

SP MANWEB

Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network



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Application Letter and s55 Checklist

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BY EMAIL AND POST

FAO: Sian Evans
Case Manager
Major Applications and Plans
Directorate
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Your Ref EN020021
Our Ref: NSRP SJE001

Email:
steven.edwards@spenergynetworks.co.uk
Tel: 0141 614 5656

12 November 2018

Dear Madam

**Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network - EN020021
Planning Act 2008
SP Manweb Plc**

I am pleased to enclose, on behalf of SP Manweb plc ("SP Manweb"), an application under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 ("the Act") for an order granting development consent for the Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network.

As set out in the enclosed application form, the application is for the installation of a new electric line above ground located wholly in England and which is not less than 132,000 Volts ("132kV"), is not less than two kilometres, will be owned and managed by SP Manweb, and is not otherwise exempt from the relevant exemptions. Accordingly, the electric line is classed a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project pursuant to section 16 of the Act. Development consent is therefore required for the 132kV electric line above ground and all works that form part of that line under section 31 of the Act.

A fee of £6939.00 has already been submitted by electronic transfer to the Planning Inspectorate.

As required following earlier discussions with the Major Applications and Plans Directorate, the following documents are enclosed with this letter:

- a paper copy of the application, comprising document references 1.1-7.11 (please note that DCO documents 7.3 and 7.4 are not used);
- 6no. electronic copies (USB)

- accompanying this letter is a Navigation Document (**DCO Document 1.4**) and the section 55 Checklist;

Please note that the application includes the results of a [REDACTED] survey ES Chapter 7 – Ecology and Biodiversity Technical Appendices 7.9 (**DCO Document 6.7.9**). This is a confidential document and should not be made publically available.

The Proposed Development

The Proposed Development comprises a new 22.5 km 132kV electrical circuit between the existing SP Manweb Substations at Oswestry and Wem in North Shropshire, together with associated temporary construction works. The circuit would be a combination of underground cables and overhead line. Works are also required at the existing Oswestry and Wem Substations to accommodate the new circuit.

The Proposed Development includes the following elements:

- Works within the boundary of the existing SP Manweb Substation at Oswestry including underground cable and the installation of electrical switchgear and associated equipment;
- Approximately 1.2km of 132kV underground cable between Oswestry Substation and a 132kV terminal structure at Long Wood (SJ 31132 29877);
- Approximately 21.3km of 132kV of overhead line supported by Trident wood poles from the terminal structure at Long Wood (SJ 31132 29877) to the existing SP Manweb Substation at Wem; and
- Works within the existing SP Manweb Substation at Wem including the installation of a new 132kV to 33kV transformer.

The Proposed Development also includes work to facilitate the new electrical circuit including:

- Undergrounding six short sections of existing SP Manweb lower voltage overhead lines in order to ensure safe electrical clearance for the new overhead line; and
- Temporary works required for the construction of the new overhead line including seven temporary laydown areas, welfare unit, security cabin, access tracks, vegetation clearance and reinstatement planting.

Need for the Proposed Development

National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1 sets out that it is critical that the UK continues to have secure and reliable supplies of electricity as part of the transition to a low carbon economy. NPS EN-1 also highlights an urgent need for new electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure to be provided. This Proposed Development would help SP Manweb and the UK meet these requirements.

The current local electricity distribution network has been distributing electricity to North Shropshire for many years. It is operating at or close to capacity. However, with future growth plans in the region, there is a need to reinforce the network. This is to provide additional capacity to support development and growth. Reinforcement of the local distribution network is therefore required to ensure that SP Manweb can continue to comply with their various statutory and licence duties and obligations.

In addition, enhancing the electricity supply across North Shropshire has been identified by Shropshire Council as a local infrastructure priority to support future growth plans identified in the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017 – 2021, its Local Plan and adopted Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan. The planned employment sites at Oswestry will lead to an anticipated increase in electricity load which cannot be met by the existing network. There is therefore an urgent need to substantially increase the capacity of the network if the social and economic plans for the county are to be achieved.

Construction of the local infrastructure would safeguard a small number of existing jobs for a contractor as well as indirectly support the growth of the market towns and the rural economy.

Following discussions with the Council, installation of a new 132kV electrical circuit was identified by SP Manweb as the best way forward to reinforce the existing 33kV electricity distribution network and provide the required capacity to support development on land allocated for new jobs and homes across North Shropshire.

Having considered a number of network design options, as explained in Chapter 2 'Alternatives and Design Development' (**DCO Document 6.2**), SP Manweb secured investment approvals for an £18m scheme to install a new 132kV electrical circuit from Oswestry Substation to Wem Substation. The option review process which led to this decision is set out in the Strategic Options Report (May 2016) (**DCO Document 7.5**), the Updated Strategic Options Report (November 2017) (**DCO Document 7.6**) and the Further Updated Strategic Options Report (October 2018) (**DCO Document 7.7**).

Consultation

I can advise that SP Manweb has undertaken both non-statutory and statutory consultation in accordance with the Act and relevant government Guidelines and PINs Advice Notes. As required by section 37(3)(c) of the Act, the enclosed application includes a Consultation Report (**DCO Document 5.1**).

The Consultation Report explains that SP Manweb has engaged with a number of prescribed bodies, including persons with land interests, and relevant local communities and people living and working within the vicinity of the Proposed Development over the past two years through non-statutory and statutory consultation. The report sets out summaries of the relevant responses received and how, following this consultation, SP Manweb has had regard to them and refined and amended the project design where possible to accommodate environmental, technical and landowner preferences. SP Manweb has developed a project design from broad route corridor options for the required electrical circuit to the 20m – 25m application limits now shown for the proposed 132kV underground cable and 132kV overhead line. This project design presents a level of certainty and detail which enables a better understanding of the proposals. In taking this approach, SP Manweb has managed to secure support for the Proposed Development from the majority of those consulted. In particular, SP Manweb has worked very closely with Shropshire Council, the local authority for the area where the project is proposed. Shropshire Council provided a positive letter of support in response to the statutory consultation in February 2018 and a copy of this letter is enclosed.

