

Consultation Strategy

Brechfa Forest Connection Project

June 2013





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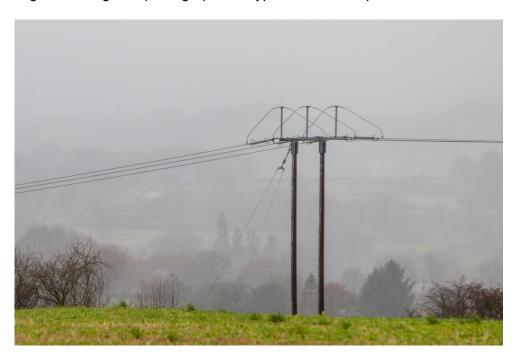
1. Background

- 1.1. Western Power Distribution Ltd (WPD) is the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) for the Midlands, South Wales and the South West and holder of an electricity distribution licence issued in accordance with the provisions of the Electricity Act 1989 as amended by the Utilities Act 2000.
- 1.2. Under its obligation to connect new power generation to the national grid, WPD is required to make a 132,000 volt (132kV) connection to three proposed onshore wind farms in the Brechfa Forest, Carmarthenshire.
- 1.3. Brechfa Forest has been chosen by the developers of these three proposed wind farms as it was identified by the Welsh Government in 2005 as one of seven areas of Mid and South Wales which are potential sites for renewable energy projects. Brechfa Forest was identified as Strategic Search Area G in the Welsh Government's Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005).
- 1.4. The first is a wind farm to be built by RWE npower renewables Limited (RWE NRL) at Brechfa Forest West (centred on the Afon Pib valley, east of Alltwalis) which has already received development consent; the second is also proposed by RWE NRL at Brechfa Forest East and, for the third, RES has separately submitted plans for a new wind farm at Bryn Llywelyn. The proposal for Brechfa Forest West is classified as a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) and has received consent from the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, whilst Brechfa Forest East and Bryn Llywelyn will be determined by Carmarthenshire County Council according to the Town and Country Planning (England and Wales) Act 1990.
- 1.5. As part of the Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm application, an indicative route option for a connection from the wind farm to a substation, potentially located north of Swansea, was provided by WPD in autumn 2011. This indicative route was prepared to meet WPD's obligations to make a connection offer to RWE NRL and, although it is in the public domain, it will be not be used by WPD in its proposal development process.

2. Proposal development

2.1. To determine connection options for the proposed wind farms WPD has carried out an extensive technical constraints review of existing and planned infrastructure and has identified that there is an existing overhead line which runs from Llandyfaelog, 10km south of Carmarthen, to Swansea North substation, which can be used for part of the connection route. This existing overhead line is known as the EE route. At the Llandyfaelog end of the line there are several steel lattice towers which could form the connection point and all of these options will be presented during the consultation process. In using this existing infrastructure the length of the new connection is significantly reduced, which in turn reduces any potential environmental or social impact and also the cost of the connection. This also means that WPD has been able to discount previously identified potential route corridors which run past Llandeilo, Ammanford and Cross Hands.

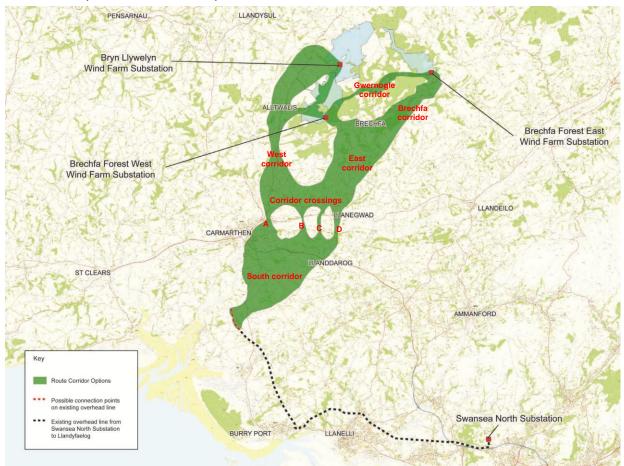
- 2.2. WPD is therefore proposing to connect the planned Brechfa Forest wind farms by building a 132kV wood pole overhead line between a new substation at Brechfa West Wind Farm and the existing overhead line near Llandyfaelog, south of Carmarthen. WPD will also need to build a 132kV wood pole overhead line between the new substations at Brechfa East and Brechfa West wind farms. Bryn Llywelyn Wind Farm can be connected to Brechfa West Wind Farm by using either a 132kV wood pole overhead line via the route corridor to the west, or by an underground cable route through the forest.
- 2.3. The proposed 132kV connection will be made using wood pole structures as this will help to reduce any potential visual impact on the countryside, and also minimise the environmental impact of the connection when compared to 132kV steel lattice towers. Twin wood pole structures will be required to support the weight of the cables along much of the route although we will aim to use single wood pole structures where a connection between the proposed wind farms is required. The maximum height of the wood pole structures is 20 metres although they will be lower than this along much of the route with an average height of about 15 metres. Detailed information on the exact height of the wood poles will produced at the final preferred alignment stage. A photograph of a typical twin wood pole is shown below.



