



## National Grid Milford Haven Gas Connection Projects: Felindre to Tirley Pipeline

### YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

#### What is the pipeline project?

The National Grid gas pipeline project plans to reinforce links between two new Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals at the port of Milford Haven and the existing national gas network. This is so that gas can be imported by ship into the UK.

The first stage of the pipeline is already under construction – a new pipeline linking Milford Haven with the existing gas network near Swansea.

There are existing pipelines linking Felindre, near Swansea, to the main national network in England, but they are not sufficient to transport the large amounts of gas involved. Therefore a new pipeline of some 115 miles in length is proposed between Felindre and Tirley in Gloucestershire.

The proposed pipeline scheme is the biggest ever planned in the UK.

#### Who is responsible for it?

The Office for Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) is the organisation that regulates the gas industry. It has a role in issuing instructions for pipelines to be built, based on privatised gas suppliers establishing the need for a pipeline. To find out more about OFGEM, please visit its website: [www.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

National Grid is responsible for designing and building the pipeline. Proposals are submitted by National Grid to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for consideration. If the DTI considers the scheme appropriate, it will grant permission for the pipeline to be built.

***Our view:*** Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) believes that the whole rationale for building gas pipelines should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). An SEA would look at wider aspects of national gas supply and assess the environmental impact of schemes as a whole. This would give us a better understanding of whether the current proposal really represents the best option available.

## What is Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's role?

BBNPA is both the local planning authority for the Brecon Beacons National Park and also landowner along parts of the proposed pipeline route. As a planning authority, National Grid has to consult with BBNPA over its plans and listen to any concerns it might raise. However, given the national profile of the proposed scheme, ultimate responsibility for approving the plans rests with the DTI.

As a landowner along parts of the route, the Authority is also able to express concerns and request more specific measures across the land it owns.

## Where will the pipeline go?

The pipeline will link a new gas terminal at Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire with the national gas network at Tirley in Gloucestershire. The first section, from Milford Haven to Aberdulais, is already under construction. Detailed plans for the second stage of the route, from Felindre to Tirley, will be published by National Grid on 14 August. This section of the route is planned to pass through areas of Brecon Beacons National Park and a UNESCO designated Geopark – the first in Wales. A Geopark is an internationally recognised landscape of exceptional geological importance.

The pipeline is planned to enter the National Park in the west near Myddfai, following a route to the south of the A40 before crossing the road to the west of Brecon and heading north out of the National Park. The proposed route then drops back into the National Park around Hay on Wye. In all, around 16 miles of the pipeline is proposed to run within the National Park boundary.

***Our view:*** *BBNPA's first objective is to conserve the precious National Park environment. The Park is protected by the highest environmental designation in the UK, recognising its special qualities. Geopark status also provides international recognition for the National Park's outstanding geological heritage. However well the pipeline project is planned, BBNPA believes it will have a negative impact on the environment of the National Park. Therefore, BBNPA remains concerned at the principle of the pipeline being routed across the National Park.*

## Why is it coming here?

OFGEM requires National Grid to link new gas terminals to the national network. Many routes between Milford Haven and Tirley have been considered and the latest proposals represent what National Grid believes to be the best option for linking Milford Haven to the national network.

***Our view:*** *BBNPA does not believe that National Grid has yet proved beyond doubt that it is in the national interest to construct the pipeline through the National Park and that there is no reasonable alternative. In BBNPA's view, an*

*independent or DTI-led engineering and health and safety assessment of the proposed route would help clarify these issues. BBNPA will examine National Grid's latest environmental statement to assess whether these issues are being addressed.*

### **When will the work start?**

National Grid plan to commence construction on this part of the pipeline in April 2007.

### **How long will it take?**

National Grid is planning for a six month construction period, so that the entire pipeline is completed by October 2007.

***Our view:*** *BBNPA feels that the extremely short timetable for completing the pipeline does not offer the best chance of making sure that environmental concerns are addressed. BBNPA is also concerned that the planned construction period coincides with the height of the tourist season.*

### **Will the pipeline leave a scar on the landscape?**

National Grid will present detailed plans to restore the landscape as part of its environmental statement. During the construction phase, a strip of land 44 metres wide will have to be cleared – this is approximately the width of a motorway. Therefore very careful consideration needs to be given to how best to restore land to its original condition.

***Our view:*** *The short timescales involved will make it difficult for National Grid to carry out the best possible environmental restoration work, particularly across some of the more remote upland areas, peat bog areas and river crossings. BBNPA Officers are working closely with their National Grid counterparts to make sure these concerns are taken into account. Given favourable weather conditions and with good working practices, restoration work can be relatively successful. However, on more fragile upland habitats the environmental impact is likely to be greater. Restoration work is more difficult and will take significantly longer.*

### **What local disruption will there be during construction?**

If the scheme goes ahead, the construction process is likely to have a number of impacts including road traffic issues and footpath restrictions. National Grid will publish its proposals for how to deal with these issues as part of its latest submission.

***Our view:*** BBNPA is concerned that social and environmental impacts have been underestimated – particularly the potential disruption to tourism and local trade. BBNPA is also keen to see National Grid give detailed traffic management proposals and keep local residents and businesses informed of likely disruption.

### **Will the new pipeline mean that more local people will be able to access mains gas?**

No. The pipeline is solely intended to take high pressure gas from Milford Haven into the existing gas network at Tirley in Gloucestershire. Therefore local availability of mains gas will be unaffected by the pipeline.

### **Is the pipeline safe?**

National Grid is required to confirm to the DTI that the pipeline conforms to all relevant safety standards.

### **What happens now?**

The DTI will look at National Grid's detailed submission and, in due course, decide whether to grant permission to build the pipeline along the route described.

BBNPA will also closely examine National Grid's submission and continue to raise issues where it feels that National Grid has yet to fully address particular concerns.

### **Where can I get more information?**

More information on the project is available from BBNPA's website:  
[www.breconbeacons.org](http://www.breconbeacons.org)

Summaries of the proposals are available from National Grid's website, at:  
<http://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/Gas/Pipelines/milfordhaven>

National Grid has made copies of the full 15 volume environmental statement, including maps, available to view at the following locations:

- City and County of Swansea Council, The Guildhall, Swansea
- Pontarddulais Public Library, St Michael's Avenue, Pontarddulais
- Carmarthenshire County Council, Civic Offices, Crescent Road, Llandeilo
- Ammanford Town Hall
- Llandovery Library, Town Hall, Market Square, Llandovery.
- Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Cambrian Way, Brecon
- BBNPA Visitor Centre, Libanus, Brecon
- Powys County Council, Cambrian Way, Brecon

- Powys Council Offices, Hay-on-Wye
- Herefordshire Council, Blue School House, Clue School Street, Hereford
- “Info in Herefordshire”, Swan House, Eddy Cross Street, Ross-on-Wye
- Forest of Dean District Council, High Street, Coleford
- “One Stop Shop”, 7 Church Street, Newent
- Newent Library, High Street, Newent
- Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester

National Grid also has a freephone information line: 0800 731 0561

### **How do I submit my views on the project?**

Anyone wanting to submit views on the proposals has until **6 October** to do so.

Comments should be submitted to the DTI at the following address:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry  
Department of Trade and Industry  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET.

Please mark your letter for the attention of Mr Gary Mohammed.

National Grid would be grateful if copies of any comments are also sent to:

Katrina Cooper  
For and on behalf of Mr D Gelly  
National Grid Project Manager  
c/o RSK ENSR Environment Limited  
18 Frogmore Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire  
HP3 9RT.