

Application No.:	P2026/0410	
Site Location:	Abernant Colliery Pontardawe Neath Port Talbot SA8 4SX	
Description:	Request for Screening opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 for a proposed biomass gasification Combined Heat and Power (CHP) waste-to-hydrogen production facility	
Date of submission:	18.06.2026 (EOT agreed)	
Relevant Regulation:	~~— 1999 Regs submitted between 1999 and the 29 Feb 2016~~ ~~— 2016 Regs submitted on or between 1 March 2016 and 15 May 2017.~~ - 2017 Regs. Submitted on or after 16 May 2017.	
Schedule 1.		
Is the project Schedule 1 Development?	~~Yes, if so which description of development? EIA is Required.~~	NO
Does the project change or extend development described in schedule 1?	~~If yes, would the project may have significant adverse effects on the environment? If so describe:~~	NO
Schedule 2.		
Is the project listed as a description of development under column 1 of Schedule 2?	NOT DIRECTLY, but the proposed development can be likened to: 3 Energy Industry (c) Surface storage of natural gas; or 6 Chemical Industry (a) Treatment of intermediate products and production of chemicals; and/or 11 Other Projects (b) Installations for the disposal of waste (unless included in Schedule 1).	~~If no proceed.~~
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in column 2 exceeded/met?	NO	~~If no, proceed.~~
Does the project change or extend development described in column 1 of schedule 2?	~~If yes, would the project may have significant adverse effects on the environment? If so describe:~~	NO
Is the Project located wholly or partly within a 'Sensitive area'? Sensitive Areas are: - SSSI. - National Park. - World Heritage Site. - A scheduled Ancient Monument. - ANOB. - A European Site – SAC, CSAC etc.	~~If Yes, screening opinion required.~~	NO
Have the Welsh Ministers issued a screening Direction?	~~If Yes, is the direction that the development is EIA Development? If yes, has an EIA been submitted with the application? If direction is that the project is not EIA then no~~	NO

	~~screening required.~~	
Has an ES been submitted?	~~If Yes proceed to validation.~~	NO

Detailed EIA Screening Assessment.

In answering the following questions due regard must be given to the impact of the development taking into account:-

- (a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- (b) the nature of the impact;
- (c) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- (d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- (e) the probability of the impact;
- (f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;
- (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
Criterion 1. Character of Development		
Question 1a Size and Design of Development.		
Will the design, Construction, Operation or decommission of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc.)?	Yes, however the proposed development is relatively small in scale and well below the 5ha threshold set out in the EIA Regulations. The proposal includes the installation of a number of above ground gas CHP engines and related plant and includes the storage of hazardous gases and liquids, the quantity of which will require separate consent under the Hazardous Substances regime.	Significant effects unlikely.
Question 1b Cumulation with Other Existing Development and/or Approved Development.		
Are there any other factors which should be considered such as: - Consequential development which could lead to Environment effects? - The Potential for cumulative impacts with other existing approved development or planning activities in	Yes. There is potential for some cumulative in-combination effects with other existing developments, however, given the relatively localised scale, and location on a former colliery site it is considered that significant cumulative effects are unlikely.	Significant effects unlikely.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
the locality? - Any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project? - Transfrontier impact?		
Question 1c Use of Natural Resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;		
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity etc. which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes, the proposal would require a degree of land take of a former colliery site that has naturally revegetated and requires ecological survey and impact assessment to inform any planning application. However, given the relatively small scale of the project, it is considered that significant effects on natural resources are unlikely.	Significant effects unlikely.
Question 1d. Production of Waste		
Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes, some waste will be produced during the construction and operation phases, however given the scale and nature of the proposed development it is considered that significant effects are unlikely in terms of waste generation.	Significant effects unlikely.
Question 1e. Pollution and Nuisances.		
Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes, however the controlled nature of the process is governed by Environmental Permitting Regulations. The principal emissions arising from the process are likely to be: Emissions to Air It is noted that a 25m high flue stack will produce emissions arising from the combustion of the syngas within the gas engines and therefore pollutant concentrations. The gasification plant will be installed with 'pre' combustion	Significant effects unlikely.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects <u>likely to be significant?</u>
	syngas clean up to ensure that all emissions are free from particulate, acids gases, halides, volatile organic compounds and dioxin/furan. Dust Dust emissions from the storage and processing of the incoming pelletised waste feedstock will be subject to extraction and filtration to ensure that there are no adverse emissions of dust. Odour None anticipated. Emissions to Water All process effluents will be cleaned to the extent that they can be discharged to the sewer under an Effluent Discharge Consent to the local sewerage undertaker. Under the requirements of the Environmental Permitting Regulations, all storage and processing areas will be required to be equipped with pollution prevention measures (bund compounds, controlled storage etc) to ensure that there is no potential for surface water runoff to be contaminated. The surface water drainage system will be equipped with a three stage (Class 1) interceptor to enable the removal of solid and trace oil contamination prior to release to controlled waters. As a requirement of the EPR, the site surface water drainage systems will be required to be isolated in the event of a fire so as to avoid the potential release of contaminated firewater's entering controlled waters. Emissions to Land None anticipated Noise The plant will incorporate a	

