

VYRNWY FRANKTON CONNECTION

PHASE ONE CONSULTATION

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Winter 2023/24



GREEN GEN CYMRU'S PROPOSALS:

Green GEN Cymru is part of the Bute Energy Group and will connect the renewable energy generated by Bute Energy's wind and solar parks to the national grid.

We're acting now to build and operate a green energy network that will make sure 100% renewable energy can flow to communities. This new connection will help address the climate emergency that is affecting our livelihoods, landscapes and wildlife by providing the necessary infrastructure to connect green energy to the grid, ready to supply homes and businesses.

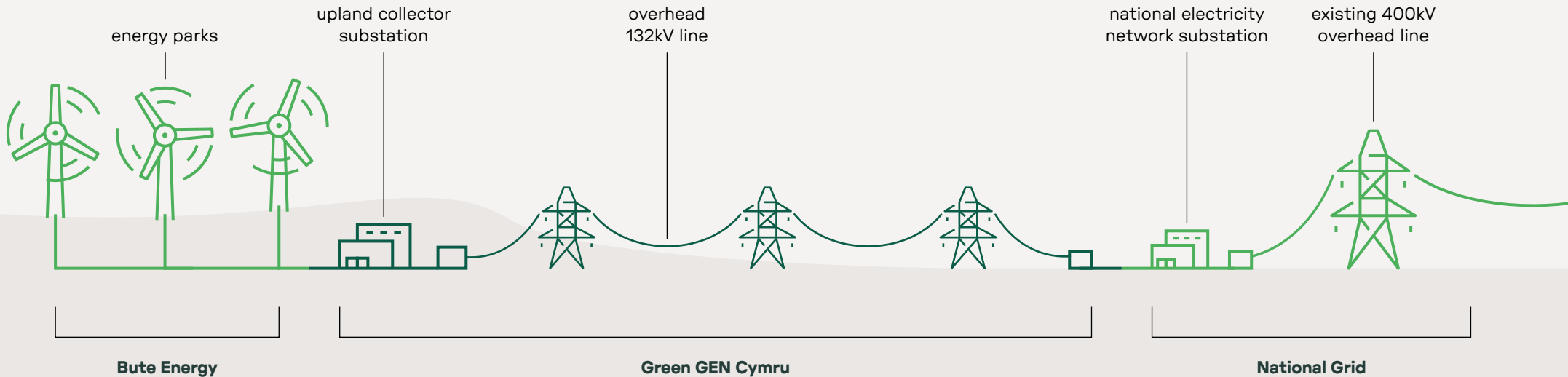
We're proposing a new 132kV overhead line, collector substation and cable sealing end compound to

connect Llyn Lort and other energy parks in Mid Wales to the national grid near Lower Frankton, Shropshire. The Vyrnwy Frankton connection will be approximately 50km in length and will use 27m pylons.

We were pleased to be able to share our proposals with stakeholders and communities in our first consultation in Autumn 2023. We would like to thank everyone who attended events, provided feedback, and took part in the consultation.

It was good to talk to people to hear your thoughts and understand the affects you think the proposals could have on the area. From these conversations, it's clear that you want us to think carefully about visual effects, as well as impacts on local people and landowners. These are important issues for us too.

In this summary you will find further information about the key themes people raised in their feedback, as well as how we will use this to inform our plans moving forward.



WHY WE NEED A NEW CONNECTION

Climate change is threatening our livelihoods, landscapes and wildlife.

The challenges of climate change are well recognised by the UK and Welsh Governments, and the local authorities in Powys and Shropshire. Both councils report that the effects of climate change are already being seen in the counties.

As we move away from fossil fuels, new energy generation will be located where it can capture sustainable sources like wind, tidal and solar. The electricity grid will also change to connect these new sources to homes and businesses.

In Mid Wales and Shropshire, new energy parks are planned but the existing electricity network does not have the capacity to connect them. To end the use of fossil fuels we need new infrastructure and quickly. If we do not upgrade the electricity network quickly, we risk missing renewable targets and failing to address the climate emergency.

Green GEN Cymru's Vyrnwy Frankton connection will mean that the energy generated by the new energy parks can be used in homes and businesses, locally and nationally.