Having finalised the design, SP Manweb has outlined how the proposed development would be constructed in the Construction Report (**DCO Document 7.2**). This report explains the balance made between maintaining flexibility in construction to constraining the Proposed Development as assessed through Order Limits and Limits of Deviation in relation to the proposed 132kV overhead line. The Construction Report also refers to the use of a number of construction accesses which avoid entering the route at one end and constructing the overhead line in a linear fashion. This approach has been taken to protect field boundary hedgerows, a theme that is taken forward in the Draft Construction Environmental Management Plan (**DCO Document 6.3.2**).

SP Manweb has discussed the Proposed Development with people that have relevant land interests and has commenced discussions with landowners and tenants with a view to agreeing a number of land rights voluntarily. To date, SP Manweb has had a positive response from most landowners and tenants to this approach and will provide regular updates to the Planning Inspectorate. Chapter 10 of the Consultation Report (**DCO Document 5.1**) refers to the remaining comments received from landowners and tenants in response to the further consultation in April 2018.

SP Manweb has also advanced pre-application discussions with a number of prescribed bodies including in relation to progressing statements of common ground.

Complexity and Level of Public Interest in the Proposed Development

SP Manweb has had regard to the Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Act 2008: Guidance for the examination of applications for development consent issued in March 2015. In particular, SP Manweb has noted the guidance on the criteria for appointing the Examining Authority.

In this context, SP Manweb considers that the Proposed Development:

- builds on similarities with two similar 132kV wood pole overhead line schemes (North Wales Wind Farms Connection Project and Brechfa Forest Wind Farm Connection Project) recently consented by the Secretary of State in 2017; and
- demonstrates positive stakeholder engagement with a limited number of remaining representations for a project of this scale and a good indication of voluntary land agreements.

SP Manweb considers the Proposed Development does not raise new or complex issues and can demonstrate a limited public interest, and as such, in accordance with the above guidance, merits a single appointed person to examine the application.

I hope the above is satisfactory and enables you to accept the application. Please let me know if you would like any further information to help in your consideration of the application at this stage.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this application.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Steven Edwards.

Steven Edwards

Land & Planning
SP Energy Networks, for and on behalf of SP Manweb

Encs: Schedule of Compliance with Section 55
Letter from Shropshire Council re: SP Manweb's statutory consultation

SP Manweb: Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network

Schedule of Compliance with Section 55¹

Section 55 Application Checklist	SP Manweb Comments
<p>1. s55(3)(a) and s55(3)(c) It is an application for an order granting development consent</p>	
<p>1.1 Is the development a nationally significant infrastructure project² (NSIP) (or does it form part of an NSIP); and does the application state on the face of it that it is an application for a development consent order³ (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008), or equivalent words? Does the application specify the development to which it relates (i.e. which category or categories in ss14-30 does the application scheme fall)?</p> <p>If the development does not fall within the categories in ss14-30, has a direction been given by the Secretary of State under s35 of the PA2008 for the development to be treated as development for which development consent is required?</p>	<p>The development is a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP).</p> <p>The Application Form (DCO Document 1.2) states "The application is for the installation of a 132kV electric line above ground located wholly in England'. Accordingly, the electric line is classed a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project pursuant to sections 14(1)(b) and 16 of the Planning Act 2008. Development consent is therefore required for the 132kV electric line above ground and all works that form part of that line under section 31 of the Planning Act 2008.</p> <p>The application letter (DCO Document 1.1) also states that it is an application for a development consent order (DCO) under s.37 of the Planning Act 2008. It is set out in accordance with the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 6 'Preparation and Submission of Application Documents' (February 2016).</p>

¹ References in this document to the Secretary of State include references (where applicable) to the Planning Inspectorate which carries out functions related to consenting nationally significant infrastructure projects on behalf of the Secretary of State

² NSIP is defined generally in s14 with the detailed thresholds for each of the specified categories being set out in ss 15-30

³ Development consent is required for development to the extent that the development is or forms part of an NSIP (s31 of the PA2008)

2. s55(3)(e) The applicant in relation to the application made has complied with Chapter 2 of Part 5 (pre-application procedure)

2.1 Did the applicant before carrying out the s42 consultation either (a) request the Secretary of State to adopt a screening opinion in respect of the development to which the application relates, or (b) notify the Secretary of State in writing that it proposed to provide an environmental statement in respect of that development⁴?

At an early stage of the project SP Manweb considered that the Proposed Development would be EIA development under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 and as such did not seek a screening opinion from the Secretary of State. SP Manweb notified the Secretary of State of its intention to carry out an environmental impact assessment (EIA) under Regulation 6 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 as part of its request for a Scoping Opinion. SP Manweb submitted its request for a Scoping Opinion on 8th March 2017. The Scoping Report (<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020021/EN020021-000027-Scoping%20Report.pdf>) contains the statement under Regulation 6 in paragraph 1.4.6

2.2 Have any adequacy of consultation representations⁵ been received from “A”, “B”, “C” and “D” authorities; and if so do they confirm that the applicant has complied with the duties under s42, s47 and s48?

Following submission of the application for development consent the Planning Inspectorate will invite relevant local authorities to provide an adequacy of consultation statement, as set out in Advice Note 14 (April 2012). Feedback received from local authorities by SP Manweb during the stage two statutory consultation process is set out in Table 9.17 of the Consultation Report (**DCO Document 5.1**), whilst chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe how SP Manweb consulted under sections 42, 47 and 48 of the

⁴ Regulation 6 of the The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009

⁵ S55(4) of the PA2008 provides that the Secretary of State must have regard to the consultation report, and any adequacy of consultation representations received

	Planning Act 2008.
s42: Duty to Consult	
2.3 Did the applicant consult the following about the proposed application:	
s42(1)(a) persons prescribed ⁶ ?	<p>SP Manweb consulted statutory consultees prescribed under Schedule 1 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (APFP Regulations) during stage two statutory consultation.</p> <p>The list of prescribed consultees is in Appendix 3.1 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
s42(1)(aa) the Marine Management Organisation ⁷ ?	<p>The Proposed Development does not affect and it not likely to affect areas specified in subsection 42(1)(aa) of the Planning Act 2008. Therefore the MMO has not been consulted.</p>
s42(1)(b) each local authority within s43 ⁸ ?	<p>SP Manweb has consulted each local authority that falls within s43 of the Planning Act 2008 during stage two statutory consultation.</p> <p>The list of prescribed consultees, including s43 authorities is in Appendix 3.1 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.3). Further, Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) sets out which local</p>

