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James Cook
Principal Planner
Sirius Planning Ltd
Via email

Eich Cyf / Your Ref:

Ein Cyf / Our Ref: DNS 3279676

Dyddiad / Date: 21 September 2021

Dear Mr Cook

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
The Developments of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017

Potential DNS Application

Site Address: Land at Craig y Perchyll, Glais, Swansea.

Proposed Development: Proposed ground-mounted photo-voltaic solar farm with an electrical generating of circa 20 MW together with associated equipment, infrastructure and ancillary works.

On the 23 July 2021 the Planning Inspectorate received a request made under regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 ("the Regulations"), for the Welsh Ministers to make a screening direction as to whether or not the development proposed is "EIA Development" within the meaning of the Regulations.

The Planning Inspectorate is authorised by the Welsh Ministers to provide that screening direction.

The project, as described above, falls within the description at paragraph 3(a) in column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 to the Regulations.

As the proposal is a potential Development of National Significance (DNS) application, the attached screening assessment identifies the key areas which have been considered. Having taken into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the Regulations and the advice in Welsh Office Circular 11/99: Environmental Impact Assessment on establishing whether EIA is required, the assessment concludes that:

The proposed development of a circa 20MW solar farm with associated infrastructure would inevitably result in a number of effects. The majority of the Site falls within Graig Ola – Cwm – Cymach Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. (SINC). The area of the SINC within the Site is classed as Unimproved Lowland Dry Acid Grassland which is listed in Section 7 of the Environmental (Wales) Act 2016 as a habitat of principal importance. In response to a requested for further information, the Applicant has provided a Technical Note which confirms the presence of priority habitats within the western and southern fields of the Site thus less than the extent of the Site which forms part of the SINC. It is predicted that a combination of bracken and scrub encroachment on the outcrop, scrub encroachment on the southern fields and the influence of horse grazing will result in decline in the quantum of the acid grassland habitats, and a decline overall in the grassland habitat condition and biodiversity value. The Applicant is proposing an Ecological Management Plan to be agreed with the LPA as part of the mitigation. I agree with the Technical Note that careful management over the lifespan of the project will likely have a beneficial impact on the priority habitats present on Site. I have considered the mitigation measures as part of the EIA screening exercise and I believe that they can be secured through the examination process and therefore I conclude that EIA is not required in this instance.

Therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Regulations and the authority referred to above, the Welsh Ministers hereby direct that the development subject of this application **is not EIA development** within the meaning of the Regulations.

My opinion on the likelihood of this development having significant effects is reached for the purposes of this direction.

This letter will be copied to Swansea County Council, so that this screening direction is placed on Part 1 of the Planning Register in relation to the application in question, in accordance with the Regulations.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely

Giulia Bazzoni

Giulia Bazzoni PIEMA MA

Swyddog Cynllunio / Planning Officer
Tîm Cynllunio a'r Amgylchedd / The Planning & Environment Team
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio / The Planning Inspectorate

Annex 1

The consultation responses received have been appended to this EIA Screening Direction.

It is recommended for the Applicant to liaise with the consultees with regards to the format of the application supporting documentation. Based on the consultation responses, the following technical and environmental assessments will be required:

- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Cultural Heritage Assessment;
- Ecological Impact Assessment;
- Ecological Management Plan;
- Agricultural Land Classification Report;
- Flood Consequence Assessment & Drainage Management Strategy;
- Transport Assessment, including Construction Traffic Method Statement, and
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment

ECOLOGY OBSERVATIONS

APPLICATION No.	2021/2007/LPA
ADDRESS	Craig Y Perchych Glais Swansea
PROPOSAL	EIA Screening Consultation for a Development of National Significance - Proposed Solar farm and Ancillary Infrastructure

Documents Reviewed:

- Site Location Plan, Windel Energy, July 2021; and
- Cover Letter, Sirius Planning, July 2021.