2.4. In accordance with its electricity distribution licence, WPD has an obligation to provide an economic, efficient and co-ordinated connection. We will therefore look to connect the proposed wind farms using 132kV overhead lines as this is the most cost-effective way of making the connection. Once we have identified our preferred route corridor and carried out more detailed environmental surveys we may determine that for social impact or ecological reasons it will be better to underground certain parts of the connection routes. We won't be able to determine this until the second stage of our consultation process.

- 2.5. WPD has produced a Strategic Options Report (SOR) which explains the need case for the connection and the methodology applied to select the potential connection points to the electricity distribution network at Llandyfaelog on technical and engineering grounds.
- 2.6. Although WPD has received connection requests for the three proposed wind farms, only one has so far received consent to build (Brechfa Forest West) so it is necessary to present various connection options for the three wind farms. In autumn 2012 Carmarthenshire County Council Planning Committee refused the planning application for Bryn Llywelyn Wind Farm submitted by RES. An appeal has subsequently been lodged by RES and it is anticipated that a local public inquiry will be held in 2013 with a decision possible towards the end of 2013 or early 2014. The application for Brechfa Forest East Wind Farm has not yet been considered by Carmarthenshire County Council Planning Committee although a decision is expected by summer 2013.
- 2.7. Until the outcomes of the local public inquiry and the planning application are known it will be necessary to consult on four possible wind farm connection combinations. These are:
 - 2.7.1. Only Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm
 - 2.7.2. Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm and Bryn Llywelyn Wind Farm
 - 2.7.3. Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm and Brechfa Forest East Wind Farm
 - 2.7.4. All three wind farms
- 2.8. Following the identification of a connection point at Llandyfaelog, 10km south of Carmarthen, WPD's environmental consultants, RSK agreed with Carmarthenshire County Council and other statutory consultees representing environmental interests, a defined study area and a proposed method to map areas of specific environmental interest known as primary environmental constraints. Using the agreed method and avoiding these areas, route corridor options were then identified allowing for the four connection combinations. These route corridor options are shown on the map below.

2.9. Map of route corridor options:



2.10. Corridor options

- 2.10.1. To connect the proposed Brechfa Forest East Wind Farm substation to the Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm substation there are two route corridor options, to the north the 'Gwernogle' corridor and to the south the 'Brechfa' corridor.
- 2.10.2. To connect the proposed Bryn Llywelyn Wind Farm substation to Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm substation there will either be a 132kV overhead wood pole line through the West corridor or an underground cable connection through the forest between the substations. Should the appeal submitted by RES be successful, this connection will also be included as part of the DCO application.
- 2.10.3. To connect Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm substation to the River Towy Crossings corridor there are two route corridors, the East corridor which roughly follows the B4310 and the West corridor which roughly follows the A485.
- 2.10.4. Through our environmental constraints mapping and site visits we have established four potential corridors to cross the River Towy. These are labelled A, B, C and D from west to east and they join up with one single corridor, the south corridor, which goes all the way to the potential connection points on the existing overhead line (EE route) at Llandyfaelog.

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2.11. Additional work

2.11.1. In order to connect a new 132kV line near Llandyfaelog we will need to carry out work on existing overhead lines near Burry Port. This will involve cross connecting two lines that run parallel to each other. At this stage we have not yet established exactly which towers we will connect or whether the connection will be using overhead lines or an underground cable. This additional work will also be included as part of our DCO application.

3. Rationale for the consultation strategy

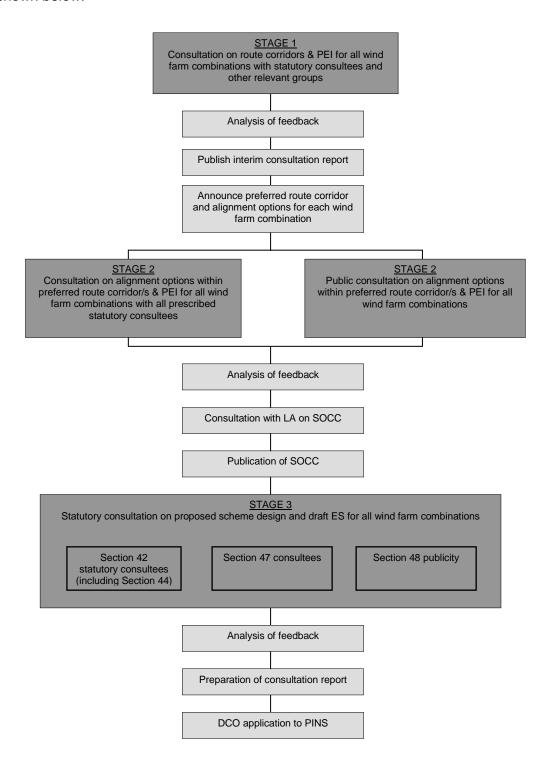
- 3.1. The proposed consultation strategy outlined in this document is based upon advice received from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), WPD's legal advisors, Osborne Clarke and Russell Harris QC and on the updated preapplication process guidance produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government in January 2013. Detailed community and stakeholder research have helped to shape the strategy together with information and guidance received from Carmarthenshire County Council.
- 3.2. The proposed consultation strategy will be based upon the principles of the Planning Act 2008 for NSIPs and current Government guidance. It will:
 - Involve local authorities, communities and statutory consultees early in the proposal development to bring about benefits for all parties;
 - Raise awareness and build understanding of the proposals among people living in the vicinity, or those potentially affected by wider effects;
 - Allow people potentially affected by the proposals to provide feedback as they develop, so that their views can influence the decision making process and the final application;
 - Obtain important information about the economic, social and environmental impacts of a scheme from consultees to rule out unsuitable options and to consider mitigating measures before the application is submitted;
 - Communicate with clarity of intent to enable those being consulted to understand what can be influenced and why;
 - Communicate the need for and explain the procedure for agreeing access and rights over land or acquiring such rights over land for the connection:
 - Communicate proportionately to the scale of the proposal;
 - Encourage structured discussion and debate, embracing constructive ideas and suggestions and generate demonstrable evidence of a responsive process;
 - Give feedback to those affected by the proposal as to how their comments have shaped the proposal;
 - Build lasting, positive relationships in which points of agreement and difference are clearly demonstrated.
- 3.3. The strategy will answer the following questions:
 - Why are we consulting?
 - What do we want to know?
 - What are the criteria for consulting with specific communities, groups and individuals?
 - What aspects of the proposals can they influence?
 - What methods will we use to enable them to contribute, capture feedback and produce evidence of how they have influenced the proposals?
 - What measures have we taken to ensure that consultation is conducted in a way that is inclusive of people from hard-to-reach and/or marginalised groups?

