

Appendix 15.5

Outline Access Management and Enhancement Plan

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Environmental Statement	A document reporting the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and produced in accordance with the EIA Regulations.
North section	Section of development located north of Bryn settlement, within Penrhydd forestry block.
South section	Section of development located south of Bryn settlement, within Bryn forestry block.
The proposed development	Y Bryn Wind Farm development.
Y Bryn site boundary	The area within which the proposed development will be located.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AFP	Afan Forest Park
AIL	Abnormal indivisible loads
AMEP	Access Management and Enhancement Plan
BCBC	Bridgend County Borough Council
BOAT	Byway Open to All Traffic
CDM	Construction, Design & Management
CMS	Construction Method Statement
CRoW	Countryside Rights of Way
ERP	Emergency Response Plan
ES	Environmental Statement
km	Kilometre
LDF	Long-Distance Footpath
LPA	Local Planning Authority
m	Metres
NPTCBC	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
O-AMEP	Outline Access Management and Enhancement Plan
PRoW	Public Rights of Way

A15.5 OUTLINE ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Introduction

- A15.5.1 This Outline Access Management and Enhancement Plan (OAMEP) has been prepared by Y Bryn Wind Farm Limited (the applicant), together with input from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) as land manager for the main part of the site, in support of an application for consent to construct and operate Y Bryn Wind Farm (hereafter referred to as the ‘proposed development’). It would be expected that final details of an Access Management Enhancement Plan (AMEP) would be agreed via planning condition associated with a relevant consent.
- A15.5.2 This document provides information on how public access rights would be managed for the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.
- A15.5.3 The proposed development comprises 18 turbines and is located north-east of the M4 motorway between Port Talbot and Maesteg. The proposed development is within the administrative boundary of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) and Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC).
- A15.5.4 Construction of the proposed development it anticipated to last approximately 24 months. It is assumed that construction will continue year-round.
- A15.5.5 There will be no restrictions to public access rights following completion of construction works.

Methodology

- A15.5.6 This O-AMEP has been drafted in line with the guidance set out in NatureScots “Guidance for the Preparation of Outdoor Access Plans” (NatureScot, 2010). The NatureScot guidance stipulates that there should be five steps set out within an Outdoor Access Plan (see Table A15.5.1).

Table A15.5.1: NatureScot Guidance for the Preparation of Outdoor Access Plans

Step 1	Identify the Purpose, Aims & Objectives of the Outdoor Access Plan
Step 2	Establish the Outdoor Access Baseline affected by the development proposal
Step 3	Identify predicted development impacts and potential enhancements on the Outdoor Access Baseline
Step 4	Mitigate the predicted development impacts, and design potential enhancements
Step 5	Manage & Monitor the implementation of the Outdoor Access Plan

Source: NatureScot

- A15.5.7 This O-AMEP has been structured to broadly follow the steps detailed above.

Purpose

- A15.5.8 The purpose of this O-AMEP is to outline how the applicant, in conjunction with NRW, intends to manage access within Bryn and Penhydd forests during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. It relates primarily to the NRW managed parts of the overall application site.

- A15.5.9 Figure 13.7 of the Environmental Statement (ES) details the areas that will be felled for the proposed development and Figure 1.2 of the ES shows the location of the proposed wind turbines, access tracks and other necessary infrastructure for the construction and operational phases.
- A15.5.10 Decommissioning of the proposed development is also considered where possible. It is expected that decommissioning will not cause the same levels of disruption as construction. As the level of recreational activities taking place within the forests during this phase is not known, it is proposed that a further AMEP is produced in advance of decommissioning.
- A15.5.11 Bryn and Penhydd forests are used for a number of recreational activities by people:
 - using the Public Rights of Way (PRoW);
 - exercising their rights under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act);
 - using the forests under a general permission to do so e.g. mountain bikers and general cyclists;
 - using the forests under a specific permission / permit e.g. 4x4 users, etc; and
 - using the forests for a variety of other activities with no permission as such.
- A15.5.12 There are also PRoW over parts of the privately owned access land outside of the forests, a section of which leading from the B4282 corresponds with the construction access point into the southern section crossing Maesteg Golf Club. Management of interaction between golfers and wind farm traffic and compensation will be achieved through the legal agreements between the club and the applicant, and so fall outside of the scope of this outline- and any future AMEPs.
- A15.5.13 The majority of this document refers the construction phase of the proposed development since it is this stage of the proposed development which will result in the majority of predicted access impacts. The construction phase is expected to last for up to 24 months. The wind farm will operate for up to 50 years.
- A15.5.14 This outline plan lists users of the forests who could be affected during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the proposed development. Where potential impacts have been identified, this outline plan provides details of how the mitigation measures identified to reduce and avoid potential impacts will be implemented and monitored. It also sets out how this outline plan will be communicated. The outline mitigation measures and proposals for access management and enhancement will be reviewed prior to each phase and will be incorporated into relevant risk assessments and method statements that will be produced by the applicant, NRW and their contractors.
- A15.5.15 It is the primary intention of the applicant to protect the health and safety of all parties who may be undertaking activities within application Bryn Wind Farm site boundary and have the potential to come into contact with construction works and also the operational development. Construction activities have the potential, if public access was uncontrolled, to result in a number of risks including injuries due to vehicle movements, falling objects and slipping and tripping on muddy

or rutted uneven ground. The applicant has also endeavoured to preserve access to the forests where appropriate, whilst ensuring that safety takes precedence at all times.

- A15.5.16 Due to the timeframe involved, this O-AMEP and the full AMEP approved by planning condition will be considered to be ‘live’ documents and will be updated on an ongoing basis. In addition, a revised AMEP will be produced for the decommissioning phase closer to the end of the wind farm life. Proposals to communicate these plans to users of the Forests along with actions to monitor the performance of the plan are provided.

