



Local Impact Report

Ref: DNS/3272424

Project: Ground mounted solar farm

Site: Land Forming Part Of Pen Cae'r
Lan Farm, Lane From Dulais Road To
Pen Cae'r Lan Farm, Seven Sisters,
Neath Port Talbot
SA10 9EP

1. Introduction
2. Site description
3. Proposed development
4. Local designations relevant to the site / surroundings and constraints
5. History
6. Publicity
7. Local Planning Policy
 - 7.1 Climate Change - Positive
 - 7.2 Landscape and Visual – Negative
 - 7.3 Noise - Neutral
 - 7.4 Ecology – Negative
 - 7.5 Glint and Glare – Neutral
 - 7.6 Transport and Access – Negative
 - 7.7 Socio Economic – Positive
 - 7.8 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage – Neutral/negative
 - 7.9 Public Right of Way – Negative
 - 7.10 Flooding - Neutral
 - 7.11 Other local effects
8. Likely impact of any application in relation to any secondary consent needed or to be granted
9. Planning Obligations and Conditions

Appendix 1 Draft conditions

Appendix 2 Publicity

1. Introduction

Under the requirements of Section 62I and 62K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Regulation 25 of Developments of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016 the Council, as Local Planning Authority, are obliged to prepare a Local Impact Report (LIR) for the consideration of Planning and Environment Decisions Wales in respect of Developments of National Significance (DNS).

In accordance with Welsh Government Guidance, this LIR does not examine the relationship with national policy and guidance but is focussed on establishing the degree of local impact in relation to the main planning issues, having regard also to the local planning policy context. For each topic, in accordance with guidance, impacts have been expressed in terms of whether they are positive, neutral or negative; with the degree of impact, where relevant, being expressed as major, moderate or minor. Also following PEDW guidance, the LIR does not contain a balancing exercise between positives and negatives, nor does it come to a conclusion on the relative merits of the development.

The report below forms Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's LIR in response to the above DNS planning application.

The full description of development is as follows: -

Photovoltaic (PV) panels

Mounting frames

Scheme of landscaping and biodiversity enhancement;

Inverters units

Underground cabling

Sub station

Stock proof fencing

CCTV

Tracks

Grid connection hub

This report is set out in accordance with the headings advised in the relevant Welsh Government (WG)/ Planning & Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) guidance notes as follows:

1. Local designations relevant to the site/surroundings and constraints
2. Planning history
3. Publicity
4. Relevant local planning policies, guidance and other documents
5. Likely impact of the DNS development on the area (in terms of its positive, neutral or negative effects)
6. Likely impact of any application in relation to secondary consents needed or to be granted.
7. Draft conditions/obligations the LPA considers necessary for mitigating any likely impacts of the development.

This LIR includes an analysis of likely impacts, a description of the planning history of the site, the identification of local designations, and recommendations for planning conditions (and, if considered necessary, planning obligations) as well as evidence of the requisite publicity required to be undertaken by the LPA. It is requested that the appointed PEDW Inspector consider this report when determining the above DNS planning application

This LIR is reliant upon information available within the submitted documents and prior knowledge of the site. The LIR takes note of the relevant procedural guidance contained at Appendix 5 of the Welsh Government's 'Guidance on Developments of National Significance'.

2. Site Description

The site area measures approximately 29 hectares, located to approximately 1.1 km to the southwest of the village of Seven Sisters

within the Dulais Valley, Neath. The site is entirely situated within the administrative area of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council administration.

The site is irregular in shape and consisting of several rough pasture fields with a series of watercourses that cross the site, the land is currently used for grazing. The fields are generally bounded by hedgerows with some occasional scattered trees. The site slopes towards the south/ southeast.

To the north and west of the site are agricultural fields, with the general topography sloping from northwest to southeast. To the south and east is the village of Seven Sisters.

The site is accessed from an existing vehicular access off Dulais Road (A4019).

3. Proposed Development

The scheme constitutes a solar park with associated grid connection infrastructure. The design capacity is 25 MWp of renewable energy over a period of 40 years with a grid connection into the electricity network at Western Power Distribution's substation approximately 1200m to the west of the site.

A description of the development has been provided in the Planning statement which include the following

- Photovoltaic (PV) panels
- Mounting frames
- Scheme of landscaping and biodiversity enhancement
- Inverters units
- Underground cabling
- Sub station
- Stock proof fencing
- CCTV
- Stone tracks

- Grid connection hub

Solar panels are proposed to be mounted on a framework system. The panels will be static and positioned along an east west axis with the panels facing south.

A scheme of landscaping and ecological management has been submitted to retain and reinforce the existing features.

4. Local designations relevant to the site / surroundings and constraints

- Technical Advice Note 15 Development, flooding and coastal erosion identifies that the majority of the site (all the PV deployment area) as not located within a flood zone, only part of the access road is located within flood zone 2 and 3.
- A Public Right of Way (PROW) 2.41 runs across the application site. The access route leading to the site is defined as Public Right of Way (PROW) footpath named Route 20.DHi/2 which can be accessed off the A4109 to the south west of the application site. This footpath splits into two footpaths named Route 23.D.Hi/1 and 23.D.Hi/2, which run throughout the application site and separate to various footpaths extending further across the site.
- The majority of the site is located within the coal mining development low risk area, in addition there are smaller areas of high risk.
- The development site falls within Special Landscape Area 2 – Dulais Valley, as defined by Local Development Plan policy (EN2/2)
- The site is located within Mineral Safeguarding Area as defined by Local Development Plan policy M1

- There is a watercourse which crosses the site which is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (sinc) watercourse.
- There are no designated or non-designated heritage assets within or adjoining the site.