4. Proposed consultation strategy

- 4.1. We propose a multi-stage process comprising two stages of informal consultation and one stage of statutory consultation (with section 42 and 47 consultees as identified in the Planning Act 2008) in accordance with DCLG guidance.
- 4.2. During stage one, we will engage with community councils, specialist statutory bodies and with local amenity user groups to gather information which will help inform the selection of a preferred route corridor or corridors to connect the wind farms to the electricity network. We will also be consulting with statutory bodies on early stage preliminary environmental information (PEI) gathered by RSK for feedback and comment.
- 4.3. The second stage of informal engagement will be with all prescribed statutory consultees including the local authority, community councils, landowners and those with an interest in the land (described as Persons with an Interest in the Land or PILs in the Planning Act 2008), residents, businesses, local amenity user groups and others to gather feedback on proposed route alignments to connect the wind farms to the electricity network. The PEI gathered for the route alignment options will also be presented and comments and feedback sought from statutory consultees on its content.
- 4.4. The final stage of the pre-application consultation process will be statutory consultation on the proposed application (which may include more than one connection to take into account all of the identified wind farm combinations) and on the draft Environmental Statement (ES). Statutory consultation will be in accordance with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008. A detailed programme of activity for this stage will be described in a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) which will be developed in conjunction with, and reviewed by, Carmarthenshire County Council.

4.5 Consultation strategy flowchart

An illustrative chart of the various stages of the proposed consultation strategy is shown below.



4.6. Stage 1 – Route corridor options consultation

4.6.1. Purpose of Stage 1 consultation

During this stage of consultation we will be seeking specialist, technical and local knowledge to obtain relevant information about the route corridor areas. We will also be presenting early stage Preliminary Environmental Information gathered by RSK which will be presented to selected statutory consultees for feedback and comment.

This will help WPD to determine the following:

- If we were to connect Brechfa Forest East Wind Farm substation to Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm substation should we use the 'Gwernogle' corridor or the 'Brechfa' corridor?
- To connect the Brechfa Forest West Wind Farm substation to the River Towy Crossing corridor should we use the West corridor or the East corridor?
- To cross the River Towy should we use crossings A, B, C or D?
- Where to connect crossing A, B, C or D to the possible connection points on an existing overhead line within the South corridor

4.6.2. Who will be consulted?

We have taken into consideration the proposal's scale, topography, geography, environmental, demographic, social and political factors.

At this stage we propose to engage with statutory bodies and community representatives as follows:

- Statutory consultees (appendix A)
- Carmarthenshire County Council planning officers
- Elected representatives (MPs, AMs and local authority members)
- Community councils (appendix B)
- Relevant campaign groups, interest groups, local amenity user groups and representative bodies (appendix C)

4.6.3. What will be consulted on?

In order to obtain the specialist, technical and local knowledge from consultees listed above WPD will share all information contained within the following reports:

- Strategic Options Report
- Route Corridor Options Report
- Existing Line Survey Report
- Undergrounding Survey Report
- Preliminary Environmental Information

The information obtained from the consultees will influence the decision as to which corridor or corridors are taken forward to the route alignment stage.

4.6.4. How will the consultation be delivered?

Stage 1 consultation will be carried out over a fourteen week period running from 24 June 2013 to 27 September 2013. It will be expected that all responses to this stage are received within this time period and where necessary we will actively pursue feedback.

The following consultation and communication methods will be used to engage with stakeholders:

4.6.4.1. Briefings and site visits for MPs and AMs

 All MPs and AMs whose constituencies are affected by the route corridors will be contacted by letter and telephone and offered a full briefing on the project along with a site visit to view the corridors and the Alltwalis connection to the north of Carmarthen.

