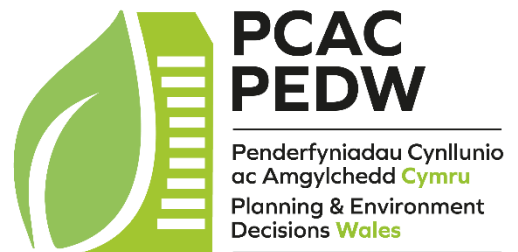


Adeilad y Goron,
Parc Cathays, Caerdydd,
CF10 3NQ

Crown Buildings,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff, CF10 3NQ



Ein Cyf / Our Ref: DNS CAS-04012-T8Y8D2

Ffôn / tel: 0300 123 1590

Dyddiad / Date: 04/03/2025

Ebost / email: PEDW.Infrastructure@gov.wales

Dear Steffan Baker

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990
The Developments of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016
Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017**

Potential DNS Application

Site Address: Land at Pencoed, Ganol Farm, Pendderi Road, Llanelli, SA14 9PL

Proposed Development: Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of 30MW and associated infrastructure for a temporary period of 40 years.

On the 31st January 2025 Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) received a request made under regulation 31(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 ("the Regulations"), for the Welsh Ministers to make a screening direction as to whether or not the development proposed is "EIA Development" within the meaning of the Regulations.

PEDW is authorised by the Welsh Ministers to provide that screening direction.

The project, as described above, falls within the description at paragraph 3(a) in column 1 of the table in Schedule 2 to the Regulations.

As the proposal is a potential Development of National Significance (DNS) application, the attached screening assessment identifies the key areas which have been considered. Having taken into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the Regulations and the advice in Welsh Office Circular 11/99: Environmental Impact Assessment on establishing whether EIA is required, the assessment concludes that:

The proposed solar farm will lead to effects on a number of aspects of the environment. However, due to the nature of the proposed development most effects are unlikely to be significant. Due to local topography and the presence of existing vegetation, the effects on landscape and on the settings of designated historic assets are unlikely to be significant. However, the site is within 230 m of a railway line, within 8.5 km of Swansea airport and the western part of the site is immediately adjacent to residential dwellings. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate impacts on amenity of residents or safety

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg. Cewch ateb Cymraeg i bob gohebiaeth Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not involve any delay.

impacts from glint and glare would not be significant. Given the proximity to these sensitive receptors and the scale of the development, significant effects are likely.

In terms of ecology, the site is approximately 280 m from the Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary SSSI and 1.5 km from the Burry Inlet SPA, both of which are designated for wintering birds. Whilst the preliminary survey data provided for October – December 2024 has not found that the site supports wintering birds, this survey effort is inadequate to conclude the site has no functional linkage to the designated sites. The site is also 280 m from Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC, which is designated for otter. There are habitat features within the site and around its periphery which may support otter. No information has been provided on the potential impact on this species. Given the scale of the development, the proximity of the site to sensitive designated sites and the lack of robust information to demonstrate there would be no significant impact on the qualifying features, I am unable to conclude that a significant effect is unlikely. In addition, limited information has been provided to address the potential impact on other protected species including breeding birds and water vole.

Given the nature and location of the proposed development and based on the information currently available, it is not possible to rule out the potential for significant effects from glint and glare and effects on ecology, particularly on designated sites. As such, I consider that due to the potential for these significant effects, the proposal is EIA development.

Therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Regulations and the authority referred to above, the Welsh Ministers hereby direct that the development subject of this application **is EIA development** within the meaning of the Regulations.

Consequently, this application must be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Under regulation 17(1) of the Regulations an Environmental Statement must contain, for the purpose of assessing the likely impact on the environment, the information specified in that regulation. It is recommended that you refer to the Regulations and the accompanying Circular, Welsh Office Circular 11/99, before and during the preparation of the Environmental Statement. In the meantime, you may wish to have regard to the particular environmental topics identified in the attached screening assessment.

This letter will be copied to Carmarthenshire County Council, so that this screening direction is placed on Part 1 of the Planning Register in relation to the application in question, in accordance with the Regulations.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely

Tanya Leck

Tanya Leck

Swyddog Cynllunio | Planning Officer

Penderfyniadau Cynllunio ac Amgylchedd Cymru | Planning and Environment Decisions Wales
Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg. Cewch ateb Cymraeg i bob gohebiaeth Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not involve any delay.