Objectives

- A15.5.17 The objectives of this O-AMEP are to provide an overview of the arrangements that will be put into place during construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development to manage access by members of the public within the application site. Working access to the application site for NRW, their contractors, licence holders and merchants will be agreed and organised separately with NRW. This outline plan has been produced in line with the applicant’s stated aims for access in areas affected by the proposed development, which are for the construction phase, where possible:

- To protect the health and safety of all parties who may be undertaking activities within the application site boundary;
- To endeavour to retain access to as many PRowS as possible;
- To endeavour to maintain access to as many forest roads as possible;
- To endeavour to maintain access to as many official mountain biking trails as possible;
- In particular, to endeavour to maintain the capability for local residents of Bryn, Maesteg and Goytre to gain access into at least part of the forest from their homes to facilitate regular exercise; and
- To provide an explanation of how clear information will be provided to the public regarding closures, diversions and the programme of works

- A15.5.18 This outline plan presents proposed mitigation measures and provides more detail on how they will be implemented for the benefit of users during and following the construction of the proposed development. Additional mitigation and enhancement for the operational phase are detailed.

Access and Use of the Forests

Introduction

- A15.5.19 Bryn and Penhydd forests are used for a number of recreational activities. Walkers are able to use any forest tracks and roam freely within the forests due to the CRoW Act. Cyclists and horses are also permitted by NRW to use the forest tracks, in accordance with existing policy. Penhydd forest is also host to world class mountain biking trails forming part of the Afan Forest Park complex. In addition, there are a number of interpretation and information boards, benches and seats concentrated within the northern end of the northern Penhydd section, and two picnic tables (one within the same broad northern end of Penhydd, and one in the eastern end of

Penhydd). There are no boards, benches, seats or picnic areas recorded within the southern Bryn section.

- A15.5.20 The following sections describe in detail access to the application site and the ways in which visitors make use of the forests.

Public Road Network

- A15.5.21 There are no public roads within the application site boundary. The two parts (northern and southern sections) of the application site are divided by the B4282 between Maesteg and Cwmafan. The A4107 runs to the north of the northern section. The M4 motorway runs to the south of the southern section.

Car Parking

- A15.5.22 There are no official public car parking areas located with the application site boundary, however there are two informal locations where cars are understood to park. These are located in the south-eastern corner of the northern section (the ‘Garn Wen’ entrance), and in the central-north of the southern section (the ‘Royal Oak’ layby). Garn Wen entrance currently comprises a widened junction of the forest road with eight car parking spaces. Royal Oak comprises a layby area before a locked gated entrance, with no formal car parking spaces or signage

- A15.5.23 It is understood that there are a number of barrier locations where people informally park to walk or cycle into the forests. There is also the Afan Mountain Bike centre which has a large car park, wherefrom mountain bikers and walkers access Penhydd forest.

Walking (and Running)

- A15.5.24 The baseline situation in terms of identified routes is illustrated by Figures 15.2a and 15.2b of the ES. There are a number of PRow, including footpaths and bridleways, and the St Illtyd’s Walk which is recognised as a Long-Distance Footpath (LDF). The Ogwr Ridgeway Walk which is a permissive route runs adjacent to the south-eastern boundary of the south section. An alternative longer hillier inland option for the Wales Coast Path, bypassing Port Talbot steelworks running parallel to the M4 motorway north of Brombil Farm, also crosses the abnormal indivisible loads (AIL) access point from the motorway.

- A15.5.25 The majority of the Y Bryn Wind Farm site boundary is classified as ‘open access land’ under the CRoW Act. This means that people have a right of access on foot to use the forests tracks and roam freely over the land. The forests tracks are also currently used by equestrians and cyclists. In addition to this recreational use, the forests tracks are in constant use by NRW traffic. This includes but is not limited to heavy goods vehicles used for harvesting and haulage of timber, and NRW operational oversight.

- A15.5.26 Information from NRW’s third party access log shows that Bryn and Penhydd forests are used for occasional, organised walking and running events managed through the permissions system, including the annual ‘Beast of Bryn’ event.

Equestrian Activities

- A15.5.27 The baseline situation in terms of identified routes is illustrated by Figures 15.2a and 15.2b of the ES. A local authority recognised route known as the North to South Dragon Ride, promoted

by the British Horse Society, and used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists, runs through the application site boundary.

- A15.5.28 NRW has a concordat in place with the British Horse Society, Cymru. Under this concordat NRW allows permissive access along forests tracks for quiet and informal recreation for horse riders in addition to rights to use the byway open at all times (BOAT) which runs through the west (although outside) of the northern section of the application site boundary. It should be noted that these are also currently used by NRW vehicles.
- A15.5.29 Information from NRW's third party access log shows that Bryn and Penhydd forests are used for occasional, organised horse rides managed through the permissions system.
- A15.5.30 NRW have confirmed that at present there is some authorised carriage driving within their portion of the application site boundary.

Cycling/Mountain Biking

- A15.5.31 Cyclists have a legal entitlement to use bridleways and BOATs. NRW also allows permissive access along forests tracks for quiet and informal recreation for cyclists, in addition to the rights granted under PRow.
- A15.5.32 The north-west of the north section forms part of the wider Afan Forest Park (AFP) complex, and benefits in particular from two world class mountain bike trails, being accessed typically from the visitor centre and tearooms at Cynonville: the Penhydd and Blue Scar trails, both last renovated in 2013.
- A15.5.33 Penhydd Trail is a 'classic' red graded 14.4 kilometre (km) loop (estimated 1.5 hours duration), which combines with the Blue Scar to climb out of the visitor centre. It was originally opened in 2000 (then named "9feet.com") as the first purpose-built trail in AFP and was created by a group of volunteers. It was used for the World Singletrack Championships in 2001.
- A15.5.34 The trail was closed in 2010 due to harvesting and then reopened in 2013 with a refresh, but usage has reduced in recent years and it is considered to be in need of modernisation¹. Trail inspections are carried out by NRW on a regular basis (every month for Blue Scar, and every other month for Penhydd).
- A15.5.35 There are likely to be a number of illegal unauthorised mountain bike trails within the forests at any time, which NRW will not maintain, will discourage use of, and depending on resources will remove. No current reliable survey of such "wild trails" is available and given the guerilla nature of their creation and NRW's ongoing intention of elimination it would not be feasible or proper to assess impacts on their usage.

Anglers

- A15.5.36 There are no fishing clubs or fishing rights known to NRW on any waterbodies or watercourses anywhere within the forests.

