

Electricity Act 1989: Section s36

Town and Country Planning Act 1990: Section 90

Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and
Wales) Regulations 2000

Electricity Generating Stations and Overhead Lines (Inquiries Procedure)
(England and Wales) Rules 2007

Application by RWE npower renewables Limited
for a 150 MW wind farm and habitat restoration
at Carnedd Wen

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE: LOCAL TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS

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SUMMARY OF TRANSPORT EVIDENCE (CARNEDD WEN)

- 1.1 The transport evidence has been submitted for Session 2 of the Public Inquiry and is solely in respect of the local transport considerations that are deemed relevant to the Carnedd Wen Development. The consideration of the wider strategic transport issues and the cumulative construction traffic effects, Carnedd Wen in combination with other wind farm proposals, will be dealt with during Session 4 of the Public Inquiry. Any references to Appendices hereafter relate to those which have been attached to my evidence in chief.
- 1.2 The evidence which I have prepared for this public inquiry is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institutions and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

2013 SEI (Chapter 14: Transport)

- 1.3 I have examined and summarized the key changes over the earlier 2008 ES and 2011 SEI. Further reductions in the off- site construction traffic estimates will result from the refinements made to the scheme since the 2011 SEI. These have been quantified in the 2013 SEI in paragraphs 31 to 35 and Table 14.3 in relation to Timber Vehicle Movements, paragraphs 38 to 45 in relation to Stone Aggregate and paragraphs 46 to 48 in relation to Concrete.
- 1.4 The majority of traffic to and from the Carnedd Wen development is anticipated to come from the east reflecting the relative location of various materials suppliers and the larger population centres from which construction workers might be expected to commute from. The majority of the trips to and from Carnedd Wen will converge upon and travel along the A458 trunk road to the development site access.
- 1.5 Tables 14.5, 14.6 and 14.7 of the 2013 SEI summarize the construction traffic flows and their contribution to background traffic on the adjoining highway network. It has been demonstrated (paragraph 70 and Table 14.8) that the magnitude of development traffic impact, where it would be greatest (Link 9 on the A458 in proximity to the development) would be negligible and its significance can therefore considered to be neutral or slight.

Development Site Access

- 1.6 I have undertaken a further review of the access strategy for Carnedd Wen. I have recommended to the Applicant that access be taken solely from one point on the A458 trunk road. Accordingly the proposed access strategy, as detailed in the 2013 SEI (Chapters 2 and 14), proposes a single point of entry taken from a new junction to be constructed on the A458. It will be designed to accord with trunk road standards (Core Document: CPL-TRA-001) and be laid out to facilitate the movement of all site clearance and construction traffic.
- 1.7 It is a matter of record that the highway authority responsible for the A458 trunk road, the Welsh Government (Transport), has approved the proposed access arrangements (Section 14.4.1 and Appendix 14.3 of the 2013 SEI and the Statement of Common Ground refer). These have been subjected to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (**Appendix 1**).
- 1.8 I have also demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Welsh Government – Transport that the approved site access can be optimised at the detail design stage so as to minimise the impact upon vegetation/trees (**Appendices 2 and 3**).
- 1.9 I consider the Applicant’s proposal to provide a single point of access directly onto the A458 trunk road will represent a substantial improvement over what was originally proposed and assessed (ES 2008).

Construction Traffic Management

- 1.10 The Applicant (RWE) and I recognise that traffic management will be an important element of the proposed development’s mitigation strategy. This is acknowledged and affirmed in the 2013 SEI (Section 14.6, paragraphs 71 to 84).
- 1.11 The proposed strategy focuses upon both the management of general construction traffic at the local level (scheduling, routeing and timing of deliveries) and the wider strategic implications of transporting Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) from Ellesmere Port along various trunk roads, through Welshpool town centre and then westwards along the A458.