4.6.4.2. Briefings and site visits for Carmarthenshire County Councillors

 All councillors whose wards are affected by the route corridors will be offered, via the council's planning officer, a full briefing on the project along with a site visit to view the corridors and the Alltwalis connection to the north of Carmarthen.

4.6.4.3. Deliberative workshops with affected community councils and interest groups

- The workshops will be designed to enable direct consultation with representatives from affected communities and interest groups.
- The workshops will identify and discuss with consultees where on the corridor options the particularly sensitive, constrained or difficult sections are.
- Workshops will be held on a series of dates at various locations throughout the route corridors and the 18 affected community councils will be clustered geographically to ensure that the focus of the discussions is relevant to those representatives attending. We propose holding four workshops with the community councils grouped as follows:
 - Llansawel CC, Llanfihangel Rhos y Corn CC, Talley CC and Llanfynydd CC
 - Llanfihangel-ar-Arth CC, Llanllwni CC, Llanpumsaint CC, Llanllawddog CC and Llanegwad CC
 - Bronwydd CC, Abergwili CC, Carmarthen CC and Llanarthney CC
 - Llangynnwr CC, Llanddarog CC, Llangyndeyrn CC, Llangain CC and Llandyfaelog CC
- Representatives from relevant interest groups will also be invited to attend the workshops depending on their geographic focus.
- Attendees will be briefed on the project and the consultation process by way of presentations. Feedback and Q&As will be managed in small group sessions to enable all consultees to achieve the same level of understanding of the project and to have a two-way dialogue about relevant information on the route corridor areas.

4.6.4.4. Attendance at community council meetings, by invitation only

 If requested, members of the project team will attend community council meetings to explain the consultation process, how communities and local amenity user and interest groups can provide their input via community councils during Stage 1 and how communities will be able to directly participate in Stages 2 and 3.

4.6.4.5. Correspondence with statutory consultees

 All statutory consultees will be sent copies of the various reports along with a series of questions or prompts to help the consultees frame their responses. A workshop to discuss the corridor options will be arranged with the statutory consultees if requested.

4.6.4.6. Access to information

- Copies of all project materials and reports will be made available to consultees.
- Copies of summary versions of technical documents, general project information and maps will also be available in Welsh.
- Formal presentation materials such as PowerPoint and exhibition display boards.
- All information will also be available on the project website.

4.6.4.7. Media relations

- The WPD project team, in conjunction with the WPD corporate communications team, will provide briefing meetings and interviews, issue press releases and use media briefing packs to secure editorial coverage.
- Social media to get across how communities will be able to participate in the shaping of the project proposals via community councils during Stage 1 and directly during Stages 2 and 3.

4.6.5. How will feedback be received?

Statutory consultees, interest groups and community councils will be encouraged to provide formal written feedback to the route corridor options.

Members of the public wishing to contribute to the process will be encouraged to provide their feedback to their community council as part of their formal response.

Should they wish to comment directly on the route corridor options, they will be able to use the following methods:

- Project email address
- Freepost address

There will be an 0800 information line available throughout this stage although we do not propose that it will be used to receive feedback.

Wherever possible all external facing materials will be supplied in both Welsh and English and, where it is not possible to provide a translated version of a technical or planning related document, an executive summary in Welsh will be made available.

4.6.6. How will comments and feedback be recorded and taken into account? All responses received will be acknowledged in writing and recorded on the consultation database and detailed analysis of the responses carried out.

WPD will then use all relevant responses received to help determine which route corridor option or options should be taken forward to the route alignment options stage alongside other technical, environmental, social and economic information.

4.6.7. How will WPD's decision be publicised?

WPD's assessment of the options and its selection of a preferred route corridor or corridors for the wind farm connection combinations will be described in an Interim Consultation Report. The report will provide a summary of the relevant responses

and will explain how the feedback received during this stage fed in to the decision making process and the methods used to review the options.

Various communication channels will be used to announce the preferred route corridor or corridors including a media announcement to secure editorial coverage. The Interim Consultation Report will be published and made available via the project website and across a range of public outlets.

4.7. Stage 2 – Alignment options consultation

4.7.1. Purpose of Stage 2 consultation

Once a preferred route corridor or corridors to connect the wind farms have been selected, the project team will carry out detailed environmental surveys and technical assessments to identify feasible route options or alignments for the 132kV line.

This stage of the consultation process will focus on seeking feedback and comments on the identified alignment options within the preferred corridor or corridors from statutory consultees, affected residents, businesses, community groups, PILs and the public. We will also be presenting early stage Preliminary Environmental Information gathered by RSK which will be presented to selected statutory consultees for feedback and comment.

An indication of how, what, who and when we may consult during this stage is indicated below but this may be subject to change as the proposal develops.

4.7.2. Who will be consulted?

In order to identify those to be engaged with, we will consider those directly and indirectly affected by the route alignment options and those who have specifically expressed an interest in participating in the consultation process. We will take into consideration the proposal's scale, topography, geography, environmental, demographic, social and political factors.