5. History

The application site has the following relevant planning history:

P2014/0684 _Single storey rear extension – Approved 21.10.2014.

P2017/0906 – Retention and completion of two storey rear extension – Approved 25.10.2017

6. Publicity

By official notice of acceptance letter dated 20th November 2024, PEDW required the site notices (copies of which were included with that letter) to be erected in at least one place on or near the land to which the application relates and for a period of not less than 30 days. Site notices were erected at four locations on 10th July 2025. The site notices will be erected for at least 30 days of the consultation period. This is in compliance with Regulation 19 of The Order.

Appendix 1 to this report includes a copy of the site notice, a plan indicating the location of the site notices, and photographs of the site notices. This is in compliance with Regulation 25 (2) (c) of The Order.

The LPA can also confirm that the documents required to be placed on the planning register and described in PEDWs official notice of acceptance letter dated 20th November 2024, were placed on the planning register within the required 5 working days. A hard copy of the submission was placed in the Authority's office for

inspection by the public. Therefore, the LPA has complied with Regulation 20 of The Order.

7. Local Planning Policy

The Authority notes that the applicant's make reference to national planning policy and guidance within Planning Policy Wales 12 and Future Wales: the National Plan 2040 and compliance with their policy frameworks, this outside the scope of the LIR.

The development plan for the purposes of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan 2011 - 2026 (Adopted January 2016) (hereafter LDP). When considering the grant of planning permission, the plan should be considered as a whole, within the LDP the following policies are of particular relevance. The Authority's Replacement LDP is at present at an early stage with the delivery agreement agreed.

Strategic Policies

The LDP Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for Neath Port Talbot, meet the objectives of the LDP and respond to the issues identified to deliver sustainable development. The strategy focuses on enabling development in accordance with the 25 identified objectives. The Strategy is implemented through facilitating development(s) that comply with 22 strategic policies; these are then supported by a number of general policies (and allocations). The strategic policies that are of most relevance to the appeal are described below.

The LDP recognises that the County Borough should make a proportionate contribution to meeting renewable energy targets while balancing the impact of development on the environment and communities. Policies SP 1 (Climate Change); SP 14 (The Countryside and the Undeveloped Coast); Policy SP16 (Environmental Protection); and SP18 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy) aim to ensure that sustainable development is achieved whilst protecting the landscape, and natural and built environment of Neath Port Talbot and adjoining areas.

- **Policy SP1** Climate Change
- **Policy SP2** Health
- **Policy SP4** Infrastructure
- **Policy SP6** Development in the Valleys Strategy Area
- **Policy SP13** Tourism
- **Policy SP15** Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **Policy SP16** Environmental Protection
- **Policy SP18** Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
- **Policy SP20** Transport Network
- **Policy SP21** Built Environment and Historic Heritage

Topic Based Policies

Of most relevance are policies RE1 (Criteria for the Assessment of Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development), BE1 (Design), Policy EN6 (Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites), and EN7 (Important Natural Features)

Policy RE1 enables the supply of renewable energy through environmentally acceptable solutions. RE1 states for all renewable energy development it sets criteria that seek to ensure that measures have been taken to minimise impacts on visual amenity and the natural environment; That there will be no unacceptable impacts on residential amenity; that the development will not compromise highway safety; that the development would not interfere with radar, air traffic control systems, telecommunications links, television reception, radio communication and emergency services communications; and that there are satisfactory proposals in place for site restoration as appropriate. RE1 therefore provides a framework for the evaluation of potential development impacts.

Policy BE1 supports development proposals only where they demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places.

Policy EN2 states that development within the designated Special Landscape Areas will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there will be no significant

adverse impacts on the features and characteristics for which the Special Landscape Area has been designated

Policy EN6 offers protection to locally important biodiversity and geodiversity sites such as Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs), sites meeting SINC criteria or sites supporting Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) or S42 habitats or species. It requires where possible conservation and enhancement of such features and where adverse impacts are unavoidable enhancement.

Policy EN7 requires that proposals which adversely affect ecologically or visually important natural features such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows / field boundaries, watercourses or ponds take account of these features and retain them where possible and where this is not possible secure mitigation.

Policy M 1 Limits development in Mineral Safeguarding Areas Development proposals within mineral safeguarding areas.

- **Policy SC1** Settlement limits
- **Policy I1** Infrastructure Requirements
- **Policy EN2** Special Landscape Areas
- **Policy EN6** Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites
- **Policy EN7** Important Natural Features
- **Policy EN8** Pollution and Land Stability
- **Policy M1** Development in Mineral Safeguarding Areas
- **Policy RE1** Criteria for the Assessment of Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development
- **Policy W3** Waste Management in New Development
- **Policy TR2** Design and Access of New Development
- **Policy BE1** Design
- **Policy BE2** Buildings of Local Importance

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

A Renewable Energy SPG was adopted in July 2017. It supplements LDP policies SP18 and RE1 which seek to balance the benefits of renewable energy development against the need to protect the natural and historic environment. It focuses on all major renewable energy sources. The aim of the SPG is to give information about the planning approach to renewable and low carbon energy in Neath Port Talbot and sets out the relevant matters that will need to be taken into consideration when developments are being planned in the County Borough.

The below is a list of SPG that is considered to be most material to the consideration of this application.

- Planning Obligations (October 2016)
- Pollution (October 2016)
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (July 2017)
- Design (July 2017)
- Landscape & Seascape (May 2018)
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity (May 2018)
- The Historic Environment (April 2019) (incl. Schedule of Buildings of Local Importance)

7.1 Climate Change - Positive

The Welsh Government through Future Wales has a target of 70% energy production by renewable means by 2030. This is set out in 'Future Wales' which is the highest tier of planning policy in Wales and is therefore a material consideration. Neath Port Talbot set a target of being a carbon neutral authority by 2030 when it declared a climate emergency in 2022. The applicant estimates that the proposal would generate renewable electricity for over 7,500 homes per year which is equivalent to displacement of 11000 tonnes of CO2 per year and 440, 000 tonnes over the life of the development based on industry figures provided by Solar Energy UK.