⁶ Statutory consultees set out in Schedule 1 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

⁷ In any case where the proposed development would affect, or would be likely to affect, any of the areas specified in s42(2) of the PA2008

⁸ Definition of "local authority" in s43(3): The "B" authority where the application land is in the authority's area; the "A" authority where any part of the boundary of A's area is also a part of the boundary of B's area; the "C" authority (upper tier) where the application land is in that authority's area; the "D" authority where such an authority shares a boundary with a "C" authority

	authorities were consulted at stage two statutory consultation.
s42(1)(c) the Greater London Authority (if in Greater London area)?	The Proposed Development does not fall within Greater London and as such, the Greater London Authority was not consulted.
s42(1)(d) each person in one or more of s44 categories ⁹ ?	<p>SP Manweb consulted with each category and it is evidenced within the Book of Reference (DCO Document 4.3) and Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1).</p> <p>Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) explain the due diligence enquiries carried out by SP Manweb to identify those individuals with an interest in the land.</p> <p>Initial contact was made with persons in one or more of s44 categories through land registry searches and local enquiries involving face to face meetings with owners and occupiers.</p> <p>Further more detailed land registry searches including a search of the Index Map and HMLR followed with Land interest questionnaires and request for information packs sent out.</p>
s45: Timetable for s42 Consultation	
2.4 Did the applicant notify s42 consultees of the deadline for receipt of consultation responses; and if so was the	SP Manweb notified s42 consultees of the deadline for receipt of consultation responses during stage two

⁹ Category 1: owner, lessee, tenant or occupier of land; Category 2: person interested in the land or has power to sell and convey the land or to release the land; Category 3: person entitled to make a relevant claim. There is no requirement to check the accuracy of the list(s) or whether the applicant has made diligent inquiry

<p>deadline notified by the applicant 28 days or more starting with the day after receipt of the consultation documents?</p>	<p>statutory consultation. This information was contained within the letter sent to s42 consultees notifying them of the start of stage two statutory consultation dated 22nd November 2017 and contained with Appendix 5 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.5).</p> <p>S42 consultation started on 23rd November 2017 and closed on 2nd February 2018.</p> <p>Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides further information on the consultation including the deadline for receipt of responses.</p> <p>The duration of each stage of consultation exceeded the minimum period of 28 days. Chapter 1 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides further information on the duration of each stage of consultation</p>
<p>s46: Duty to notify Secretary of State of proposed application</p>	
<p>2.5 Did the applicant supply information to notify the Secretary of State of the proposed application; and if so was the information supplied to the Secretary of State on or before the date it was sent to the s42 consultees? Was this done on or before commencing consultation under s42?</p>	<p>SP Manweb notified the Secretary of State of the proposed application by letter dated 20th November 2018. This was prior to the start of statutory consultation which commenced on 23rd November 2017. Chapter 5 (paragraph 5.3.2) of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides further information on the s46 notification to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Appendix 5.1 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.5) includes a copy of the letter sent to the Planning Inspectorate. The information was provided to the Secretary of State on commencement of stage two statutory consultation.</p>
<p>s47: Duty to consult local community</p>	

<p>2.6 Did the applicant prepare a statement of community consultation (SOCC) on how it intended to consult people living in the vicinity of the land?</p>	<p>SP Manweb consulted on and produced a SoCC prior to stage two statutory consultation. Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides further information on the consultation and production of the SoCC. The published SoCC is in Appendix 3.2 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p> <p>Copies of the draft SoCC are provided in Appendix 6.1 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.6).</p> <p>The published SoCC is in Appendix 3.2 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p> <p>The SoCC notices were placed in one local / regional newspaper and can be found in Appendix 3.3 to the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>2.7 Were “B” and (where relevant) “C” authorities consulted about the content of the SOCC; and if so was the deadline for receipt of responses 28 days beginning with the day after the day that “B” and (where applicable) “C” authorities received the consultation documents?</p>	<p>SP Manweb consulted on the draft SoCC with Shropshire Council, a unitary authority. Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides further information on the consultation and production of the SoCC.</p> <p>To give Shropshire Council the fullest opportunity to provide comments on the draft SoCC, SP Manweb provided the Council with a non-statutory period to review the draft SoCC (11 September 2017 to 05 October 2017), in addition to the statutory 28-day period (09 October 2017 to 10 November 2017). Copies of these drafts, as reviewed, are provided in Appendix 6.1 (DCO Document 5.1.6).</p>
<p>2.8 Has the applicant had regard to any responses received when preparing the SOCC?</p>	<p>Table 6.1 in Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides a summary of the initial feedback received in preparing the SoCC. Para. 6.3.3 refers to minor</p>

	<p>changes made during the statutory consultation period on the SoCC and brought to the attention of Shropshire Council.</p> <p>Shropshire Council confirmed it had no further comments on the SoCC and agreed to the additional changes (see letter dated 15 November 2017 (Appendix 6.3, DCO Document 5.1.6)).</p> <p>Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides further information on the consultation and production of the SoCC.</p>
<p>2.9 Has the SOCC been made available for inspection in a way that is reasonably convenient for people living in the vicinity of the land; and has a notice been published in a newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the land which states where and when the SOCC can be inspected?</p>	<p>The SoCC was published on 23 November 2017. It was available on the project website and at reference locations. A copy of the published SoCC can be found in Appendix 3.2 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p> <p>S47(6)(a) requires an applicant to publish a notice in a newspaper circulating 'in the vicinity of the land' stating where and when the SoCC can be inspected. SP Manweb placed an advertisement in the Shropshire Star on 23 November 2017. A copy of the relevant advertisement is in Appendix 3.3 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>2.10 Does the SOCC set out whether the development is EIA development¹⁰; and does it set out how the applicant intends to publicise and consult on the preliminary</p>	<p>The SoCC (DCO Document 5.1.3) refers on page 5 to the development being EIA development and that a preliminary environmental information report will be consulted on.</p>