STAGE 1 – INITIAL EIA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

| 1 Case Details | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----|
| A | Case reference | |
| | DNS CAS-04012-T8Y8D2 - Pencoed Ganol Solar Farm | |
| B | Brief description of development | |
| | Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of 30MW and associated infrastructure for a temporary period of 40 years. | |
| 2 EIA Screening Details | | |
| 2A Schedule 1 | | |
| | Is the project Schedule 1 development as described in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations? | No |
| | <i>If Yes, under which description of development? If No, consider whether project is 'Schedule 2' development below in part 2(B).</i> | |
| | | |
| 2B Schedule 2 | | |
| (i) | Is the project listed as a description of development under Column 1 of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations? | Yes |
| | <i>If Yes, under which description of development? If No, EIA is not required.</i> | |
| | 3(a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1) | |
| (ii) | Does the project change or extend development described in paragraphs 1 to 12 of Column 1 of schedule 2, where the change or extension may have SIGNIFICANT* adverse effects on the environment? | No |
| | <i>If Yes, provide reasons for your answer below. *If unsure, discuss with PET. Proceed to point (iii).</i> | |
| | N/A - not a change or extension | |
| (iii) | Is the project located wholly or partly within a ' Sensitive Area ' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations? | No |
| | <i>If Yes, state which area and move to Question 3. If No, proceed to point (iv) below.</i> | |
| | | |
| (iv) | Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded / met? | Yes |
| | <i>If Yes, note which applicable threshold/criteria. If No, EIA is not required.</i> | |
| | The site is approximately 48 ha and therefore exceeds the threshold of 0.5 ha. | |
| 3 LPA / Welsh Ministers' Screening | | |
| (i) | Has the LPA issued a Screening Opinion (SO)? | No |
| (ii) | Have the Welsh Ministers issued a Screening Direction (SD)? | No |
| 4 Environmental Statement (ES) | | |

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| | Has the applicant/appellant supplied an ES for the current or previous (if reserved matters or conditions) application? | No |
|--|---|----|

Is a detailed screening assessment (Section 5) required?

If Yes has been answered in response to either 2B(iii) or 2B(iv), send to relevant team to undertake detailed screening assessment.

If No has been answered for both questions, or the questions are not applicable, start appeal.

| Sign-off | |
|-----------|------------|
| Signature | Tanya Leck |
| Date | 21/02/2025 |

STAGE 2 – DETAILED EIA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

As per Schedule 3, Para 3: When considering the potential impact, take into account; (a) magnitude / spatial extent / population likely to be affected; (b) nature of impact; (c) transboundary nature; (d) intensity & complexity; (e) probability; (f) expected onset / duration / frequency & reversibility; (g) cumulation with existing and / or approved development; (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

| 5 | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|--|--|---|
| Questions to be considered | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For ‘Yes/Unknown’, are effects likely to be significant ? <i>Include consideration of features or measures to avoid or prevent what might otherwise be significant effects</i> |
| CRITERION 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF DEVELOPMENT | | |
| Question 1(a) Size and design of the Development | | |
| Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)? | <p>The proposal is for the installation of a solar farm and ancillary infrastructure with a generating capacity of 35 MW. The solar farm is proposed with a site area of 48 hectares over 18 field parcels. The scheme includes underground cabling connecting to Trostre Substation, which would be laid within the highway.</p> <p>The land use will change from agricultural land to host the solar arrays. However, the Screening Report (SR) confirms that much of the land can continue to be used for low intensity grazing during the 40-year lifetime of the development. The development does not involve any topographic changes, nor does it propose removal of trees or hedgerows. The lifespan of the scheme is 40 years, after which the site would be restored. Therefore, whilst there would be physical change during the lifetime of the development, grazing could continue on the site and the site would be restored in the future. Therefore, I do not consider there to be significant effects in EIA terms.</p> | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Question 1(b) Cumulation with Existing and/or Approved Development | | |
| Are there any other factors which should be considered such as: | No. The site is relatively isolated and therefore cumulative impacts would be limited. | Significant effects unlikely . |

| 5 | | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Questions to be considered | | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consequential development which could lead to environmental effects? the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality? any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project? transfrontier impacts? | | | |
| Question 1(c) Use of Natural Resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity | | | |
| Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply? | | Yes, the proposal will require a degree of land take and use of natural resources during construction and operation. Whilst the SR does not include the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) for the site, the Predictive ALC Map shows that the site is only of moderate agricultural quality (grade 3b and 4). The site is within an aggregate safeguarding zone, however due to the nature of the development significant effects are unlikely. There is also the potential for the infrastructure used on site to be recycled. Therefore, whilst the development will use resources, none of them are in short supply. I am therefore satisfied significant effects are unlikely. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning? | | Yes, some solid waste would be produced during construction and for any parts that cannot be recycled at the decommissioning stage. However, construction waste can be managed in accordance with best practice guidance and a CEMP to be submitted with the application. The development will not produce any waste during the operational phase. Given the scale and nature of the development, I do not consider that significant effects are likely in terms of waste generation. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Question 1(e) Pollution and Nuisances | | | |

| 5 | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|--|--|---|
| Questions to be considered | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health? | Yes, dust generation is possible during construction. The SR confirms no air quality management areas (AQMA) in the vicinity of the site or along the construction route. I am satisfied that standard good practice and mitigation measures to be incorporated into a CEMP would prevent any significant impacts. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation? | <p>Yes, the construction phase is likely to result in noise and vibration. These impacts would be localised and time limited, these impacts would also be managed through measures outlined in a CEMP.</p> <p>During operation, there is potential for glint and glare from the panels and a minimal amount of noise. Due to the nature of the development, significant operational noise is unlikely. The SR confirms that a glint and glare assessment would be submitted with the application. However, I note that the western field parcels of the site immediately abut a number of residential properties. No information has been provided in the SR on the potential impact, or any possible mitigation. I also note there is a railway line that runs approx. 230m to the east of the site. The site is also approx. 8.5 km from Swansea airport. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate impacts on amenity of residents or public safety impacts from glint and glare would not be significant. I am therefore unable to conclude that significant effects from glint and glare are unlikely.</p> | Significant effects likely . |
| 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)? | The LPA highlight hydrological linkages between the Burry Inlet and Lougher Estuary SSSI and the Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC. NRW state that a Construction Environmental Management | Significant effects unlikely . |