All-Terrain Vehicles/Car Driving

- A15.5.37 All-Terrain Vehicles and cars can legally use the BOAT which passes through the west (although outside) of the northern section of the application site boundary.
- A15.5.38 It is understood that the wider site is occasionally subject to illegal access, with NRW cooperating with the police and other relevant authorities in seeking to manage this and any adverse effects on other user groups, including Maesteg golf club.
- A15.5.39 Use of the forests for car driving events requires permission from NRW.
- A15.5.40 Margam Forest (including the southern section of the application site boundary) was used for a stage of the Wales Rally GB up until 2013. A memorial plaque stands to a co-driver, Michael Park, who was killed in an accident in the 2005 World Rally Championships. The last local club rally event in the forest was held in 2014. Motorsports are currently not permitted by NRW.

Bird Watching and Other Ecological Interests

- A15.5.41 There are no known bird watching hides within the forest, and no records of local bird or other ecological interest groups having officially organised use of the forests. Wildlife surveys are undertaken by NRW on a regular basis.

Shooting

- A15.5.42 There are no public hunting/sporting rights within the forests, however NRW staff do undertake deer management for habitat and population management purposes only. Permits for fox control are also available in line with current UK legislation. There is also uninhibited range access for firearm maintenance by NRW staff.

Unregistered Rights of Way

- A15.5.43 There are a number of unregistered rights of way within the application site boundary which permit access for residents, landowners and commercial/recreational interests. These include access to the group of properties at Hafod Farm coming from Goytre, and access to the group of properties at Blaen-Cwmcerwyn coming from Maesteg.

NRW Staff and Contractors

- A15.5.44 The NRW managed forests, together with the access road crossing Maesteg Golf Club, are also used by NRW staff and contractors for the management of the forests, including the on-going cycle of tree clearance and timber haulage, along with a wide variety of other activities, including deer management. Access to the forests by these users will be managed by NRW, in conjunction, where necessary, with the applicant.

Other Users

- A15.5.45 In addition to the use of the forests by groups as outlined above, Bryn and Penhydd forests are used for a number of other activities on ad hoc basis, as agreed with NRW. These uses include: filming, military training, Forest School, bee hives, orienteering. Those organising such activities in the forests must apply to NRW for an activity permit in which they are required to specify the

¹ On the basis of knowledge and evidence shared by NRW with the applicant

- date of activities, nature of activity, location and access required, a risk assessment and method statement.
- A15.5.46 The activities and movements in these groups and individuals are not straightforward to record and capture, because access into the Bryn and Penhydd forests is possible from a number of locations. It has therefore been assumed that the whole of the forests are used by all types of users, and the health and safety, communication and mitigation/ enhancement measures contained within this document reflect this assumption.

Land Designation

- A15.5.47 The whole of Bryn and Penhydd forests are designated as ‘dedicated land’ under the CRow Act. This legislation entitles any member of the general public to ‘open air recreation’ on this land, that is, to access any part of that land at any time providing they do so without ‘breaking or damaging any wall, fence, hedge, stile or gate’. Effectively, this is accepted as meaning visitors on foot. NRW also permit informal and quiet recreational access for horse riders and cyclists².
- A15.5.48 There are a variety of PRoWs running through the application site boundary. There are also forests roads which are used by vehicles, walkers, horse riders and cyclists, smaller paths which are used mostly by walkers.

Construction (Design & Management) (CDM) Regulations 2015

- A15.5.49 The CDM Regulations 2015 will apply to the proposed development construction area, and as such require the principal contractor to take reasonable steps to prevent access by unauthorised persons to the construction site. Only persons authorised, individually or collectively, by the principal contractor, should be allowed access.
- A15.5.50 How access to a construction site is controlled depends on the nature of the proposed development, the risks and the location and evidence of unauthorised incursion. The boundaries of all construction sites should be physically defined, where necessary, by suitable fencing. The type of fencing should reflect the nature of the construction site and its surroundings. As most of the Y Bryn Wind Farm Site Boundary will be remote from construction activities it is not anticipated that the Y Bryn Wind Farm Site Boundary will be fenced off, but suitable signage will be positioned at points of public access. Special consideration is needed where rights of way cross construction areas and areas that will be used by construction traffic. At these locations suitable fencing may be used subject to risk assessment.
- A15.5.51 The principal contractor will be responsible for ensuring that their activities and those of the sub-contractors (as defined by the CDM Regulations 2015) will not jeopardise the health and safety of others.
- A15.5.52 Ultimately the principal contractor will define the exact CDM boundaries used at any point during the construction of the proposed development. On a project of this size it is highly likely that the CDM boundary will change during the course of the construction, however this will always remain within the application site boundary as shown in Figure 1.1 of the ES.

² Natural Resources Wales: Managing Public Access to Areas of Land

Summary of Potential Impacts Arising from the Construction Phase

A15.5.53 Table A15.5.2 summarises the potential impacts that have been identified during the construction phase of the proposed development. Decommissioning impacts are anticipated to be similar to those described for the construction phase.

Table A15.5.2: Potential impacts on forest users during construction

Forests User	Potential Impact
Public road network	No impacts to public road users beyond those established within Chapter 11: Traffic and Transport.
Users of car parking areas	No impacts on Royal Oak car park. Garn Wen car park temporarily out of use for the period of construction.
Walkers – Open Access under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	Potential health and safety concerns regarding members of the public entering construction sites (for example risks due to vehicle movements, falling objects and slipping and tripping on muddy or rutted uneven ground).
Cyclists and Horse Riders – Permissive access from NRW	Contact with construction vehicles using same forests tracks as walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Contact with construction vehicles at points where construction vehicles cross forests tracks being used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
Walkers using PRoW	Contact with construction vehicles at points where currently passable PRoW are crossed by access tracks used by construction vehicles to access turbine sites.
Motor vehicles using BOAT	Contact with construction vehicles where PRoW are also used by construction vehicles to access turbine sites.
Cyclists using bridleway/BOAT	Quarrying at borrow pit locations may be audible and visible to recreational users. Access via footpaths, bridleway/BOAT and forest roads to construction sites for new tracks, widening existing forests tracks or turbine sites.
Horse riders using bridleway/BOAT	Potential health and safety concerns regarding members of the public entering construction areas. Contact with construction vehicles using same forests tracks as cyclists. Contact with construction vehicles at points where vehicles cross forests
Cyclists using forest tracks and mountain biking singletrack trails	

Forests User	Potential Impact
Unregistered rights of way	Contact with construction vehicles of properties at Hafod Farm using the NRW forestry road from Goytre village
NRW staff and contractors	Potential health and safety concerns regarding NRW staff and contractors entering construction areas. Contact with construction vehicles using same forests tracks.

