to make amendments to the existing overhead line consent in order to successfully connect to this substation or to the substation at Swansea North.

The Planning Inspectorate asked whether the developer has had regard to the IET (The Institution of Engineering and Technology) Electricity Transmission Costing Study report issued by Parsons Brinckerhoff and Associates. This report analyses the whole life costs of installing and maintaining new high voltage transmission circuits under the ground, under the sea and over ground. The developer had decided to have its own costing study prepared and has had regard to this; however the developer confirmed it was aware of the above report.

The developer was advised to make contact with Welsh Government regarding their proposals and the aspects of the development they consider to be integral to the NSIP. The Planning Inspectorate will provide the developer with contact details.

The Planning Inspectorate asked the developer to provide it with a list of those works it considers to be ancillary to the development.

Approach to Consultation

The developer introduced its three-stage approach to its pre-application consultation. Stage 1 on the Corridor Options and stage 2 on the Route Alignment Options were presented as non-statutory rounds of consultation.

Over 8 weeks from February to April of 2014, the developer carried out stage 2, non-statutory, consultation on the proposed Route Alignment Options. The consultation involved the general public and potentially affected landowners along the proposed route alignments.

Persons living in property up to 3km from the proposed routes were written to and invited to respond to the developer's consultation, this involved around 11,500 households. Information leaflets were produced, events held in the community and adverts were placed in local newspapers.

13 consultation events took place, with 5 of those events tailored particularly to potentially affected landowners. Landowners were also presented with information packs specifically produced for them.

The developer intends to carry out stage 3, statutory consultation in November 2014. A draft of the developer's Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) is with the local authority for comments.

The Planning Inspectorate should expect to receive draft documents from the developer in the New Year. The Planning Inspectorate reminded the developer that it has the ability to provide comments on draft documents such as the draft DCO, Explanatory Memorandum, the Consultation Report and land and works plans.

The developer also requested access to the statutory instrument for the production of its draft DCO; the Planning Inspectorate will provide the developer's contact details to its contact at the National Archives in order to provide access to the statutory instrument.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping, Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) & Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

The developer was reminded that its Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) should include information on how it intends to consult on the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI).

The Planning Inspectorate advised the developer to pay close attention to Advice Note 10: Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) relevant to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, as this includes appendices with the preferred standard matrices to be submitted with a DCO.

Emerging best practice

The Planning Inspectorate advised the developer to consider beginning the production of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) as early as possible. It is now common

practice for appointed Examining Authority's to ask for SoCG as early as possible in the examination of an application.

The developer was informed that the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change has removed the use of the word "general" from draft and recommended DCOs; therefore the developer should give this consideration when drafting its draft DCO.

The Planning Inspectorate stated that, for the North London Reinforcement Project, an Environmental Measures document is to be certified by the Secretary of State, following the decision.

Land Rights

The developer is intending to secure voluntary agreements with the majority of landowners affected by the proposals but will draft the compulsory acquisition rights for the whole length of the route.

AOB

The Planning Inspectorate reminded the applicant of its Pre-Application Prospectus which sets out the Planning Inspectorate's service for developers at the pre-application stage of the nationally significant infrastructure planning process. The developer was advised to take this into consideration.

The Planning Inspectorate queried the number of consents the developer is intending to include within their DCO and explained that some bodies have not agreed to certain consents being 'wrapped up' in the DCO.

Submission of the application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate is expected in Q1 2015.

The developer and the Planning Inspectorate agreed to hold further monthly meetings prior to the submission of the application; dates are to be agreed.