| 5 | | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Questions to be considered | | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| | | Plan can mitigate pollution during construction. I am satisfied that significant impacts are unlikely. | |
| Question 1(f) Risk of major 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 during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment? | | Yes, there is a small risk of accident during construction, operation or decommissioning. Given the scale and nature of the works, alongside construction best practice measures, such risks are unlikely to be significant. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Question 1(g) Risks to Human Health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution) | | | |
| Will there be any risk to human health during the construction and/or operation of the development | | Yes, there is potential risk to air quality or water contamination during construction and decommissioning. However, best practice guidance and mitigation measures included within a Construction Traffic Management Plan and Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP) would prevent any significant impacts. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| CRITERION 2. LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT | | | |
| Question 2(a) Existing and Approved Land Use | | | |
| Will the Project result in social changes, for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment? | | Yes, the construction phase would result in some short term employment opportunities. The impacts are not considered significant in EIA terms. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Are there any routes or 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. The SR states two public rights of way cross the site, confirming that the routes would not be directly impacted as a result of the scheme. I am satisfied that routes and facilities would not be significantly impacted. Users of footpaths within and adjacent to the site would experience visual impacts from the scheme. and visual impacts are considered below. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Are there any transport routes which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project? | | Yes. Some impacts would occur during the construction phase. However, these impacts would be temporary and could be managed via a CEMP and CTMP. I therefore do not consider that significant effects are likely. | Significant effects unlikely . |

| 5 | | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|--|--|--|---|
| Questions to be considered | | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be significant? |
| Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land? | | Yes. The site will change from greenfield agricultural land to host the solar farm. However, the SR states that much of the land can continue to be used for low intensity grazing during the lifetime of the development. The Predictive ACL map indicates that the site does not include any best and most versatile agricultural land. The land is proposed to be largely restored at the at the end of the solar farm's lifespan. I therefore do not consider that significant effects are likely. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Are there any areas on or around the location occupied by land uses which could be affected by the project, particularly sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities? | | No | N/A |
| Question 2(b) Relative Abundance, Availability Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources 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, which could be affected by the project? | | Yes. There is a small cluster of woodland to the southeast of the site, some of which comprises ancient woodland. The indicative site layout shows that no development is proposed within the area of woodland. The SR does not indicate that any tree or woodland removal is required as part of the development. The site is within an aggregate safeguarding zone, however due to the nature of the development significant effects are unlikely. Given the scale and nature of the development, I do not consider that significant effects are likely. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Question 2(c) Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment | | | |
| Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology, or are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora, which could be affected by the project? | | <p>Yes. The site is 280 m from the Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary SSSI and Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC, and 1.5 km from the Burry Inlet SPA and RAMSAR site.</p> <p>The Burry Inlet SPA and Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary SSSI are designated for wintering birds.</p> | Significant effects likely . |

| 5 | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Questions to be considered | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| | <p>The preliminary ornithology survey provided with the SR provides survey results from October to December (inclusive), stating that the survey effort will continue January to April (inclusive). NRW raise concerns with the completeness of the surveys at this stage, noting that it is not possible to draw a conclusion on the functional linkage to the designated sites with limited survey results. In addition, the preliminary data lacks an assessment as to whether the site provides supporting habitat for birds associated with the designated sites during inclement weather conditions (e.g. as a storm and/or cold weather refuge). Without full survey data covering the wintering period and detailed weather conditions, it is not possible to rule out a significant effect at this stage.</p> <p>NRW also note that the site has potential to have impacts on breeding birds, particularly ground nesting birds such as lapwing, and species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The SR states that a walkover breeding bird survey was carried out in 2024. However, no results from this survey have been provided.</p> <p>Otters are a qualifying feature of the Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC. NRW note there are minor watercourses and ponds within the development site and around its periphery which may support otter. No information has been provided with regard to this protected species. NRW also note there is a population of water vole recorded close to the proposed cabling route at Trostre. The SR does not acknowledge or assess the likely significant impact on otter or water vole.</p> | |