Summary of Potential Impacts Arising from Operation

A15.5.54 Table A15.5.3 summarises the potential impacts upon forests users that have been identified during the up to 50 year operational phase of the proposed development, i.e. following completion the construction phase.

Table A15.5.3: Potential impact on forest user for the lifetime of the wind farm

Forests User	Potential Impact
Public road network	No impact.
Users of car parking areas	No impact.
Walkers – Open Access under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	No impact for majority of operational phase, however, if significant maintenance work is required impacts could arise that are similar to construction impacts. Any temporary disruption will be over a much smaller area (localised to the maintenance area) and over a much shorter period (days rather than months) than during construction.
Cyclists - Permissive access from NRW	
Horse Riders – Permissive access from NRW	Turbines are perceived by some equestrians to impose a negative impact where horse and carriage riders pass within 200 metres (m) of a turbine due to the possibility of blade and shadow movement potentially startling or frightening their animals. No other impacts for majority of operational phase, however, as above regarding significant maintenance work.
Walkers using PRow and the Hiraethog Trail	No significant impact for majority of operational phase, other than from the potential of significant maintenance work, as described above.
Motor vehicles using BOAT	
Cyclists using bridleway/ BOAT	

Forests User	Potential Impact
Horse riders using bridleway/BOAT	As noted above, turbines are perceived by some equestrians to impose a negative impact where horse and carriage riders pass within 200 m of a turbine. No other impacts for majority of operational phase, other than from significant maintenance work, as described above.
Cyclists using forest tracks and mountain biking singletrack trails	No impacts for majority of operational phase, other than from the potential of significant maintenance work, as described above.
Unregistered rights of way	No impact.
NRW staff and contractors	No impacts for majority of operational phase, other than from the potential of significant maintenance work, as described above.

Implementation of Proposed Mitigation

Public Access Management Area

- A15.5.55

In order to ensure clarity as to who is responsible for public access and safety within any particular area of the forests, a Public Access Management Area has been identified which is shown on Figure 15.3. This will roughly follow the extents of the construction working area, but also encompassing any paths that might otherwise become cul-de-sacs as a result. The applicant will take responsibility for this area for the duration of the construction phase. Responsibility for the area will revert to NRW and relevant private landowners during the operation of the wind farm, with the exception of the demised areas which will remain within the applicants control. NRW will retain responsibility for the area of the forests outside of the Public Access Management Areas during all phases of the proposed development.
- A15.5.56

The right to “open air recreation” under the CRow Act and also the permissive access rights for cyclists and horse riders will be suspended within the Public Access Management Area for the duration of the construction phases for health and safety reasons. The remainder of this document, in the main, refers to the Public Access Management Area. Access to the wider forests outside the Public Access Management Area will remain under NRW responsibility throughout, although information will be provided regarding the restrictions in place.
- A15.5.57

A joint approach will be taken between the applicant and NRW to manage the restrictions and diversions of public access across the interface of the Public Access Management Area and the wider forests. Any path or road which passes into the Public Access Management Area will be clearly marked, an information point provided and the point of entry may also be blocked if appropriate. Specific details are discussed later in this document. Signage will be funded directly from the wind farm construction budget and will inform the public of the direction of usable routes and/or construction hazards as appropriate.

- A15.5.58 There will also be a communications campaign, in conjunction with NRW, linked with the start of pre-development tree clearance and the end of construction to inform local people and user groups about the closure and re-opening of the Public Access Management Area and the closed PRowWs. This campaign will use a comprehensive range of communications tools as set out in this document.

Mitigation During Construction

- A15.5.59 The proposed access routes to the turbine locations both cross, and use the same routes as, a number of forests tracks and PRowW, permissive routes and trails, albeit for a short distance in the main. Mitigation is proposed to ensure the health and safety of the public. This mitigation has been developed on the basis of the applicant's approach, in response to consultation, to maintain health and safety as an over-riding concern and to keep PRowW open.

Public Road Networks

- A15.5.60 Although the extent of any temporary works is unknown at this stage, it is envisaged that all public highways around the site will remain open throughout construction. All works within the public highway are to be undertaken by authorised contractors and will be compliant with all relevant aspects of the Highways Act and local policy. A construction traffic management plan (CTMP) will consider the operation and management of construction traffic to ensure the safe and efficient transportation of the turbine components and other construction materials and personnel to the development during the construction phases. The CTMP will take into account any specific requirements identified by the relevant authorities and will be sufficient to satisfy and discharge planning conditions attached to any consent.

Car Parking

- A15.5.61 The Garn Wen entrance including carpark will be closed for the duration of the construction period. Royal Oak entrance will remain open.

Open Access Users

- A15.5.62 The right to open access, if maintained during the construction phase, would make it very difficult to monitor and restrict visitors from reaching the actual areas where construction work is taking place as users will not necessarily follow waymarked or mapped routes. While it is the preferred option to allow public access as far as possible, in the interest of health and safety, it is not acceptable to allow visitors to come into close contact with construction activities.
- A15.5.63 The temporary suspension of the right to 'open air recreation' and also permissive access for horse riders and cyclists within the Public Access Management Area will therefore be in place during the construction period, in order to protect the health and safety of the visitors to the forests. The temporary suspension of the right to 'open air recreation' will be displayed on notices around the site, and also on the NRW and the applicant websites. The permissive rights granted to cyclists and horse riders will be temporarily withdrawn during construction by NRW, and re-instated after construction. Consent for the closure of any PRowWs will be agreed with the relevant local authorities. The applicant will be responsible for dealing with all issues (including the erection, maintenance and management of infrastructure including signage and barriers) related

to managing public access/notifying forest users of associated activities for the purposes of managing health and safety during construction stage of the development.