Protected Sites

A large proportion of the application site is situated within the Graig Ola – Cwm-cymach Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Whilst the part of the application site within the SINC is just 30ha of the 186ha total SINC area (16% of the total SINC area), the designated habitat type that the application site covers is all mapped as Unimproved Lowland Dry Acid Grassland, of which there is approximately 39ha within the SINC. Therefore, the application site may affect 77% of this SINC habitat. Considering Schedule 3 of the Town and Country planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2017, this may be a significant impact in terms of the size of the development relative to the size of the SINC habitat.

Lowland dry acid grassland is listed in Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 as a habitat of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales.

The cover letter states, "Given there is a SINC located across part of the proposal site baseline ecology/botanical surveys have been undertaken to understand the current biodiversity value." It is also noted that the application site is currently used for grazing, which may have affected the quality of the grassland habitat.

In determining whether the proposed application will have a significant environmental impact, it is suggested that further information is requested, in the form of the results of the "ecological/botanical surveys", in order to assess whether or not the impacts upon the SINC habitats will be significant.

This is in line with Part 2 of the 2017 Regulations:

6. (2) A request for a screening opinion in relation to an application for planning permission must be accompanied by—

(c) a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development.

(4) The person making the request for the screening opinion must, when that person provides the information required by paragraphs (2) or (3), take into account the criteria in Schedule 3 and the available results of other environmental assessments carried out pursuant to Union legislation other than under the Directive.

Kathryn Jones, Planning Ecologist

09/08/2021

Consultee Comments for Planning Application

2021/2007/LPA

Application Summary

Application Number: 2021/2007/LPA

Address: Craig Y Perchych Glais Swansea

Proposal: Screening Opinion for a Development of National Significance - Proposed Solar farm and Ancillary Infrastructure

Case Officer: Simon Hughes

Consultee Details

Name: Mrs Amanda Pugh Transportation

Address: Brangwyn Hall, The Guildhall, St Helens Crescent Brynmill, Swansea SA1 4PE

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: Transportation Group (PREAPP) - Amanda Pugh

Comments

2021/2007/LPA | Screening Opinion for a Development of National Significance - Proposed Solar farm and Ancillary Infrastructure | Craig Y Perchych Glais Swansea

In terms of submitted document only a small scale plan and covering letter have been received. There is no indication of access or layout although it appears that the site access will be gained off Graig y Pal (which is in part adopted highway). The roads in the area are rural in nature, heavily wooded on both sides, single width and provide few (if any) passing places.

The main concern from the Highway Authority is during the construction phase, as operationally there will be limited traffic associated with the ongoing maintenance.

A full Transport Assessment (TA) will be required to be submitted to support any planning application and this should cover in detail access by all modes of transport including full swept path analysis where the site access requires the use of HA Roads. The use of Graig Y Pal itself also needs to be covered as in its current form it is not considered appropriate for large levels of construction vehicles. Lack of access for pedestrians and the remote nature of the site, and lack of access to sustainable travel means that all traffic will be private cars and large construction vehicles, contrary to the Active Travel Act.

A Construction Method statement (CMS) will also be required to be submitted up front with the TA

Consultee Comments for Planning Application 2021/2007/LPA

Application Summary

Application Number: 2021/2007/LPA

Address: Craig Y Perchych Glais Swansea

Proposal: Screening Opinion for a Development of National Significance - Proposed Solar farm and Ancillary Infrastructure

Case Officer: Simon Hughes

Consultee Details

Name: Mr Alan Webster

Address: Civic Centre, Oystermouth Road, City Centre, Swansea SA1 3SN

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: Trees/Hedgerows - Alan Webster (Pre App)

Comments

There are no statutory tree protections on the site.

If the information supplied is representative of the proposals then an EIA is not required. However, there appears to be mature trees on the existing field boundaries that should be retained.