| 5 | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|--|---|---|
| Questions to be considered | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| | <p>NRW advise that until the site is comprehensively assessed for its potential to support protected species, a conclusion is not able to be made on the significance of the effect. Given the high sensitivity of the designated sites and the potential for impacts on qualifying features, alongside the limited evidence provided in terms of survey effort for wintering birds and otter, I am unable to conclude that a significant effect is unlikely. I further note the lack of assessment for other protected species (breeding birds and water vole). On the basis of the proximity of the site to sensitive receptors, and the scale of the development, I conclude that significant effects are likely.</p> | |
| <p>Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?</p> | <p>Yes. The site is within proximity to the River Loughor. However, NRW are satisfied that construction impacts on water quality could be effectively mitigated through standard pollution prevention measures and a CEMP. I am satisfied that significant effects are unlikely.</p> | <p>Significant effects unlikely.</p> |
| <p>Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?</p> | <p>Yes. The site is approx. 4.5 km from the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) / National Landscape (GNL). NRW note the distance from the AONB / NL boundary and separation by the river and estuary means that potential views towards the development are distant, and would be further obscured by intervening vegetation, existing development and topography. On this basis no significant effects are likely on the Gower AONB / NL. The site is 315 m to the west of Lower Loughor Valley and Estuary and Southern Part of Burry Inlet special landscape area (SLA). However, the topography and existing vegetation limit views to the site. Therefore, given the topography and existing vegetation, the landscape effects of the</p> | <p>Significant effects unlikely.</p> |

| 5 | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|--|--|---|
| Questions to be considered | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| | proposal are not likely to be significant in EIA terms. | |
| Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? | Yes. The site is adjacent to residential dwellings and the settlement of Bynea. There are also public rights of way within and adjacent to the site. Whilst the development would be visible, these impacts would be localised. I therefore consider visual impacts would not be significant. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project? | Yes. The site is adjacent to the settlement of Bynea. Whilst the development would be visible, these impacts would be localised. There may be impacts during construction, however these would be temporary in nature and can be controlled through mitigation measures (i.e. CTMP, CEMP). I therefore consider impacts on local settlements would not be significant. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project? | Yes. Whilst there are a number of historic assets within 3 km of the site, limited views will be possible due to intervening topography, buildings and vegetation. Cadw note where the solar farm is visible, the nature of those historic assets makes it unlikely that the change to the views will have a significant impact on those assets. I am therefore satisfied that significant impacts are unlikely. | Significant effects unlikely . |
| Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project? | No. | N/A |
| Is the project location susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions, which could cause the project to present environmental problems? | Yes. A small section of the cable route within the Trostre area falls within the Flood Zone 3 (Sea) of Flood Map for Planning. However, due to the scale and nature of the small section that falls within the identified flood outline, any significant impact is unlikely. | Significant effects unlikely . |

| 5 | Detailed Screening Questions | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Questions to be considered | Yes/No/Unknown – provide description | For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects <u>likely</u> to be <u>significant</u> ? |
| Has there already been a failure to meet environmental quality standards that is relevant to the project? | No. | N/A |

Statement of reasons – insert into Screening Direction

The proposed solar farm will lead to effects on a number of aspects of the environment. However, due to the nature of the proposed development most effects are unlikely to be significant. Due to local topography and the presence of existing vegetation, the effects on landscape and on the settings of designated historic assets are unlikely to be significant. However, the site is within 230 m of a railway line, within 8.5 km of Swansea airport and the western part of the site is immediately adjacent to residential dwellings. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate impacts on amenity of residents or safety impacts from glint and glare would not be significant. Given the proximity to these sensitive receptors and the scale of the development, significant effects are likely.

In terms of ecology, the site is approximately 280 m from the Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary SSSI and 1.5 km from the Burry Inlet SPA, both of which are designated for wintering birds. Whilst the preliminary survey data provided for October – December 2024 has not found that the site supports wintering birds, this survey effort is inadequate to conclude the site has no functional linkage to the designated sites. The site is also 280 m from Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC, which is designated for otter. There are habitat features within the site and around its periphery which may support otter. No information has been provided on the potential impact on this species. Given the scale of the development, the proximity of the site to sensitive designated sites and the lack of robust information to demonstrate there would be no significant impact on the qualifying features, I am unable to conclude that a significant effect is unlikely. In addition, limited information has been provided to address the potential impact on other protected species including breeding birds and water vole.

Given the nature and location of the proposed development and based on the information currently available, it is not possible to rule out the potential for significant effects from glint and glare and effects on ecology, particularly on designated sites. As such, I consider that due to the potential for these significant effects, the proposal is EIA development.

| 6 | Outcome of assessment | | |
|---|--|--|-----|
| (ii) | If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it? | | N/A |
| (iii) | Is EIA required? | | Yes |
| Outcome | | Action | ✓ |
| Schedule 2 development – threshold exceeded/ criterion met or Sensitive Area and likely to have significant effects | | Issue direction stating EIA Required (Letter 2) | ✓ |
| Name and Job Title of Assessor | | Tanya Leck – Planning Officer | |
| Date of Assessment | | 04/03/2025 | |

Appendix 1 – Consultation Responses

From: [Gary Glenister](#)
To: [PEDW – Seilwaith / Infrastructure](#)
Cc: [Planning Hwb](#)
Subject: CAS-04012-T8Y8D2 Land at Pencoed, Ganol Farm, Pendderi Road, Llanelli, SA14 9PL
Date: 17 February 2025 14:06:48

Dear PEDW,

Thank you for consulting Carmarthenshire County Council on the EIA Screening request. I have conducted limited internal consultation based on the information received to ensure that relevant consultees are aware of the scheme and can bring specific matters to my attention.