At the second stage we propose to engage with the following stakeholders:

- Members of the public¹
- Statutory consultees (appendix A)
- Carmarthenshire County Council planning officers
- Elected representatives (MPs, AMs and local authority members)
- Community councils (appendix B)
- Landowners and other persons with an interest in the land (PILs)
- Relevant community groups, campaign groups, interest groups, local amenity user groups and representative bodies (appendix C)
- Hard-to-reach groups (appendix D)

(¹ Residents, businesses and members of the public potentially affected by the alignment options and those who have registered an interest.) Where a potential alignment option runs close to the edge of a route corridor, affected members of the public will be identified by zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) studies.

4.7.3. What will be consulted on?

In order to obtain specialist, technical and local knowledge from the consultees listed above, WPD will share all information contained within the following documents:

- Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI)
- Route Alignment Options Report
- Interim Consultation Report
- Strategic Options Report
- Route Corridor Options Report
- EE Route Line Survey Report
- Undergrounding Survey Report

The comments and feedback received from this stage of consultation will influence the decision as to which alignment option/s is/are selected to connect the wind farms alongside other technical, environmental, social and economic information.

4.7.4. How will the consultation be publicised?

WPD will publicise this stage of the consultation process by a variety of means to ensure that all those potentially affected by the route alignment options are aware of the consultation process. This will be achieved by:

- Project website with downloadable information
- Project information in the form of a leaflet or newsletter
- Adverts and media coverage in local newspapers (The Carmarthen Journal, the South Wales Evening Post, the Western Mail and the Llanelli Star) and community newsletters
- Media coverage on local radio
- Posters on community noticeboards
- Social media streams including Twitter and Facebook
- Letters to relevant community councils, PILs and members of the public as identified above.

4.7.5. How will the consultation be delivered?

Stage 2 consultation will be carried out over an eight week period in early 2014. It will be expected that all responses to this stage are received within this time period.

The following consultation and communication methods will be used to engage with stakeholders:

4.7.5.1. Briefings and site visits for MPs and AMs

 All MPs and AMs whose constituencies are affected by the route alignments will be contacted by letter and telephone and offered a project update along with a site visit to view route alignments within the preferred corridors.

4.7.5.2. Briefings and site visits for Carmarthenshire County Councillors

 All councillors whose wards are affected by the route alignments will be offered, via the council's planning officer, a project update along with a site visit to view route alignments within the preferred corridors.

4.7.5.3. Public exhibitions

- During the eight week consultation period, open exhibitions will be held at key locations within the preferred route corridors.
- Exhibitions will provide information on the project, consultation carried out to date, PEI, alignment options and how feedback and comments can be submitted to the project team, including the online feedback facility.
- All exhibition material and executive summaries of technical documents will be provided in English and Welsh.
- Key members of the WPD project team will be present at the exhibitions to answer questions relating to the project.
- Feedback forms will be available for people to complete at the event or to take away and return using prepaid envelopes.

4.7.5.4. Attendance at community council meetings, by invitation only

 If requested, and where possible, members of the project team will attend community council meetings to provide updates on the project and the consultation process and to answer questions from councillors and other attendees.

4.7.5.5. Workshop with statutory consultees

- All statutory consultees will be invited to attend a workshop to discuss the methodology followed to identify the route alignment options as well as the options themselves.
- All statutory consultees will be provided with copies of the various reports along with a series of questions or prompts to help the consultees frame their written responses.

4.7.5.6. Exhibitions for landowners and PILs

- During the eight week consultation period, we will hold a series of exhibitions at key locations within the preferred route corridors specifically for landowners and PILs.
- Exhibitions will provide information on the project, consultation carried out to date, PEI, alignment options, WPD's approach to land access and how feedback and comments can be submitted to the project team, including the online feedback facility.
- All exhibition material and executive summaries of technical documents will be provided in English and Welsh.
- Key members of the WPD project and wayleaves teams and will be present at the exhibitions to answer questions relating to the project and WPD's approach to land negotiations.
- Feedback forms will be available for landowners and PILs to complete at the event or to take away and return using prepaid envelopes.

4.7.5.7. Access to information

- Copies of all project materials and reports will be made available to consultees.
- Copies of summary versions of technical documents, copies of exhibition materials, project information leaflets, newsletters and maps will also be available in Welsh.
- Project website with downloadable information.
- Formal presentation materials such as PowerPoint and exhibition display boards.
- Inspection copies of all materials will be available to view at various locations within the route corridor or corridors (appendix E).

4.7.5.8. Media relations

 The WPD project team will provide briefing meetings and interviews, issue press releases and use media briefing packs to secure editorial coverage.

4.7.5.9. Briefings and meetings with community groups

 Where possible, the WPD project team will attend meetings with community groups to provide updates on the project and the consultation process and to answer questions from representatives of those groups.

4.7.6. How will feedback be received?

All members of the public, landowners, PILs, statutory consultees and key stakeholders involved in this stage will be encouraged to provide written feedback on the route alignment options. Consultees will be able to provide feedback via the following methods:

- Project website online feedback facility
- Hard copy feedback form
- Project email address
- Freepost address
- Bilingual 0800 information line

Wherever possible all public facing materials will be supplied in both Welsh and English and, where it is not possible to provide a translated version of a technical or planning document, an executive summary in Welsh will be made available.

4.7.7. How will comments and feedback be recorded and taken into account? All responses received will be acknowledged in writing and recorded on the consultation database and detailed analysis of the responses carried out.