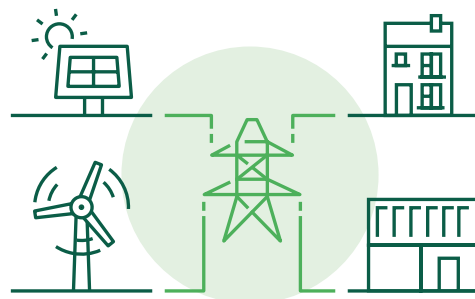
The infrastructure we need to transition to a low carbon economy can also bring many benefits. It has the potential to create new skills and jobs, nationally and locally. And it will support the adoption of low carbon technologies in our homes and businesses.

Our project can also contribute to a more resilient and reliable network for the region – providing for a future in which we all rely more on electricity as we move away from oil and gas.

Addressing the climate emergency means:



**Increasing renewable generation,
reducing use of fossil fuels**



**New grid infrastructure to connect
renewables to homes and businesses**



**Acting fast and delivering
projects efficiently**

OUR CONSULTATION: AUTUMN 2023

Our phase one consultation took place between **6 September and 18 October 2023.**

The consultation asked for your feedback on:

- the proposed site for the collector substation and cable sealing end compound in Powys
- the preferred route we've identified for an overhead line through Powys and Shropshire

We held stakeholder briefings, webinars, and public events in the communities closest to the project.

It was good to meet so many people in the community and it was a valuable way for us to hear your thoughts on our proposals.

During the consultation we asked whether there were any factors we hadn't considered in our work to date, and what you wanted us to consider as we develop our proposals.

Your local knowledge is invaluable in helping us understand and mitigate any potential impacts of the project, and outline areas you would like us to consider for the community benefit fund.



Event attendees

692



Feedback submissions

183

To find out more, visit our website: www.greengenvyrnwyfrankton.com

YOUR FEEDBACK: WHAT YOU TOLD US AND HOW WE'RE CONSIDERING IT

We want to thank everyone for the feedback we've received. It helps us understand the factors you think we should consider and plays an important part in how the project progresses.

We received comments about the overhead line itself and the routeing decisions, as well as broader comments about the need for low carbon technology. We have summarised the feedback into key themes below.

We will also publish a consultation report which will contain a full breakdown of all the feedback we've received, and how each of these comments is being taken into account. This will be available at our next consultation in 2024.

Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5
Cefn Coch to Llangyniew	Llangyniew to Meifod	Meifod to Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain to Llanymynech	Llanymynech to Lower Frankton

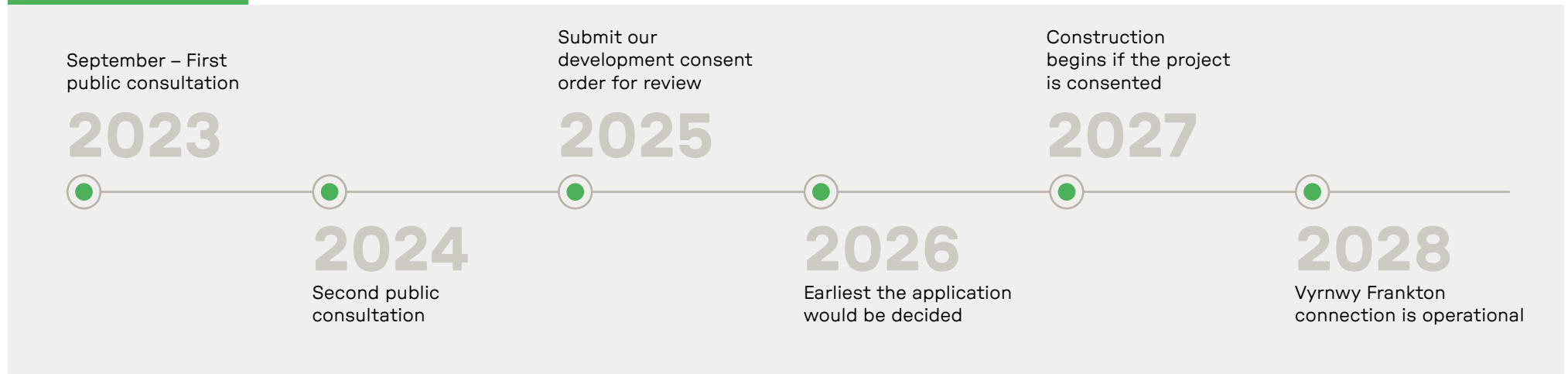
Topic	What you said	What we're doing
Section 1	<i>You have requested part of the route in this section be undergrounded through the area of the proposed National Park currently being proposed by National Resources Wales.</i>	The North East Wales National Park Designation Project has outlined a search area to extend the existing Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB and turn this extended area into a National Park. This search area outlines the geographical limits of the search area, rather the extent of the proposed National Park itself. The boundary of the park has not yet been established. There is a small overlap of the search area to the north west of Llanfair Caereinion. We will continue to monitor how the National Park proposals progresses to understand what it means for our project.
	<i>There was concern about the visual impacts of pylons in the rural setting of the uplands and the potential effects on individual dwellings.</i>	We understand the unique position of those living in the Powys uplands, and the value of the landscape for these people. The route in this section has been chosen as it provides opportunities to reduce effects on residential properties. Where possible, we will use screening from the valley and existing woodland to reduce visual effects.

