

**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 REQUIRED**

**Name and address of the applicant**

**Lewis Mcarthur  
Arise Renewable Energy UK Limited  
78 York Street  
London  
W1H 1DP**

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**DATE REGISTERED:** 4 September 2025

**APPLICATION NO:** P2025/0624

**LOCATION:** Land At Caegarw Farm, Margam, Neath Port Talbot, SA13 2TL

**PROPOSAL:** Request for Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 for a proposed ground mounted 9.9MW capacity solar farm and ancillary infrastructure including security fencing, access, and landscaping works to generate power to feed into the local electricity distribution network.

THE NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL AS THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY IN PURSUANCE OF ITS POWER UNDER THE ABOVE MENTIONED ACT AND REGULATIONS HEREBY ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING SCREENING OPINION THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS AN E.I.A. DEVELOPMENT AND THAT THE APPLICATION NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT. THE REASONS FOR THIS OPINION ARE SET IN THE ATTACHED REPORT.

Signed:   
**Ceri Morris – Head of Planning & Public Protection**

**Date: 23 January 2026**

Detailed EIA Screening Assessment.

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| 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 proposed development would result in the site (approximately 35 hectares) being altered from agricultural use to that of a 9.9MW solar farm consisting of PV panels and associated infrastructure. The predicted lifespan of the project is 40 years after which the site is capable of being restored. | The solar panels will be ground mounted and work with the existing ground levels on site. Whilst there would be physical changes to the site itself, the change would be localised in nature and would not be likely to result in significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Question 1b Cumulation with Other Existing Development and/or Approved Development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p>Are there any other factors which should be considered such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consequential development which could lead to Environment effects?</li> <li>• The Potential for cumulative impacts with other existing approved development or planning activities in the locality?</li> <li>• Any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?</li> <li>• Transfrontier impact?</li> </ul> | Yes – there is potential for some cumulative in-combination effects with other developments within the locality of the application site, such as the Eirlys Solar Farm, Mynydd Ty-Talwyn Energy Park , Port Talbot Solar Farm and the Y Bryn wind farm.                                                           | <p>It is considered that based on the current information within the public domain and under consideration by PEDWs DNS/ SIPs team there is potential for cumulative impacts. Due to the nature of solar and wind farms, the potential cumulative impacts in relation to the proposed development would be through Landscape Visual Impacts and biodiversity. It is also considered that due to the development's proximity to other proposed developments and the proximity to Margam Country Park (Grade I, II* and II Listed Buildings, Schedule Ancient Monuments, Historic Park and Garden, Conservation Area and Registered Historic Landscape) the visual and ecological impacts of the development have the potential to create cumulative impacts to the wider protected historic landscape.</p> <p>As such the potential impacts would have to be thoroughly assessed in any application submitted and has the potential to be significant.</p> |
| Question 1c Use of Natural Resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| 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 a degree of land take and use of natural resources during both the construction and operational stages, however the panels would be ground mounted. The site does not constitute Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land which is in short supply in Wales. The submitted information has not provided any details on the presence of Peat on site. As such the precautionary approach is adopted and it is assumed that peat is present. | The proposed development would include the use of natural resources.<br>No information has been provided in relation to peat and any application in accordance with PPW 12 would require the submission of a Peat Survey and depending on its findings a Peat Impact Assessment.<br>In the absence of this information, this screening opinion would have to assume Peat is present and the potential impacts could be significant. |
| 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, notwithstanding the potential for some recycling of materials, the decommissioning of the equipment at the end of its lifespan would result in some solid waste.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Given the scale and nature of the proposed development it is considered that significant effects are unlikely in terms of waste generation and can be adequately dealt with by planning conditions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 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? | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?                                                                                                                        | Yes, some noise and vibration is likely during the construction phase, though this would be localised and time limited. There would also be a minimal amount of noise during the operational phase and potential for redirection of light in terms of glint and glare, via the reflective surface of the panels.                                                                                                                                                                   | It is considered that any effects in terms of glint, glare and noise would be localised and could be appropriately managed by conditions and unlikely to be of a magnitude that would be significant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| 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)?               | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 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 knowledge during construction or operation of the project? | Yes – there is some risk of accident and disasters during construction, operation and decommissioning. The application site is partially located within a surface water and small watercourses flood zone 2 and 3 and within a high-risk coal area. A small section of the site is also located within a HSE Pipeline Buffer Zone.<br>As such there is a potential risk of accidents and incidents caused by climate change. | A flood consequence assessment would be required as part of any planning application which considers the vulnerability of the site. The application would also require a Coal Mining Risk Assessment. It is considered that potential risks around safety associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the development would be covered under Health and Safety legislation and is not considered to be of a type or nature that would result in likely significant effects. |
| Are there risks to human health for example due to water contamination or air pollution?                                                                                                                                       | Yes – there is a risk to human health during construction, maintenance and decommissioning together with risks to water contamination due to the drainage ditches/ small watercourses running through the site.                                                                                                                                                                                                              | The risks could be mitigated through the implementation of a comprehensive CEMP and are not considered to be of a nature that is likely to result in significant effects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 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?                        | Yes – while there are no registered Public Rights of Way (PROW) running through the site, there are PROWs to the south and north of the application site together with the Wales Great Dragon Ride to the western boundary of                                                                                                                                                                                                | The PROW to the south and north would be outside of the application site and the Great Dragon Ride route is to the west of the site, the volume of construction traffic accessing the application site and the operational traffic is                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | the site that runs along Graig Coch road.                                                                                                                                                                                                                | considered to be minor and can be adequately assessed through the submission of a construction method statement and suitably worded conditions. As such it is unlikely to have a significant impact.                                                                                                                 |
