

From: [Sian Evans](#)
To: [North Shropshire Reinforcement](#)
Subject: FW: SP Manweb North Shropshire Reinforcement Adequacy of Consultation response
Date: 26 November 2018 13:48:50
Attachments: [EL - Eddie West \(22_11_18\).PDF](#)
[SPManweb Adequacy of Consultation response.doc](#)

From: Ian Kilby [mailto:ian.kilby@shropshire.gov.uk]
Sent: 26 November 2018 12:37
To: Sian Evans
Cc: Edward West; Robert Macey
Subject: SP Manweb North Shropshire Reinforcement Adequacy of Consultation response

Dear Sian,

Please find attached a copy of Shropshire Council's response to the adequacy of consultation request for the above project. We have also received correspondence on this on behalf of the Canal and River Trust which they have agreed I can attach to this response to you.

Regards

Ian Kilby

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26th November 2018

Dear Sian,

SP Manweb's Proposed Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network: Adequacy of Consultation Under Section 55 of the Planning Act 2008

Thank you for your letter of 12th November asking for the Council's views on the adequacy of consultation carried out by SP Manweb in the preparation of the draft Development Consent Order (DCO) recently submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. It is understood the Council's response will help the Inspectorate decide whether to accept the draft DCO and this decision will be communicated to the Council in due course.

Shropshire Council has been engaged with SP Manweb on this project since 2016, and is supportive of the principle behind the need for the scheme as it is widely recognized this will address a critical infrastructure capacity issue in the north of the County. Council officers have therefore been supportive of SP Manweb's efforts in communicating and consulting on the need, as well as the more specific details regarding the evolution of the proposed line route presented through the draft DCO. It is therefore considered the Council is in a good position to comment on the adequacy of consultation process to date.

Having had regard to sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act), I can confirm that SP Manweb has carried out an adequate pre-application process that met, and in many places exceeded the provisions set out in relevant sections of the Act. SP Manweb's engagement with the council has been proactive and we have welcomed the opportunity to influence the applicant's approach to consultation with the wider public from the earliest stage through the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC).

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

The Council was invited to comment on a draft version of the SoCC in May 2016. The council was satisfied this set out a robust approach to consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders. The council acknowledges that the applicant provided opportunity in excess of the statutory requirement for reviewing the draft Statement of

Community Consultation (SoCC). This involved a non-statutory period of review between 11 September 2017 to 05 October 2017, in addition to the statutory 28-day period between 09 October 2017 to 10 November 2017. This early opportunity to comment was welcomed.

It was noted that the applicant's approach to its statutory consultation built on the successful approach used at the first stage. The council therefore had only minor comments on the draft SoCC, which included:

- Querying the decision to not include Maesbury Road industrial estate as part of the consultation zone. It is noted that the applicant did ultimately include this area in its statutory consultation.
- Suggesting copies of the reference documents were placed in parish council offices.
- Asking for further information on how community events will be advertised.
- Suggesting two additional reference locations for reference documents at Shirehall and Oswestry Town Council.
- Advising on the suitability of a small number of suggested hard to reach groups.

The council recognises that SP Manweb adopted a number of these suggested and was satisfied with the applicant's explanation where it had not adopted suggestions. As such, the council was happy to confirm its support for the SoCC on reviewing the final version, with no further comments.

Pre-Application Consultation

From the outset it is acknowledged the consultation on a Nationally Important Infrastructure Project is complex due to the scale and nature of the projects involved. Firstly it has been necessary for SP Manweb to inform people about the framework the application sits within in, i.e. National Infrastructure Planning, which the public are less aware of. It has then been necessary for SP Manweb to communicate the complex nature of the scheme's evolution in an accessible manner, as well as being open and available to respond to the Council's and community's concerns.

It is the Council's view SP Manweb has carried out these tasks in an effective and open manner. In particular the Council considers SP Manweb have been proactive in communicating and consulting with Council officers and elected councillors and relevant Parish and Town Councils throughout the pre-application process, both in times on statutory and non-statutory consultation. This is shown in the SP Manweb's Consultation Statement and has included a range of evening meetings/workshops, meetings with individual Parish Councils, regular newsletters. A dedicated website was created by SP Manweb to allow people to view the evolution of the proposals with ease.

The process used to consult has followed that described in the SoCC and in many cases exceeded it. It is considered that an appropriate consultation area has been used which has allowed sufficient flexibility for anyone with an interest to be included in any mailshots. It is recognised SP Manweb has used local media channels (through press

releases and public notices) and they have also provided advertisement material to parish councils and civic locations, which have helped to raise awareness of the consultation and how to take part.

Importantly, given the demographic range of communities in North Shropshire, the applicant provided a variety of ways for individuals to take part. A range of materials and technical documents were provided. Community materials (including feedback forms) were provided and suitably detailed newsletters (including fold out maps of the proposed line route) were distributed effectively. The applicant made clear where more detailed information could be found and reference location holding this information were suitably located throughout the project area.

Consultation events were well located in key towns and villages, offering consultees good opportunities to attend without travelling long distances. The spread of times and combination of weekends and evenings further supported this. We note from the Consultation Report that these were well attended.

It's also noted that the applicant has gone beyond the requirement of the Act in several ways, such as an extended consultation period of 10 weeks and its inclusion of a range of hard to reach and local special interest groups in the consultation.

The council further welcomes the applicant's work to engage with those representing communities potentially affected by the proposals. This has included holding briefing events at key project milestones for county councillors and parish councils. These sessions have provided an important opportunity for these groups to understand the proposals before they were publicly launched and allow elected representatives to provide additional information to their communities.

We reiterate the conclusions contained in our response to the applicant's statutory consultation (letter dated 13 February 2018), that we are supportive of the applicant's general approach to consultation throughout the project. We are also supportive of the approach SP Manweb has taken to targeted consultation following changes to the proposed development as a result of statutory consultation feedback, as confirmed in our correspondence of 22 May 2018 Shropshire Council considers that the applicant has carried out a robust and successful consultation.

In conclusion, and considering the above, Shropshire Council can confirm that it considers consultation on the proposed Reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network to have been adequate with respect to sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

Yours sincerely

Ian Kilby

Planning Services Manager