Topic	What you said	What we're doing
Section 2	<p><i>It's clear people are concerned about flooding in the Meifod Valley - you want to ensure we don't make flooding worse and have asked how we can route in an area that floods.</i></p>	<p>We understand people's concerns about flooding in the Meifod Valley.</p> <p>We will consider any risk to flooding as a result of our proposals during the next stage of our design development and consider how we can reduce any effects.</p>
	<p><i>Many people are concerned about the visual impacts of pylons within the Meifod Valley.</i></p>	<p>People are particularly concerned about the visual impacts of the pylons through the Meifod Valley.</p> <p>The preferred route in this area has been chosen to reduce effects across a range of topics including heritage, agriculture and biodiversity, and has been intentionally routed away from Mathrafal. Further information on the routeing through this area can be found in the Routeing and Consultation Document available on the website.</p> <p>We understand the value of this area to local people and will continue to assess our proposals to see if they need to be modified. We will also think carefully about the visual effects of pylons as we develop more detailed plans.</p>
Section 3	<p><i>People are concerned about the visual impacts of the pylons as seen from Meifod and Llansantffraid.</i></p>	<p>We appreciate that you have concerns over the proximity of the overhead line to communities along the route, particularly Meifod and Llansantffraid.</p> <p>There are significant constraints around this area and our routeing report outlines why we've chosen the valley.</p> <p>We will use screening opportunities and natural dips in the land to site the pylons to reduce visual impacts as much as possible.</p>
	<p><i>There were requests for this section of the route to be undergrounded as previously proposed by National Grid.</i></p>	<p>The Vyrnwy Frankton connection is currently being proposed as an overhead line.</p> <p>We will develop our proposals sensitively and assess if any of the connection needs to be placed underground in response to ongoing assessments and consultation feedback.</p>
Section 4	<p><i>The feedback made clear that people are worried about the potential impact on tourism in the area, particularly the existing holiday parks in this section of the route.</i></p>	<p>Pylons feature in many areas in England and Wales where landscape, agriculture and tourism are thriving parts of the local economy – electrical infrastructure and these activities co-exist in many places.</p> <p>We do understand the concern about potential impacts on established holiday parks in the area.</p> <p>Where possible, we will route away from these sites, and will think carefully about where the pylons are located to try and reduce visual impacts as much as possible.</p>
	<p><i>You expressed concerns about how the overhead line would interact with existing infrastructure such as the Montgomery canal.</i></p>	<p>The preferred route currently crosses the Montgomery canal at a point just south of Carreghofa Locks.</p> <p>We would work to place the pylons as far from the canal as possible, using existing trees for screening.</p> <p>We will continue to liaise with the Canal & River Trust to treat this area as sensitively as possible.</p>

