



Asesiad o Ddatganiad Amgylcheddol

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Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 26/02/2026

Assessment of Environmental Statement

by Richard James Bsc (Hons) Msc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 26/02/2026

Ref: CAS-03018-G7G6H7

Site address: Mynydd Ty-talwyn Energy Park, situated approximately 5km north west of Bridgend, 4.5km north east of Pyle and 2km west of Tondur.

- The Environmental Statement which is the subject of this assessment has been submitted in relation to the above case in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (as amended).
 - The application is made by Galileo 03 Limited.
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Introduction

1. An Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared to support an application for a Development of National Significance (DNS) which has been submitted to the Welsh Ministers for determination.
 2. The proposed development is EIA development within the meaning of the regulations. The ES was produced following a Scoping Direction, dated 11 April 2024 (the Scoping Direction), issued on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.
 3. The Scoping Direction required the ES to address the following matters:
 - i. Biodiversity
 - ii. Climate
 - iii. Cultural Heritage
 - iv. Land and Soils
 - v. Landscape and Visual
 - vi. Noise and Vibration
 - vii. Traffic and Transport
 - viii. Cumulative Effects
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Proposed Development

4. The proposed development is described on the application form as the installation of an Energy Park comprising up to 6 wind turbines and ancillary infrastructure. It includes turbine foundations, crane hardstandings and erection areas, solar PV panels, inverters and transformers, substation compound with control building, fencing and CCTV, upgraded and new access tracks, watercourse and pipeline crossings, highway junctions and highway remedial works, underground cabling, associated construction enabling earthworks, associated drainage, landscaping, ecological mitigation/enhancement, temporary construction compounds and other associated ancillary works/infrastructure.
5. A permissive footpath is proposed along part of the on-site access tracks and Section 106 contributions would be made by the applicant for Public Right of Way (PRoW) enhancements.

Completeness of Environmental Statements

6. The aim of an Environmental Statement (ES) is to provide a systematic and objective account of the significant environmental effects likely to arise from the proposed development, including sufficient information to verify the conclusions and identify the source of the information provided. Regulation 17 and Schedule 4 of the 2017 Regulations specifies the information to be included in an ES. My assessment of completeness is based on these requirements.

The Environmental Statement

7. The ES is presented in four volumes with topic chapters covering those listed within the Scoping Direction above:
 - Volume I – Non-Technical Summary;
 - Volume II – Main Written Statement;
 - Volume III – Supporting Technical Appendices; and
 - Volume IV – Supporting Figures and Plans.
8. The ES is well structured and presented, with good cross referencing enabling easy navigation between the documents. Each ES topic chapter includes tabled responses to Scoping Direction requirements and consultation representations.

Description of the Development

9. The application site comprises approximately 578 hectares of predominantly grazed upland countryside, adjacent to the Craig yr Aber woodland valley. National and international environmental designations are identified, with three Special Area of Conservation sites within circa 5 km of the site, four non-statutory designated sites and four Scheduled Monuments within the site. The A4063 runs adjacent to its eastern boundary and the Ffordd-y-Gyfraith C-class highway runs through the site. There are 22 PRoWs within the site as shown in Figure 13.1. The site is located within the Western Uplands Special Landscape Area (SLA) as set out in the Bridgend County Borough Local Development Plan (2018 – 2033) and Margam SLA, as set out within the Neath Port Talbot Local Plan (2011-2026).
10. ES Chapter 2 describes the proposal and is supported by a number of Figures detailing the site layout and individual components of the scheme. Five turbines would be located centrally within the site, linked by access tracks from the public highway. The solar panels would be split into a number of separate parcels to the southern, western and northern edges of the site. The sixth

turbine would be located within the western group of solar panels and would be separated from the rest of the site by the Craig yr Aber wooded valley. The turbines would have a maximum height of 200m with a rotor diameter of 162m, each would have an associated crane and lay down hardstanding and an access track turning head. It is anticipated that the solar panels would be ground mounted and would measure up to 3m high. Each array of panels would have associated transformer/inverter buildings, 2.4m high perimeter fencing and CCTV mounted on 3.6m poles. A 50m micro-siting allowance for the turbines and ancillary infrastructure is applied for. A permissive footpath is proposed along part of the on-site access tracks to improve access.