WPD will then use all relevant responses received to help select a route alignment or alignments to connect the wind farms to the connection point at Llandyfaelog, alongside other technical, environmental, social and economic information.

WPD's assessment of the options and its selection of a preferred route alignment or alignments for the wind farm connection combinations will be described in an Interim Consultation Report. The report will provide a summary of the relevant responses and will explain how the feedback received during this stage fed in to the decision making process and the methods used to review the options.

4.8. Stage 3 – Detailed scheme design consultation

4.8.1. Purpose of Stage 3 consultation

Stage 3 will be statutory consultation on the detailed scheme design including an identified route alignment or alignments to connect the wind farms following Stage 2, any other associated work required and the draft Environmental Statement. This will be carried out in accordance with requirements of the Planning Act 2008 under Sections 42, 47 and 48.

We will:

- Seek information and views on the specific environmental impacts of the proposal.
- Seek information and views on the impact to human activities of the proposal.
- Seek specific views on the scheme design.

If this period of statutory consultation results in changes to the proposals which are significantly different, further consultation on these changes may be required before a DCO application is submitted.

4.8.2. Preparation of the Statement of Community Consultation

Before Stage 3 consultation can start, a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will be prepared which will provide a detailed account of proposed consultation.

The development of the SoCC, and its successful delivery, provides strong evidence of WPD's commitment to the principles of the legislation and guidance. Along with the SoCC and final Consultation Report, an Adequacy of Consultation Report produced by Carmarthenshire County Council, informs the formal test of Adequacy of Pre-Application which is applied by the Planning Inspectorate before the application is accepted for formal Examination.

The SoCC will set out how WPD has engaged with stakeholders potentially affected by its proposals during Stages 1 and 2 and how it proposes to consult with the public on the detailed scheme design before it is submitted as a DCO application.

The process for the development of the SoCC is as follows:

- Seek information and advice from Carmarthenshire County Council to help inform the content of the SoCC.
- Using this information and the knowledge gathered from the earlier stages of the consultation process the SoCC will be drafted. It will explain what WPD intends to consult on and how and when it will consult.
- The draft SoCC will be sent to Carmarthenshire County Council for review and comment (allowing a minimum of 28 days to respond).
- Feedback from Carmarthenshire County Council will be reviewed and audited to produce a final version of the SoCC. Once finalised, it will be formally published and publicised.

The SoCC will detail how, when and with whom consultation will take place. It will include information on consultation zones, methods of consultation, details of consultation materials, where consultation materials can be inspected, information on timings and locations of public events, timescales for consultation and the consultation feedback mechanisms.

An indication of how, what, who and when we may consult during this stage is indicated below but this may be subject to change and differ from the content of the SoCC when it is published.

4.8.3. Who will be consulted?

Stage 3 consultation will be carried out with the following key stakeholders:

- Members of the public¹
- Statutory consultees (appendix A)
- Carmarthenshire County Council
- Elected representatives (MPs, AMs and local authority members)
- Community councils (appendix B)
- Landowners and other persons with an interest in the land (PILs)
- Relevant community groups, interest groups, local amenity user groups and representative bodies (appendix C)
- Hard-to-reach groups (appendix D)

(1 Members of the public potentially affected by the proposed scheme including those within a 'bare earth' zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) either side of a route alignment or alignments, and those who have registered an interest.)

4.8.4. What will be consulted on?

- The draft Environmental Statement
- Detailed scheme design including identified route alignment or alignments to connect the wind farms and any associated work required

Supporting documentation will include:

- Specific technical and environmental reports and surveys
- Interim consultation reports for stages one and two

4.8.5. How will the consultation be publicised?

WPD will publicise this stage of the consultation process by a variety of means to ensure that all those potentially affected by the proposed scheme are made aware of the consultation process. This will be achieved by:

- Statutory advertisements in local and national press to publicise the SoCC (Section 48)
- Publication of the SoCC
- Project website with downloadable information
- Project newsletter
- Adverts and media coverage in local newspapers (The Carmarthen Journal, the South Wales Evening Post, the Western Mail and the Llanelli Star) and community newsletters
- Media coverage on local radio
- Posters on community notice boards
- Social media streams including Twitter and Facebook
- Letters to relevant community councils, PILs and members of the public as identified above.

4.8.6. How will consultation be delivered?

Stage 3 consultation will be carried out over a four week period in mid-2014. It will be expected that all responses to this stage will be received within this time period.

The following consultation and communication methods may be used:

4.8.6.1. Briefings and site visits for MPs and AMs

 All MPs and AMs whose constituencies are affected by the proposed alignment will be contacted by letter and telephone and offered a project update along with a site visit to view the final proposed route alignment or alignments.

4.8.6.2. Briefings and site visits for Carmarthenshire County Councillors

 All councillors whose wards are affected by the proposed alignment will be offered, via the council's planning officer, a project update along with a site visit to view the final proposed route alignment.

4.8.6.3. Public exhibitions

- During the four week consultation period, open exhibitions will be held at key locations close to the proposed route alignment or alignments.
- Exhibitions will provide information on the project, consultation carried out to date, the draft ES, the proposed scheme and how feedback and comments can be submitted to the project team.
- All exhibition material and executive summaries of technical documents will be provided in English and Welsh.
- Key members of the WPD project team will be present at the exhibitions to answer questions relating to the project.
- Feedback forms will be available for people to complete at the event or to take away and return using prepaid envelopes.

