

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD PORT TALBOT**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1999**

**SCREENING OPINION – ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT NOT
REQUIRED**

Name and address of the applicant

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Warick
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Name and address of the agent

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DATE REGISTERED: 2 May 2025

APPLICATION NO: P2025/0309

LOCATION: Margam Sub Station, Margam, Port Talbot, Neath Port Talbot,
SA13 3NF

PROPOSAL: Request for Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town
and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment)
(Wales) Regulations 2017 for a new 275 kV double busbar
substation to replace and extend the existing Margam
Substation, including a GIS hall and amenities building and 6no
cables of 275 kV between Margam and Port Talbot substations
to include cable trenching and Horizontal Directional Drilled
(HDD) cable.

THE NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL AS THE LOCAL PLANNING
AUTHORITY IN PURSUANCE OF ITS POWER UNDER THE ABOVE MENTIONED ACT
AND REGULATION HEREBY ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING SCREENING OPINION THAT
THE DEVELOPMENT IS NOT AN E.I.A. DEVELOPMENT AND THAT THE APPLICATION
NEED NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT. THE
REASONS FOR THIS OPINION ARE SET OUT IN THE ATTACHED REPORT.

Signed:



Ceri Morris – Head of Planning & Public Protection

Date: 22 May 2025

Detailed EIA Screening Assessment.

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

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

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
Criterion 1. Character of Development		
Question 1a Size and Design of Development.		
Will the design, Construction, Operation or decommission of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc)?	Yes – The application site is predominantly located within a SINC and an identified flood zone with surface water ditches running through and in close proximity to the site. The proposed substation would have a Gross External Area of 1862sqm and would be built within the flood zone, with the application site extending over 21.97 hectares. The development would include, cable runs with HDD and trenching, ditch diversions, flood defence wall, surface water features, earthworks, temporary construction swathes and an access road.	The application site is greenfield land, located next to an existing substation. The scale of the proposed works would result in physical alterations to the land and surface water flows. The screening information outlines that temporary construction swathes would be used including the utilisation of lightweight aggregates or trackway to mitigate long-term compaction. The cable route excavations would be infilled after construction, returning the land to the original topography. The ditch diversion route would be finalised once the topography survey is available. The screening report includes details of proposed mitigation measures which seek to avoid, limit and manage potential impacts down to an acceptable level.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
		Such measures can be fully assessed during the course of the application and can be required through to imposition of suitably worded conditions and as such the effects of the development are not likely to be significant.
Question 1b Cumulation with Other Existing Development and/or Approved Development.		
Are there any other factors which should be considered such as: - Consequential development which could lead to Environment effects? - The Potential for cumulative impacts with other existing approved development or planning activities in the locality? - Any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project? - Transfrontier impact?	Yes – A planning application for the redevelopment of Tata Steel has recently been approved, to allow for the construction of an Electric Arc Furnace on land near the application site. The proposed development would also facilitate the Tata development, providing a sufficient electricity supply. The AB Ports redevelopment initiatives and the Lanzatech project, together with the Freeport designation could also have the potential to create an in-combination effect.	Based on the information within the public domain in relation to the Tata development, it is noted that due to the location and nature of the Tata development the impacts are unlikely to have an in-combination effect with the development outlined within this screening request. With regard to the Lanzatech project, ABP redevelopment and the freeport designation, while these initiatives could have an in-combination impact, the proposed development due to its location and nature is considered to have impacts that would not have a cumulative impact in combination with these projects.
Question 1c Use of Natural Resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;		
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity etc. which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes – the proposal would require land and the use of natural resources for the construction of the substation and the proposed cable runs. The proposal would also result in the diversion of drainage ditches and the loss wetland habitat.	The applicant has stated that during the course of the development design, a number of alterations have been made to the development where possible to avoid the impacts, and where this is not possible, to reduce their effect. Nevertheless, the extension of the substation would