I have received the following comments from our Ecologist.

- We consider the effect on the **Burry Inlet SPA and Ramsar** to be potentially **significant but unlikely** given the results of preliminary surveys by BSG (Appendix D - Pencoed Ganol Ornithology).
- We consider the effect on the **Burry Inlet and Lougher Estuary SSSI** to be **significant and likely** due to proximity of the development site to the SAC and hydrological linkages to the site.
- We consider the effect on the **Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC** to be **significant and likely** due to proximity of the development site to the SAC, hydrological linkages to the site, and numerous otter records within 2km of the site.

The scale of the proposal is likely to have a **significant** visual impact which needs to be assessed.

In terms of highways and public protection, the matters can be assessed outside an EIA.

The development would be classed under Schedule 2 Part 3(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations as “Industrial installations for the production of electricity” with a site over 0.5ha. It then falls to be assessed under Schedule 3 of the Regs as to whether an EIA would be necessary. Given the scale of the development and proximity to the SAC and SSSI which are sensitive designations, the ecological and visual impact need to be carefully assessed and Carmarthenshire County Council considers it to be EIA development.

Regards,

Gary Glenister BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI
Uwch Swyddog Gorfodi a Monitro / Senior Enforcement and Monitoring Officer
Gwasanaethau Cynllunio / Planning Services
Rhif ffon / Tel No: [REDACTED]
e-bost / email: [REDACTED]

Croeso I chi gysylltu gyda Chyngor Sir Gâr yn Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg.
You are welcome to contact Carmarthenshire Council in Welsh or English.

Tanya Leck
Planning & Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW)
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Ein cyf/Our ref: CAS-273961-B4K7
Eich cyf/Your ref: DNS CAS-04012-
T8Y8D2

Dyddiad/Date: 26 February 2025

Annwyl/Dear Ms. Tanya Leck,

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
[THE DEVELOPMENTS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE (PROCEDURE) (WALES)
ORDER 2016 (AS AMENDED)]
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(WALES) REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)**

POTENTIAL DNS APPLICATION

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: INSTALLATION OF A SOLAR FARM COMPRISING
GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR PV PANELS WITH A GENERATING CAPACITY OF 30MW
AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD OF 40 YEARS.**

**LOCATION: LAND AT PENCOED GANOL FARM, PENDDERI ROAD, LLANELLI, SA14
9PL**

Thank you for your letter dated 03 February 2025 requesting Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru (CNC)/Natural Resources Wales' (NRW) views on whether the above proposed development is likely to have a significant environmental effect.

We have considered the information provided in the letter from Lighthouse Development Consulting to PEDW entitled '*Request for an EIA Screening Opinion in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017*' dated 31st January 2025 (reference: LH24-47), along with its associated appendices.

Based on the information provided, we consider that the proposed development is likely to have adverse effects on the environment. However, in light of the information available to us we cannot confirm the significance of these effects. We therefore cannot rule out that these effects may be significant. In the absence of further information, we consider that the proposed development has the potential to have significant environmental effects.

Our view on the likelihood of significant effect on each of the environmental interests under our remit are set out below:

Protected Sites

At its closest point the development is proposed approximately 250m to the west of the Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the Burry Inlet Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site being approximately 1.5km to the south.

Marine Ornithology

Overwintering Bird Surveys

We have reviewed the information provided in Appendix D entitled 'Re: Pencoed Ganol Solar Farm Ornithology' by BSG Ecology, dated 21st January 2025. We note that overwintering bird surveys are still ongoing having been carried out between October-December 2024 inclusive and that further surveys are planned between January-April 2025.

The information supplied in the report is based on the limited survey work to date (October-December 2024 inclusive: six diurnal walkovers and three nocturnal walkovers). Due to the incomplete nature of this work, it is not possible to draw meaningful conclusions at this stage. We are therefore unable to comment on the results of these surveys until they have been completed, and the reports and data have been provided to NRW.

Section 3 'Baseline Survey' of the report states *"In addition to the above, BSG Ecology completed walkover breeding bird survey work during 2024. Six visits, five of which commenced in the early morning and one in the evening, were completed. This work, while not directly relevant to the winter, provided useful context on the range of bird species typically using the Site."* We do not agree with the statement in the context of overwintering birds. The Burry Inlet SPA and Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary SSSI are designated for overwintering birds, and robust survey effort during the overwintering period is needed to inform any decision making.

Overwintering bird surveys to date have been timed to coincide with high tide on the Burry Inlet and take account of different tidal heights. We welcome this approach; however, we also advise that the weather conditions during surveys should be presented. Assessment should also be made as to whether the site provides supporting habitat for birds associated with the Burry Inlet SPA and Burry Inlet and Loughor Estuary SSSI during inclement weather conditions (e.g. as a storm and/or cold weather refuge). Therefore, surveys should include sufficient replicates in a range of different weather conditions throughout the overwintering period.

Maps showing the areas of the site which have been surveyed, as well as any areas which have not been covered are necessary. It would also be beneficial to indicate on maps where birds have been recorded, so that this is recorded spatially.