The scheme would therefore have a positive impact on climate change.

7.2 Landscape and Visual – Negative

The Local Planning Authority were not consulted on the proposed development prior to 7th July 2025 and as such there has been no landscape architect input from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council in the lead up to the submission. The viewpoint locations have not been discussed or agreed.

The effects of the proposed development upon the landscape and visual receptors and the landscape related policies have been considered within the confines of the Neath Port Talbot local authority area only.

The proposed arrays are spatially set out on an open and exposed east-facing slope that is strongly visually connected to the surrounding landscape, on land rising from 150m AOD to approximately 230m AOD across slopes in the region of 1:10. The site is highly visible from parts of the Seven Sisters settlement, on the valley slopes where public rights of way cross the site to reach open access land adjoining the site and from more distant views from the east, including Sarn Helen to the east (c 2.5km distant).

The public right of way network crossing the site has a number of notable features including the stepping stones crossing streams and rurality of the land that becomes increasingly remote and tranquil with distance from the town as a path user crosses the site heading towards the relatively wildness of the open access land bordering the site.

The site lies within the Dulais Valley visual and sensory layer area where an open wooded mosaic on the upland valley landform is noted. There is high scenic quality (LVA para 4.2.27) and the overall evaluation is high. (LVA para 4.2.26). Part of the site is within a designated Special Landscape Area; (EN2/2) Dulais Valley, development within this area will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the features and characteristics for which the special landscape area has been designated.

The LVA related information has been prepared by Tir Collective. The proposed development is expected to generate up to 25 megawatts (Mw) through solar installations. The application documentation makes no mention of any battery storage facilities (BESS) which is noted as being unusual for a solar farm. Confirmation of this aspect of the proposals is required.

The access arrangements are complex and include the upgrading of existing and creation of new access tracks.

The proposed development is a major development in terms of scale in relation to the character of the site, and in this regard offers many challenges from the main solar array components and the connecting infrastructure, including access tracks.

NPT consider that the value of the area including the site (site plus context) is in the order of **medium-high / high**, meeting with the criteria recorded in the high value box of Table A2-2 of the LVA by virtue of the area being a landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition, with scenic quality, tranquillity and wildness and that the landscape is valued for recreation and in a location where the experience of landscape is important. NPT have not undertaken a full TGN 02/21 value assessment and note that this has not been done in the LVA.

Table A2-2 Criteria to determine landscape value.

Value	Criteria
High Value	Landscapes subject to international or national designations, and non-designated landscapes where the following considerations apply: Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape; There are important cultural and artistic associations; They are representative of typical character of the area or have a character or elements that are valued for their rarity; Particular components may be identified as important contributors to the landscape character; The landscape is valued for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.

The LVA identifies the landscape susceptibility to be low. NPT disagree, and on the basis of observations and the approach noted in the LVA methods, conclude that the **susceptibility is high**. (The changes arising from the solar and access aspects of the development would alter the character, quality and condition of this particular landscape type / area and new elements would appear to be incongruous, impacting on the perceptual qualities that reinforce key characteristics of the aspect area.)

Table A2-3 Criteria for landscape susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	The changes arising from the type of development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area. The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character. The type of development would compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape. The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character or add new elements that would reinforce the key characteristics of the landscape character.

The sensitivity to change assessment, whilst well set out in section 4.4.5 of the LVA, places the sensitivity too low. LVA Table 4.1 sets out the conclusions, recording the assessor's opinion that the landscape is of moderate-low sensitivity overall. NPT consider this is incorrect, and the **sensitivity should be moderate high or high**. Placing sensitivity too low has led to the under-reporting of effects in LVA Tables 4.2 and 4.3. For a substantial development in a relatively intact, high scoring rural landscape the greatest effects on landscape are set as being moderate minor. This is not a conclusion that NPT can support. NPT request that the landscape assessment is re-visited prior to the final submission of the application to PEDW.

The visual assessment similarly underplays effects by not giving sufficient value, susceptibility to change or sensitivity to the users of paths and residents in the community whose outlook will be changed across a broad proportion of the view. The changes in view and visual context will make this area a far less attractive place to walk and bring about impacts on path users in NPT as well as the long-distance Sarn Helen users in Powys (not assessed in detail in this LIR) and will bring about **major impacts on visual receptors**.

The only moderate-major effects identified in the LVA are on path users crossing within the site. NPT advise that the visual assessment needs re-visiting prior to the final submission of the application to PEDW.

The cumulative assessment is very limited. The minor adverse cumulative impact conclusion needs to be substantiated with, as a minimum, a transparently reported assessment of cumulative impacts on the landscape character and in the visual assessment an evaluation of cumulative impacts on the sequence of views from long distance paths.

It is not clear from the application LVA and other documentation reviewed if there is a battery storage element to the scheme proposals. If there is, then the detail of the BESS development including detailed drawings, needs to be included in the final application supporting information and NPT seek to see an assessment made of the above ground and below ground works impacts, including any cut and fill. If there is a BESS element the omission of details is a notable shortcoming and needs to be resolved prior to submission of the final documents. The submission of 1:100 scale cross sections would assist NPT in this regard.

The new tracks will bring about their own impacts, the development will impact on public access, the stream crossings and cultural heritage elements in the landscape as well as disrupting patterns.