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
		result in the permanent loss of SINC habitat and a temporary adverse impact during construction operations and would result in the permanent diversion of the existing drainage network. The submitted details sets out a programme of biodiversity compensation and enhancement on an area of land located to the south of the substation development and adjacent to the Margam Moors SSSI bringing the area of land up to a similar habitat standards of that of the SSSI standard, together with management of the SSSI.
Question 1d. Production of Waste		
Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes – some waste would be produced during construction and decommissioning. The cables are expected to have a design life of 40 years and are not anticipated to be replaced during that time.	The excavated material from the site will be reinstated in situ unless it is not possible following the geotechnical assessments. Once the substation is constructed and operational it would not be manned, and it unlikely to generate waste. While it is acknowledged that the decommissioning would result in some waste, this is not considered to be over and above that of any development site.
Question 1e. Pollution and Nuisances.		
Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes, all construction operations have a risk to human health however appropriate site management in accordance with HSE regulation should mitigate any such effects. The application is also not likely to produce substances or material that	Any application submitted would have to fully assess the predicted emissions to air, together with any proposed mitigation methods. However the scale of these impacts could be assessed through supporting documents and controlled through the imposition of conditions and

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	could be hazardous to human health.	as such is not likely to be significant.
Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes - Noise and vibration is likely during the construction phase, and during the operational phase.	Noise and vibration would be localised and time limited during construction. During the operational phase, noise and vibration is considered to be limited and is not significant. The proposal would not result in significant heat energy impacts.
Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air, or lead to risks of contamination of land or water (including surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea)?	During construction operations there would be potential for contaminates to land and water. Soil movement could lead to disturbance and possible mobilisation of ground gases given the presence of ground gas, Peat and coal mining history During the operational phase it is noted that the proposal has the potential to release pollutants to the air due to the inclusion of a diesel generator, which is intended for use during emergency situations.	Potential sources of contamination to land and water during the construction operations can be mitigated through the comprehensive application of a CEMP which details appropriate management methodology for the storage and disposal of materials that would need to be stored and used on site, such as fuel and HDD biproducts, thereby assuring that any potential impact are appropriately mitigated and no significant effect occur. Similarly, suitable operation methodologies to be used in association with the emergency generator on site in an operational management plan and thereby ensuring no significant potential effects.
Question 1f Risk of accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.		
Will there be any risk of accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific	Yes, the application site is located within a flood zone and includes facilities for the distribution of electricity, as such there is a potential risk of	It is understood that the developers have produced a Flood Consequence Assessment which considers the vulnerability of the site and its contribution as an

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
knowledge during construction or operation of the project?	accidents and incidents caused by climate change.	infrastructure facility. The proposal details the provision of a flood defence wall around the substation compound and potential issues of safety associated with electricity supply should be controlled through their construction and operational procedures. As such any potential impacts are unlikely to be significant.
Are there risks to human health for example due to water contamination or air pollution?	Yes, some small risk in terms of health and safety during the construction and operational phases. Together with risks to water contamination due to the proximity of the development to drainage ditches and its location with a flood zones.	The risks should be mitigated through the implementation of a comprehensive CEMP and flood defence measures. As such the impacts are not likely to be significant.
Criterion 2 Location of development.		
Question 2a Existing and approved land use.		
Will the project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles employment?	No - due to the nature of the development.	
Are there any routes or facilities or approved facilities on or around the location, which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	There are no registered Public Rights of Way on the site, however it would be located in close proximity to Longlands Lane PROW which would be used for construction vehicle access.	Longlands Lane is not an intensively use PROW and the volume of construction traffic would be unlikely to have a significant impact on this PROW.
Are there any transport routes or approved routes which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	The development would be located off a private road and in close to the M4 and the Harbour Way Peripheral Distributor Road (PDR).	Due to the scale and nature of the proposed development it would be unlikely to result in a significant increase in congestion during both the construction and operational phase of development.
Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes – while the site is located adjacent to the existing substation, the proposal would be constructed on greenfield land and would	the development has been designed to limit the amount of land taken up by the development. The land is marshland/ bog and as such