4.8.6.4. Statutory consultees

 All statutory consultees will be sent copies of the various reports along with a series of questions or prompts to help the consultees frame their responses.

4.8.6.5. Access to information

- Copies of all project materials and reports will be made available to consultees.
- Copies of summary versions of technical documents, copies of exhibition materials, project information leaflets, newsletters and maps will also be available in Welsh.
- Project website with downloadable information.
- Formal presentation materials such as PowerPoint and exhibition display boards.
- Inspection copies of all materials will be available to view at various locations within the route corridors (appendix E).

4.8.6.6. Media relations

 The WPD project team will provide briefing meetings and interviews, issue press releases and use media briefing packs to secure editorial coverage.

4.8.7. How will feedback be received?

All members of the public, landowners, PILs, statutory consultees and key stakeholders involved in this stage will be encouraged to provide written feedback via the following methods:

Project website online feedback facility

- Hard copy feedback form
- Project email address
- Freepost address
- 0800 information line

Wherever possible all public facing materials will be supplied in both Welsh and English and, where it is not possible to provide a translated version of a technical and planning document, an executive summary in Welsh will be made available.

4.8.8. How will comments and feedback be recorded?

All responses received will be acknowledged in writing and recorded on the consultation database and detailed analysis of the responses carried out. The information obtained during this stage of the consultation process will be included in the Consultation Report which will form part of the DCO application.

4.9. Consultation Summary

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
On what	Route corridor options	Route alignment options	Proposed detailed scheme
When	Mid 2013	Early 2014	Mid 2014
Duration	10 weeks	8 weeks	4 weeks
With who	Statutory consultees including affected community councils and other community representative groups	Affected residents, businesses, PILs, community groups and representatives, members of the public and other statutory consultees	Affected residents, businesses, PILs, community groups and representatives, members of the public and other statutory consultees

4.9.1 Burry Port consultation

In addition to the multi-stage consultation on the route corridors, the alignment options and the detailed scheme, we will also be consulting with the public, the community council and the statutory consultees potentially affected by the additional work we need to do at Burry Port.

This consultation will involve face to face meetings and where necessary, public exhibitions, to explain the work required.

4.10. Stage 4 – Preparing for the DCO application

4.10.1. Consultation Report

The Consultation Report is a statutory requirement and will accompany the DCO application alongside the Environmental Statement. This report will summarise all the relevant feedback collated throughout the pre-application process and will provide evidence of how feedback has influenced the scheme design process at all stages of development.

4.10.2. Feedback analysis

Data capture of all feedback received through formal consultation and engagement is a vital component of the audit trail required under the Planning Act 2008 to demonstrate how consultation has influenced the decision making process.

Using a bespoke Tracker system, all relevant responses will be captured across all consultation methods to create an evidence trail of how, when and from whom, feedback has been received. It will log and track all information exchange transactions involving each stakeholder or group of stakeholders (including statutory consultees). This will form the foundation for efficient and accurate analysis of consultation feedback. Data analysis will separately be undertaken by Dialogue by Design using a process which directly links into the Tracker system.

Data and analysis collected from these processes will form the basis of consultation reports submitted as part of the DCO application.

Key to effective analysis is understanding and preparing for the variety of forms in which feedback can be received including answers to structured questions and unstructured feedback.

We anticipate feedback will be drawn from:

- Feedback forms (hard copy and online)
- Email
- Letter
- Telephone
- Formal responses by statutory consultees

4.10.3. Statement of Common Ground

In preparation for the Examination period, a Statement of Common Ground will also be prepared jointly with Carmarthenshire County Council to state clearly the areas of agreement and difference in relation to the proposals.

4.11. Stage 5 – Publicity and communication of the DCO application submission

We will then submit our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate for acceptance and subsequent examination. The Planning Inspectorate will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will make a decision on the application.

When the DCO application is submitted, those directly affected and the public in general will be advised of the submission and the application detail.

This will be an information exercise and aims to:

- Notify those directly affected by the proposals of the application submission and the date
- Provide summary and detailed information of the scheme proposals

The components of the information exercise are likely to include:

- Information available on the project website
- A media announcement and publicity
- Inspection copies of documents available in public places
- Possible information events/displays

4.12. Stage 6 - Post DCO application submission

There will be substantial communication requirements once the DCO application has been formally accepted and during the Examination process. Communication and maintenance of key relationships with statutory and non statutory consultees will be extremely important in managing this phase of the project's development and a separate communications strategy will be required.

