

Developments of National Significance Inception Meeting:
DNS CAS-03009-N5D9K8 - Aberedw Energy Park
DNS CAS-03010-F0X0Q1 - Bryn Gilwern Energy Park
Monday 2nd October 2023 at 13.00
Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

LUC

Alistair Peet
Hywel Roberts
Stuart Langer

**Planning and Environment Decisions
Wales (PEDW)**

Chris Sweet – Infrastructure Consenting Manager
Marloes Holtkamp – Planning Officer

Bute Energy

James Nicol
Lisa Ryan
Tom Edmunds

Meeting Note:

Representatives from Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) met with the above-named project team regarding the proposed Bryn Gilwern and Aberedw Energy Parks located within the Powys County Council Local Planning Authority planning area (noting that two separate DNS applications will be submitted).

The project team provided an overview of both proposed sites, which are located close to each other. A third Bute Energy proposed DNS site, Nant Mithil, is also nearby, but has progressed further. Bryn Gilwern sits within a Future Wales Pre-Assessed Area 4 for Wind Energy and Aberedw is just outside a Pre-Assessed Area (in vicinity to PAAs 4 and 5). Both Energy Parks are at the early stages of design and the following is proposed to be included:

- Aberedw: 18 turbines at 200 m tip height, with a wind generating capacity of around 108 MW.
- Bryn Gilwern: 16 turbines at 220 m tip height, with a wind generating capacity of around 86 MW.

As both sites are closely located, they are likely to have similar effects on the local community. The public non statutory consultations for both sites will therefore be held at the same time. Both schemes will be submitted as separate DNS applications.

The project team highlighted that they will be seeking secondary consent as part of the DNS process in relation to deregistration and exchange of common land and temporary works. This will apply in the main to Aberedw and in part to Bryn Gilwern where only the southern part of the site is Common Land. Identification of replacement common land has been commenced.

The project team also highlighted that they may be seeking Section 247 secondary consent to divert Public Rights of Way, pending final designs for both sites although this will only be proposed if essential to do so. Confirmation from PEDW that the S247 consent can be included within the DNS can be provided if it is requested. PEDW advised that the project team liaise with the Welsh Government Transport Directorate on the draft Order that will need to be published as part of their statutory pre-application consultation. PEDW agreed to provide contact details for the Orders Branch after the meeting.

The project team stated that ornithology will be a key issue, with Red Kite known to be present at both sites. The intention is to take a strategic approach across the two sites as well as Nant Mithil to address this matter.

The project team explained that work is ongoing at Bryn Gilwern on the depth, location and condition of peat.

Work is also ongoing in relation to access tracks and long-range access to the sites, including considering the key risks of delivering supplies to the rural areas and any licences that may be required.

The project team outlined that they are looking to submit scoping requests towards the end of November 2023 and will provide PEDW with advance notice of this nearer the time. This will consist of two separate Scoping Reports (and eventually two separate Environmental Statements) and cumulative impacts will be considered.

PEDW confirmed that, although not a requirement, it would be helpful if a Shapefile could be submitted with the scoping request. The project team queried whether it would be possible for Shapefiles for other DNS sites to be shared to assist with assessing cumulative effects. PEDW advises that the LPA would be best placed to provide details of any developments in their area, particularly as proposed sites and boundaries may change following scoping and therefore Shapefiles held by PEDW may be out of date.

PEDW advised that current resource constraints within the Planning and Environment Team may lead to delays to the usual turnaround time for producing Scoping Directions, although it is hoped the team will be up to full complement later this year. However, delays remain possible for example due to workload or if key consultees do not respond in a timely manner. PEDW can advise the project team of the consultation closing date and provide copies of consultation responses received after this date and asked the project team to get in touch at that time to request the responses.

The project team stated that they are looking at the start of 2025 for the submission of the DNS application. They expressed that it would be helpful to have a discussion further down the line regarding the impact of the Infrastructure Bill and any transitional arrangements.

PEDW stated that it would be helpful to be kept up to date regarding the projects' proposed key dates, to assist with Inspector planning and it may be possible to have the same Inspector cover both applications, or if not, working very closely together.

The project team asked for the note of this meeting to be kept confidential at this stage, only to be published once the project is in the public domain.