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	result in the loss of habitat and peat.	would not result in the loss off quality agricultural land however would result in the loss of SINC habitat which the applicants have identified a suitable scheme of compensation, mitigation and enhancement. As such the development is unlikely to have a significant impact.
Are there any areas on or around the location occupied by land uses or approved land uses which could be affected by the project, particularly sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities?	No.	
Question 2b Relative Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;		
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, soil, land, water and biodiversity, which could be affected by the project?	Yes – the site is located within flood zone 2 and 3 and within surface water ditches and a SINC. The application would require the submission of a FCA and demonstrate that the proposal meets the tests of TAN15. The development would have the potential to impact surface water, the loss of SINC habitat and impact upon Peat.	The applicant has indicated that it is their intension to submit an FCA, a Peat Management Plan and a schedule of compensation, mitigation and enhancement measures which would allow the full assessment of the impacts associated with the development which are not likely to be significant.
Question 2c Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment		
Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology, or are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or floras which could be affected by the project?	Part of the application site would result in the loss of a SINC which is characterised by marshy wetland habitat, with the potential for Peat to be present. Margam Moors SSSI and Eglwys Nunydd Reservoir SSSI and Kenfig SSSI, SAC and national and local nature reserve located to the south, at a higher ground level.	The applicant has indicated that the application will be supported by the submission of surveys, mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategies. This information should be sufficient to allow the full assessment of the developments impacts which are of a nature that are not likely to be significant.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
Are there any inland, coastal, marine, river mouths, riparian area or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes – the development would result in the diversion of ditches in order to construct the proposed substation. The cable routes would also be located within wetland areas and have the potential to impact surface and ground water flows.	Within the submitted document, the applicant has identified potential hazards to groundwater receptors associated with the trenching and ground stabilisation. Any application submitted would have to fully assess the impact of such identified hazards and demonstrate that any potential impacts can be mitigated to an acceptable level. However given the scale of the development within the context in which the site is located it is considered that these impacts could be managed to ensure that any impacts are unlikely to be significant.
Are there any areas or feature of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes – the application site is located near the Margam Special Landscape Area and Margam Country Park Historic Park and Garden.	The identified landscape areas are elevated at a significantly higher topography to the application site. Given the limited height of the proposed development at approximately 17m together with the scale of the development and the context in which it would be viewed it is considered that the development is unlikely to have a significant impact.
Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	The application site is located adjacent to the National railway line and the Longlands Lane PROW, however views of the site are likely to be limited and would largely be viewed in the industrial context to which it is located. The cable runs would be located below ground and	

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
	would not be visible once constructed.	
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	No - the application site is located outside settlement limits and within a predominately industrial setting.	
Are there any areas, landscapes, sites or features of historic, archaeological or cultural importance or significance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	While there are features with in the wider area, there is nothing located within the immediate area that is considered to be affected by the development.	
Are there any areas on or around the location which area already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g where existing legal environmental quality standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project? Or in which it is considered there is such a failure? Such as AQMA?	Yes – the application site is located in close proximity to the AQMA which is located to the north of the application site. The site also has the potential for historic ground contamination.	While there are potential emissions to air during construction this could be controlled by a CEMP. During construction there also is potential for disturbance to historic ground contamination however these impacts could be managed through the imposition of a suitable CEMP. During operation the development, the emergency diesel generator has to potential to have some emissions to air however this is only likely to be used in an emergency and any associated impact is unlikely to be significant.
Is the project located susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes – the site is located within a flood zone.	The applicant has identified that any application would be supported by an FCA. Part of which would be for the construction of a flood defence wall around the proposed substation.

Statement Of Reasons

In coming to this decision the Authority has had due regard to all information submitted by the developers; the available results of other environmental assessments as well as the criteria set out within schedule 3. The Authority's main reasons for coming to this decision are set out within the above table. In conclusion, the Authority is of the opinion that the proposed development, either alone or in combination, are unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the environment. This is on the understanding that the above identified effects could be avoided or prevented as specified within the table. As such, the likely effects of the development are unlikely to be significant enough to warrant EIA development.