

TECHNICAL OFFICERS'  
WORKING PARTY REPORT

WYE VALLEY AONB  
JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
4<sup>th</sup> July 2016

## **UNDERGROUNDING OF OVERHEAD POWERLINES**

### ***Purpose***

To update members on the undergrounding work of overhead powerlines and seek their approval for a further three proposed schemes.

### ***Recommendations***

That the JAC endorses the programme of undergrounding work including the new schemes at Coppett Hill, Reddings Farm and Penterry.

### ***Key Issues***

- Western Power Distribution (WPD) work in collaboration with the AONB Unit on identifying a programme of undergrounding electricity power-lines in the AONB.
- WPD require the JAC to approve new undergrounding schemes prior to further investigation and evaluation work taking place.
- The new proposed schemes requiring JAC approval are for power lines across Coppett Hill and between Penterry and Reddings Farm near Tintern (see attached maps).
- Two previously approved schemes are still being investigated for potential undergrounding.

### ***Reasons***

Western Power Distribution (WPD) have a budget of £8million for undergrounding across all their regions (South Wales, the South West of England and the Midlands) in the current funding round to 2023. The AONB Development Officer continues to work in partnership with WPD to identify potential undergrounding schemes throughout the AONB. The Wye Valley AONB falls both the WPD South Wales and Midland Regions. Decisions on which schemes should proceed, within the corresponding Regional budget available, are taken by an area focus group attended by the respective protected landscapes in the Region.

WPD require that proposed undergrounding schemes are endorsed by the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee prior to allocation of their budget for evaluation and, if viable, implementation.

## ***Implications***

There are three new undergrounding schemes that are proposed to Western Power Distribution for inclusion in the current budget period, Coppett Hill, Penterry Church and Reddings Farm. The schemes are all 11KV powerlines. Penterry Church and Reddings Farm are close to each other, near Tintern, but are separate schemes.

### Penterry Church (Map 1)

The proposed scheme at Penterry Church, running from point A to point B on the map, passes across the front of the church and is a visible feature in the view into the valley below. This scheme has been costed at approximately £88,000 by Western Power.

### Reddings Farm (Map 1)

The scheme near Reddings Farm is an off shoot of the powerline passing Penterry Church and crosses the Wye Valley Walk. The removal of the powerlines, which are currently a highly intrusive feature, will benefit walkers heading in both directions along the path. This scheme is yet to be priced up.

### Coppett Hill (Map 2)

The proposed scheme on Coppett Hill is on the highly visible 11KV powerline which runs diagonally in a north to south direction across the Hill. The proposal for undergrounding runs from point A on the map at the high point, diagonally across and down the hill to the houses on the western edge of the common and across the B4239 to the edge of Goodrich village at point C, and includes an off shoot of the powerline to point C in the direction of Kerne Bridge. Should this longer scheme be unfeasible, a shorter scheme from point A to point B, only including the powerlines where they cross the common, is to be considered.

There are currently two undergrounding schemes being pursued; New Grove Meadows and Brampton Abbots are both still active and are being considered alongside schemes submitted by other protected landscapes in the South Wales and West Midlands regions.

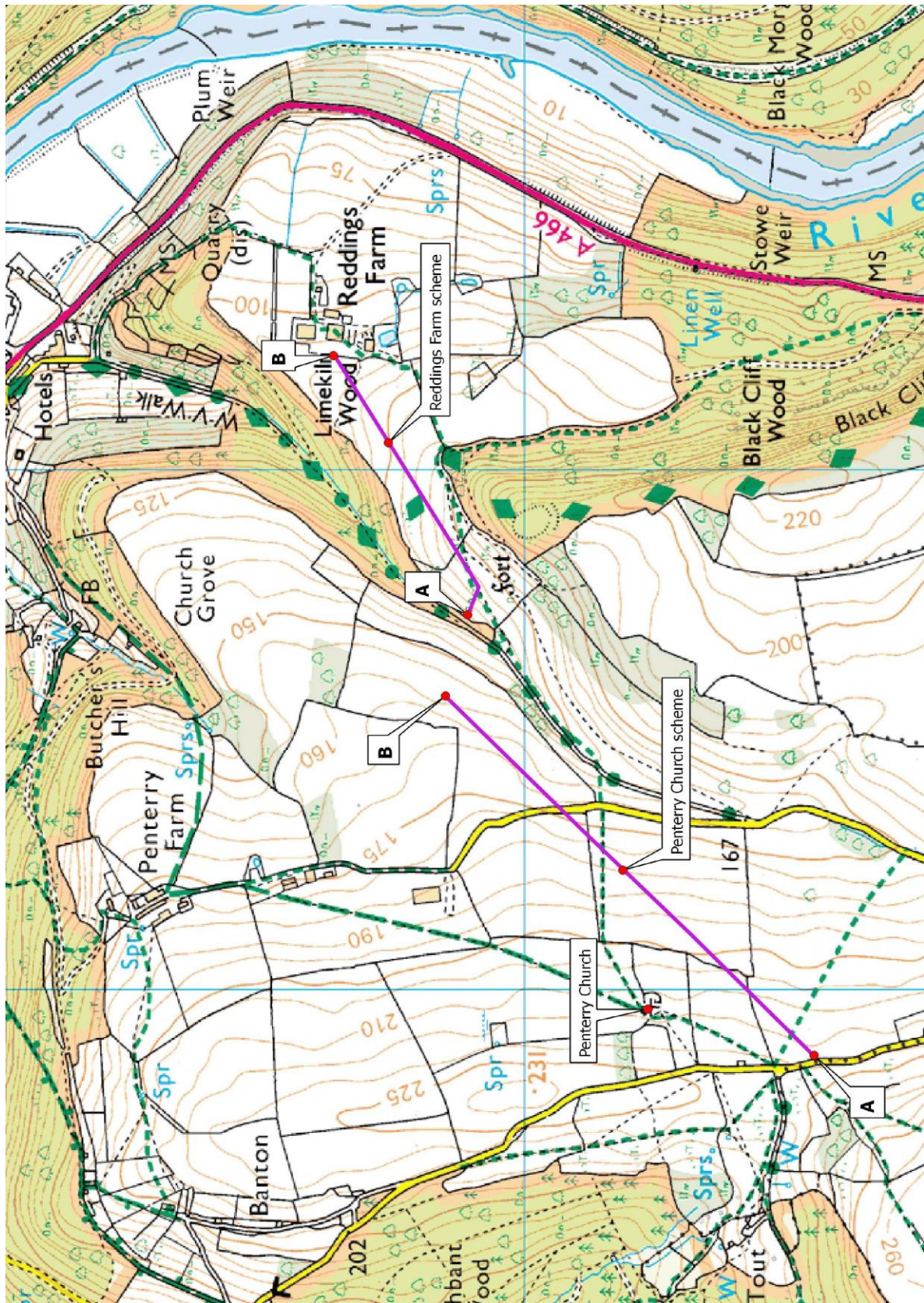
## ***Background***

As part of its Section 85 'Duty of Regard to the AONB' OFGEM, the official regulator for gas and electricity industry, provided a framework for allowing power distribution companies the discretionary option to underground overhead power lines.

Western Power Distribution (WPD) works with AONB and National Park partners across South Wales, the South West of England and the Midlands on undergrounding schemes that affect 'iconic sites' and manage a separate working group for AONB's across region.

### Map 1: Penterry Church and Reddings Farm

These lines are close to each other, near Tintern, but are separate schemes.



Map 2: Coppett Hill