Maes Newydd,
Llandarcy,
Neath Port Talbot,
SA10 6JQ

The Planning Inspectorate
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ebost/email:
swplanning@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

11/08/2021

Annwyl/ Dear Mr Robert Sparey

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
THE DEVELOPMENTS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE (PROCEDURE) (WALES)
ORDER 2016 (as amended)
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(WALES) REGULATIONS 2017 (as amended)**

BWRIAD / PROPOSAL: Solar farm (circa 20 MW) and ancillary infrastructure

LLEOLIAD / LOCATION: Craig Y Perchyll, Glais, Swansea, SA7 9HP

Thank you for consulting Natural Resources Wales on the above Development of National Significance, request for a screening opinion. Which we received on 26 July 2021.

Based on the information provided, the proposed development is not likely to give rise to 'significant' environmental effects. Additional comments are provided below.

Protected Sites

There are two SSSI's within 1km of the site:

- Glais Moraine geological SSSI to the South of the site.
- Fforest Goch Bog Biological SSSI to the North of the site

When determining any likely significant effects, the following should be taken into account:

- the type of development;
- the notified features of any SSSI that may be affected
- the distance between the SSSI and the development
- potential pathways for effects
- source – pathway – receptors
- direct and indirect effects

- short term and long-term effects.

However, the proposed development should not impact on either SSSI provided a CEMP is produced which details all pollution prevention measures to ensure there is no pathway for contamination.

SINC

A large part of the site is located within the Graig Ola - Cwm-cymach Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The applicant will need to discuss any management proposals with the LPA.

Ancient Woodland

The site borders Ancient semi natural Woodland and Restored Ancient Woodland. The importance of Ancient Woodlands in Wales are recognised by Welsh Government and there are a number of policies and strategies to preserve, protect and manage these areas, such as the 'Woodlands for Wales: Strategy'; and 'Woodlands for Wales: Action Plan' accessible via the following link; <https://beta.gov.wales/forestry>.

Ancient woodland is also recognised in Planning Policy Wales Ed. 10 (Section 6.4.26). Any proposals should ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect the trees and to avoid losses or damage.

European Protected Species (EPS)

Our records show there may be protected species on / in the vicinity of the site (bats). We advise that the applicant liaison with the LPA ecologist to discuss and agree the scope of any surveys required.

We refer you to our [website](#) for further advice

Birds

The main issues from a bird perspective will be breeding birds, surveys will be required for these, we advise that the applicant liaises with the LPA ecologist to discuss and agree the scope of any survey.

Flood Risk

The site lies within Zone A of the Development Advice Maps (DAM) contained within Technical Advice Note 15 Development and Flood Risk (July 2004).

TAN15 advises that for development located in Zone A the justification test is not applicable and surface water requirements apply. The acceptability criteria is for no increase in flooding elsewhere to occur as a result of the development. Given the location of development in Zone A, we advise that surface water requirements should be assessed. It is for the Local Authority's Land Drainage Department to comment on the suitability of these proposals.

Other Matters

Our comments above only relate specifically to matters included on our checklist, *Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics* (September 2018), which is published on our [website](#). We have not considered potential effects on other matters and do not rule out the potential for the proposed development to affect other interests.

If you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully

Louise Edwards

Uwch Cynghorydd - Cynllunio Datblygu / Senior Advisor - Development Planning
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Natural Resources Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
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Mr Robert Sparey
Planning & Environment Manager
The Planning & Environment Team
The Planning Inspectorate

Eich cyfeirnod
Your reference

DNS 3279676

Ein cyfeirnod
Our reference

Dyddiad
Date

5 August 2021

Llinell uniongyrchol
Direct line

0300 0250566

Ebost
Email:

Cadwplanning@gov.wales

Dear Rob

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Solar farm (circa 20 MW) and ancillary infrastructure
LOCATION: Craig Y Perchyll, Glais, Swansea, SA7 9HP

Thank you for your letter of 26 July 2021 asking for Cadw's view on the likely impact of the proposed development described above on the environment and whether or not Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required.

