# **Omega West 132kV Diversion**

**Environmental Information** 

SP Energy Networks February 2022



Internal Use

# **Table of Contents**

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background	1
2	Environmental Surveys	3
2.1	Surveys Undertaken	3
2.2	Recommended Mitigation	4

# **Appendices**

Appendix A: Bat Mitigation

## 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) requires to divert the existing 132,000 volt (132kV) "FH" overhead line located on agricultural fields to the west of the Omega Development, St Helens. The diversion is to facilitate the development of the Omega West site. The diversion will be temporary for up to two years at which point the line will be placed underground. The Omega West development is an extension of the existing Omega site and will house a number of industrial units. The current route of the overhead line will be in close proximity of the proposed industrial units and requires to be relocated between 60 and 70m to the east of its current location to facilitate a safe construction of the proposed industrial units.
- 1.1.2 In order to achieve this, SPEN propose to construct a temporary diversion of the 132kV overhead line circuit that currently runs through this site. This is required for the duration of the works and will be facilitated by the construction of seven wood poles (18m in height) spanning 793 metres within the developer's landtake area (refer to figure 1.1, below). These poles will be in place for a period not exceeding two years and will be constructed in the same "Trident" design as the existing poles. Illustrations of the proposed pole type is include below.



Figure 1.1: Proposed 132kV Diversion

#### OMEGA WEST 132KV DIVERSION Environmental Information

#### **Trident Pictures**

Intermediate Structures:



#### Angle/Section Structures:



# 2 Environmental Surveys

#### 2.1 Surveys Undertaken

- 2.1.1 SPEN has undertaken a desk top study and initial walkover survey of the site to understand the environmental baseline of the area and consider the potential for any environmental effects.
- 2.1.2 The study has found the following:
  - Site sits within proposed Omega West land take area and is currently rough grassland which will change to hardstanding when the proposed industrial units are constructed
  - No environmentally or culturally sensitive sites within or in proximity to the site
- 2.1.3 SPEN has reviewed ecological information provided by Omega West developers. Surveys undertaken in 2021 by the developer's ecologists included the area of the proposed diversion. A summary of the most relevant findings are set out below:
  - Water voles 2 surveys undertaken, no water voles present in either the Whittle Brook, nor any other pond
  - Great crested newts all ponds surveyed within 500m and all eDNA samples returned negative, therefore there are no newts present
  - Reptiles surveys up to date, no reptiles present
  - Breeding birds all surveys up to date, no breeding birds present
  - Fungi all surveys up to date, no fungi of significance identified
  - Badgers all surveys up to date, no presence identified
  - Bats no roosts in trees identified. Some trees within the SPEN proposed overhead line diversion route have the potential to support bats in the future.
- 2.1.4 Specific bat mitigation is proposed.

#### 2.2 Recommended Mitigation

- 2.2.1 The following general mitigation is proposed to further reduce the risk of effects during the construction and operation of the temporary diversion:
  - Pre-construction species survey to take place in advance of construction
  - Construction and reinstatement works will be undertaken in line with Environment Agency's Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs)
- 2.2.2 Specific bat mitigation is also proposed. This is included in Appendix A with the proposed mitigation outlined below:
  - bat licensed person must be present
  - Trees are to be soft felled
  - The potential roost feature(s) on the tree should be cut off in a section and roped down to ground and the licensed person is to be allowed to inspect the feature prior to the remaining tree being soft felled
  - The bat licensed person may halt works for further inspection
  - If a bat is discovered a licence from Natural England will be required to further adversely affect the tree
  - The bat licensed person has the final word
  - For works to affect any other tree:
  - The tree has to be soft felled

**APPENDIX A: BAT MITIGATION** 



# Mitigation when felling

The 2021 bat survey of trees did not find any trees with bats present at the time of survey. However, the survey found that a number of them had the potential to provide an opportunity for bats to use them (roost in them) in the future. Therefore, there is targeted mitigation for such a tree, as depicted in the drawing here, should one wish to fell or otherwise carry out surgery to a tree. This data is valid until Spring 2023, after which another survey is required prior to any tree works.

## For works that affect those trees shown left

- A bat licensed person must be present
- Trees are to be soft felled
- The potential roost feature(s) on the tree should be cut off in a section and roped down to ground and the licensed person is to be allowed to inspect the feature prior to the remaining tree being soft felled.
- The bat licensed person may halt works for further inspection
- If a bat is discovered a licence from Natural England will be required to further adversely affect the tree.
- The bat licensed person has the final word.

# For works to affect any other tree

• The tree has to be soft felled.

### Soft felling methods

Ideally carried out in autumn or in spring.

Parts of the tree with low potential roost feature are removed but this is done by making cuts away from the feature and the section is lowered by rope (slowly and gently) to the ground.

This section is then leant against a standing tree for 24 hours with the roost feature facing outwards to allow the bat to fly out that night if it is present.