¹⁰ Regulation 10 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009

environmental information?	
2.11 Has the applicant carried out the consultation in accordance with the SOCC?	Table 6.2 in Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provides a summary of how SP Manweb carried out the consultation in accordance with the SoCC.
s48: Duty to publicise the proposed application	
2.12 Did the applicant publish a notice, as required by Regulation 4(2) of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (the APFP Regulations):	
(a) for at least two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers circulating in the vicinity in which the proposed development would be situated;	<p>SP Manweb published public notices as required by the Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The s47 notice appeared in the Shropshire Star on 23 November • The s48 notice appeared in the Shropshire Star on 23 November, 30 November <p>Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
(b) once in a national newspaper;	<p>SP Manweb published public notices as required by the Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian – 23 November <p>Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
(c) once in the London Gazette and, if land in Scotland is affected, the Edinburgh Gazette; and	<p>SP Manweb published public notices as required by the Act.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Gazette – 23 November <p>Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(d) where the proposed application relates to offshore development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) once in Lloyds List; and (ii) once in an appropriate fishing trade journal? 	<p>The Proposed Development does not include 'offshore development' for the purposes of Regulation 4(2)(d) of the APFP Regulations. As such, no additional advertisements were placed.</p>
<p>2.13 Did the notice include, as required by Regulation 4(3) of APFP Regulations:</p>	
<p>(a) the name and address of the applicant;</p>	<p>The name and address of SP Manweb is given in the s48 notice. The details are the same as that of the applicant name and address for the DCO application. A copy of the notice is provided in the document Copies of Newspaper Notices (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(b) a statement that the applicant intends to make an application for development consent to the Secretary of State;</p>	<p>SP Manweb in the s48 notice states the intention to make an application for development consent to the Secretary of State. A copy of the notice is provided in the document Copies of Newspaper Notices (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(c) a statement as to whether the application is EIA development;</p>	<p>SP Manweb in the s48 notice states that the Proposed Development is EIA development. A copy of the notice is provided in the document Copies of Newspaper Notices (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(d) a summary of the main proposals, specifying the location or route of the proposed development;</p>	<p>SP Manweb in the s48 notice describes the principal elements of the Proposed Development and the location of the route of the Proposed Development. A copy of the notice is provided in the document Copies of Newspaper Notices (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>

<p>(e) a statement that the documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the proposed development are available for inspection free of charge at the places (including at least one address in the vicinity of the proposed development) and times set out in the notice;</p>	<p>SP Manweb sets out in the s48 notice a number of locations where the documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the Proposed Development, including information so far compiled about environmental impacts (the preliminary environmental information), may be inspected free of charge. A copy of the notice is provided in the document Copies of Newspaper Notices (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(f) the latest date on which those documents, plans and maps will be available for inspection (being a date not earlier than the deadline in sub-paragraph (i));</p>	<p>SP Manweb sets out in the s48 notice the date on which those documents, plans and maps will be available for inspection, being 2nd February 2018. Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(g) whether a charge will be made for copies of any of the documents, plans or maps and the amount of any charge;</p>	<p>SP Manweb sets out in the s48 notice the potential charges for paper copies of the documents, plans or maps and gives a fee. Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(h) details of how to respond to the publicity; and</p>	<p>SP Manweb sets out in the s48 notice how to respond to the consultation. Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).</p>
<p>(i) a deadline for receipt of those responses by the applicant, being not less than 28 days following the date when the notice is last published?</p>	<p>SP Manweb in the s48 notice give a deadline for sending responses which was not less than 28 days following the date when the notice was last published. The notice was last published on 27 March 2014, and responses were required to be returned by 18 May 2014 (the original deadline).</p>

	Copies of these notices are available in Appendix 3.4 (DCO Document 5.1.3).
2.14 Has a copy of the s48 notice been sent to the EIA consultation bodies and to any person notified to the applicant in accordance with Regulation 9(1)(c) of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (the EIA Regulations) ¹¹ ?	<p>SP Manweb included copies of the notice in letters to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribed consultees, including community councils and Regulation 9 list consultation bodies (see section 5.2); • Local authorities under section 43; and • The Secretary of State (via PINS) under s46
s49: Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity	
2.15 Has the applicant had regard to any relevant responses to the s42, s47 and s48 consultation?	SP Manweb has had regard to all feedback to consultation under s42, s47 and s48 consultation. Chapters 9 and 10 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) provide an overview of the feedback received and SP Manweb's response.
Guidance about pre-application procedure	
2.16 To what extent has the applicant had regard to DCLG guidance 'The Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process' ¹² ?	Through undertaking pre-application consultation, SP Manweb has had regard to DCLG Guidance on the pre-application process. Chapter 3 of the Consultation Report (DCO Document 5.1) sets out the Guidance and how SP Manweb has met the requirements.
3. s55(3)(f) and s55(5A) The application (including accompaniments) achieves a satisfactory standard having regard to the extent to which it complies with section 37(3) (form and contents of application) and with any standards set under section 37(5) and follows any applicable guidance under section 37(4).	

¹¹ Regulation 11 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations

¹² The Secretary of State must have regard to the extent to which the applicant has had regard to guidance issued under s50

3.1 Is it made in the prescribed form as set out in Schedule 2 of the APFP Regulations, and does it include:

- a brief statement which explains why it falls within the remit of the Secretary of State; and
- a brief statement that clearly identifies the location of the application site, or the route if it is a linear scheme?

The application has been made in the prescribed form and the application form includes a brief statement as to why it falls within the remit of the Secretary of State and which identifies the route of the Proposed Development.

The Application Form (document reference 1.2) states:

“The application is for the installation of a 132kV electric line above ground located wholly in England. Accordingly, the electric line is classed a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project pursuant to sections 14(1)(b) and 16 of the Planning Act 2008. Development consent is therefore required for the 132kV electric line above ground and all works that form part of that line under section 31 of the Planning Act 2008.”

