



# The Planning Inspectorate Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

## Meeting note

<b>File reference</b>	EN020015
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
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<b>Date</b>	26 November 2015
<b>Meeting with</b>	National Grid
<b>Venue</b>	Planning Inspectorate Offices, Temple Quay House
<b>Attendees</b>	<u>National Grid:</u> Matt Durham – National Grid Simon Best – National Grid Jacqui Fenn – National Grid Eloise Frank – National Grid  <u>Planning Inspectorate:</u> Kathryn Dunne – Infrastructure Planning Lead Sian Thomas – Assistant Case Officer Hannah Pratt – Senior EIA and Land Rights Advisor Frances Russell – EIA and Land Rights Manager Linda Rossiter – EIA and Land Rights Advisor Justin John – Legal Adviser to the Planning Inspectorate
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Following a previous meeting held between the Planning Inspectorate and National Grid (the developer) on the 11 September 2015, this meeting was arranged to provide an update on the progress of the project and to discuss the likely consenting regime(s).
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a meeting note would be taken and published on the website; including any advice given under s51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). It was also explained that any such advice would not constitute legal advice upon which the developer (or others) could rely.

#### 1. Overview of the project

The developer explained that the North Wales Connection Project is necessary to connect Horizon Nuclear Power's proposed nuclear power station, Wylfa Newydd, to the National Grid at Pentir. The developer stated that they are also contracted to

accommodate two Irish wind energy projects, Greenwire and Codling Park. Both wind energy projects have the intention to connect to National Grid's network in Gwynedd. The works required for the Irish wind energy projects include replacing the underground cables at the Glaslyn Estuary, near Porthmadog, and building a new substation near Bryncir. It was explained that the wind farms plan to start generating electricity by the early 2020s. The works at Glaslyn will also strengthen the existing network to facilitate the connection of Wylfa.

Regarding the Wylfa to Pentir section of the route, the developer confirmed that they are proposing a 400kV overhead line to run in parallel to the existing overhead line. In January 2015 the developer confirmed that an overhead connection in the orange corridor, between Wylfa and Pentir, was the preferred option and that the connection would run underground through the Menai Strait. It is proposed that the existing line will stay in place with the possibility of transpositioning from the original to the proposed line in some areas.

## **2. Consultation**

At present, non-statutory consultation is being undertaken by the Developer on the Wylfa to Pentir section of the proposal, which runs from the 21 October 2015 to 16 December 2015. The Developer has organised 16 consultation events and some home visits are being conducted.

## **3. Discussions on route to consent for project elements**

The Developer provided the Inspectorate with a map detailing the proposal as well as an overview document that provides the below information on the route for the proposed project:

National Grid considers the Wylfa to Pentir connection to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

The proposed route starts at Wylfa substation and extends south-east towards Rhosgoch. Depending on the final substation design, the intention is for the new line to lie to the east of the existing line from the substation. However, the existing line may need to be moved depending on the final substation design.

Outside of the Wylfa Newydd's boundary the route options are close to the east side of the existing line for the purpose of keeping distance from communities, the Anglesey Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and settings of scheduled monuments and listed buildings.

From Rhosgoch the line runs to Llandyfrydog, passing Rhosybol and Capel Parc. Within this section is the Llyn Alaw reservoir, south-west of Rhosybol. Llyn Alaw is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), home to a large population of Whooper Swans and other wildfowl and waders. It's also a popular destination for tourists.

From Llandyfrydog, the third section runs from North of Llandyfrydog towards Talwrn.

From Talwrn, the penultimate section of this part of the project follows the existing line between Talwrn in the east and Llangefni in the west and runs down to the west of Star.

The final section of the cable route runs from the west of Star and terminates at Pentir. Within this area lies the Menai Strait and Anglesey AONB. The developer stated that to mitigate the effect on both the Menai Strait and Anglesey AONB the connection will be undergrounded within this area. In order to make the change from an overhead line to an underground cable, two sealing end compounds are required to be built which are each approximately one acre in size.

The Developer has found five areas within which a sealing end compound could be built, three on Anglesey and two in Gwynedd. The Developer stated that all of the search areas are outside of Anglesey AONB and avoid Plas Newydd and the Vaynol Estate Registered Parks and Gardens.

#### **4. Options in DCO**

The Developer stated that they intend on bringing forward one option for the DCO application and that it intends to submit in the autumn of 2017.

Following discussion of the various route options, the issue of what may constitute associated development under section 115 of the Planning Act 2008 ('PA2008') was discussed. The Inspectorate advised that:

- (i) it is for the Secretary of State to determine whether elements of a scheme constitute associated development on a case by case basis; and
- (ii) that, due to the restrictions in section 115(4) relating to Wales, if the application were to be accepted for examination, the Developer would need to be able to demonstrate that all works included in the application for a DCO were integral to the NSIP to which it relates, rather than being associated development.

The two Welsh electric line NSIPs currently under examination, Brechfa Forest Connection and North Wales Wind Farms Connection were discussed in terms of what development the applicants have applied for.

#### **5. Scoping**

The Developer informed the Inspectorate that Environmental Impact Assessment scoping will take place during spring time (April) 2016. The Environmental Services Team (EST) within the Inspectorate advised the Developer that they can only scope the works that will fall within the PA2008 regime however it would be beneficial to describe the whole scheme and make clear what falls under the TCPA regime or PA2008 regime, as the TCPA elements will need to be considered in relation to cumulative / in-combination effects.

#### **6. AOB**

It was suggested that a teleconference between the Developer and EST would be beneficial to address the wider works and to discuss how the Developer will approach this development. The Developer advised that they would have more clarity on the route options by April 2016.