

MID WALES CONJOINED PUBLIC INQUIRY  
5 WINDFARM APPLICATIONS AND A 132KV POWER LINE CONNECTION.  
SESSION 4 : CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Written Statement regarding the intersection of the proposed [Red Route North] National Grid 400KV powerline with Offa's Dyke Path National Trail / Montgomeryshire Canal towpath at Carreghwfa Grid sq. SJ25/20 and SJ25/19 [ Explorer OS 240 1;25 000 ] in Powys .

I am describing a walk taken along ODP/canal towpath of about 600 metres between Grid Refs. SJ254203 [ Carreghwfa Bottom Lock/bridge 95 ] and SJ253/198 Grade 2\* listed Aqueduct across R. Vyrnwy ] in sunshine a few days ago . Volunteers have been faithfully restoring this canal section , but as yet there is no boat traffic . The conservation of wildlife is an ongoing priority so one sees a rich diversity . It is a very tranquil stretch and little sound except for birdsong . Traffic noise from the B4398 on the left is minimal and vehicles are hidden by hedgerows.. This section is built on aqueducts well above the water meadows of the R. Vyrnwy floodplain and the sky dominates here . The Canal settles into this tranquil rural landscape and views on both sides look over fields , but to the left rises up Breidden Hill[Rodney's Pillar ] and seems very close , while to the right are glimpsed , through trees , the wooded hills near Llansanffraid . The crossing of the canal aqueduct over the R.Vyrnwy is quite spectacular . A very rewarding walking experience and the ODP here gives easy access for all to enjoy .

The National Grid inform us that the steel pylons on Red Route North could be up to 50m in height and spaced 360m apart . The powerline is shown on National Grid plans as crossing over the 600m section described in the walk above in an E-W direction .

How might the walking experience be in a few years time if windfarms and this powerline get permission ? The canal is well above the fields so the steel structures and cables will be so close as to fill the sky . The view across to Breidden hill will be interrupted by cabling . The pylons from a side view along the ODP could rank in a line , seeming oppressive . The height of the powerline structure would be totally out of proportion with any other features in the vicinity . It would be an industrialised landscape .

Future planning applications can be measured and evaluated against policies and environmental surveys . It is , at present , more than reasonable to think that the landscape and visual amenity of path users here is likely to be severely harmed by the impact of such a powerline . Undergrounding must be the way forward here , as in the Meifod area .