The Application Form (document reference 1.2) states:

“The proposed development is in North Shropshire and is within the administrative boundary of Shropshire Council.

The proposed development will start from a vacant bay within the existing Oswestry substation, Shropshire as a 132kV underground cable. The cable runs parallel to the western edge of the A5(T) for a distance of approximately 600m before passing south-east under the A5(T) (100m). For the remaining 700m it heads south parallel to the eastern edge of the A5(T) the east towards Long Wood (grid reference SJ 31 132 29877) where it transfers to an overhead line at pole no.1. From this point the overhead line runs in an easterly direction past Middleton, Babbinswood, the Montgomery Canal (to the north of Green Wood), Berrywood, Rednal Mill, to the south of the River Perry, to the north of Lower Hordley, Stanwardine in the Wood, Noneley Loppington, Commonwood and the

	River Roden. The overhead line enters Wem substation, which is situated on the western edge of Wem.”
3.2 Is it accompanied by a consultation report?	Document 5.1 of the DCO application is the Consultation Report. Documents 5.1.1 to 5.1.8 are the Consultation Report Appendices.
3.3 Is it accompanied by the documents and information set out in APFP Regulation 5(2) and listed below:	
(a) where applicable, the environmental statement required under the EIA Regulations and any scoping or screening opinions or directions;	<p>DCO Documents 6.1 – 6.16 of the DCO application are the Environmental Statement.</p> <p>DCO Document 6.14 is the ES Figures Document</p> <p>The ES Technical Appendices are contained within DCO Documents 6.1 to 6.12</p> <p>DCO Document 6.16 is the ES Glossary</p> <p>DCO Document 6.15 is the ES Non-Technical Summary</p> <p>The Scoping Opinion and the Scoping Report are available to view on the Planning Inspectorate’s website as pre-application documents for SP Manweb’s Reinforcement to North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network, Ref EN20021.</p>
(b) the draft proposed order;	DCO Document 3.1 of the DCO application is the draft proposed order.
(c) an explanatory memorandum explaining the purpose and effect of provisions in the draft order;	DCO Document 3.2 of the DCO application is the Explanatory Memorandum
(d) where applicable, a book of reference (where the application involves any compulsory acquisition);	DCO Document 4.3 of the DCO application is the Book of Reference.

<p>(e) a copy of any flood risk assessment;</p>	<p>DCO Document 5.2 of the DCO application is the Flood Risk Assessment</p>
<p>(f) a statement whether the proposal engages one or more of the matters set out in section 79(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (statutory nuisances) and if so how the applicant proposes to mitigate or limit them;</p>	<p>DCO Document 5.3 of the DCO application is the Statement of Statutory Nuisance.</p>
<p>(g) any report identifying any European site(s) to which regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994¹³ applies; or any Ramsar site(s), which may be affected by the proposed development, together with sufficient information that will enable the Secretary of State to make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site if required by regulation 48(1);</p>	<p>DCO Document 5.4 of the DCO application is the Information to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment No Significant Effects Report.</p>
<p>(h) a statement of reasons and a funding statement (where the application involves any compulsory acquisition);</p>	<p>DCO Document 4.1 of the DCO application is the Statement of Reasons. DCO Document 4.2 of the DCO application is the Funding Statement.</p>
<p>(i) a land plan identifying:- (i) the land required for, or affected by, the proposed development; (ii) where applicable, any land over which it is proposed to exercise powers of compulsory acquisition or any rights to use land; (iii) any land in relation to which it is proposed to</p>	<p>DCO Documents 2.2.0 – 2.2.16 of the DCO application are the Land Plans. These plans show: (i) the land required for, or affected by the proposed development; (ii) land over which it is proposed to exercise powers of compulsory acquisition or any rights to use the land;</p>

¹³ Now Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 SI2010/490.

<p>extinguish easements, servitudes and other private rights; and</p> <p>(iv) any special category land and replacement land;</p>	<p>(iii) land in relation to which it is proposed to extinguish easements, servitudes and other private rights;</p> <p>Special category land has been identified as being affected by the Proposed Development.</p>
<p>(j) a works plan showing, in relation to existing features:-</p> <p>(i) the proposed location or (for a linear scheme) the proposed route and alignment of the development and works; and</p> <p>(ii) the limits within which the development and works may be carried out and any limits of deviation provided for in the draft order;</p>	<p>DCO Documents 2.3.0 – 2.3.16 of the DCO application are the Works Plans. These show:</p> <p>(i) the proposed route and alignment of the development and works;</p> <p>(ii) the limits within which the development and works may be carried out and limits of deviation provided for in the draft order.</p>
<p>(k) Where applicable, a plan identifying any new or altered means of access, stopping up of streets or roads or any diversions, extinguishments or creation of rights of way or public rights of navigation;</p>	<p>DCO Documents 2.4.0 – 2.4.16 of the DCO application are the Access and Rights of Way Plans. These show accesses and public rights of way affected as part of the Proposed Development.</p>
<p>(l) where applicable, a plan with accompanying information identifying:-</p> <p>(i) any statutory/non-statutory sites or features of nature conservation e.g. sites of geological/landscape importance;</p> <p>(ii) habitats of protected species, important habitats or other diversity features; and</p> <p>(iii) water bodies in a river basin management plan, together with an assessment of any effects on such sites, features, habitats or bodies likely to be</p>	<p>DCO Document 2.6 of the DCO application are the plans showing Nature Conservation Sites. The plans show (where applicable):</p> <p>Designated sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Areas of Conservation • Sites of Special Scientific Interest • National Nature Reserves

