

**Electricity Act 1989 (Sections 36, 37, 62(3) & Schedule 8) Town and Country  
Planning Act 1990 (Section 90) and the Electricity Generating Stations and  
Overhead Lines (Inquiries Procedure)(England and Wales) Rules 2007**

**Application by SP Manweb PLC, dated 2 December 2009 for consent under  
Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 to install and keep installed a 132kV  
overhead electric line connection from the proposed Llandinam Wind Farm to  
Welshpool Substation (the “Application”)**

**Summary Proof of Evidence  
Of  
Rory Brooke of URS Corporation  
On  
Socio-Economics (including Tourism)  
SPM/ECONOMIC/POE/BROOKE/009B**

## 1. **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

1.1 My name is Rory Brooke. I have over 22 years of professional economic development and development planning experience. I have prepared a proof of evidence for socio-economic issues associated with the single 132kV overhead line from Llandinam Repowering Wind Farm to Welshpool Substation (the '**Llandinam Scheme**').

## 2. **SCOPE OF PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

2.1 The Proof presents:

2.1.1 The planning policy context in Wales relevant to socio-economic issues;

2.1.2 An assessment based upon the Updated ES (CD/SPM/ES/01) of the socio-economic impacts, including on tourism, of the Llandinam Scheme;

2.1.3 The cumulative socio-economic effects of other developments in and around the study area, and

2.1.4 The matters to be addressed at the Inquiry as set out by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (CD/COM/11) with specific reference to impacts on the use and enjoyment of land in the vicinity.

## 3. **CONSULTATION FEEDBACK ON SOCIO ECONOMIC ISSUES**

3.1 Concerns raised by stakeholders in relation to socio-economic issues generally focussed on the potential visual impacts on the rural landscape of the area, and the implications this could have for both the local residents and visitors.

## 4. **PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

4.1 At the UK level relevant policies refer to the wider economic impacts of overhead lines. Welsh policies refer to the economic opportunities offered by

renewable energy whilst acknowledging that such developments should limit negative impacts such as visual and environmental effects.

- 4.2 Local policies in Powys recognise the value of tourism to the local economy and identify specific tourism assets which may be impacted by the Llandinam Scheme. The relevant local policies also state that renewable energy developments need to meet landscape, environmental and amenity requirements.

## 5. **SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND TOURISM IMPACTS**

- 5.1 The principal aim of the socio-economic study was to determine: the sensitivity of receptors<sup>1</sup>; the magnitude of impacts; and the consequent significance of effects. This assessment was made by considering findings from a range of sources concerning impacts on farms/agricultural land, tourism attractions, tourism accommodation, local community assets, tourism supporting businesses; and other businesses (not captured elsewhere).
- 5.2 The magnitude of impacts are categorised as high, medium, low or negligible, and the sensitivity of receptors are categorised as being high, medium or low. The assessment of significance is based on the product of impact magnitude and the sensitivity of receptors.
- 5.3 The quality of the landscape, examined through the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) and the prosperity of the visitor economy are clearly interlinked in the study area. However, there is a distinction between the two assessments. The LVIA looks at the quality of visual effects whereas this assessment looks at these effects in a social and economic context.

### ***Construction Phase***

- 5.4 The assessment determined that no significant socio-economic effects would arise from the construction and decommissioning of the Llandinam Scheme,

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<sup>1</sup> Receptors are individuals, organisations or groups who are users or beneficiaries of socio-economic resources which could be affected by the Llandinam Scheme.

although both phases would result in a modest amount of employment locally.

### ***Operational Phase***

- 5.5 Population – the potential impacts on population would only arise from workers coming to the area or people choosing to move away due to the perceived negative impacts. I consider the extent of either incident occurring to be minimal. As such, they are deemed to have a **negligible effect** on the population and therefore are considered **not significant**.
- 5.6 Local Community Assets – nine out of 15 resources would have negligible magnitude and five a low magnitude in terms of impact, because of the intervening distance and limited number of vantages that are likely to materialise. Several local trails would pass under the Llandinam Scheme, however this is for a small fraction of the overall trail. Seven resources (trails/walks) are considered to have a medium sensitivity. Overall, the potential impacts on all local community assets are classified as **not significant**.
- 5.7 Employment – the low maintenance of the Llandinam Scheme once installed means that there would be a **negligible effect** on employment locally and therefore is considered to be **not significant**.
- 5.8 Farming/Agriculture – consultation with landowners has found a general acceptance of the Llandinam Scheme subject to the resolution of a few isolated issues. The expected magnitude of impact is expected to be negligible and as such all impacts would be **not significant**.
- 5.9 Tourism Attractions - 11 out of 13 tourist attractions are anticipated to experience negligible magnitude impacts predominantly because of the intervening distance from the resource to the Llandinam Scheme, vegetation cover and the overall perceptibility of the line. The Llandinam Scheme will be visible on a number of walks/trails but will only be visible at a small number of vantages – and for only a fraction of its length – along each of these trails. In my judgement I think this is unlikely to discourage usage to any significant

level. Overall, the potential impacts on all of the tourist attractions are classified as **not significant**.