5. Appendices

5.1 Appendix A

Statutory consultees for Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the consultation process

- 1. Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
- 2. CADW
- 3. Canal and River Trust
- 4. Carmarthenshire County Council Highways
- 5. Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
- 6. Dyfed Archaeological Trust
- 7. Dyfed Powys Local Resilience Forum
- 8. Dyfed Powys Police
- 9. Electricity Generators with CPO powers
- 10. Hywel Dda Health Board
- 11. Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- 12. Ministry of Defence
- 13. National Grid
- 14. Natural Resources Wales
- 15. Network Rail
- 16. Persons with an interest in land (PILs)
- 17. Public Gas Transporter
- 18. Relevant statutory undertakers
- 19. Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
- 20. South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH)
- 21. Telecoms (mobile providers)
- 22. The British Waterways Board
- 23. The Civil Aviation Authority
- 24. The Coal Authority
- 25. The Commission for Sustainable Development
- 26. The Crown Estate Commissioners
- 27. The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
- 28. The Equality and Human Rights Commission
- 29. The Gas and Electricity Markets Authority
- 30. The Health and Safety Executive
- 31. The Health Protection Agency
- 32. The Highways Agency
- 33. The Met Office
- 34. The Office of Rail Regulation and approved operators
- 35. The Rail Passengers Council
- 36. The Water Services Regulation Authority
- 37. Welsh Government officers
- 38. Welsh Language Commissioner
- 39. Welsh Water

5.2 Appendix B

Community Councils potentially affected by the route corridor options

- 1. Abergwili Community Council
- 2. Bronwydd Community Council
- 3. Carmarthen Community Council
- 4. Llanarthney Community Council
- 5. Llanddarog Community Council
- 6. Llandyfaelog Community Council
- 7. Llanegwad Community Council
- 8. Llanelli Rural Council
- 9. Llanfihangel Rhos-y-Corn Community Council
- 10. Llanfihangel-ar-Arth Community Council
- 11. Llanfynydd Community Council
- 12. Llangain Community Council
- 13. Llangynnwr Community Council
- 14. Llangyndeyrn Community Council
- 15. Llanllawddog Community Council
- 16. Llanllwni Community Council
- 17. Llanpumsaint Community Council
- 18. Llansawel Community Council
- 19. Talley Community Council

5.3 Appendix C

Campaign groups, interest groups, local amenity user groups and representative bodies potentially affected by the route corridor options

- Abergwili Angling Club
- Bike Brechfa
- Brechfa Forest Tourism Cluster Group
- Carmarthen Amateur Angling Association
- Carmarthen and District Angling Club
- Carmarthen and District Ramblers
- Carmarthen Coracle & Netsmen's Association
- Carmarthenshire Riders Group
- Clwb Godre'r Mynydd Du Shooting and Fishing Club
- Cog Nation
- Crosshands and District Angling Association
- Dinefwr Ramblers' Group
- Gwaun Cae Gurwen Angling Association
- Gwendraeth Valley Paddlers
- Hawk Adventures, Llanarthney,
- Hills Farm Stables, Carmarthen
- Llandeilo Angling Association
- Llanelli Ramblers
- Ramblers Cymru
- The British Horse Society Cymru
- Towy Valley Riding Club
- Tywi Fishing Nantgaredig

5.4 Appendix D

Hard to reach groups who may be less willing or able to engage in the consultation process

- Agricultural workers
- Carers
- Elderly (+65)
- Faith
- Holiday home owners
- Homeless people
- Interest groups
- Local businesses
- Migrant workers
- People with disabilities
- People with learning difficulties
- Refugee and Asylum seekers
- Rural/isolated communities
- Schools
- Socially deprived communities
- Those from minority groups
- Those with a long term physical or mental health problem
- Those with poor internet connectivity
- Those without transport
- Time poor, e.g. working parents
- Tourism organisations
- Tourists
- Travellers
- Young people(16-24 year olds)

5.5 Appendix E

Inspection copies of project documents will be available to view at the following locations:

Carmarthenshire County Council Offices

Carmarthenshire County Council, 3 Spilman Street, Carmarthen, SA31 1LQ (Opening hours: 9.00am to 5.00pm)

Carmarthen Library

St Peters Street, Carmarthen, SA31 1LN

(Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 9.30am to 7.00pm,

Thursday and Saturday: 9.30am to 5.00pm)

Penbontbren Stores

Llanpumsaint, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA33 6BZ (Opening hours: Monday to Saturday 8.00am to 8.00pm, Sunday 9.00am to 1.00pm)

Llanddarog Post Office

Llanddarog, Carmarthen, Dyfed, SA32 8NS

(Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 5.30pm,

Saturday 8.30am to 12.30pm)

Rhydargaeau Post Office

Llanllawddog, Carmarthenshire, SA32 7DR

(Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm and

2.00pm to 5.30pm, Wednesday and Saturday 9.00am to 1.00pm)

Dryslwyn Post Office

Llangathen, Carmarthen, SA32 8QX

(Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00am to 12.30pm and

1.30pm to 5.30pm, Wednesday and Saturday 9.00am to 12.30pm)

Brechfa Community Shop

Brechfa, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA32 7QY

(Monday and Thursday 9.00am to 1.00pm, Tuesday and Saturday 9.00am to 12.00pm)

Abergwili Post Office

8 High Street, Abergwili, Carmarthen, SA31 2JA

(Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.30pm, Saturday 9.00am to 12.00pm)

6. Contact information

Various methods of contact will be available throughout the consultation process including:

Web: www.westernpower.co.uk/brechfaforest

Email: info@brechfaforestconnection.co.uk

Post: FREEPOST B FOREST CONNECTION

Freephone: 0800 019 3518

Twitter: @WPD_Brechfa