

Reinforcement to North Shropshire Electricity Distribution Network: 132,000 volt wood pole overhead line from Oswestry to Wem



Updated information on our proposal for new electricity line in North Shropshire

- More than 120 comments received to our Stage One Consultation
- Your feedback has helped us review and refine the route
- New sections now proposed near Hordley, Cockshutt and Noneley

Thank you for all your feedback and for attending our events held as part of the initial consultation on this important infrastructure project in North Shropshire. Your feedback has helped us review our proposals and make changes where appropriate.

Over the 10 week consultation, which closed on 9th September 2016, more than 120 comments (via emails, feedback forms and phone-calls) were received. Lots of people also attended our public events, in Cockshutt, Wem, Hordley and Whittington, and provided a variety of comments.

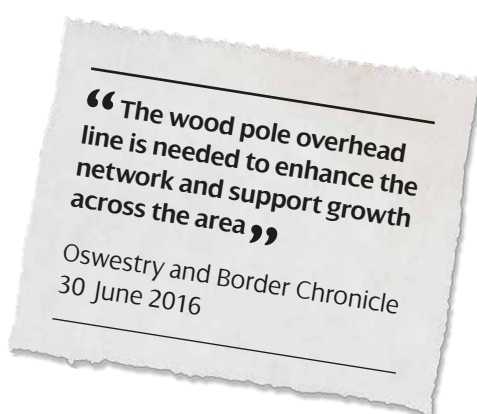
These comments supported our investment in upgrading the electricity network in the area. They also provided additional information on our proposals. In terms of the concerns raised, these were about visual impacts in relation to particular sections of the preferred line route.

All comments from local people, landowners and statutory bodies have now been considered and we are able to update you on our response – see inside for details.

This has resulted in an updated route for the new line. We've published the details of the proposed route which you can see in the fold-out plan in this newsletter.

In the media

The start of the consultation was widely announced in a number of local newspapers in June and July. In addition, this coverage provided background information on our proposal for installing the new 132kV overhead line.



IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- Updated plan for line route
- How your feedback influenced the updated proposals
- Information on agreeing land rights with owners and occupiers

Key issues from Stage One Consultation

We've received really useful feedback on the four key areas we asked for comments on.

Comments on the Preferred Line Route

- **People commented on the likely local environmental constraints affecting Section 2 (Hordley).**
We've used this feedback to review options, and identified a preference for a new Section 2A, the evaluation of which is almost complete. If there are any changes to this section, we'll let people know. This route supported retaining Section 1 (Babbinswood), as opposed to following the line of a former tower line.
- **Comments were also received from people near Section 3 (Cockshutt), including likely visual impacts in the area from property owners.**
As a result of this feedback we've decided to follow a more southerly route. This is further away from Cockshutt and avoids greater impacts on any single property in the area.
- **Concerns were raised about the proximity of the new overhead line in Section 4 (Noneley), and suggested alternatives: to use the existing 33kV overhead line; or identify a new line route north of Noneley.**
As the existing line cannot be upgraded, and a parallel route would be less preferable for visual impact reasons, we looked at replacing the existing 33kV line with the new 132kV line and installing the 33kV line along the preferred route. However, the likely low level of impact on the landscape character to the south of Noneley of the new 132kV line would not be very different to that of a 33kV overhead line, whereas, it would to the north. To reduce any likely visual impacts, the updated line has been moved further south from properties in Noneley. As part of the consultation, SP Energy Networks has spoken to bodies responsible for safeguarding Sleaf Airfield and received no objection to the proximity of the line route to the airfield.

Comments on the likely environmental impacts

- **Comments referred to the Baggy Moor and River Perry area and ponds in the central area of the line route, which are important bird feeding areas. People also told us about likely impacts on farming operations in the Hordley area.**
The changes we have made to the line route have taken these comments into account.

Comments on other aspects of the project

- **We received a small number of comments relating to the earlier work we carried out and whether the line could be placed underground.**
Our assessment work to date shows that the likely level of landscape and visual impact wouldn't justify placing any sections of the overhead line underground. This position will be reviewed in light of further environmental assessment work. An overhead wood pole trident line allows us to find the right balance between minimising environmental impacts and ensuring the new line offers value for money, which is in the interest of bill payers.

Comments on the consultation

- **From the comments received, there was generally a level of support for the way the consultation was run and most respondents considered they were left with sufficient information in order to give informed feedback.**
Feedback on the consultation itself is really useful and we'll use this when we plan our next stage.

An artist's impression of how the new line could look in the local landscape



Existing view



Proposed view (artist's impression)

Using Trident wood pole instead of steel tower or heavy duty designs



Indicative heights. Actual heights can vary depending on design requirements.

Stakeholder feedback

As well as helpful feedback from local people, we received a number of comments from statutory bodies such as Shropshire Council and local parish councils, and the Environment Agency.

We also received comments from a range of other organisations such as the local wildlife trust and the RSPB. These responses were generally supportive and provided additional information.

Proposed route for the new line

All of the feedback we received and further assessments undertaken by SP Energy Networks has resulted in an updated route for the new line, referred to as 'the proposed route'. You can see this in the fold-out plan in this newsletter.

Comments on updated sections of the line route

If you have comments on any of the sections shown on the fold-out plan in this newsletter, then please let us know. You can contact the project team on the details on the back page.

Any comments will be passed to relevant representatives from SP Energy Networks who will then be back in touch to discuss these with you.

Where to find out more

The work carried out by SP Energy Networks and its advisers is set out in two technical reports:

- Stage One Consultation Feedback Report, November 2016
- Updated Line Route Report, November 2016



These documents are available on our website and at these reference 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

Agreeing voluntary land rights with landowners and occupiers

Wherever possible, we seek to agree rights to construct, operate and maintain our equipment, with landowners and occupiers in the form of either a Wayleave Consent or a Deed of Easement.

We will start discussions about pole positions on this project as soon as possible with a view to agreeing draft voluntary consents. These are already familiar to many landowners and occupiers.

Where we are unable to reach agreement for voluntary consent, we will seek to use the statutory powers granted to us under the relevant legislation. We will still continue to negotiate voluntary agreement with landowners and occupiers, seeing this as a preferable approach.

If you are a landowner/occupier affected by our proposals and have any questions or want to find out more, please contact the community relations team (details below), who can put you in touch with SP Energy Networks' land agents.

Project timeline



Contact us:

Email us: enquiries@spennorthshropshire.co.uk

Visit our website: www.spenergynetworks.co.uk/north_shropshire

Give us a call: 0800 804 4666

Write to us: FREEPOST SPEN NSR

We're sending a copy of this newsletter to residents, businesses and landowners and occupiers in the consultation area. We're also sending it to local parish councils.

If you'd like any further copies or would like a large print version, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