11. A substation to connect the turbines and solar panels to the electricity network would be located towards the north western side of the site, adjacent to the highway. It would also be contained by 2.4m high perimeter fencing, with 3.6m high pole mounted CCTV. Underground electrical cables would link the wind turbines, solar PV and the substation and would generally be laid in trenches alongside the access tracks.
12. Appendix 4.1 provides a high-level assessment for the anticipated grid connection, which would be the subject of a separate application to the District Network Operator. The Applicant has secured a connection to the Pyle substation located approximately 3 km south-west of the site. From the on-site substation, the route would travel south along Ffordd-Y-Gyfraith, until the junction with New Road where it would continue west along Crown Road and Heol-Y-Glo until Glan Yr Afon Road, where it would continue south to connect at Pyle Substation.
13. For Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs), two new site access points would be created from the A4063 Maesteg Road to the north east and via New Road to the south of the site. The latter would be for AIL entering the site only. Appendix 12.3 provides details of the proposed accesses and Figure 2.17 provides the location of highway overrun areas. The delivery of AIL would be routed along the M4 from Swansea, before turning northwards at Junction 36. Highway works required to facilitate AIL delivery would be the subject of separate agreements and applications to the Local Authority.
14. The proposal would deliver approximately 94.43 ha of new and enhanced habitats, to support species on-site including nesting birds, bats, dormice, grassland fungi, invertebrates and mammals.
15. A 24-month construction period is anticipated, comprising site mobilisation including access upgrades and crossings, turbine preparation, delivery and erection, then solar infrastructure construction, delivery and erection. The estimated maximum number of staff present at any one-time during construction is approximately 45. The peak workforce numbers are likely to be over a 2-month period towards the end of the civils phase of the works.
16. The proposal is expected to have a total capacity of approximately 93.5 MW, with 43 MW from the turbines and 50.5 MW from the solar panels. Its expected operational life is 50 years from the date of commissioning. A brief description of the decommissioning scheme is provided, which would include the dismantling and removal of turbines, solar panels and electrical equipment and the restoration of hardstandings. To avoid undue ground disturbance, tracks and underground cables would generally be left in situ.
17. Three temporary construction compounds with welfare facilities would be located along the access track from the north eastern access. Typically, surface soils will be stripped and stockpiled, and the surface would then be capped with geofabric and aggregate. However, this surfacing should be specified on Figures 2.12a-b. The permeability of the construction compounds should also be clarified and suitable surface water drainage details should be provided.

18. Appendix 2.1 '*Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan*' states that toilet effluent will be temporarily stored within a septic tank and regularly emptied by a certified waste carrier. As welfare facilities are proposed in more than one Construction Compound, the number and location of septic tanks should be confirmed. It should also be confirmed whether any percolation into the ground of treated water is proposed, with drainage details provided if so.
19. There are two proposed watercourse crossings within the site, one to facilitate the northern access and a crossing of Nant Cwm-bach to facilitate the internal access track, the locations of which are shown in Appendix 6.1 '*Watercourse Crossing Baseline Assessment*'. These crossings are proposed to be in the form of a single span bridge or bottomless box/arch culverts. However, reference is also made to smaller crossings of less than 2m wide, a number of gas pipes that pass through the site and the undergrounding of overhead lines near Cwm Risca. Whilst indicative design details are provided in Figures 2.15 and 2.16 and the location of watercourses shown on Figures 6.1-6.5 (inclusive), the location and extent of all crossings and undergrounding works within the site should be confirmed on a plan and a full assessment of the environmental effects of these works should be provided across relevant ES topic chapters.
20. As such, the description of the development is not satisfactory.

Description of the reasonable alternatives

21. ES Chapter 3 identifies the factors that have influenced the location for the proposal, from an analysis of constraints, planning policy, access points, ground conditions and extant uses.
22. It summarises four design iterations. Layout A informed the Scoping Direction and comprised ten turbines of up to 230m height and solar PV within a site area of approximately 814ha. Layout B comprised a five turbine layout of up to 200m and solar PV and a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). Layout C comprised the pre-application consultation stage proposal, with six turbines of up to 200m height and solar PV and a decreased site area of 580ha. Layout D is the proposal for consideration under this application and has, amongst other things, removed the BESS, removed/relocated some solar PV fields and relocated the substation. The reasons for these design iterations are evident and respond to identified environmental and infrastructural constraints, as further survey work and consultations were carried out.
23. The consideration of the main alternatives is satisfactory.

Description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected

24. The ES is supported and informed by a comprehensive suite of surveys and figures, including studies explaining the baseline conditions and likely impacts of the proposed development.
25. Within ES Chapter 10 Terrestrial Ecology, Table 10.6 summarises the survey work completed to date. However, for Preliminary Roost Assessments, it states these were conducted in January 2025, whereas Appendix 10.1 '*Ecological Baseline Report*' states these were undertaken in January 2022, at paragraph 2.9.3. The timing of Bat Activity Surveys differs between Table 10.6 (2024) and Appendix 10.1 Table 7, which refers to 2023 instead for wind turbine areas. Table 10.6 states Otter and water vole surveys were carried out in 2023 and 2024, whereas Appendix 10.1 paragraph 2.11.7 refers to the 2022 season. Clarification on the timing of these surveys is therefore required.
26. The majority of survey work used to inform ES Chapter 11 Ornithology is now considerably more than 2 years old. Although both ES Chapters 10 and 11 provide a brief description of future baseline conditions, further detailed explanation is required as to why the surveys which are now

over 2 years old are still considered to provide robust evidence for the baseline conditions of the site, for both ES Chapters 10 and 11.