- A15.5.64 Specific permissive routes and trails within the Public Access Management Area will be kept open as far as possible. Where possible, permissions for specific annual events which could be affected, including the Beast of Bryn running event, will be reviewed, in aim of seeking to enable an event to occur elsewhere within the forests.

- A15.5.65 Public access will remain as normal (CRow Act, PRowW and permissive access) outwith the Public Access Management Area. Barriers (such as soil or stone bunds), appropriate fencing and signage will be utilised where appropriate to ensure that visitors do not stray into the area. Appropriate signage will be used at entry points (i.e. minor roads, PRowW and forests tracks) to the Public Access Management Area and car parking areas to inform of the temporary CRowW closure and removal of permissive access. Signage will request that visitors do not stray from the defined PRowW and will also show the location of the construction works and the access tracks to be used by construction traffic. Barriers will be in place across the entrances to PRowW and forests tracks that will not be open to the public.

- A15.5.66 A number of temporary alternative Multi-User Diversion Routes will be identified to provide continuing connections and circular routes around the forests for different types of users. These will be supplemented by a number of Active Management Areas, where banksmen will facilitate safe priority crossing for members of the public, generally over crossroads. In a number of locations, New temporary Footpath Diversions will be established to enable safe and efficient connections. All of these measures are shown illustratively on Figure 15.3 of the ES. All public/permissive access routes will be surveyed and upgraded (if necessary) prior to start of construction to allow multi-user passage and will be maintained for the lifetime of the proposed development.

Construction Areas

- A15.5.67 All construction compounds, borrow pits and turbine foundations when being actively worked will be fenced, as will any open excavations. If following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, a risk assessment identifies that additional mitigation is required then further measures will be considered, which may include banksmen when plant is operating during the construction of new tracks and widening of existing forests tracks; and when construction traffic is anticipated to be intensive. 24 hour security (for example driving patrols) will be in place at construction sites within the Public Access Management Area during construction activities.
- A15.5.68 Associated lighting (where necessary), gated entrances, and site fencing will be in place from initiation of the construction work. All plant, equipment and welfare units will be shuttered up, locked and parked within the fenced area when not in use, where possible. When plant and equipment at working areas cannot be returned to a compound it will be locked in a safe condition overnight and immobilised, where possible.

PRoW

- A15.5.69 There are a number of PRoW, permissive routes and trails within the Application Site as shown in Figure 15.2a and 15.2b. Maintaining an appropriate distance between infrastructure and these public rights of way was a key consideration during the design process.
- A15.5.70 The applicant has endeavoured to retain access to as many PRoWs as possible during the construction phase but emphasise that the right to wander from the PRoW will be prohibited under the temporary CRoW closure (as described at A8.3.56. The use of any PRoW route within the Public Access Management Area will remain purely under PRoW and not through CRoW or permissive use. This will be reinforced by signage at entry points to the Public Access Management Area and other means of communication.
- A15.5.71 Where a PRoW will take users into direct conflict with construction activities, it will be closed for the duration of the construction phase. However any currently passable PRoW which does not lead directly into the construction site and is not used for access by construction vehicles will remain open, other than when there are construction activities at crossing points.
- A15.5.72 Consent for any temporary closure of the PRoWs will be agreed with the relevant local authorities.
- A15.5.73 The remaining PRoW which are currently passable will remain open as long as it is safe to do so. Once construction is complete these PRoW can be re-opened.
- A15.5.74 In order to mitigate the temporary closure of these footpaths and trails, options for potential diversions shall be explored with the relevant local authorities.
- A15.5.75 The diversion and closure of the footpaths will be signed and publicised as described at A15.5.116. Signs will also indicate the location of the construction works and the access tracks to be used by construction traffic. These signs will be checked and maintained for the duration of the construction period.
- A15.5.76 Where the PRoW cross access tracks that will be used by construction traffic, the mitigation measures described at A15.5.78 will be put in place.
- A15.5.77 All diversions and stoppages will be restored following completion of the construction phase. All new access tracks will be finished with aggregate rather than tarmac in accordance with the British Horse Society's known preference.
- A15.5.78 All PRoW within the Public Access Management Area that are identified as being closed during construction period will be inspected prior to closure. Once the construction period is complete, these will be re-surveyed and any necessary work carried out to ensure they are returned in a condition agreed with the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).
- A15.5.79 All PRoW within the Public Access Management Area which have remained open during the construction period will be inspected, monitored and maintained when necessary, during the construction period. Once the construction period is complete and NRW control the forests once again, all PRoWs/paths and roads will be returned to an agreed state.

Crossing of PRoW by Construction Vehicles

- A15.5.80 Subject to the final approved AMEP, there may be locations within the Public Access Management Area where PRoW which will remain open will cross over forests tracks that will be used by construction vehicles.
- A15.5.81 Any such crossing points will be fully signed and guarded in accordance with "Safety at Street Works and Road Works A code of practice ISBN 0 11 551958 0" and Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual and Guidance for Safer Temporary Traffic Management. All approaches to the crossing points will be signed to warn both walkers/cyclists/horse riders and construction vehicles of the approaching hazard. In addition, signs will be erected at all entrances to the forests (i.e. PRoW and forests tracks) indicating the location of the construction works and the access tracks to be used by construction traffic. When the crossing points are not safe for public access they will be closed off with appropriate signage in place.
- A15.5.82 Where access tracks, to be used by construction traffic, are accessible from PRoW (such as where access tracks are crossed by PRoW), lockable barriers or appropriate fencing will be used alongside warning signs to prevent members of the public from using construction access tracks to access construction sites. Barriers will be erected each side of the crossing point parallel to the track to guide pedestrians to the designated crossing point. The crossing points will be maintained in a clean and rut-free state with no obstructions, and inspected on a regular basis to ensure signage, fencing and the footpath crossing surface is in good order.
- A15.5.83 Where footpaths cross in areas of poor visibility, the visibility will be improved, or the footpath will be diverted to a new temporary crossing point with better visibility.
- A15.5.84 All construction staff will be required to undertake an induction to alert them to the potential for recreational users in the forests and to the environmental, health and safety measures that need to be taken. All delivery drivers and plant operators will be briefed during tool box talks on the location of footpath crossing points and the safety procedure adopted for them.
- A15.5.85 All operatives and delivery drivers will be informed to advise site management of any deterioration of crossing point safety. All operatives and delivery drivers will be required to keep within the existing speed limit of 15 mph and to reduce this speed further when passing pedestrians, cyclists or riders using crossing points. The speed limit will be rigorously enforced.
- A15.5.86 If following the implementation of the mitigation measures above, a risk assessment identifies that additional mitigation is required then further measures will be considered, which may include the use of banksmen. Banksmen would control PRoW crossing when working in a particular area and construction traffic is anticipated to be heavy.