Topic	What you said	What we're doing
Section 4	<i>You want to know more about how the overhead line could interact with the proposed Llanymynech bypass.</i>	<p>We understand the subject of the proposed Llanymynech bypass will be a concern for some in the area. The proposed Llanymynech bypass has been a consideration for over 20 years, and has this year been confirmed by UK Government as 'not a priority'.</p> <p>If the project is funded in the future, we would work with stakeholders including Welsh Government on how the projects could exist together, including routing the overhead line over the road, as is commonplace in many areas.</p>
Section 5	<i>It is clear you want to know more about the national electricity transmission network substation near to Lower Frankton.</i>	<p>The proposed substation near Lower Frankton to connect our overhead line to the national electricity transmission network is being proposed by National Grid.</p> <p>As a result, it's not part of this project and will be consulted on separately.</p> <p>We understand this will cause concern for those living in the area. We would like to assure you that when National Grid has developed its proposals further, this information will be shared locally</p>
Low carbon energy	<i>In your feedback you expressed concerns about the need for low carbon technology, specifically the wind farms being proposed by Bute Energy.</i>	<p>The UK and Welsh Governments both want to accelerate the development of renewable energy as part of plans to address the climate emergency.</p> <p>As we move away from fossil fuels, new energy generation will be located where it can capture sustainable sources like wind, tidal and solar.</p> <p>If consented, Bute Energy's Energy Parks could supply 25% of Wales' renewable energy needs, providing clean, green energy to homes and businesses across the country.</p> <p>This would make a significant contribution to the UK and Welsh Governments aspirations to reach Net Zero by 2050.</p>
EMFs	<i>You have concerns about Electromagnetic Fields associated with being near an 132kV overhead line.</i>	<p>Any use of electricity involves exposure to electric and magnetic fields. This includes switching on a light bulb, using an oven or watching the TV.</p> <p>What is considered a 'safe' level of exposure is a decision taken by the government and is subject to advice from the Health Protection Agency and international governing bodies.</p> <p>Data from the Energy Networks Association currently shows that EMF exposure from walking under a 132kV line is the same as walking passed a microwave that's turned on and in use.</p> <p>As such, it is considered a safe level of exposure.</p> <p>For further information on EMFs, we encourage you to view information made available by the UK Health Security Agency. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/electromagnetic-fields.</p>
Undergrounding	<i>You have asked us to consider undergrounding part or the whole of the proposed overhead line.</i>	<p>The Vyrnwy Frankton connection is currently being proposed as an overhead line.</p> <p>Overhead lines can be developed quickly – providing the new connection quickly is key if we're to bring low carbon energy to homes and businesses as soon as possible. Underground cables are typically between 6 and 10 times more expensive and create more ground disturbance during construction.</p> <p>We will develop our proposals sensitively and assess if any of the connection needs to be placed underground in response to ongoing assessments and consultation feedback.</p>

Topic	What you said	What we're doing
Routeing requests	<i>Many of you suggested alternatives to the route at various sections.</i>	Thank you to those who made alternative suggestions to parts of the route, these have been valuable to us. All alternative route suggestions will be considered by our routeing team against the Holford rules, visual effects, environmental features, technical feasibility, and cost.
National Grid proposals	<i>Several comments referenced a previous National Grid proposal in the area as a comparison to this project.</i>	While the National Grid proposals of 2013 share some similarities with the Vyrnwy Frankton connection, the two routes were proposed by different companies with different environmental teams. Any similarities in the route are a result of feasibility and not a desire to keep them the same. The Vyrnwy Frankton connection is a 132kV overhead line, rather than a 400kV that was proposed by National Grid. In addition, we are proposing 27m pylons rather than 50m pylons.
Consultation	<i>You asked us if we could provide further details of our proposals at consultation, including visualisations of how the pylons may look in the landscape.</i>	We are at a very early stage of our proposals for the Vyrnwy Frankton connection. Our initial consultation helped gather feedback to inform the project. We will have further details of the route, alongside proposed pylon locations, at the next phase of consultation. Thank you to those who provided feedback on what they would like to see at consultation. We will take these suggestions into consideration and see whether they can be included at our next consultation in 2024.

Project timeline



NEXT STEPS

Your feedback on the consultation has given us lots of valuable information which will be taken into account as we develop the project.



Working with landowners

We have a dedicated lands team who are currently working with landowners directly affected by the proposals. We will continue to engage with landowners before the next consultation in 2024.

If you are a landowner that has not been contacted by our lands team, please get in touch using the community contact details on the back page.



Consultation report

We will prepare a consultation report which contains a full breakdown of all the feedback we've received, and how each of these comments is being taken into account.

This will be available at our next consultation.



Stakeholder engagement

We'll also continue to work closely with our stakeholders for the duration of the project including regular updates on the project's progress.



Routeing and pylon placement

We will continue working on the routeing which will be influenced by the feedback we received.

We have also started work to establish where the pylons might be sited. We will have more information about both of these aspects at the next consultation.



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