Local Development Plan policy RE1 is supportive of renewable energy development in the borough, subject to the assessment of local impacts and the careful siting so as to avoid **unacceptable impacts**. Section 4 of this policy identifies that:

All renewable energy or low carbon energy development proposals will be required to demonstrate that:

- (a) Measures have been taken to **minimise impacts** on visual amenity and the natural environment;*
- (b) There will be no unacceptable impacts on residential amenity; ...*

The LPA support well-planned and sited schemes in parts of the landscape that can accommodate the proposed change without unacceptable impacts on landscape or visual receptors. The policy requirement is the minimising of effects. The LPA also seek to see well-designed and incorporated landscape

enhancement and mitigation of discordant elements by re-siting or removal from the scheme, not by screening.

Overall, the LPA consider that the character of the landscape is deeply rural and predominantly pastoral with impeded drainage and rushy rough pastures dominating the land, becoming more akin to moorland on the northern part of the site. The land itself appears to be heavily dissected by streams and gulleys and geologically complex and therefore, in terms of siting modular elements at a field-scale, the landscape is too open, too strongly related to the Seven Sisters settlement and population and visually complex to be able to accommodate the proposals successfully.

The LPA's landscape reviewer has made an initial assessment of the proposed development, and the LPA draw the conclusion that, as an overarching observation, the development is poorly sited. Effects cannot be minimised due to the openness of the landscape and the specific key characteristics present and valued not being accommodating to solar development. The character is not accommodating to the form of the development proposed.

On the sloping site land that also has upland characteristics and is highly visible the likely effects cannot be softened or mitigated. The hedge / tree planting shown is located to screen the solar development. The LPA also consider that this type of screening would not be effective and if the site was more accommodating to development, less susceptible to change, screening should not be required.

The LPA have significant concerns over the siting of the proposed development and the LPA would wish to object on landscape and visual grounds to the solar farm if this scheme is taken forward.

7.3 Noise - Neutral

The applicants have undertaken an assessment of the noise levels resulting from the introduction of the proposed development in terms of potential operational and

construction effects. Noise impact associated with solar farms may arise from the electrical equipment, inverters and transformers, typically in enclosures or containers around the site.

A noise impact assessment has been submitted with the application which shows that at all properties surrounding the site the noise during the operational phase would be limited to the daytime and not exceed 32db at any property which is stated to be an acceptable level. Noise is therefore likely to be NEUTRAL. However, as a precaution it is suggested that a condition is imposed regarding noise nuisance and construction/decommissioning operating times.

7.4 Ecology – Negative

There are relevant ecological matters which fall under the remit of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) as responsible authority, namely SSSIs, SACs, Badgers, Bats, and Dormice.

The application is accompanied by an ecological impact assessment that draws on baseline ecological conditions and identified ecological features to provide an assessment of the effects of the proposed development on the ecology of the area. A range of ecological surveys have been undertaken defining baseline conditions for the proposed development. It is reported that the habitats on site meet SINC criteria.

The site includes improved and poor semi-improved grassland used for silage and hay production, semi-improved acid grassland, and a relatively large area of marshy grassland in the northern and central part of the site. Two streams run in a south-easterly direction across the site before discharging to the Afon Dulais to the east, and there are two ponds, located on the southern boundary and approximately 100 m to the east of the site respectively. Small areas of broadleaved woodland and scrub occur along the watercourses.

It is suggested that a condition is imposed regarding the implementation of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

It is likely there will be some loss of floristic diversity under the panels, so it is concluded that it will have a negative impact on biodiversity.

7.5 Glint and Glare – Neutral

Glint and Glare is not a statutory nuisance so needs to be considered at the time of determination. A Glint and Glare assessment supports the application, and it is accepted that these assessments should form the basis for determination of the acceptability of these impacts by the Decision Maker as part of the overall planning policy balance.

A 1 km assessment area was considered appropriate for the assessment of glint and glare. The results of the analysis have shown that reflections from the proposed development are geometrically possible towards 47 out of 73 identified dwelling receptors.

The results of the analysis have shown that solar reflections from the proposed are possible towards road users along approximately 1.1km of the A4109. Predicted solar reflections it was stated are screened by existing vegetation and therefore no impact is predicted to be experienced by road users, and mitigation was not recommended.

Solar reflections towards Rhigos Airfield which is outside the administrative boundary has been assessed and are predicted to be acceptable in accordance with associated guidance and industry best practice. No significant impact is predicated upon the aviation activity at Rhigos Airfield and mitigation was not recommended.

The Glint and Glare assessment stated that no impact is predicted, and mitigation is not required and therefore consider the impact to be neutral.

7.6 Transport and Access – Negative

The site is accessed off the A4109 is via a combination of existing farm tracks and a small section of new access track connecting to this existing route. The access lane is narrow, poorly maintained, and lacks formal passing bays.

The Local Highway Authority have been consulted separately as a statutory consultee on this proposal and have therefore provided comments to PEDW on a separate basis. However, these comments have been copied to the Case Officer within the Council for the purpose of this report and these comments therefore inform the Council's consideration of highway impacts.

The submitted Transport Statement is deficient in several key areas, notably its non-compliance with Design Manual for Roads & Bridges (DMRB) due to incorrect survey timing and the omission of essential data such as full traffic counts, ATC locations, and updated collision records. Visibility splays are referenced but not defined, and clarification is required regarding the proposed vehicle pit-stop location.

It is considered that further information is required in respect of

- Auto-tracking revised to include large vehicles such as HGVs and HIABs, demonstrate two-way passing.
- A plan indicating the vision splays on to Dulais Road in accordance with TAN 18.
- The route crosses a culvert and bridge of unknown condition; condition surveys will be required to assess their capacity to accommodate increased traffic loads.

Although a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) was submitted a further CTMP is required to provide more detail of how traffic and safety considerations will be managed during construction. This is recommended to be provided via a condition.