Depending on the results of these surveys, and other information about the proposed development site (e.g. habitat surveys and/or preliminary ecological assessment), we will be able to advise if further overwintering bird surveys are needed or not.

Potential for Functional-linkage to the Burry Inlet SPA

Based on the limited information supplied in the preliminary ornithology evaluation, it is not

yet possible to establish if the site is functionally linked to the Burry Inlet SPA or not. We will be able to advise on this further once full survey results have been received.

The proposed works would occupy a large area (48ha approximately) near the protected sites and should therefore be considered to be located in a sensitive area. Impacts of disturbance on the sites and/or priority species included on Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 have not been robustly assessed. Therefore, this development has the potential to impact overwintering birds through disturbance, displacement, and/or long-term habitat loss.

Based on the information supplied on marine ornithology, it is not possible to rule out significant effects on the above protected sites and/or priority species.

Otter

There are minor watercourses and ponds on the development site and around its periphery. Otters are a qualifying feature of the Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC, and no information has been provided on this protected species in support this screening stage. Until the site is comprehensively assessed for its potential to support protected species, we are unable to advise you on the significance of any effect.

Marine and Sediment Water Quality

There are hydrological links from the development site to the above listed protected sites. From a water quality perspective, due to the nature, size and location of the development, we consider it is not likely to have a significant environmental effect.

We advise that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that accounts for any hydrological linkages with the protected sites, and that considers the hydrology specifically to determine any potential pathways for pollution during construction, is submitted to support any application. The Applicant should ensure any robust schemes to prevent or mitigate pollution during construction are accounted for in the CEMP and are included for consideration in any subsequent assessments of effects on protected sites and their features.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

In addition to the above, Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 requires the competent authority to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project which is likely to have significant effects, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on the SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. The Applicant will need to provide sufficient information for the competent authority to be able to carry out a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Protected Species

Based on the available local record centre data, we note there is a population of watervole, a protected species, close to the proposed cabling route at Trostre. We note that an absence of records does not rule out other protected species using the site. We therefore reiterate our previous advice that until the site is comprehensively assessed for its potential to support protected species, we are unable to advise you on the significance of any effect.

Breeding Birds

The site has potential to have impacts on breeding birds, particularly ground nesting birds such as lapwing, and species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). We note that a walkover breeding bird survey was carried out in 2024 however we have not had sight of these.

Protected species surveys for breeding birds should be undertaken. These surveys should be in line with industry best practice (see [Bird Survey Guidelines](#)). While surveys for barn owls should follow [Barn Owl Survey Methodology and Techniques for use in Ecological Assessment | CIEEM](#).

Additional, species-specific surveys should also be considered and should be informed by the habitat on site as well as the results of any desktop survey conducted to date. The methods can be species specific and may require different timings (both during the day/night and seasonally). As we are not in receipt of the full results of a desktop survey so are not able to provide an exhaustive list of the species-specific surveys we would expect to be included within any supporting information for the application.

Determining the importance of species and populations identified from surveys should refer to Wales specific resources and publications where practical. Relevant population estimates can be found in, but no limited too, [Hughes et al. 2020](#) (Wales) and [Woodward et al. 2020](#) (UK/Britain). County Bird Reports, the Welsh Bird Reports, as well as Birds of Wales/Adar Cymru (Pritchard et al. 2021) may also contain relevant information. Reference should be made to Birds of Conservation Concern Wales 4 (BoCCW4) as well as listing on Section 7 of the Environment Act (Wales) 2016, and Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Landscape

Our landscape advice relates to the landscape character and visual amenity of the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)/National Landscape (GNL) and the statutory purpose of the designation to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.

The locality is characterised by a landscape pattern of field parcels bounded by hedges with more distant woodland copse to the south. This pattern of occasional trees, woodland and hedgerows in an area of low-lying topography are elements that generally help integrate solar farm development into rural landscapes.

The site's 4.5 km distance from the GNL boundary and separation by the river and estuary means that potential views towards the development are distant and these are further obscured by intervening vegetation, existing development and topography. There are no significant effects expected on the GNL. Public rights of way within the site and locally will be affected and we support that these are assessed through a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

Based on the information submitted, we advise the environmental effect on the setting of the GNL will not be significant.

Flood Risk

The flood risk detail within the letter provided correctly identifies that the only part of the

proposed development at risk of flooding is a small section of the cable route where it extends towards the Trostre/TATA Steel area. This falls into the Flood Map for Planning (FMfP) Flood Zone 3 (Sea). Due to the scale and nature of the small section of the proposed development that falls within the identified flood outline, and based on the information provided, we can rule out a significant effect regarding flood risk.

We support that a Flood Consequence Assessment will be submitted in support of any forthcoming planning application.

Other Matters

We have considered the likelihood of significant effects from the scheme on environmental interests listed on our consultation topic list: [Natural Resources Wales and Planning Consultations \(September 2018\)](#)

Our advice does not rule out the potential for the proposed development to affect other interests, including environmental interests of local importance, or human health. You may wish to consult other bodies for their expert advice on those effects.