Proximity to Borrow Pits

- A15.5.87 None of the proposed borrow pits are very closely located to PRoW (as shown in Figure 15.2a and 15.2b). Quarrying may be audible and visible to recreational users resulting in a temporary potential impact of negligible significance. Any blasting at borrow pits will require a 'safe zone' from which all public will be excluded.

- A15.5.88 Stone from the borrow pits will be required for constructing access tracks and hardstandings (such as the crane pads). Stone will also be required for maintenance of the access tracks on an ongoing basis and also reinstatement towards the end of the construction period. The requirements for stone will therefore continue throughout the construction phase and it will not therefore be possible to phase the use of the borrow pits however the working hours will be limited as described previously for construction works as a whole.

Promoted Routes

- A15.5.89 Any temporary diversions for St Illtyd's Walk and the Great Dragon Ride will be agreed with the relevant local authorities.

Cyclists Using Mountain Biking Trails

- A15.5.90 A section of the Penhydd trail will need to be closed and diverted during construction. The diversion will be accompanied by signage and other communications means, together with roadblocks. Restoration and upgrading sections of the Penhydd and Blue Scar trails, including the 'Big Dipper' singletrack section, will be completed prior to closures for construction.

Unregistered Rights of Way

- A15.5.91 Any necessary mitigation measures will be agreed with the inhabitants of Hafod Farm.

Other Users

- A15.5.92 The location and timing of some recreational activities requiring an activity permit may need to be restricted by NRW during the construction phase. The risk assessments currently prepared for these activities will need to take cognisance of the proposed development construction activities and will be agreed, as is currently the case, with NRW.

- A15.5.93 Discussion with the local access officers, NRW, local community groups and other user groups will continue to help integrate the proposals with those using the forests for recreation.

- A15.5.94 Other informal uses of the forests, such as bird watching relying on open access rights will be prevented due to temporary suspension of these rights. Such activities will only be possible along the open PRoW. Those activities requiring permissions for areas outwith the Public Access Management Area, within the rest of Bryn and Penhydd Forests, may still occur at NRW's discretion.

Emergency Procedures for Recreational Users during Construction

- A15.5.95 Any visitor to the Forests will follow the same procedure as they do today. The emergency services will be made aware of the proposed development, including AIL movements and the restrictions in place within the forests.

- A15.5.96 Prior to construction, under the CDM Regulations 2015, the Principal contractor will produce a construction phase plan which will include emergency procedures relating to the construction works and will exchange this with the emergency services. Keys to any locked gates at access points to the forests will be shared with the emergency services.

- A15.5.97 An Outline Emergency Response Plan (ERP) will be prepared for the construction phase. The outline ERP will contain procedures to be adopted in the event of an environmental emergency

during construction of the wind farm. This document will form an Appendix to the final Construction Method Statement (CMS) for the Project. The objectives of the ERP will be to provide guidance and information on action to be taken by personnel involved in the construction process in the event of an environmental incident. The plan will identify procedures to be followed in the event of an incident with the potential to cause environmental harm.

- A15.5.98 Guidance and procedures for all health and safety related incidents will be contained in the Construction Health and Safety Plan for the proposed development, which is expected to be prepared by the applicant's appointed Principal Contractor.

Tree Clearance during the Construction Phase

- A15.5.99 NRW will endeavour to minimise its usual tree clearance activity throughout the wider Bryn and Penhydd Forests in the interest of maintaining public access to as much of the forests as possible during the construction phase in the following way:

- NRW will not undertake other tree clearance, thinning and haulage of timber within the main block of Bryn and Penhydd Forests, where the proposed development is located during the construction period, unless required in extenuating circumstances such as tree diseases which require control under statute; and
- NRW, however, will retain the right to fell, thin and haul timber in the wider Bryn and Penhydd Forests. It is the intention to minimise this where possible

Deer Management during the Construction Phase

- A15.5.100 NRW staff will require continuing access into the forests for the purpose of managing deer populations during construction. In particular, access will be required to the rifle range located within the southern section, for purpose of safe re-sighting. Vehicular access to the rifle range for NRW staff will be guaranteed at all times throughout the construction period. This will either be via an existing vehicular track, or otherwise via the creation of a new bypass track or restoration of one of the other existing paths in this area.

Mitigation Measures during Operation

- A15.5.101 The temporary suspension of CRoW Act and permissive access rights will be lifted and all PRoW closed due to construction activities will be reopened following commissioning of the proposed development.

- A15.5.102 Should significant maintenance work be required then mitigation with respect to direct impacts on the PRoW will be employed for the construction phase, where appropriate. Any temporary disruption will be over a much smaller area (localised to the maintenance area) and over a much shorter period (days rather than months) than during construction.

- A15.5.103 Four turbines lie within 200 m of the local authority recognised North-South Dragon Ride. However, it is known that horse riders informally use other forests tracks and that activity permits can be requested for carriage driving. As turbines are perceived by some equestrians to have a negative impact where horse riders and carriage riders pass within 200 m of a turbine, due to the possibility of blade and shadow movement potentially startling or frightening their animals, signs will be installed, both along the bridleway and also at all entrances to the forests alerting

equestrians and other forests users to the presence of the turbines. In addition, alternative re-routed options providing over 200 m setback will be provided within the forest.

- A15.5.104 Enhanced security measures, including pin-coded gates and cameras, will also be provided and maintained by the applicant during the operating life of the wind farm at key entrance points and locations around the application site, including the B4282 access road via Maesteg golf club.