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	number of noise control measures, such as noise enclosures, stack exhaust attenuators and screens to ensure that all impacts are mitigated. Given the volume of hazardous material being stored at the site it will be necessary to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place as per the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015: - If the development/site is classified as a lower tier COMAH site under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015, it will need to have a major accident prevention policy (MAPP) in place. - If the development/site is classified as an upper tier COMAH site under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 2015, it will need to have a major accident prevention policy (MAPP) in place, as well as prepare a safety report; an internal emergency plan; and it will need to work with Neath Port Talbot Council's Civil Protection & Preparedness Team to prepare an external emergency plan.	
Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes, noise and vibration is likely during both the construction and operational phases and further assessments of impact would be required as part of the planning application, including the submission of a noise assessment report. However, given the location of the site and the nature and	Significant effects unlikely.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	type of surrounding land uses, it is considered that any effects in terms of noise and vibration would be localised and unlikely to be of a magnitude that would be so significant, such that they would warrant EIA.	
Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air, or lead to risks of contamination of land or water (including surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea)?	Yes. There is a risk of contaminants on the site which could infiltrate surrounding water networks. NRW were consulted on this EIA screening request but have declined to provide any comments at this stage. Adequate provision will need to be made to ensure that the drainage of any adjoining land is not interrupted or otherwise adversely affected by the development. It is considered the changes would be localised in nature and not be likely to result in significant effects in EIA terms, subject to further hydrological information and mitigation.	Significant effects unlikely.
Question 1f Risk of accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.		
Will there be any risk of accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge during construction or operation of the project?	Yes, given the nature of the development there is a risk of accident during all phases of the development. As a minimum, a major accident prevention policy (MAPP) will need to accompany the planning application. This, together with HSE advice and NRW permitting regimes provides sufficient mitigation to risk such that a full EIA would not be required.	Significant effects unlikely.
Question 1g Risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)?		
Are there risks to human health for example due to water contamination or air pollution?	Some risk in terms of health and safety but given the scale and nature of the works this is unlikely to be significant.	Significant effects unlikely.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
Criterion 2 Location of development.		
Question 2a Existing and approved land use.		
Will the project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles employment?	No.	N/A
Are there any routes or facilities or approved facilities on or around the location, which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site is close to a future active travel route (FR-GCG-C001) which requires safeguarding from and connectivity to the proposed development.	Significant effects unlikely.
Are there any transport routes or approved routes which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. Vehicle movements will be via the A474 and the development requires submission of a full transport impact assessment as part of the planning application process.	Significant effects unlikely.
Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	No. The site is currently undeveloped but was previously a working colliery which subsequent reclamation, landscaping and construction activities has changed over time.	N/A
Are there any areas on or around the location occupied by land uses or approved land uses which could be affected by the project, particularly sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities?	No.	N/A
Question 2b Relative Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;		
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, soil, land, water and biodiversity, which could be affected by the project?	Yes, however mineral extraction has been exhausted and the proposals would not affect any statutorily protected or designated sites. Whilst there would be physical change to the site itself, as well as surrounding hydrology and ecology, it is considered the change would be localised in nature and not be likely to result in significant effects in EIA terms, subject to further hydrological and ecological	Significant effects unlikely.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	surveys and mitigation. The anticipated water demand associated with the proposed development will likely require a full hydraulic modelling assessment and installation of a new water connection(s).	
Question 2c Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment		
Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology, or are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or floras which could be affected by the project?	Yes, the proposed development will result in the loss of existing habitat including marshygrassland mosaic and a full ecological survey and impact assessment to demonstrate compliance with the DECCA framework will be required at planning application stage.	Significant effects unlikely.
Are there any inland, coastal, marine, river mouths, riparian area or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	N/A
Are there any areas or feature of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No.	N/A
Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes, the proposed 25m high flue stack would be visible from a number of public vantage points and a landscape and visual impact assessment would need to accompany any planning application for the development.	Significant effects unlikely.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	No.	N/A
Are there any areas, landscapes, sites or features of historic, archaeological or cultural importance or significance on or around the location which could be	Yes. Historic mapping shows that a number of structures associated with the Abernant Colliery were located in the application area and it is not known if these have all been	Significant effects unlikely.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ?
affected by the project?	cleared from the site. There is therefore a possibility that undesignated historic assets remain within the development area, particularly below ground. There are designated historic assets located within 3km of the proposed development. Whilst there will be no direct impact on designated historic assets and it is likely that the topography of the area surrounding the proposed development will block views of it from them, it is noted that the 25m high flue stack will produce emissions which are likely to be visible. Cadw advise that this visual effect could have an adverse impact on the settings of designated historic assets. The information given above is sufficient for Cadw to conclude that the proposed development could have an adverse impact on buried archaeological features and on the settings of designated historic assets however these effects are unlikely to be of such significance to require an EIA to be prepared but will need to be addressed as part of any planning application. Cadw recommend that any application for the proposed development should be accompanied by a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment prepared to the standards and guidance set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, which should include an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the settings	