| 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 application site would be accessed off Graig Coch Road which is off the A48, in close proximity to the M4.                                                                                                                                           | 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, and any impacts can be assessed through the submission of a Transport Statement and Construction Method Statement. |
| Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?                                                                                                                                                                       | Yes – the application site is existing greenfield land.                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Due to the nature of the development, the site has the ability to be restored following decommissioning. The restoration works can be considered and secured through conditions and a section 106 agreement (if required) and as such significant effects are unlikely.                                              |
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 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 – a SINC is located to the southwest and west of the site with the site also located within surface water and small watercourses zone 2 and 3. The application would require an FCA and demonstrate that the proposal would meet the tests of TAN15. | Whilst there would be moderate physical change to the site itself, it is considered that the changes would be localised in nature and not be likely to result in significant effects in EIA terms, subject to further ecological surveys and mitigation.                                                             |
| Question 2c Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| 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? | Yes – the application site is located to the east of Margam Country Park which is a SINC. Margam Park has a protected species on site (bats) which are considered to be of national importance with 14 of the Uks 18 resident species having been recorded on site. The site is also considered to have numerous habitats making it a cohesive site. | <p>The submission identifies that a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan would be submitted as part of a planning application submission.</p> <p>However, the information submitted as part of the screening opinion does not provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the impact upon protected species would be acceptable, with the assessments not including all bat species present on site, conflicting views and has not considered the site in terms of Core Sustainance Zones for the bat species present.</p> <p>At present, from the information provided, the effects of the development is likely to be significant.</p> |
| 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 site has a small watercourse running through the site, providing riparian and reedy areas on site that could be affected by the proposal through the construction of access tracks. There is also a small pool of water to the east of the site near the existing barn.                                                                    | It is noted that the proposed development would consist of ground mounted solar panels. The applicant has confirmed that a Flood Consequence Assessment and a Drainage Strategy would accompany a planning application submission. It is considered that subject to the submission of these documents and the inclusion of suitably worded conditions the effects 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 – sites lies within a Landscape of Outstanding / Special Historic Interest (in Wales) and the Margam Special Landscape Area (SLA04) which is characterised by the main landmass, Mynydd Margam which is a broad, low-lying plateau of north-east dipping Productive Coal Formation mudstones and coals between South Wales Pennant               | <p>A Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been submitted as part of the screening request and the agent has confirmed that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment would be submitted as part of a planning application.</p> <p>However a response from the Council's Landscape Consultant confirms that from visiting the site, the sensitivity</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                            | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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|                                                                                                                                        | <p>Formation escarpment and east to west Millstone Grit ridge to the south, dissected by shallow, alluvium filled valleys of tributaries and the main Cynfig valley. The SLA which contains Margam Park, has exceptional example of architecture and history as a major Cistercian Abbey and wider monastic landholdings. The application site is located within the visual and sensory NPTVS543 – Coedhirwaun. The application site lies outside of the registered parkland boundary however views of the site are possible from the Bro Stone to the northwest of the application site. Margam Park is also a Conservation Area and a registered Historic Park and Garden.</p> | <p>is considered to be higher than detailed within the LVIA and notes that 'The scheme is in the setting of the RPG and within the SLA and the Green Wedge and visually significant changes would be brought about from the Bro stone views.' The comments also confirm that additional points in the Margam Park and extended park areas need to be visited and assessed as they are not included within the LVIA.</p> <p>From the information provided the development has the potential to have a significant impacts in terms of landscape and visual impact.</p> |
| Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?                                                   | Yes – the application site is likely to be visible from the wider Margam Country Park, surrounding Public Rights of Way's to the north and south of the site and the Great Dragon Ride.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>The layout of the development extends across 15 small parcels of land, located next to the boundary with Margam Country Park.</p> <p>It is noted that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment would be required with any application submission however given the potential visibility of the proposal from public vantage points, its fragmented design and the Special and Historic Landscapes, the impacts of the development are likely to be significant.</p>                                                                                                |
| Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?         | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Are there any areas, landscapes, sites or features of historic, archaeological or cultural importance or significance on or around the | Yes – The proposed development is located inside the registered Margam Mountain Landscape of Special Historic Interest and more                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | A response from CADW confirms that the impact on the Goch and Heol Newydd Historic Landscape Character Area could be significant,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| Questions to be considered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| location which could be affected by the project?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | specifically inside the Graig Goch and Heol Newydd Historic Landscape Character Area. It is also in one of the identified significant views from the registered Margam Park Historic Park and Garden and the developers Zone of Theoretical Visual Impact suggests that it could have an impact on the settings of the other designated historic assets. | however, by itself this impact is unlikely to require an EIA. The screening information sets out that a desk-based Historic Environment Assessment and an ASIDOHL assessment which are considered to be sufficient to assess the impacts and would need to be provided with the application submission. |
| 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? | No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 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 application site is within a High Risk Coal area and any application would require the submission of a Coal Mining Risk Assessment. The site is also located within an area of historic contamination.                                                                                                                                         | It is noted that the proposed development proposes ground mounted PV panels with limited ground works expected. The submission of a Coal Mining Risk assessment is considered to be sufficient to assess the impact and significant effects are unlikely.                                               |

#### 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, is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the environment. This is based on the information provided as part of the screening opinion and as such the effects of the development are likely to be significant and would constitute EIA development.