<p>caused by the proposed development;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation • Regional Important Geological Sites • Local/Regional Wildlife Sites • Wildlife Trust Sites <p>Habitats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient Woodlands • Wales National Forest Inventory • Public Forests • Peatland Habitats <p>Appendices 1 and 2 of the Flood Risk Assessment (DCO Document 5.2) shows water features crossed by the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Chapter 7 of the ES (DCO Document 6.7) sets out the accompanying information for the sites and provides an assessment of any effects on such sites, features and habitats likely to be caused by the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The Flood Risk Assessment (DCO Document 5.2) carries out an assessment of flood risk on the Proposed Development.</p>
<p>(m) where applicable, a plan with accompanying information identifying any statutory/non-statutory sites or features of the historic environment, (e.g. scheduled monuments, World Heritage sites, listed</p>	<p>DCO Document 2.7 of the DCO application are the plans showing Historic Sites. The plans show (where applicable):</p> <p>Designated sites:</p>

<p>buildings, archaeological sites and registered battlefields) together with an assessment of any effects on such sites, features or structures likely to be caused by the proposed development;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings • Scheduled Monuments • World Heritage Sites • World Heritage Essential Setting • Historic Landscapes • Undesignated Sites • Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland • Conservation Areas • Registered Parks and Gardens • Parks and Gardens Essential Setting <p>Chapter 8 of the ES (DCO Document 6.8) sets out the accompanying information for the sites and provides an assessment of any effects on such sites and features likely to be caused by the Proposed Development.</p>
<p>(n) where applicable, a plan with any accompanying information identifying any Crown land;</p>	<p>No Crown land is affected by the Proposed Development.</p>
<p>(o) any other plans, drawings and sections necessary to describe the development consent proposal showing details of design, external appearance, and the preferred layout of buildings/structures, drainage, surface water management, means of</p>	<p>DCO Documents 2.3.0 to 2.3.16 of the DCO application show the Works Plans for the Proposed Development. DCO Document 6.3 of the DCO application, and its accompanying Appendices 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, describe and</p>

vehicular and pedestrian access, any car parking and landscaping;	illustrate the Proposed Development.
(p) any of the documents prescribed by Regulation 6 of the APFP Regulations ¹⁴ ;	N/A
(q) any other documents considered necessary to support the application;	<p>DCO Document 5.5 of the DCO application is the Other Consents and Licences Report.</p> <p>DCO Document 7.2 of the DCO application is the Construction Report.</p> <p>DCO Document 7.5 of the DCO application is the Strategic Options Report, the DCO Document 7.6 of the DCO application is the Updated Strategic Options Report (November 2017) and the DCO Document 7.7 of the DCO application is the Further Updated Strategic Options Report (October 2018)</p> <p>DCO Document 7.1 of the DCO application is the Planning Statement</p> <p>DCO Document 7.4 of the DCO application is the Statements of Common ground</p> <p>DCO Document 7.8 of the DCO application is the Route Corridor Options Report (June 2016)</p> <p>DCO Document 7.9 of the DCO application is the Line Route Report (June 2016)</p> <p>DCO Document 7.10 of the DCO application is the Updated Line Route Report (November 2016)</p>

¹⁴ These are documents which are relevant to specific types of project (generating stations, highway related development, railways, harbour facilities, pipelines, hazardous waste facilities, dam or reservoirs). Confirm in each case the type of project and the relevant documents which must be included with the application in each case

	<p>DCO Document 7.11 of the DCO application is the Updated Line Route Report 2 (November 2017)</p>
<p>(r) if requested by the Secretary of State, three paper copies of the application form and other supporting documents and plans.</p>	<p>One paper copies and 6 electronic copies of the DCO application documents have been supplied.</p>
<p>3.4 Are the plans, drawings or sections submitted A0 size or smaller, drawn to an identified scale and, in the case of plans, show the direction of north¹⁵?</p>	<p>The plans and drawings submitted are mostly at A0 size, drawn to an identified scale and, where applicable, show the direction of north.</p> <p>DCO Document 2.1 and DCO Documents 2.5-2.7 are at A3 size as the appropriate scale for the information that they depict, and show the direction of north.</p>
<p>3.5 Where a plan comprises three or more separate sheets has a key plan been provided showing the relationship between the different sheets¹⁶?</p>	<p>SP Manweb has supplied key plans, or information within the key to individual sheets, for those plans which comprise three or more separate sheets.</p>
<p>3.6 Has the applicant had regard to DCLG guidance 'Planning Act 2008: Application form guidance', and has this regard lead to the application being prepared to a standard that the Secretary of State considers satisfactory?</p>	<p>SP Manweb has had regard to DCLG guidance when completing the application.</p> <p>All the boxes in the Application Form have been completed in accordance with Section 1 and 2 – Application Form: information requirements of the DCLG guidance 'Planning Act 2008: Application form guidance'.</p> <p>In addition SP Manweb has submitted two weeks in advance of the application a GIS shapefile of the Order Limits and £6939.00 application fee.</p> <p>SP Manweb has also submitted an electronic index of the</p>

¹⁵ Regulation 5(3) of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

¹⁶ Regulation 5(4) of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

	<p>application documents in DCO Document 1.3.</p> <p>The documents have been bound in folders where relevant and grouped accordingly. The documents are formatted as Arial 12 font with all paragraphs numbered as suggested in advice Note 6.</p>
<p>The Infrastructure Planning (Fees) Regulations 2010 (SI106)</p>	
<p>Fees to accompany an application</p>	
<p>Was the fee paid at the same time that the application was made?</p>	<p>SP Manweb submitted payment in advance of the DCO application for the application fee of £6939.</p>



FREEPOST

Planning Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: 13th February
Your ref;

Dear Mr Edwards,

RE:

STATUTORY CONSULTATION UNDER S42 AND S47 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008

I refer to your letter of 22 November 2017 in respect of the consultation into SP Manweb's proposed Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network. The following letter provides the Council's response to the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PIER) into the proposed development of a new 132kv electrical circuit between Oswestry and Wem, together with associated construction works. This response also further confirms the Council's position with respect to the overall need of the project.

Shropshire Council has the status of a prescribed consultation body under Regulation 9 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended), and we therefore welcome the opportunity to comment.

Shropshire Council has been working collaboratively with SP Manweb project team since 2016 through a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA), in order to identify the likely environmental impacts of this planned project from an early stage. This has included input into early non-statutory consultation on alternative route options as well as more general pre-application advice.