Overall, subject to a condition for a further CTMP, it is considered that the proposal could have a adverse impact on highway safety and traffic, with the greatest impact being a short term one at construction stage. However, further information would be required prior to determination in respect of the access works to be carried out to allow a full assessment of these impacts to be made.

7.7 Socio Economic – Positive

Paragraph 2.27, Policy Wales advises that planning authorities should ensure that social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits are considered in the decision-making process. Environmental and cultural matters are considered elsewhere in this report.

The planning design and access statement state the economic benefits of the scheme *include economic output of £500,000 Gross Value Added (GVA) over 14 months, £80,000 business rates generated per annum to the Council, and significant spin off benefits for the supply chain with gross value added (GVA) in excess of £1million.* Further details of proposed employment opportunities have not been provided.

The proposed development could potentially generate socio-economic and economic benefits throughout the 40-year lifespan. Therefore, the development is likely to be a positive impact on the local economy.

Whilst not a material planning consideration (hence there is no LPA comment within the LIR) it is good practice to provide a contribution to benefit the local community. It is noted that the developer has indicated that there have been discussions regarding a community benefit fund with the Community Councils, however the adequacy or otherwise will be a matter for the host communities to comment on.

7.8 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage – Neutral/negative

The development is supported by an Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment by AB Heritage (report no. 62813, dated March 2025), as well as a Geophysical Survey by Terradat (report no. 8654, dated December 2023). This document assessed the archaeological resource of the area, as well as the potential impact upon it by the proposed development. The Authority has referred this to our archaeological advisors, Heneb|

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It is noted that whilst there are no known archaeological sites within the proposed development, there are highly significant remains in the wider landscape, particularly on the higher ground to the north.

The results of the partial geophysical survey concluded that 'no sites that are likely to represent archaeological significance features have been identified'. Nevertheless, there is the potential for currently unknown archaeological material to be encountered during the course of the proposed works, particularly outside of the area subject to the geophysical survey.

It is considered that a detailed written scheme of investigation for a programme of archaeological work to protect the archaeological resource including a watching brief during groundworks required for construction phase and consideration of the impact on any historic boundaries is required.

As outlined above, there is in the Authority's view a need to undertake further archaeological assessment of this site. Without this additional information the Authority is unable to conclude that the proposal does not negatively affect the historic assets or their settings therefore the impact would be neutral/ negative.

7.9 Public Right of Way – Negative

Public Rights of Way 2.4.1 A Public Right of Way (PROW) runs across the application site. The access route leading to the site is defined as Public Right of Way (PROW) footpath named Route 20.DHi/2 which can be accessed off the A4109 to the south west of the application site. This footpath splits into two footpaths named Route 23.D.Hi/1 and 23.D.Hi/2, which run throughout the application site and separate to various footpaths extending further across the site.

The routes of the public rights of way have been identified on the layout to ensure these footpaths are not obstructed.

However, the changes in view and visual context will make this area a far less attractive place to walk and bring about impacts on path users in NPT as well as the long-distance Sarn Helen users in Powys (not assessed in detail in this LIR).

Moderate-major effects identified in the LVA are on path users crossing within the site. NPT advise that the visual assessment needs re-visiting prior to the final submission of the application to PEDW.

The proposal would have a NEGATIVE impact.

7.10 Flooding - Neutral

The application has been accompanied by a flood risk assessment. Natural Resources Wales through the Development Advice Maps identifies that the majority of the site (all the PV deployment area) is not located within a flood zone, only part of the access is located within flood zone 2 and 3. The sites would be permeable in that arrays and fencing will not form a physical barrier to water.

It is noted that an application is likely to be required for the surface water drainage to the Sustainable Drainage Systems Approval Body (SAB application). During construction, it is recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan is put in place to ensure, among dealing with other issues, that the construction of the development does not result in water pollution. Subject to the submission of a condition for a CEMP, the proposed development is considered to have a minor negative impact on the water environment and flood risk.

7.11 Other local effects

Agricultural Land - Neutral

National level guidance on the deployment of ground mounted solar expresses a preference to avoid 'Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land'. Grades 1, 2 and 3A of the Agricultural Land Classification are considered to be best and most versatile land, whilst 3B, 4 and 5 are not.

The soil survey presented has determined there are no elements of 'Best and Most Versatile' agricultural land within the proposed deployment area, although the actual Agricultural Land Classification has not been stated in the submitted documentation. The application seeks consent for 40 years after which time the site would be restored back to its existing agricultural use. The layout of the panels is such that the land can remain in agricultural use either for grazing livestock or as a managed meadow.

The scheme is likely to have a NEUTRAL impact

Contaminated Land – Neutral

With regard to the potential for on-site contamination, the application is accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment. This has been reviewed in respect to human health by the Authority's Contaminated Land Officer (CLO) who has advised that mine gas risk for the development will be low risk. The CLO has advised that the risks from this as a ground gas source should be considered and risk assessed. To address this standard contaminated land conditions should be imposed on any decision.

Mineral Resource – neutral/ minor negative

The site is safeguarded for mineral resources.

Policy M1 Development in Mineral Safeguarding Areas

Development proposals within mineral safeguarding areas will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

1. The mineral concerned is no longer of any value or potential value; or

2. The mineral can be extracted satisfactorily prior to the development taking place;
or

3. In the case of temporary development, it can be implemented and the site restored within the timescale that the mineral is likely to be needed; or

4. There is an overriding need for the development; or

5. The scale and location of the development would have no significant impact on the possible working of the resource

The submitted documents do not address the mineral safeguarding area, however given the “temporary” nature of the development, the development will not sterilise reserves or hinder extraction, or hinder extraction in the future as technology changes, and as such, there is no requirement for a minerals assessment for the proposed development. It is acknowledged that the limited lifespan of the proposal and being largely reversible would result in it being unlikely to have any significant long-term impacts on mineral resources. As such, the proposal could have a neutral impact on mineral resources.