Our advice is made without prejudice to comments we may subsequently wish to make when consulted on any planning application, any environmental permit, the submission of more detailed information, or an Environmental Statement.

If you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely,

Hannah Roberts

Cynghorydd - Cynllunio Datblygu/Advisor - Development Planning
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales

E-bost/E-mail: swplanning@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Ffôn/Phone: [REDACTED]

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb i hynny arwain at oedi./Correspondence in Welsh is welcomed, and we will respond in Welsh without it leading to a delay.

Planning and Environment Decisions Wales

Eich cyfeirnod
Your reference

DNS CAS-04012-T8Y8D2

Sent by email

Ein cyfeirnod
Our reference

PEDW.Infrastructure@gov.wales

Dyddiad
Date

13 February 2025

Llinell uniongyrchol
Direct lineEbost
Email:

Cadwplanning@gov.wales

Dear Sir / Madam,

EIA Screening Consultation - DNS CAS-04012-T8Y8D2 - Pencoed Ganol Solar Farm

Thank you for your letter of 3 February 2025 asking for Cadw's view on the likely impact of the proposed development described above on the environment and whether or not Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required.

Cadw, as the Welsh Government's historic environment service, has assessed the characteristics of this proposed development and its location within the historic environment. In particular, the likely impact on designated or registered historic assets of national importance. In assessing if the likely impact of the development is significant Cadw has considered the extent to which the proposals affect those nationally important historic assets that form the historic environment, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered historic parks, gardens and landscapes.

These views are provided without prejudice to the Welsh Government's consideration of the matter, should it come before it formally for determination.

Advice

The scheduled monuments listed on Annex A are located inside 3km of the proposed development area, but due to intervening topography, buildings and vegetation in most cases views between them will be blocked. Where the solar panels are visible, the nature of the historic assets (Annex A) makes it unlikely that the change to the views will have a significant adverse impact on their significance. Consequently, the impact of the solar farm on the historic environment will not be of sufficient significance to require an EIA to be produced.

The screening report submitted with the application indicates that any application for this solar farm will be accompanied by a Desk Based Heritage Assessment informed

by Geophysical survey. This would be appropriate and the details of the work should be agreed with Heneb: The Trust for Welsh Archaeology: However, it should be noted that if the geophysical survey identifies buried archaeological features there may be a need for archaeological evaluation to be carried out in order to confirm the nature, extent and importance of the buried archaeological resource prior to the submission of the application.

Yours sincerely

Nichola Smith
Historic Environment Branch

Annex A

Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens & Listed Buildings

Scheduled Monuments

CM262 Glynea Colliery
 CM263 Genwen Engine House
 CM265 St David's Colliery
 CM266 Penprys Pit Engine House
 CM282 Pencoe Lead Works
 CM323 Old Castle motte
 CM324 Capel Dewi, Llwynhendy
 CM387 Capel Isaf Cemetery
 GM046 Loughor Castle
 GM363 St Michael's Chapel, Cwrt-y-Carne

Registered Parks and Gardens

PGW(Dy)14(CAM) Parc Howard

Listed Buildings:

| | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| 11196 | The Old Town Hall | II |
| 11869 | Church of The Holy Trinity | II |
| 11886 | Church of St Alban | II |
| 11887 | Calfaria Baptist Chapel, including railings. | II |
| 11888 | Parish Church of St. Ellyw | II* |
| 11889 | Lychgate to Churchyard of church of St Ellyw | II |
| 11890 | Churchyard Cross in Churchyard of St Ellyw | II |
| 11891 | The War Memorial in Churchyard of St Ellyw | II |
| 11892 | Llanelly House | I |
| 11893 | Llanelly House | I |
| 11894 | 20 Vaughan St / Bridge St | I |
| 11895 | 22 Vaughan St / Bridge St | I |
| 11896 | 24 Vaughan St / Bridge St | I |
| 11897 | NO.6 BRIDGE STREET, DYFED, | II |
| 11898 | NO.8 BRIDGE STREET, DYFED,11898 | II |
| 11899 | The Public Library | II |
| 11900 | Tabernacle Chapel including forecourt Railings | II* |
| 11901 | NO.24 COWELL STREET,,,,,DYFED | II |
| 11902 | NO.26 COWELL STREET,,,,,DYFED | II |
| 11903 | including Railings and Front Terrace | II |
| 11904 | including Railings and font Terrace | II |
| 11905 | Carrefair, including Railings and front Terrace | II |
| 11906 | Capel Newydd, including Forecourt Walls and Railings | II |
| 11907 | Parc Howard Mansion (Museum & Art Gallery) | II |
| 11908 | Bandstand in grounds of Parc Howard | II |
| 11909 | Two sets of Gates, Gatepiers & Railings to Parc Howard | II |
| | Siloah Independent Chapel, including forecourt gates & | |
| 11910 | railings | II |