Whilst the PPA does not fetter Shropshire Council's role as a statutory consultee in responding to this consultation, it has allowed an open discussion between the parties on aspects of the scheme, and has helped to address issues early and, where appropriate, the proposal of mitigation measures.

A Summary of the Key Points:

- **Shropshire Council gives in principle support to the proposed route of the proposed 132kv wood line between Oswestry and Wem;**

- **It is recognized that the proposal represents a significant investment of around £18million and that the provision of additional electricity capacity will support the successful delivery of the Council's adopted and emerging Local Plans and the aspirations of the adopted Economic Growth Strategy;**
- **It is considered SP Manweb have undertaken a robust and comprehensive Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) which has benefited from early and ongoing discussions with Council officers and the wider public;**
- **It is acknowledged that the new 132kv circuit is proposed to be carried on wooden poles using a trident design. This design feature has been considered in responding to PEIR in assessing the overall environmental impact of the proposal.**
- **At this stage it is considered there are no significant matters identified relating to the impact upon landscape, heritage, ecology or access resulting from the proposed line route which cannot be mitigated;**
- **The Council recognizes that there has been some local concern over the choice of route option around the village of Noneley. This response reiterates previous officer comments which conclude that there is a marginal preference for the northern route option, which is currently favoured by SP Manweb;**
- **The Council considers SP Manweb's approach to consultation has been appropriate and followed the proposals as set out in their Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC).**

The Need for Additional Electricity Provision

The provision of additional electricity supply has been a significant infrastructure issue in Whitchurch and North Shropshire for the last 10 years. This has impacted on local business growth and inward investment. Discussions with SP Manweb responsible for the supply and distribution of power in the North Shropshire area have been on going during this period in order to find a suitable and long-term solution.

In 2013, Scottish Power began preparation of their business plan and stakeholder consultation as part of the Ofgen Price Review for the period 2015-23 (ED1 Business Plan), with Shropshire Council making the case for further investment in the network in this area. In response, SP Manweb included plans for a major reinforcement of the 132kv network. This has now evolved into the current proposed 132kv scheme from Oswestry to Wem.

Shropshire Council had initial concerns on the timing of the delivery of the investment, as it is understood it could be several years before this scheme was completed. This could impact upon the Council's development plan and economic growth aspirations, particularly the housing and employment allocations arising from the Council's Development Plan (2006-2026) at Whitchurch, Oswestry, Wem and Ellesmere outlined in

the adopted Shropshire Council SAMDev Plan, as well as a number of villages in the surrounding area.

Scottish Power has responded with interim reinforcements to the 33kv network, which we acknowledge has resulted in an immediate increase in the capacity for the area. However, there remains a significant need for capacity improvements in the north of the county in the medium to long term to reflect Shropshire's strategic economic growth agenda, and specifically to provide efficient and cost effective infrastructure to residents and businesses over the next 25 years.

Shropshire's SAMDev Plan identifies growth strategies in a number of towns and villages in the north of the County up to 2026 within the area covered by SPEN, and in many cases identifies a significant amount of land for both housing and employment uses to achieve these aims. It is crucial that Shropshire can now move forward to deliver these aspirations.

By way of illustration, in Oswestry (Shropshire's second largest town) 2,600 dwellings and 45 hectares of employment land are planned to be delivered by 2026. In Whitchurch 1,200 dwellings and 26 hectares of employment land are planned by 2026. In Wem 500 dwellings and 4 hectares of employment land are planned, and in Ellesmere 800 dwellings are proposed. Whilst some of this development has already been built in the early part of the Plan, at 2017 in these four market towns there remains approximately 3,300 dwellings and 60 hectares of employment land to be delivered up to 2026, as well as other windfall development in the wider rural area. It is considered that further investment in infrastructure is required in order for the full extent of these growth strategies to be properly realised. SP Manweb's proposed capacity improvements will clearly play a major role on this.

These market towns act as service centres serving the local population and a wider rural hinterland. They are the focus of transport networks, employment opportunities and services. Co-ordinated housing and employment development in the market towns supports the rural economy in a sustainable manner by reducing the need for commuting, strengthening local markets and resilience, and reducing carbon emissions. The availability of power is a crucial factor in the delivery of the Council's development plan and Economic Growth Strategy. There are also a number of villages in the area where growth is proposed, such as Shawbury, Prees and Gobowen, and it is important sufficient capacity is available in these areas to support the Council's approach to improving the sustainability of rural areas such as these.

Looking beyond 2026 the Council is currently preparing the Local Plan Review which takes the Plan up to 2036. The Council has just finished a consultation into Preferred Options on the Scale and Distribution of Growth that proposes approximately 1,200 additional dwellings across Oswestry, Whitchurch, Ellesmere and Wem. The provision of additional capacity with the new line between Oswestry and Wem is key to supporting this future development post 2026 and providing for resilient growth.

Failure to provide sufficient supply could impact upon the sustainability of the market towns and put at risk their critical role as service centres leading to reduced employment

opportunities, increased outward commuting and damaging the economic resilience of the community, as well the Council's wider aspirations for supporting the rural population and economy.

Response to the Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)

Landscape and Visual comments

Our landscape consultant has considered the proposed route option and the relevant information contained in the PEIR. In summary, no significant concerns are raised at this stage to the preferred line route option.

The Council have previously responded constructively to a number of early iterations to SP Manweb's route options appraisals, as well as commenting on the overall proposed methodology for the assessment of landscape and visual impact. It is considered the Council's comments have been suitably reflected in the current consultation and have been taken into account in both the choice of preferred route and within the PEIR's assessment of landscape and visual impact.

At this stage, there remain some minor concerns as to use of some photomontages to illustrate the impact on specific viewpoints. In particular, there is extensive canal side vegetation along this whole section of the towpath. It is considered that it would be beneficial to supplement Viewpoint 8 with a view from the north of the woodland located on the southwest side of the canal, or even looking south from Viewpoint 9, although it is noted this merely illustrates the same view from a different direction. It is noted the Canals and Rivers Trust are also be consulted on the photomontages as requested by the Planning Inspectorate and it would be useful to understand if they request any additional Viewpoints to be considered.