Emergency Procedures during Operational Period

- A15.5.105 NRW will manage the entire forests as per their normal practices. Should any maintenance be required where large pieces of equipment will be used, this will be communicated clearly, signage will be erected where appropriate and the emergency services will be notified. The applicant will only have responsibility for the proposed development infrastructure. An Emergency Response Plan will also be prepared for the operational phase.

Mitigation during Decommissioning

- A15.5.106 Land use impacts as a result of the proposed development are not truly permanent as the infrastructure will be removed during decommissioning at the end of the up to 50 year period. Beyond this point, it is at NRW discretion how the land is managed. There will be no issues with the restocking of the majority of the cleared areas at the end of the proposed development.
- A15.5.107 A decommissioning plan will be produced for agreement with the Local Planning Authorities prior to decommissioning starting. It is expected that decommissioning will not cause as much disruption as construction. It is impossible to say at this stage what recreational activities will be taking place within the Forests, as such it is proposed that a further AMEP is produced in advance of decommissioning.
- A15.5.108 On decommissioning of the proposed development, the approx. 7.1 km of new wind farm access and spur roads within the forests are likely to be taken over and maintained by NRW, for management of access within the forests

Enhancement

Measures

- A15.5.109 Working in collaboration with NRW (as land manager), the applicant has identified a number of measures that it commits to undertaking in pursuit of providing significant enhancement to recreational resources.

Reinstatement of Currently Impassable PRoWs Onsite

- A15.5.110 There are a number of currently impassable PRoWs onsite, including some which have been subsumed by forestry planting, and others outside of forestry coupes where vegetation overgrowth has not been managed. Following planned harvesting schedules where relevant, so as there no adverse impacts on existing forest resources, a number of such PRoWs (shown on Figure 15.4 of the ES) will be reinstated prior to start of commercial operation and will be maintained by the applicant for the duration of the proposed development.

Restoration of a Number of Sections of Local Offsite PRoWs

- A15.5.111 Through consultations, PRoW Officers for NPTCBC and BCBC have confirmed that there are certain sections of local offsite PRoWs which may be in need of restoration. Subject to agreement by PRoW Officers and landowners, the applicant will contribute to some restorations prior to start of commercial operation.

Upgrading and Ongoing Maintenance of Penhydd and Blue Scar Trails

- A15.5.112 The applicant will fund and manage the restoration, upgrading and ongoing maintenance for the Penhydd and Blue Scar trails (as shown on Figure 15.4 of the ES), having regard to most current condition and usage reports. As a minimum, works to the 'Big Dipper' singletrack section will be completed prior to closure of the 'Desolation' singletrack for construction. The applicant shall fund maintenance throughout the operating life of the proposed development for the whole of the revamped trails.
- A15.5.113 Regular trail inspection at least in line with the baseline regime at A15.5.34 would be undertaken by an existing NRW officer or approved contractor which would clarify required repairs or maintenance works for the applicant to deliver. NRW would retain oversight and sign-off completed works to ensure trails are kept up to NRW standards. NRW and the applicant will also continue working in partnership in terms of longer term strategy for the trails, recognising the potential for continually evolving technology and opportunities over the life of the proposed development.

Strategic Link

- A15.5.114 The applicant, in collaboration with NRW, will promote a new strategic link between Afan Forest and Margam Park trails, through the southern "Bryn" block (shown on Figure 15.4 of the ES). This will include provision of signage and waymarkers on-site.

e-Bikes

- A15.5.115 The applicant will fund and deliver the installation and maintenance for the operating life of the wind farm of a number of local charging stations in strategic locations to be agreed by NRW and local authorities come the time of construction (considering the prevailing situation of local provision), and as part of revamping Penhydd and Blue Scar Trails will have regard to potential increased usage of e-Bikes in terms of design. At the moment, it is envisaged that charging station provision will be made at both of the main hubs at either end of the new Strategic Link – Afan visitor centre and Margam Park – where other facilities are available to user whilst their bikes are charging, such as toilets, food and access to vehicles.

Enhanced Seating Provision

- A15.5.116 The applicant will fund the installation and maintenance for the operating life of the wind farm of a number of new benches and/or picnic tables as resting points along the new Strategic Link route, recognising the current dearth of such within the southern section. The locations of such new seating will be agreed with NRW and the local authorities at the time of construction (considering the prevailing situation of local provision), however potential illustrative new locations are shown relative to existing such locations on Figure 15.4 of the ES. Any such sites will meet NRW standards for construction. Suitable locations are expected to potentially include

viewpoints at crests of slopes or other areas of potential visual or cultural interest and will need to be accessible to all and maintained through the life of the wind farm by the applicant.

Consideration

A15.5.117 All of the above noting that any positive works will themselves require temporary closures, which will require careful consideration and management under the final approved AMEP. Nonetheless, the enhancement opportunities created by the AMEP and AMEP Fund would be supportive of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015³ - '*A healthier Wales*'.

Delivery

A15.5.118 AMEP measures will be funded by the applicant. For the avoidance of doubt, the implementation of any final approved plan shall remain the sole responsibility and liability of the applicant.

Communication

A15.5.119 The applicant will ensure that clear communication of the implementation and removal of the above mitigation measures i.e. the changes to open access, PRoW and any trails and the location of construction areas, and timescales is made as widely as possible. This will include, but not be restricted to the following means as appropriate:

- Communication materials will be developed in agreement with NRW, NPTCBC and BCBC.
- Information boards, maps and signs will be erected, as appropriate, at the entrances of PRoW and forests tracks into the Public Access Management Area. This will allow the opportunity to present information about the proposed development as well as information about the restrictions in place. These will include information on the timing and location of construction works along with contact details for NRW during the construction phase. The information boards will include a helpline telephone number for the provision of further information, if needed (see below).
- The applicant will produce signage which includes maps about the restrictions for visitors' information. These will be available at the major forest entrances and car parking areas, and the information will also be available on the proposed development and NRW websites.
- NRW staff will be briefed on the proposed changes to access in case of enquiry by members of the public and will be provided with copies of leaflets that can be provided to members of the public, if necessary.
- Further signs will be placed at smaller entrances so that all entrance points to the Application Site provide information on the temporary changes to access within the Forests and where necessary, along the routes as well as at any point which is blocked off. This will include contact details of the applicant's Principal Contractor

(who will have the responsibility for health and safety under CDM) during the construction phase.

