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1. A proposed United Utilities 132kV line near St Helens, Lancs, has been causing some concern this year. Revolt has received reports from local residents in March and again this month. It is proposed to run the line overhead through green oases and beautiful villages, whereas the local golf club and the Rainford Bypass are favoured with undergrounding. St Helens Council twice rejected proposals, which have been resubmitted with minor variations. The latest Council decision (10-8-10, ref P/2010/0158) is to advise Secretary of State that the proposal must be screened with regard to the Pink Footed Geese population, and to add 13 formal conditions.

2. The England-and-Wales Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) based in Bristol received its first two formal applications for development consent. One (3-8-10) is from Western Power Distribution for a short (1.1km) single-circuit [132,000 volt overhead electricity line](#) on Trident wood-poles to connect Maesgwyn wind farm in Banwen, Neath, to the grid. The other is for a 65MW energy-from-waste and materials recovery facility in Bedfordshire. The IPC has until 31-8-10 to decide whether to accept the applications for examination (that's not yet to decide on approval).
<http://infrastructure.independent.gov.uk/>

3. The IPC web site gives a list of expected projects, including the two above and 47 others. Some, like the small Bedfordshire power station above, and some larger power stations, seem separated from any grid connection proposals. Revolt has long expressed concerns at the separate treatment of power station and linked powerline proposals, in contravention of at least the spirit of the EU Environmental Impact Directive, which requires that the cumulative impact of the whole project should be assessed. Although a key feature is whether the link is "shallow" (exclusive and local) or "deep" (wider reinforcement needed for the power station), it seems wrong to separate the two parts of the project.

4. The RWE 2400MW gas-fired power station proposed at Tilbury would have on-site electricity grid connection. Its required 3km gas grid connection is to be included in the application, along with replacing an on-site overhead line with underground cable. The 3260MW nuclear power station proposals at Hinkley Point, Somerset, and Sizewell C, Suffolk, are separate from their controversial 400kV grid line proposals.

5. There are three other overhead line projects in the IPC planning pipeline, all from NG with expected submission in 2011: Kings Lynn; Gateway Energy, Coryton, Essex; and South Wales (East of Swansea).

6. In Northern Ireland, objectors' group SEAT report that NIE have written to landowners to get them to sign legal documents; SEAT advises against signing them. The battle for voluntary wayleaves and easements seems to be a common stage of surreptitious grid company activity in the UK. Landowners beware!

7. Ian Paterson, chair of Stirling Before Pylons, says the government's promise to mitigate the worst effects of the upgrading of the Beaully to Denny electricity line appears to be a "sham". <http://politics.caledonianmercury.com/2010/08/02/pylon-campaigners-claim-underground-cable-evidence-ignored/>

8. Brenda Short, legal adviser to Powerwatch, reports the Environment Agency web facility to check "What's in Your Backyard". It gives interactive maps to check what pollution sources there may be (according to licences issued), landfill, floodrisk and so on. Brenda suggests it should also include powerlines as EMF sources, and we agree. Alasdair Philips, Director of Powerwatch, says they are required on Home Survey Reports environmental searches, so should be included here. I've written to the Environment Agency 20-8-10 to recommend that any high-voltage (HV) line (that is 132kV, 275kV or 400kV) within 200 metres should be reported. <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/37793.aspx>

9. The Scientific Alliance newsletter 20-8-10 reports two august bodies on global futures: the Royal Society on '[Food Security: feeding the world in 2050](#)' and the Royal Academy of Engineering on '[Global Water Security - an engineering perspective](#)'. There is some optimism about coping with a 9 billion population through producing more food from the same amount of land – "*sustainable intensification*" – though the forecasts of population stabilising in mid-century seem even more naively speculative than the more extreme global warming forecasts.

10. Navigation News July/Aug 2010 reports NASA on magnetic storms expected in 2013, when two solar cycles (11-year and 22-year) coincide. Apart from large-scale loss of power, there could be damage to vital electronic systems for emergency services, hospitals, banking, air traffic control, GPS and home computers. We have become more dependent on such systems since the last cycle.