8. Likely impact of any application in relation to any secondary consent needed or to be granted

All new developments where a construction area is of 100m² or more, plus if the SAB authority believe that any redevelopment of land has significant surface water drainage implications require SAB consent.

9. Planning Obligations and Conditions

The planning conditions below are provided without prejudice to the final determination of the Development of National Significance application and represent the Authority's view on conditions likely to be necessary for the development. This includes conditions that will require specialist input from consultees outside the Authority.

Appendix 1

Draft conditions

Time Limit Conditions

Condition 1

The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason:

To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

List Approved Plans Conditions

Condition 2

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details of the following approved plans and documents, except where amended by conditions attached to this planning permission:

****LIST OF PLANS

Reason:

To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans submitted with the application.

Pre-commencement Conditions

Condition 3

Before beginning any development at the site, the developer must:

- a) Notify the Local Planning Authority in writing that you intend to commence development by submitting a Formal Notice under Article 24B of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (DMPWO) in the form set out in Schedule 5A (a newly inserted Schedule) of the DMPWO (or in a form substantially to the like effect); and
- b) Display a Site Notice (as required by Section 71ZB of the 1990 Act) in the form set out in Schedule 5B (a newly inserted Schedule) of the DMPWO (or in a form substantially to the like effect), such Notice to be firmly affixed and displayed in a prominent place, be legible and easily visible, and be printed on durable material. Such Notice must thereafter be displayed at all times when development is being carried out.

Reason:

To comply with procedural requirements in accordance with Article 24B of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (DMPWO) and Section 71ZB of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. NOTE: Templates of the required Notice and Site Notice are available to download at www.npt.gov.uk/planning

Condition 4

No development shall commence, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The statement shall provide for:

- a) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;

- b) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- c) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- d) the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- e) wheel washing facilities;
- f) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during demolition and construction; and
- g) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety, the environment, and the amenity of residents, and to ensure accordance with Policies BE1 and TR2 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 5

No development, including site clearance, shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall be made with reference to the requirements of British Standard BS5228-1:2009 - "Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites". The CEMP should include the following information: -

Construction methods: details of the extent and phasing of development; details of construction materials or techniques to be used; details for the storage and management of plant and materials used in constructing the development.

General Site Management: details of the construction programme including timetable; details of site clearance; details for erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing; details of complaint investigation procedures.

Control of Nuisances: Identification of the significant construction and demolition noise & vibration sources; details of physical and operational management controls necessary to mitigate noise & vibration emissions; details of dust & odour control measures and measures to control light spill.

Traffic Management: details of site deliveries; details for the loading and unloading of plant and materials; details of wheel wash facilities; details for the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors.

Hours of working on site, including specified hours for deliveries; details of restrictions to be applied during construction and demolition works (including timing, duration and frequency of works) to prevent noise or nuisance amenity issues to surrounding properties.

Responsible Persons: details of the persons and bodies responsible for activities associated with the CEMP and emergency contact details

The CEMP shall be implemented as approved throughout the site preparation and construction phases of the development.

Reason:

In the interests of biodiversity and the amenity of the area as a whole and to ensure the development complies with Policy EN7 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 6

No development or site clearance shall take place until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The final version shall provide details of: - (i) All landscape and ecological objectives; and management, maintenance and monitoring proposals to deliver the objectives (ii) schedules and timescales for delivery of the LEMP (iii) reporting and monitoring responsibilities and delivery mechanisms for all elements of the LEMP The LEMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

In the interests of biodiversity and the amenity of the area as a whole and to ensure the development complies with Policy EN7 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 7

No development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a further programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To identify and record any features of archaeological interest discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource, as required by Planning Policy Wales and Policy SP21 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 8

No development shall take place until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority detailing visibility splays of 160 m splay in either direction of the access point at a 2.4m set back from the centreline of the access. The scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to the construction of the development. Nothing over 600mm in height shall be erected or allowed to grow within the vision splays

Reason:

In the in interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure compliance with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 9

Notwithstanding any other details which may be given in the application hereby approved, prior to commencement of any works on site, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, detailing highway improvements including

- Details of any borrow pits proposed to facilitate the development
- Details of intervisible passing bays
- A survey of the road and bridge which crosses the culvert.
- Details of any gates from the access onto the A4109

- Auto-tracking for the largest vehicle proposed
- The location of the vehicle 'pit-stop' that will be utilised on the public highway.

The scheme as approved shall be implemented in its entirety prior to works commencing on site and retained for the lifetime of the development. The approved works shall be removed and reinstated to its existing profile within 3 months of the completion of its decommissioning.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to accord with Policies TR2, RE1 of the Adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Action Conditions

Condition 10

Within 28 days from the receipt of written request from the Local Planning Authority, the operator of the development shall, at its own expense, employ an independent consultant approved by the Local Planning Authority to undertake a noise assessment in accordance with BS 4142:2014+A1 2019 'Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound' and / or its subsequent amendments to assess the level of sound emissions arising from the development to determine whether they exceed the sound levels specified in Condition 17. The assessment shall be undertaken under the supervision of the Local Authority.

In the event that sound levels are exceeded, then the submitted survey shall also include mitigation measures to ensure compliance with the noise level specified in Condition 17. The development shall then be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, in accordance with policies RE1 of the Neath Port Talbot CBC Local Development Plan, Policies 17 and 18 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and the relevant guidance set out in Planning Policy Wales.