- A helpline will be established during office hours to provide members of the public with a point contact regarding access within the Forests during the construction phase.
- Newsletters/leaflet drops will be distributed to local residents and recreation groups at any time when it is necessary to share information.
- Relevant information will be placed on numerous websites including the applicants and where possible NRW, NPTCBC and BCBC.
- Information will be provided to various websites including those for mountain biking, hiking/rambling and horse riding such as the British Horse Society.
- Articles and/or adverts in local newspapers where appropriate.

A15.5.120 Information leaflets will be provided at relevant information points where possible such as local accommodation, council offices, local shops, libraries, NRW offices, tourist information centres etc.

A15.5.121 Throughout the construction and operational phases the effectiveness of access arrangements and communication methods will be regularly monitored to highlight any additional access issues. Such reviews will take place every two months during the construction phase and first 12 months of operation. The performance of the access management plan and any feedback received from members of the public will be reviewed on a regular basis by the applicant and NRW. Information on the performance of the access management plan will be collected via the following sources:

- Regular contact with PRoW officers at NPTCBC and BCBC to review the progress of the access management arrangements;
- Feedback forms will be available via the Y Bryn Wind Farm website;
- Contact details, including a telephone number and e-mail address, will be provided on leaflets, signage, newspaper articles and websites for members of the public to provide feedback on access arrangements during; and
- Short spot questionnaires will be carried out during construction to seek feedback from members of the public using the PRoW within the Application Site. This will include questions on the clarity of information provided as well as the adequacy of signage and other communication measures.

Roles and Responsibilities

A15.5.122 For the avoidance of doubt, the implementation of any final approved plan shall remain the sole responsibility and liability of the applicant.

³ Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/well-being-of-future-generations-wales> [Accessed 14/12/2023]

- A15.5.123 The applicant will be responsible for dealing with all issues (including the erection, maintenance and management of infrastructure including signage and barriers) related to managing public access/notifying forest users of associated activities for the purposes of managing health and safety during construction stage of the development.
- A15.5.124 The applicant will take responsibility for the Public Access Management Area for the duration of the construction phase. The principal contractor will be responsible for ensuring that their activities and those of the sub-contractors (as defined by the CDM Regulations 2015) will not jeopardise the health and safety of others.
- A15.5.125 Prior to construction commencing the applicant will be responsible for ensuring that all diverted (and new) public and permissive access routes will be fit for purpose. This will be done by the applicant undertaking route surveys to ascertain the condition and suitability and carry out any remedial or improvement works required to ensure they are fit for purpose (single or multi-purpose use) prior to construction. These routes will also be inspected regularly throughout the construction phase to ensure suitability and any repairs undertaken where necessary.
- A15.5.126 Responsibility for the whole area will revert to NRW and relevant private landowners during the operation of the wind farm, with the exception of the demised areas which will remain within the applicant's control. NRW will retain responsibility for any areas of the forests outside of the Public Access Management Areas during all phases of the proposed development. Access to the wider forests outside the Public Access Management Area will remain under NRW responsibility throughout, although information will be provided regarding the restrictions in place.
- A15.5.127 During the operational phase, NRW will manage the entire forests as per their normal practices. Should any maintenance be required where large pieces of equipment will be used, this will be communicated clearly, signage will be erected where appropriate and the emergency services will be notified. The applicant will only have responsibility for proposed development infrastructure
- A15.5.128 The applicant will, in particular, be responsible for funding, delivering and managing all agreed measures throughout the operational life of the proposed development.

Summary

- A15.5.129 Within this O-AMEP, existing users of the Application Site within the Bryn and Penhydd Forests are identified and potential impacts to access by these groups are highlighted. The main groups include:
- Public road network;
 - Users of car parking areas;
 - Open access to the Forests by walkers;
 - Permissive use of forests tracks by cyclists and horse riders;
 - Access via the PRoW network by walkers;
 - Horse riders and cyclists using the bridleway/BOAT;

- Users of the mountain biking trails;
- NRW, its staff and contractors; and
- Other users including filming, military training, Forest School, and bee hives.

- A15.5.130 The plan describes the implementation of mitigation measures to address potential impacts of the proposed development within Bryn and Penhydd Forests. This mitigation has been developed on the basis of NRW and the applicant's approach, in response to consultation i.e.:
- To maintain health and safety as an over-riding concern which has resulted in the need to temporarily close a number of PRoW and suspend the right to 'open air recreation' and permissive access rights within the Public Access Management Area during the tree clearance and construction periods; and
 - To keep the remaining PRoW open as far as possible during these phases. Efforts have been made to ensure that temporary closures are kept to a minimum and that diversions are put in place where possible.
- A15.5.131 Car parking on the site and in the vicinity will be minimally affected.
- A15.5.132 One section of the Penhydd mountain biking trail will be diverted for health and safety reasons during the construction phase.
- A15.5.133 The diversion and closure of the footpaths and the suspension of the open and permissive access will be marked well in advance with signs to explain the open routes across the forests.
- A15.5.134 Following construction of the proposed development, all closed PRoW will be re-opened and the temporary suspension of the right to 'open air recreation' and permissive access rights lifted. There will be a formal handover from the applicant to NRW, returning the Application Site (with the exception of the demised area which will remain within the applicant control) to management under forestry framework responsibilities.
- A15.5.135 Enhancement measures will be implemented, funded by an AMEP Fund. These will include:
- Reinstatement of currently impassable PRoWs;
 - Restoration of a number of sections of local offsite PRoWs;
 - Upgrading and Ongoing Maintenance of Penhydd and Blue Scar Trails;
 - Creation of a new Strategic Link between Afan Forest Park and Margam Park;
 - Installation of new charging stations for e-Bikes; and
 - Enhanced seating provision.
- A15.5.136 It is expected that decommissioning will not cause as much disruption as construction. As it is not possible to say at this stage what recreational activities will be taking place within the forests, it is proposed that a further AMEP is produced in advance of decommissioning.

A15.5.137 The applicant will ensure the clear communication of the above mitigation measures, through the use of: information boards, maps and signs; leaflets and newsletter drops; a helpline and websites.