SP Energy Networks is planning to invest £18m in order to support and enable growth across North Shropshire. This investment is to reinforce the electricity distribution network by constructing an overhead 132,000 volt wood pole line from Oswestry substation, located at the A5/A495 roundabout, to Wem substation, located on Ellesmere Road on the western side of Wem.

This line will provide capacity to support development on land allocated for new jobs and homes in Oswestry, Whitchurch and Wem in current planning forecasts to 2026. And it will attract future business and housing investment across North Shropshire through to and beyond 2036. The new overhead line will reinforce the existing 33,000 volt electricity distribution network by increasing the capacity available throughout North Shropshire.

These proposals are good news. Shropshire Council has been pressing for investment in North Shropshire infrastructure, including Whitchurch, for a number of years. With the new homes and employment sites proposed, we are going to need the extra power. The North Shropshire reinforcement project will help our area realise its economic ambitions and ensure that we continue to enjoy a reliable electricity supply.

Councillor Steve Charmley,
Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business and Economy
Our work so far – identifying route options

It is essential that we determine the most appropriate route for the proposed wood pole line and, in so doing, seek to minimise the impact on the area for landowners and the local communities. We have undertaken a wide range of assessments to find options that we think best achieve this.

STEP 1 Where to reinforce the network

During 2015, SP Energy Networks considered a number of alternative overhead line routes from other substations at Legacy and Marchwiel near Wrexham, Crewe and Shrewsbury. These alternatives, however, have been discounted due to technical suitability, costs and potential increased environmental impacts. The route from Oswestry to Wem was considered most suitable.

STEP 2 Choosing route corridors

In the latter part of 2015 and early 2016, we considered the location of villages and towns, the landscape, cultural heritage and other environmental sensitivities to develop broad route corridors (broad ribbons of land) which we could route the line within.

From our initial routeing work, we then identified two route corridors from Oswestry to Wem, each up to 1km wide, and assessed them to see which had the least impact overall. We have based our consultation zone on an area around these two route corridors to give local people in this area the opportunity to be involved.

STEP 3 Identifying line routes

More recently in 2016, we have carried out further work within the overall preferred corridor to identify and then consider alternative line route options. These alternative line routes are 100 metres wide at this stage, which enables flexibility for a more refined design at the next stage of our work. These line routes also include the land needed for constructing the overhead line (such as temporary construction roads and lay-down areas).

STEP 4 Choosing a preferred line route

Following further assessment, we have now identified our preferred line route (shown on the map inside) – the option which we think is the preferred design to minimise likely effects on the environment. In doing so, we have also identified alternative line route options in some sections.

As well as the information provided in this newsletter, additional background material is available in the following reference documents:

• Strategic Options Report
• Route Corridor Report
• Line Route Report

These documents are available on our website and at the reference locations listed on the back page.

Alternative 132,000 volt

There are a range of different technologies available for the new line, including steel pylons, heavy duty double wood poles and single wood pole Trident designs.

We also considered placing the new line entirely underground. However, this was discounted due to cost and not being the technically preferred option. Also, overhead lines are not generally considered incompatible in rural areas such as that covered by this project.

Wood pole Trident design

Following a review of the available options for this project, we are proposing to use a wood pole Trident design which would comprise mostly single poles. We consider that this design will have less of an impact on the area compared to the others and will provide a better fit within the local landscape.

About SP Energy Networks

SP Energy Networks operates the local electricity network on behalf of SP Manweb plc. It is our responsibility to ensure that the electricity distribution network for the North Shropshire area is constructed, operated, and maintained in a technically efficient and cost-effective manner and has minimal impact on the environment.
What we’re consulting on – how your comments can influence our work

We’ve done lots of work to identify routes and would now like your local knowledge and comments to check the decisions we’ve made and develop our proposals further.

We’d like you to tell us what effects you think our proposals could have on the local area, such as farming, communities, the landscape, wildlife, ecology and anything else you consider important.

Specifically, we are consulting on:
- The preferred line route in terms of its location and limits
- The likely environmental impacts of the preferred line route and its associated construction works, such as storage areas for equipment i.e. lay-down areas, and transport
- The other line route options that have been considered
- Any other aspects of this project that you think SP Energy Networks should consider
- SP Energy Networks’ approach to consultation

We’d like your comments on all of these things and would appreciate as much detail as you can provide.

Using your feedback together with our own assessments we can identify a preferred line route that keeps any impacts as low as we can. We will review our proposals in line with the information we receive and develop them further. We will consult again in 2017 to get comments on a detailed design which will include the locations of the poles. This will be a statutory stage of consultation before making an application for planning permission.

How to send us your comments

You can give us your feedback by:
- filling out a feedback form online at www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/north_shropshire, at one of our events, or you can get in touch with us to request one
- sending us an email to enquiries@spennorthshropshire.co.uk
- writing to our freepost address FREEPOST SPEN NSR

Please give us as much detail as you can. If you think there’s something we should consider – please tell us what and let us know why.

The consultation is open from Wednesday 29th June to Friday 9th September 2016 so please make sure we have all comments by then.
Our community events and where to find out more

Our events are a great opportunity to ask us any questions you might have and find out more about the reinforcement to the North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network. We look forward to meeting you there.

We have published a number of technical documents and maps that can give you more information on our proposals. These are available on our website and at the following locations:

- **Wem Library**, High Street, Wem, Shrewsbury SY4 5AA
- **Cockshutt Millennium Hall**, Cockshutt SY12 0JQ
- **Oswestry Library**, Arthur Street, Oswestry SY11 1JN
- **Wem Town Council**, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem SY4 5DB
- **Ellesmere Library**, Fullwood House, Victoria Street, Ellesmere SY12 0AA
- **Whitchurch Library**, High Street, Whitchurch SY13 1AX

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Whittington Community Centre, Oswestry SY11 4BS</td>
<td>5.00pm – 8.00pm</td>
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<td>13th July</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>19th July</td>
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Project timeline

Establishing need for project, assessment of connection options and developing route options

Stage One Consultation and feedback review

Development of detailed proposals

Final proposal developed and application made

Decision on development consent

2015/16

Refining route options

Preliminary environmental assessments

Stage Two consultation and feedback review

Application considered (taking approx 18 months)

Construction starts

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

Contact us:

Visit our website: [www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/north_shropshire](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/north_shropshire)

Email us: enquiries@spennorthshropshire.co.uk

Give us a call: 0800 804 4666

Write to us: [FREEPOST SPEN NSR](http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/north_shropshire)

As well as the different ways of accessing project information, we’re sending a copy of this newsletter to residents, businesses and landowners and tenants in the consultation area. We’re also sending it to local parish councils along with posters to be displayed within their area. If you’d like any further copies or know of anyone else that would be interested in taking part in this consultation and would like further copies, such as businesses or visitors to the area, please do not hesitate to get in touch.