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	of designated historic assets.	
Are there any areas on or around the location which area already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental quality standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project? Or in which it is considered there is such a failure? Such as AQMA?	No.	N/A
Is the project located susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes. Past mining activity in the area requires submission of a detailed Coal Mining Risk Assessment and a minimum Phase 1 Site Investigation Report to assess land stability, mine gas and contamination risk. Information from The Coal Authority indicates that the development is within a potential zone of influence of a recorded mine shaft as well as a coal seam outcrop which may have been subject to historic unrecorded mining activity. Part of the site also falls within a NRW flood risk zone and details of how drainage and risk will be managed and mitigated is required at planning application stage.	Significant effects unlikely.

Statement Of Reasons

The proposed development to construct a new biomass gasification Combined Heat and Power (CHP) waste-to-hydrogen production facility, will inevitably result in a number of effects, most notably in terms of the physical change to the site itself, landscape and visual impact and particularly the effects on air quality, transport, hydrology and ecology. However, whilst these will likely be important considerations for the decision maker and will be subject to further assessment, the type of development proposed, coupled with the context of the site and the localised nature of the impacts, are such that significant environmental effects are unlikely. It is therefore concluded that EIA is not required in this instance.

In coming to this decision the Authority has had due regard to all information submitted by the developers; the available results of other environmental assessments as well as the criteria set out within schedule 3. The Authority's main reasons for coming to this decision are set out within the

above table. In conclusion, the Authority is of the opinion that the proposed development, either alone or in combination, are unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the environment. This is on the understanding that the above identified effects could be avoided or prevented as specified within the table. As such, the likely effects of the development are unlikely to be significant enough to warrant EIA development.

AUTHORISATION

Case Officer:	Name:	CLAIRE HALL
	Signature:	
	Date:	01.09.2026
Authorised by:	Name:	Helen Bowen
	Signature:	
	Date:	3/9/26