Condition 11

No later than 12 months before the end of the 40-year operating period (or within 12 months of the permanent cessation of electricity production) a Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) shall be submitted for the written approval of the LPA. The DEMP shall include details of the following: i) Surveys and assessments to identify the existing ecology and habitat status at the time of decommissioning; ii) Method Statement detailing the process and extent of removal of surface elements of the photovoltaic solar farm and associated development and any foundations, anchor systems, trackways and subsurface cabling and associated works; iii) Proposals for effective recycling and disposal of decommissioned elements; iv) Traffic management plan to address likely traffic impacts arising from decommissioning operations; v) Measures to ensure environmental protection at the site to cover all decommissioning operations; vi) Measures to ensure ecological protection at the site to cover all decommissioning operations informed by the surveys and assessments under i) above; vii) Implementation timescales and schedules for all elements of the DEMP; viii) Reporting and monitoring responsibilities and delivery mechanisms for all elements of the DEMP; and, ix) Site restoration measures following all decommissioning operations. The DEMP shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timescales.

Reason: To ensure the impacts of the development exist only for the lifetime of the development, in accordance with policies RE1 of the Neath Port Talbot CBC Local Development Plan, Policies 17 and 18 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and the relevant guidance set out in Planning Policy Wales.

Condition 12

The authorised development shall cease operating 40 years after the date on which electricity is first exported to the National Grid (excluding any testing or commissioning). This planning permission authorises the decommissioning of the

development and shall expire on the date that the site has been decommissioned in accordance with a Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan ("DEMP"). The date on which the development first exports electricity to the national grid shall be notified in writing to the LPA within 28 days of first export.

Reason: To ensure the impacts of the development exist only for the lifetime of the development, in accordance with policies RE1 of the Neath Port Talbot CBC Local Development Plan, Policies 17 and 18 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and the relevant guidance set out in Planning Policy Wales.

Condition 13

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified, work on site shall cease immediately and shall be reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority. A Desk Study, Site Investigation, Risk Assessment and where necessary a Remediation Strategy must be undertaken in accordance with the following document:- Land Contamination: A Guide for Developers (WLGA, WAG & EAW, July 2006). This document shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Prior to occupation of the development, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the agreed remediation, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other off site receptors, and to ensure compliance with Policies SP16 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 14

Should any springs or ground water seepage be encountered the on-site works in that area shall cease until a scheme for collection and disposal of the water has been

submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No ground water shall ever be discharged into the proposed drainage scheme.

Reason:

To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment, and to and ensure the development complies with Policy SP16 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 15

Adequate provision shall be made for the drainage of the site, to ensure that the drainage of any adjoining land is not interrupted or otherwise adversely effected by the development during the lifetime of construction.

Reason

To ensure satisfactory drainage and to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment, and to and ensure the development complies with Policy SP16 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 16

No works within the public highway shall commence until they have first been subject to Road safety Audits, stages 1 to 4 in accordance with GG 119 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Each stage of the Road safety Audit shall be submitted for the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority and any issues highlighted shall be addressed within 3 months of that stage of the Road safety Audit having been given the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of highway safety and the well-being of future occupiers of the site and to ensure the development complies with Future Wales Policy 12 and Policies SP20, BE1 and TR2 of the Adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Regulatory Conditions

Condition 17

The rating level of sound emitted from the development as a whole including any plant or machinery associated with the development shall not exceed existing background sound level. The rating sound levels shall be determined at the nearest non financially linked noise sensitive premises or at another location that is deemed suitable by the local authority. Measurements and assessments shall be made in accordance with BS 4142: 2014+A1:2019 'Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound' and/or any subsequent amendments.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, in accordance with policies RE1 of the Neath Port Talbot CBC Local Development Plan, Policies 17 and 18 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and the relevant guidance set out in Planning Policy Wales.

Condition 18

There must be no interference, alteration or diversion of any ditch, watercourse, stream or culvert crossing or bordering the site, without prior consultation and agreement with the Authority.

Reason

To ensure satisfactory drainage and to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment, and to ensure the development complies with Policy SP16 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 19

Foul and surface water discharges shall be drained separately from the site.

Reason:

To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment, and to and ensure the development complies with Policy SP16 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 20

No surface water or Land drainage run-off shall be allowed to connect, either directly or indirectly, to the public sewerage system unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment, and to and ensure the development complies with Policy SP16 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Condition 21

Demolition or construction works shall not take place outside the hours of 08:00 – 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 13:00 on Saturdays and no works on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason

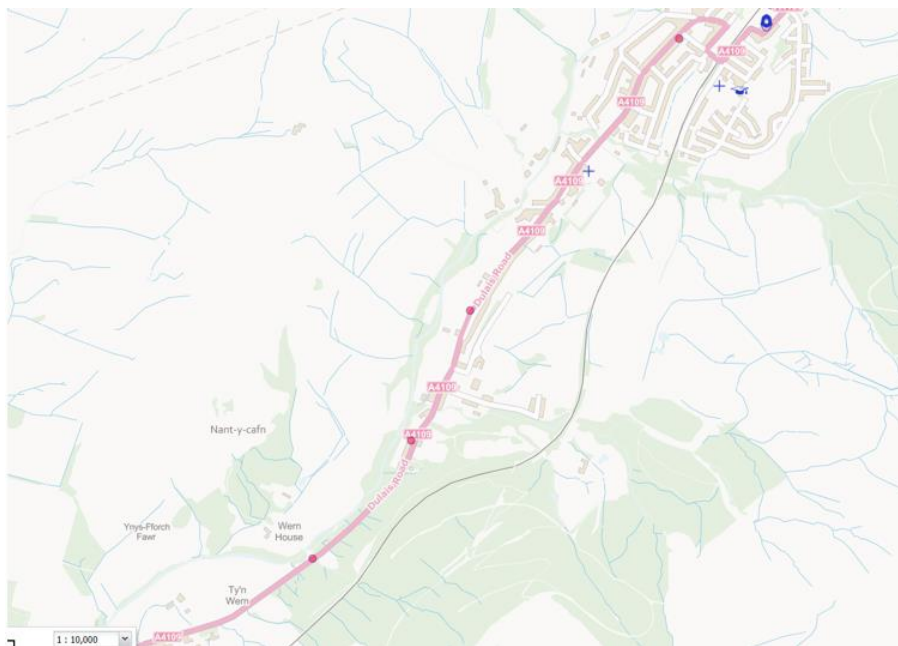
In the interest of residential amenity and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Appendix 2 – Publicity