27. Consequently, the aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly affected are insufficiently described.

Assessment Methodology

28. ES Chapter 4 describes the general assessment approach taken, which includes a mixture of desk based and onsite assessments. Further details of the topic specific methodologies are explained in each assessment chapter, with supporting figures and appendices. These include the definitions of receptor sensitivity, the magnitude of impacts and their significance and refer to practice guidance where relevant. For ES Chapters 10 and 11, it is explained why greater emphasis of the assessment of effects upon ecological and ornithological receptors is placed on the professional opinion and judgment of the authors, who were informed by relevant survey information and scientific research.
29. For each ES topic, the likely environmental change arising from the proposal has been identified and compared with the relevant current baseline condition of the application site and its environs. The assessments are based on the maximum extent of the proposal and the reasonable worst-case impacts in terms of magnitude.
30. The cumulative effects of the proposal with other proposals in the wider area have been considered within each ES topic chapter. The Zone of Influence varies according to each topic but extends up to 35km. Those projects included for consideration include those that are under construction; permitted but not yet implemented; submitted, but not yet determined, appealed schemes that are not yet determined and those for which an EIA Scoping Report has been submitted. A list of proposals considered is provided in Appendix 4.9, from which a short list of proposals for consideration is provided in ES Table 4.7. Intra-project effects are summarised within ES Chapter 15.
31. The expertise of the ES authors and those of the supporting survey/study reports have been provided.
32. The EIA methodology is described clearly in the ES.

Description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment

33. The likely significant effects of the development on the environment, including cumulative effects, have largely been assessed in line with the methodology set out in each chapter across the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the proposal.
34. However, Scoping Direction ID.9 requires the effects of glint and glare upon receptors along PRoWs to be considered. This is not provided within Appendix 4.6 '*Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study*' or as part of ES Chapter 8 Landscape and Visual.
35. As such, the significant effects of the development on the environment have not been systematically assessed and are insufficiently described.

Prevention and / or mitigation measures

36. The ES describes the mitigation measures that have either been embedded into the design of the scheme or are included as additional measures, with subsequent residual effects considered. The extent to which these measures are anticipated to mitigate the residual effects derived from construction, operation and decommissioning phases are provided.

37. The mitigation measures described in the ES are satisfactory.

Indication of any difficulties in compiling the required information

38. Limitations and difficulties in obtaining information are briefly set out each topic chapter. The assumptions made in light of these difficulties is clearly set out in the ES. Limitations and difficulties encountered are therefore adequately described.

Provision of a Non-Technical Summary

39. A non-technical summary has been provided and the information contained therein is sufficient for the ES produced. However, this may need to be updated to reflect the additional information sought, should this result in notable changes to the subsequent assessment of effects and their significance.

Reference List

40. The sources used to inform the ES are properly referenced in the ES Chapters and appendices where appropriate.

Overall Conclusions

41. I conclude that further information (set out at Annex 1) must be sought in order to address the shortcomings identified above in the Environmental Statement submitted by Galileo 03 Limited on 27 November 2025.

Richard James

Inspector

Annex 1

I hereby formally request further information under Regulation 24 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (as amended) in order for the Environmental Statement to provide the decision maker with a reasoned conclusion on the likely significant effects of the development described in the application.

The information required to address the identified shortcomings of the Environmental Statement is:

- Construction compound surfacing should be specified on Figures 2.12a-b. The permeability of the construction compounds should be clarified and surface water drainage details should be provided.
- Confirmation of the number and location of septic tanks and whether any percolation into the ground of treated water is proposed, with drainage details provided if so.
- The location and extent of all watercourse and gas pipe crossings and undergrounding of overhead lines within the site should be confirmed on plan and a full assessment of the significance of environmental effects of these works should be provided across relevant ES topic chapters.
- Clarification on the timing of surveys that have informed ES Chapter 10 should be provided with discrepancies between ES Chapter 10 Table 10.6 and Appendix 10.1 addressed.
- Detailed explanation for both ES Chapters 10 and 11 as to why the surveys which are now over 2 years old are still considered to provide robust evidence for the baseline conditions of the site.
- The significance of effects of glint and glare upon receptors along PRowS in the area should be considered within Appendix 4.6 '*Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study*'.
- A new NTS to reflect the changes made to the ES if necessary.