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 11911 | Glenalla Chapel, including forecourt gates and railings | II |
| 11912 | Church of All Saints | II |
| 11913 | War Memorial in All Saint's Churchyard | II |
| 11914 | Churchyard Wall & Gates to All Saints Church | II |
| 11915 | including Forecourt Gate and Railings | II |
| 11916 | NO.15 GORING ROAD, DYFED | II |
| 11917 | NO.17A GORING ROAD, DYFED | II |
| 11918 | NO.17 GORING ROAD, DYFED | II |
| 11919 | NO.19 GORING ROAD, DYFED | II |
| 11920 | The Mansell Arms | II |
| 11921 | Hall Street Methodist Church | II |
| 11922 | Park Congregational School | II |
| | Lakefield Community Centre (former Siloh CM Chapel) | |
| 11923 | including forecourt gates & railings | II |
| | Capel Als, including railings, piers & gates to Chapel | |
| 11924 | Enclosure | II |
| | Bethel Baptist Chapel & schoolroom, including gates & | |
| 11925 | railings to entrance | II |
| 11926 | NO.20 MARKET STREET, DYFED, 11926 | II |
| 11927 | NO.22 MARKET STREET, DYFED, 11927 | II |
| 11928 | NO.24 MARKET STREET, DYFED, | II |
| 11929 | No.26 (and No.2 Park Street Exchange Buildings) | II |
| 11930 | Exchange Buildings | II |
| 11931 | NO.6 PARK STREET, DYFED, | II |
| | Caersalem Baptist Chapel, including schoolroom & | |
| 11932 | Forecourt railings | II |
| | Greenfield Baptist Chapel, Including Gates & Railings To | |
| 11933 | Enclosure | II |
| 11934 | Park Congregational Chapel, including enclosure railings | II |
| 11935 | Craig House | II |
| 11936 | Ravenscourt | II |
| 11937 | Wellfield | II |
| 11938 | 76 including Walled Forecourt | II |
| 11939 | 78 including Walled Forecourt | II |
| 11940 | 80 including Walled Forecourt | II |
| 11941 | 82 including Walled Forecourt | II |
| 11942 | No 41 including Gates and Railings to Forecourt | II |
| 11943 | 43 including Gates and Railings to Forecourt | II |
| 11944 | 45 including Gates and Railings to Forecourt | II |
| 11945 | 47 including Gates and Railings to Forecourt | II |
| 11946 | Engine House & Accumulator Tower | II |
| 11947 | Bridge over River Lliedi | II |
| 11948 | The Vicarage | II |
| 11949 | Ivy Cottage, including Gates and Railings | II |
| 11950 | Cilfig Lodge | II |
| 11951 | Greylands | II |
| 11952 | NO.2 PROSPECT PLACE,,,,,DYFED | II |
| 11953 | NO.4 PROSPECT PLACE,,,,,DYFED | II |
| 11954 | NO.6 PROSPECT PLACE, DYFED | II |
| 11955 | The Post Office | II |

| | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| 11956 | The Midland Bank | II |
| 11957 | Llanelli Railway Yard Goods Shed and Offices | II |
| 11958 | Moriah Baptist Chapel | II |
| 11959 | The Arcade | II |
| 11960 | Lloyds Bank | II |
| 11961 | Sir Arthur Stepney Memorial in Old Road Cemetery | II |
| 11962 | The Town Hall | II |
| 11963 | Gates & Railings to Gardens at the Town Hall | II |
| 11964 | Great War Memorial in Gardens at the Town Hall | II |
| 11965 | Boer War Memorial in Gardens at the Hall | II |
| 11966 | Highfield | II |
| 11967 | Zion Baptist Chapel, including Forecourt Railings | II |
| 11968 | Zion Baptist School, including Forecourt Railings & Gates | II |
| 11969 | Barclay's Bank | II |
| 18042 | Carmarthenshire Dock west quay | II |
| 18043 | Carmarthenshire Dock east quay | II |
| 18044 | Carmarthenshire Dock tramroad bridge | II |
| 18233 | The Sanctuary | II |
| 18657 | Tinhouse, Old Castle Tinplate Works | II* |
| | Adulam Baptist Chapel with Vestry (Ysgoldy Adulam), | |
| 20529 | Baptistery, Railings and Gates | II |
| 20532 | Felinfoel Brewery | II* |
| 20533 | Office of Felinfoel Brewery | II |
| 20534 | Baptistery at Pont Adulam | II |
| 20545 | Church of St Michael and all Angels | II* |
| 20546 | Maescanner Baptist Chapel | II |
| 21095 | Church of St Cennydd (aka St Gwynog) | II |
| 21096 | Bethesda Chapel | II |
| 21097 | Bethesda Capel Bach | II |
| 21103 | Cornish Engine House of Penprys Colliery | II |
| 21104 | Capel Salem | II |
| 26260 | Church of Saint Catherine | II |
| 26261 | War Memorial in grounds of Church of Saint Catherine | II |
| 26847 | Capel Moriah | II |
| 26848 | Schoolroom at Capel Moriah | II |
| 26849 | Gates and railings at Capel Moriah | II |
| 26850 | The War Memorial | II |
| 87524 | Church of the Blessed Sacrament | II |
| 87541 | Maltings at Former Buckley's Brewery | II |
| 87584 | Westmead | II |
| 87593 | Theatr Elli | II |
| 87663 | Llanelli West Signal Box | II |