- 5.10 Tourist accommodation – two of the 22 tourist accommodation resources are classified as experiencing a medium magnitude of impact, with the remaining 20 being classified as negligible or low. The two resources of medium magnitude would have direct views of the Llandinam Scheme. However the impact of these views will not affect all patrons due to the orientation of rooms/caravans. Nine resources are classified as being of medium sensitivity with the quality of the landscape and the proximity of the regional/national trails being particularly relevant. Overall, the impacts on 21 of the 22 tourist accommodation resources are **not significant**. The one resource where **moderate adverse** impacts are envisaged is the Tavern Caravan Park, which could result in a small reduction in visitor numbers at this resource and is therefore **significant**. However, visitors have similar accommodation options elsewhere in the area meaning the local economy is unlikely to be affected by this adverse significant impact.
- 5.11 Wider Tourism Area – none of the wider visitor attractions would be expected to see a significant adverse impact as a result of the Llandinam Scheme. As a result it is expected that the Llandinam Scheme would have a **negligible** impact and as such considered **not significant** on tourism across the study area.

### ***Mitigation***

- 5.12 The main strategy for minimising the negative effects of the Llandinam Scheme is avoidance of negative effects through careful planning, design and routeing.
- 5.13 Mitigation relating to landscape and visual impact will have consequential benefits from a socio-economic perspective. In this respect, a primary mitigation measure for tourism – particularly for the Tavern Caravan Park – will be to use a screening approach. This is subject to landowner approval, but would have the residual effect of reducing the impact to **minor** and therefore **not significant**.

## 6. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

6.1 I have considered three cumulative impact scenarios:

6.1.1 Cumulative Scenario 1 – Llandinam Scheme + Llandinam Repowering Wind Farm.

6.1.2 Cumulative Scenario 2 – Cumulative Scenario 1 + other conjoined inquiry wind farms (SSA B and SSA C).

6.1.3 Cumulative Scenario 3 – Cumulative Scenario 2 + non-inquiry proposed wind farms + Mid Wales development consent order (DCO) connections + Town and Country Planning (TCPA) development (including single turbines).

6.2 The significant socio-economic effects resulting from the cumulative schemes would likely be moderate beneficial and major beneficial impacts on employment under Scenario 2 and 3 respectively, particularly during the construction phase.

6.3 There are not expected to be any significant cumulative effects upon the population.

6.4 Although under Scenario 2 there is expected to be a moderately adverse effect upon the western section of the Kerry Ridgeway and under Scenario 3 there would be significant effects upon the Kerry Ridgeway and the Sustrans National Cycle Trail 81 (these effects though mainly relate to the contribution of the other schemes), I judge that under both Scenarios there would be no significant cumulative effects on tourism overall because the vast majority of tourist attractions and accommodation would experience no significant effects. There are not expected to be any significant cumulative effects under Scenario 1.

## 7. **ASSESSMENT OF MATTER 7(C)**

7.1 The Secretary of State suggested that a key matter which should be considered at this Inquiry is the impact of the Llandinam Scheme on the use and enjoyment of land in the vicinity, including farming activities and on users of Public Rights of Way (Secretary of State matter 7(c) (CD/COM/11)).

7.2 I have not identified any significant effects on the walks and trails in the study area. This is predominantly because the Llandinam Scheme, if it is in sight, will only be prevalent for a small proportion of the overall walk/trail.

## 8. **CONCLUSION**

8.1 In respect of the operational stage the Llandinam Scheme would not have any significant impacts upon the local population, economy, local community assets, tourist attractions or tourism more broadly.

8.2 The operational stage would be expected to have a moderately significant effect upon tourism accommodation at the Tavern Caravan Park. However, residual effects at Tavern Caravan Park would be minor and not significant (if agreement over mitigation measures are reached with the landowner).