- 1.12 At the local level, it is proposed that a site traffic management plan (2013 SEI paragraphs 50, 84 and 91) would be set up and operated by the main contractor. This would, inter alia, set out the hours of working, the time periods for deliveries and the proposed off-site haulage routes.
- 1.13 At the strategic level, RWE has worked collaboratively with Renewable UK Cymru and other wind farm developers in connection with the preparation of a Strategic Traffic Management Plan (sTMP). This is outlined in the 2013 SEI (Section 14.2). It is proposed that all AIL deliveries to the wind farm developments will be co-ordinated and be undertaken with police escorts. This will ensure the movements are made safely with minimum disruption to the other road users and to the communities along the delivery route.

Position Reached with the Strategic Highway Authority

- 1.14 I have met and corresponded with Officers at Welsh Government (Transport); **Appendix 4.** The agreed position has been reported upon in the 2013 SEI (Appendix 14.2) and has been confirmed in the WG(T)'s Statement of Case for Session 2 of the Inquiry.
- 1.15 The means of access is agreed and the further technical approvals of construction details and the satisfactory implementation of the works will be covered by planning conditions.
- 1.16 WG(T) is content that the traffic management proposals which are detailed in the strategic Traffic Management Plan are acceptable in principle in respect of the Carnedd Wen wind farm application. The requirement to adhere to these principles will be covered by planning conditions. The planning conditions agreed between WG(T) and RWE for consideration at the public inquiry are listed in **Appendix 5.**
- 1.17 A Statement of Common Ground on the local transport issues has been submitted under separate cover to the Inquiry.

Position Reached with the Local Highway Authority

1.18 I have met and corresponded with Officers of Powys County Council in order to seek resolution of its highways objections (**Appendix 6**).

1.19 The Council has agreed in principle that the AIL route to the Carnedd Wen development, as set out in the sTMP, would be acceptable provided it is given assurances that structural assessments and building condition surveys will be carried out on the B4381 Severn Street in connection with the Canal Bridge and the adjacent buildings' cellars respectively.

1.20 Accordingly an Addendum to the sTMP Section 3 (copy provided in **Appendix 7**) has been submitted to Powys CC. As regards the other matter, concerning the inspection and monitoring of the structural integrity of buildings' cellars, it has been agreed that this can be covered by a planning condition.

1.21 It is now a matter of record that the Council's updated position (Opening on behalf of Powys County Council, page 28, paragraph 68) is as follows:

"68. The Council are, however, satisfied that through the significant additional work the developer has done they have demonstrated that this development can take place without unacceptable impacts on the highway network (whether that is the trunk road network or the local highway network). There will of course need to be detailed conditions to control this process and a section 106 agreement will be required to ensure compliance with the sTMP, but those will be negotiated through the course of the inquiry."

1.22 The Council's Statement of Case for Session 2 of the Inquiry also confirms its position (paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 of its Statement) that it has no objection in principle to the AIL delivery route proposed for Carnedd Wen and that it takes no issue in relation to local highways. A Statement of Common Ground on the local transport issues has been submitted under separate cover to the Inquiry.

1.23 A draft set of Conditions proposed by the Council has already been before the Inquiry. These will be further developed for consideration in Session 4. Attempts will be made to agree a common set of conditions, so far as is possible, before then.

CONCLUSIONS

- 1.24 I consider that my evidence, supported by the 2013 SEI and the agreements that have been recorded with both the Strategic and Local Highway Authorities, demonstrates that the site can be adequately accessed and that its construction traffic can be effectively managed so as to minimise any discernible impact or delays upon the local and strategic road networks.
- 1.25 The access strategy for Carnedd Wen, for both general construction traffic and Abnormal Indivisible Loads, will not require any modifications to any of the neighbouring country lanes. Carnedd Wen will provide access solely from the A458 trunk road. Indeed, the approved layout can be optimised to minimise its impact upon land and adjoining vegetation. It is proposed that all of the Carnedd Wen construction traffic will be directed along roads classified as being appropriate for HGV traffic.
- 1.26 I therefore conclude that the Inspector can be satisfied that a robust transport assessment has been carried out (as required by National Policy Statement EN3) and that planning permission can be granted subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions to secure the provision of adequate access and traffic management measures.