Cadw, as the Welsh Government's historic environment service, has assessed the characteristics of this proposed development and its location within the historic environment. In particular, the likely impact on designated or registered historic assets of national importance. In assessing if the likely impact of the development is significant Cadw has considered the extent to which the proposals affect those nationally important historic assets that form the historic environment, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered historic parks, gardens and landscapes.

These views are provided without prejudice to the Welsh Government's consideration of the matter, should it come before it formally for determination.

Advice

Cadw does not consider that the effect, on the historic environment as a whole, will be significant enough to warrant an EIA.

Assessment

Our records show that the historic assets in Annex A are potentially affected by the proposal.

Mae'r Gwasanaeth Amgylchedd Hanesyddol Llywodraeth Cymru (Cadw) yn hyrwyddo gwaith cadwraeth ar gyfer amgylchedd hanesyddol Cymru a gwerthfawrogiad ohono.

The Welsh Government Historic Environment Service (Cadw) promotes the conservation and appreciation of Wales's historic environment.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh.



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



We have carried out our own search that has identified the designated historic assets in Annex A are located inside 3km of the proposed development. However, the proposed development will not have a direct impact on any of them and in most cases intervening topography, buildings and vegetation block all views between them. In the case of scheduled monument GM387 Round Cairn with Cist on Mynydd Drumau, views of the proposed development may be possible but, in our opinion, it is unlikely this change in the view from the monument will cause a significant impact to the monuments setting. As such, from the information currently available, it is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on any designated historic asset and therefore an EIA will not be required on historic environment grounds.

Yours sincerely

Jenna Arnold

Diogelu a Pholisi/ Protection and Policy

Annex A

Scheduled Monuments

GM336 Scott's Pit Engine House & Traces of Ancillary Buildings
GM342 Standing Stones 300m W of Cefncelfi
GM382 Carreg Bica Standing Stone
GM383 Three Round Cairns on Mynydd Drumau
GM387 Round Cairn with Cist on Mynydd Drumau
GM497 Clydach Upper Forge
GM514 Burial Chamber at Pen-yr-Alltwen
GM549 House Platforms West of Dyffryn Wood

Listed Buildings/ Conservation Areas

11193 Cefn Celfi II
11195 The Old Tollhouse II
11199 Upper Clydach Aqueduct and Overflow on Swansea Canal II
11200 Pont ar Dawe II
11201 Trebannws Multi-Overflow & Outlet Sluice from the Swansea Canal II
11770 Pensianel Pigsty II
22088 Capel Calfaria II
22089 Capel Saron II
23867 Tabernacle Congregational Chapel, including forecourt gates and wall, and attached vestries. II
70909 Alltycham House II
80986 Church of Saint Peter II*
80988 Former National Schools II
80991 Gatepiers and gates to Church of Saint Peter II
80992 Graveslab and railings to William Parsons, churchyard of Church of Saint Peter II
80993 The War Memorial II
80995 Ynysmeudwy Isaf Overbridge on Swansea Canal II
81848 Scott's Pit Engine House II*
82292 Memorial drinking fountain and railings II
82293 Outbuilding at The Mill II
82294 Pont ar Dawe (partly in Pontardawe community rec no 11200) II
82317 Piers and railings at Calfaria Baptist Chapel II
82318 Church of Saint John the Baptist II
82319 Church of Saint Matthew II
82320 Howel Gwyn memorial in churchyard of Church of St Matthew II
82321 Lychgate to churchyard of Church of St Matthew II
82322 Church of Saint Mary II
82323 Swansea Canal aqueduct over the Lower Clydach River II
82324 Swiss Gables II
82325 The Grange, former stables and coach house to Dyffryn House II
82326 Former icehouse to Dyffryn House II
82327 Iron Footbridge over the Swansea Canal II
82328 Milestone on S side of High Street II
82329 Milestone on NE side of Vardre Road II
82330 Statue of Sir Ludwig Mond II
82331 Manor Park Country House II