

KINNERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk:

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Mr Peter Bryant
Senior Project Manager
FREEPOST
NATIONAL GRID MID W CONNECTION

25th May 2011

Dear Mr Bryant,

Mid Wales Connection Project

A public meeting held on the 17th May 2011 in the Kinnerley Parish Hall was attended by circa 200 people and it is clear to the Parish Council by the comments received (copy attached of minutes taken Appendix 1 and minutes of a meeting held at Maesbrook on the 4th May, Appendix 2) that almost everybody objects to the idea of placing the pylons through the parish and its immediate neighbours, we are given to understand private individuals are or will be making their own representations on this matter. Matters raised at the public meeting include (but not exclusively):

- Concern about health from electromagnetic influences
- Little or no consideration of the flooding across the Severn and Vyrnwy valley
- Adverse effects on tourism
- Poor consultation process prior to route selection

However, as a Parish Council we would like to comment on the factual matters pertaining to the consultation.

Consultation

The methodology applied to the Route Corridor and Substation Siting Study assumes 'above ground connection' unless in exceptional circumstances, indeed the entire report and route mapping is predicated on this basis, otherwise, for example, Sandford aerodrome would not have been excluded from the route mapping because undergrounding could be applied. This is counter to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process which, by its very nature, needs to review different options and evaluate the environmental consequences, and as a Parish Council we consider the process of route choice has not reviewed all options as is required ultimately in the EIA process. At this early stage of the route selection, all options must be considered irrespective of price in terms of cost per kilometre to ensure the process of environmental evaluation is correctly followed. We would urge the National Grid to clarify with the Infrastructure Planning Commission the scope and extent of the route corridor study to ensure a thorough assessment is undertaken of the potential routes and best environmental option can be ascertained prior to a final route choice being made.

Furthermore on this basis in Section 3 of the Consultation Feedback form, item C suggests visual mitigation is only achieved via route alignment not underground options, and items D to J are clearly worded to prompt the choice of over ground, without actually expressly stating it. Kinnerley Parish Council objects to the content and wording of the Consultation Feedback form.

The questions in the Consultation Feedback Form issued by National Grid are worded such that generally, one route has to be chosen above another and on the basis of the above comments we feel unable, at this stage to reply using the form and indeed give an informed response.

Routes affecting Kinnerley Parish

In terms of the routes affecting the Kinnerley Parish we would point out the location of the radio telescope between Knockin and Kinnerley and would require a thorough investigation as to any potential adverse effects any overhead pylon will have.

Also, the current use of helicopters using the nearby Nesscliffe Army Camp for airborne training is a matter of concern to many when mixed with overhead lines. At the moment we experience helicopters at low altitude and thus would ask for a thorough consideration in liaison with the Defence Estates to avoid any conflict with this existing use.

The Severn and Vyrnwy rivers flood regularly. There have been numerous "severe" flood warnings issued in recent years, which the Environment Agency defines as being of "extreme danger to life and property". The speed that flood water levels rise is increasing. Floods are experienced at levels of 6 to 12 feet and can cause severe disruption for long periods (up to four weeks). During this time the area is inaccessible due to the depth and speed of the water. Appendix 3 provides recent flood records. (The **Flood Alert Peaks** document has been provided by a parishioner and may not record all the floods during the period. All the other documents have been provided by the Environment Agency.)

Kinnerley Parish Council does not believe that any of the over ground options are acceptable because:

1. Pylons are visually damaging in the landscape and are inappropriate development in open countryside.
2. There will be adverse effects on local tourism, including caravan and camping sites, B&B facilities and local public houses.
3. The development does NOT preserve or enhance the area. The pylons will constitute over development of the countryside.
4. Insufficient weight is being given to health risks from Electro-magnetic fields produced by high voltage power lines and the effects on humans (particularly children), farm animals and wildlife.

Questions

The Parish Council have a number of specific issues which it seeks your clarification on in addition to the points raised above:

1. What is the reasoning for the routes going across Shropshire? Which other routes were considered and why were the routes across Shropshire selected?
2. Can you reassure our community that the pylons will not increase the level of existing flooding?
3. What is the legal distance that pylons must be placed away from homes?

In summary Kinnerley Parish Council challenges the Mid Wales Connection project consultation and therefore challenges all the routes.

The Parish Council looks forward to your earliest response.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kate Sanderson
Parish Clerk

- Appendix 1: Notes from Public meeting at Kinnerley on 17th May 2011
Appendix 2: Notes from public meeting at Maesbrook on 4th May 2011
Appendix 3: Flooding records for local area

c/c Infrastructure Planning Commission, Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol, The Rt. Hon Owen Paterson MP, Cllr Arthur Walpole, Shropshire Councillor, Ian Kilby, Head of Development Management, Shropshire Council