This appendix contains a plan showing the location of site notices placed at the site;
a copy of photographs of notices and a copy of the notice placed at the site as
provided by PEDW

- Entrance to the site along Dulais Road
- Footpath adjacent to 149 Dulais Road
- Near bus stop opposite 189 Dulais Road
- Near bus stop near 7 Church Road Seven Sisters

Approx position of site notices erected shown by red dots



HYSBYSIAD STATUDOL

I gael copi print bras o'r
Hysbysiad hwn ffoniwch:
0300 123 1590 neu
E-Bostiwrch:
PEDW.Seilwaith@llw.cymru

STATUTORY NOTICE

For a large print copy of this
Notice contact: 0300 123 1590
or E-Mail:
PEDW.infrastructure@gov.wales



Deddf Cynllunio Gwlad a Thref 1990 (Fel y'i Diwygiwyd) Gorchymyn Datblygiadau o Arwyddocâd Cenedlaethol (Gweithdrefn) (Cymru) 2016 (Fel y'i Diwygiwyd)

HYSBYSIAD O DAN ERTHYGL 18 O GAIS AM GANIATÂD CYNLLUNIO MEWN PERTHYNAS Â DATBLYGIAD O ARWYDDOCÂD CENEDLAETHOL

Datblygiad a gynigir yn: Tir oddi ar Graig Y Pal, Glais, Abertawe

Rwyf yn hysbysu bod: CYP Solar Limited

yn gwneud cais i Weinidogion Cymru am ganiatâd cynllunio mewn perthynas â Datblygiad o
Arwyddocâd Cenedlaethol (DAC), sef:

Fferm solar ffotofoltäig arfaethedig wedi'i osod ar y tir gydag offer, seilwaith a cysylltiad grid
cysylltiedig a gwaith ategol

Gall aelodau'r cyhoedd archwilio copïau:

- o'r cais;
- y cynlluniau, a
- dogfennau eraill sy'n gysylltiedig â'r cais

yn: Ganolfan Ddinesig, Heol Ystumllwynarth, Abertawe, SA1 3SN neu
Y Ceiau, Ffordd Brunel, Parc Ynni Baglan, Castell-Nedd, SA11 2GG

yn ystod unrhyw oriau rhesymol hyd at 23.02.2024, ac ar-lein yn
<https://planningcasework.service.gov.wales/cy> - a chwiliwch am 3279676

Os oes unrhyw un yn dymuno cyflwyno sylwadau ar y cais hwn, rhaid iddynt ysgrifennu at
Weinidogion Cymru (mae'r manylion isod) erbyn 23.02.2024. Bydd yr holl sylwadau a dderbynnir
yn cael eu cyhoeddi ar-lein wedi i'r terfyn amser fynd heibio.

Penderfyniadau Cynllunio ac Amgylchedd Cymru
Gwaith Achos Datblygiadau o Arwyddocâd Cenedlaethol
Adeilad y Goron
Parc Cathays
Caerdydd
CF10 3NQ

Ffôn: 0300 123 1590
E-Bost: PEDW.Seilwaith@llw.cymru

Mae rhagor o wybodaeth a chanllawiau ar y broses DAC ar gael ar-lein yn:

<https://www.llw.cymru/datblygiadau-o-arwyddocad-cenedlaethol-dns-canllawiau>

HYSBYSIAD STATUDOL

I gael copi print bras o'r
Hysbysiad hwn ffoniwch:
0300 123 1590 neu
E-Bostiwrch:
PEDW.Seilwaith@llyw.cymru

STATUTORY NOTICE

For a large print copy of this
Notice contact: 0300 123 1590
or E-Mail:
PEDW.infrastructure@gov.wales



Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended) The Developments of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016 (As Amended)

NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION IN RESPECT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Proposed development at: Land off Graig Y Pal, Glais, Swansea

I give notice that: CYP Solar Limited

is applying to the Welsh Ministers for planning permission in respect of Development of National Significance (DNS) which is:

Proposed ground mounted photo voltaic solar farm with associated equipment, infrastructure, grid connection and ancillary works

Members of the public may inspect copies of:

- the application;
- the plans; and
- other documents associated with it

at: Civic Centre, Oystermouth Road, Swansea, SA1 3SN or
The Quays, Brunel Way, Baglan Energy Park, Neath, SA11 2GG

during all reasonable hours until 23.02.2024 and, online at
<https://planningcasework.service.gov.wales/> - and search for 3279676

Anyone who wishes to make representations about this application must write to the Welsh Ministers (details below) by 23.02.2024. All representations received will be published online as soon as the deadline has passed.

Planning and Environment Decisions Wales
Developments of National Significance Casework
Crown Building
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Tel: 0300 123 1590
E-Mail: PEDW.infrastructure@gov.wales

More information and guidance on the DNS process can be found online at:

<https://gov.wales/developments-national-significance-dns-guidance>

Signed: Isabel Nethell, Head of Operations