Heritage comments

This pre application is part of the formal procedure associated with the Environmental Impact Assessment for the new 132,000volt line route as proposed by SP Manweb between Oswestry and Wem. It is understood that this infrastructure is part of the Council's current capacity improvement programme and supports the economic development within the north of the county.

In considering this planning application, due regard to the following local and national policies, guidance and legislation is required in terms of historic environment matters: CS6 Sustainable Design and Development and CS17 Environmental Networks of the Shropshire Core Strategy, Policies MD2 and MD13 of the SAMDev component of the Local Plan, Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance. It is also required that the effect of the application on surrounding heritage assets and their immediate and wider settings is taken into account, as required by Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

A preliminary environmental information report has been prepared, and forms the key document on which this comment is based. Previous consultation has taken place with regard to the scope of the methodology used, and has resulted in a number of refinements which have since been incorporated. We largely concur with the assessment of significant effects on heritage assets across the line route, and a number of additional comments are provided below.

The conclusions of the Heritage Impact Assessment within the appendices to the PEIR identify moderate adverse effects of the line on the wider setting of two Grade II listed farmhouses, Malt Kiln Farm and The Shayes farmhouse, which lies close to the conservation village of Loppington. Whilst these effects are acknowledged, it is felt that the siting of the line and finish of the poles is able to mitigate these; the residual effect of the line on these settings is likely to be limited, and their historic significance, as farmhouses within a largely agricultural landscape, preserved. The intervisibility between The Shayes and Loppington Church is deemed to be incidental and does not contribute directly to the significance of either asset. We would recommend that the line route is diverted as far as possible around Malt Kiln Farm and The Shayes to the north in order to take account of the above effects, and to reduce visibility within the setting by virtue of existing tree cover.

In addition to the above assessments, we have requested that an assessment of the potential effects on setting and significance is carried out for the Montgomery Canal, Rednal Mill and Stanwardine Grange, and mitigation incorporated within the design for any adverse impacts identified.

Ecology comments

As with the Landscape and Heritage comments, SP Manweb's preferred route option has been influenced by a number of early constructive discussions with Shropshire Council's ecologist since 2016. These discussions have influenced the methodology to be applied to the assessment of impact, and provided critical assessment to the iterative process of selecting the preferred route option.

Most recently, our ecologist provided comments to you regarding the draft environmental Scoping Report in March 2017 relating to:

- the appropriateness of using a baseline date for assessing the ecological impacts;
- the requirement for a method statement to be completed in the CEMP should the situation arise where a hedge is lifted and replaced rather than lost, to ensure the health and viability of the plants during this procedure;
- The use of a wider 'zone of influence' within the biodiversity and ecology study area in certain circumstances;
- The inclusion of reference to the need for bat surveys on trees to be affected by the proposal where there is a medium to high chance of a bat roost potential;
- The inclusion of reference to the need for conventional great crested newt population level surveys to be undertaken of individual ponds, where appropriate;

- Further clarification when additional surveys would be needed to support assessment outcomes

On the basis that these comments have been incorporated into the final Scoping Report, which in turn has influenced the approach in the PEIR, the Council do not have any further comments to make at this time as regards ecology and biodiversity impacts.

Comments on the Route Options around Noneley

It is recognised that the proposed line route includes a section around the village of Noneley. SP Manweb have previously consulted on route options to the north and to the south of the village, and in 2017 the preference was for an option to the south of the village.

In June 2017, having given consideration to the heritage, landscape and ecological impacts of the competing options, Council officers expressed a marginal preference for the northerly option. For the avoidance of doubt, this preference was purely an officer view and was not endorsed by the local Shropshire Councillor for the area, who was not in a position to assess the impacts or express a preference for either route option.

It is now recognised SP Manweb have changed the preference to the northern route option. Shropshire Council officers support this view, but again it must be emphasised this does not represent the view of the local Councillor for the area, who does not express a preference for either option.

The Council received a number of objections from residents of Noneley and the immediate surrounding area when SP Manweb's preferred route was proposed to be to the south of the village. In summary, these local objections included the impact on landscape and visual amenity, heritage and ecology, with concern also raised over the potential for safety risks associated with Sleaf airfield. However, it is equally accepted the northerly route option has also raised similar concerns from other residents. In acknowledging that there is likely to be an element of local objection to whatever route is preferred, it continues to be important to assess the likely environmental impacts of each option. With this in mind Council officers consider it would be beneficial to reiterate the reason for their marginal preference for the northerly route option.

The Council's Historic Environment Officer has previously provided comments to SPEN's heritage consultant regarding the route options around Noneley. For clarity, these comments, which have been informed by a site visit to the area, raised the issue of the potential impact on listed and non-designated buildings resulting in the Noneley South route. Specifically, it was considered that a southerly route would be visible from first floor windows of the two Grade II listed farmhouses, as well as from Noneley Hall which benefits from a southerly principal elevation.

With regard to visual impact more generally, it was noted that arable farmland to the south of the settlement is fairly open in character. It was also considered that when compared to the southerly route option, the northerly route benefits from more hedgerow

cover, and thus enabling a greater potential to mitigate the visual impacts of the new line. Additionally, it is now also noted the northerly route offers the opportunity to co-locate the new line with the existing 33kv line, which could further mitigate adverse impacts.

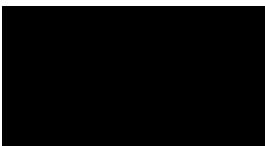
Clearly, the choice of route must take into account all material considerations, and include an assessment of impact across all topic areas. With this in mind, the County Ecologist has also undertaken an initial desktop comparison of the two Noneley route options based purely on the aerial photos.

In summary, based upon current information provided officers continue to consider there to be a slight preference for the Noneley North route option, in particular when considering the likely heritage and visual impacts of the route.

Effectiveness of the Consultation

The Council are supportive of the general approach to consultation used by SP Manweb as proposed in the Statement of Community Consultation and used to promote this consultation. It is acknowledged SP Manweb have reflected a number of comments made by the Council to the pre-draft version of the SoCC, which the Council welcomes.

Yours sincerely



Planning Services Manager

