

Pre-Application Services Meeting:
SIP CAS-03721-J2H3Y3 - Afon Ddaw Solar and Energy Storage Project
14 August 2026
Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Lightsource BP
Edwin Mawdsley

Tetrattech
Emily Avery
Andrew Lucas

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

Giulia Bazzoni – Infrastructure Consenting Manager
Marloes Holtkamp – Planning Officer
Robert Sparey – Planning & Environment Manager
Eres Thomas – Planning Student
Arthur Wallace – Planning Student
Adeline Wilcox – Planning Officer

The Welsh Government - Planning Directorate

Jamie Dell – Planning Student
Emma Thompson – Planning Student

Introductions

Representatives of PEDW met with the project team to discuss the Afon Ddaw Solar and Energy Storage Project. The project team summarised the main amendments made since the issuing of the EIA Scoping Direction in March 2025.

The project now comprises of approximately 683 hectares across seven land parcels proposed for solar photovoltaic panels, together with a battery energy storage system site. Grid connection is anticipated at Aberthaw substation.

Engaging with statutory consultees

The project team outlined that they are seeking to re-engage with relevant stakeholders, and it is anticipated that an updated Scoping Report will be submitted to PEDW by the end of 2026. The project team queried how the pre-application advice process operates.

PEDW advised that the project team may approach the relevant Planning Authority (PA) or Natural Resources Wales (NRW) directly through their respective pre-application advice services. Pre-application services forms for the PA and NRW are available online via the SIP collection webpage: <https://www.gov.wales/significant-infrastructure-projects-sip-guidance>

The completed forms and supporting information should be submitted directly to the relevant body. As these services fall outside PEDW's remit, PEDW cannot provide further guidance on the process however noted that pre-application advice may be sought at any point before submission. PEDW encourages the use of these services as it helps inform the project's development.

The project team confirmed that consultation with NRW is ongoing and that engagement with the PA is expected to begin shortly. PEDW welcomed this update.

Statement of Common Ground Process

The project team intends to include Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) with their submission. The project team has contacted the Welsh Government's Planning Directorate which has indicated that guidance on SoCGs is expected to be published in due course. PEDW confirmed that the guidance, once published, it would be made available on the above SIP collection webpage.

Drawing on experience from Developments of National Significance examinations, PEDW noted that SoCGs can help focus examination time by identifying matters that are agreed and the principal issues that remain to be addressed.

Notification of Intention to Submit a SIP to PEDW.

The project team is aiming to submit the application to PEDW in autumn 2027. PEDW reiterated that the available pre-application advice services should be used to support the continuing development of the project.

PEDW noted that the PAC cannot begin until the applicant has submitted a formal Notice of Proposed Application. Following PEDW's Acceptance of the Notice of Proposed Application (Acceptance of Notification), the project team has 18 months to undertake the PAC and amend the scheme as appropriate. Under Regulation 14 of the SIP Procedure Regs, this period may be extended by up to 56 days by the Applicant. This is engaged where a statutory consultee raises concerns about the proposal, to allow for additional consultation or amendments. The extension must be communicated in writing to PEDW and the consultee that advised that they had those concerns.

Within three months of PEDW's Acceptance of Notification, the project must have a website through which the public can be kept informed of progress. The website does not need to contain all application documents initially, but all PAC documents must be available online when the formal consultation begins. More information can be found in Part 3 of the SIP Procedure Regs

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2025/690/contents>

Statutory PAC requirements

PEDW mentioned that the Welsh Government has produced guidance on best practice when for consultations relating to SIPs. This covers early engagement

through to the statutory consultation requirements: <https://www.gov.wales/significant-infrastructure-projects-sip-welsh-infrastructure-consent-pre-application-consultation>.

Statutory pre-application consultation must run for a minimum of 42 days. These consultations must include the draft Infrastructure Consenting Order (ICO). PEDW noted that advice on how to draft an ICO can be found on the SIP webpages: <https://www.gov.wales/significant-infrastructure-projects-sip-how-draft-infrastructure-consent-order-ico>

PEDW noted that at least one public meeting or event is required in the legislation. The project team should determine whether further events are appropriate considering local circumstances and should liaise with the PA and local community councils. The applicant must serve notice on all MSs and MPs that represent an area within which the site lies as part of the PAC process.

Forthcoming planning application within Photovoltaic Area 3

The project team explained that one landowner of a land parcel is seeking planning permission for a poultry farm, with this application submission being imminent. The project team does not anticipate that the proposed poultry farm would affect the inclusion of that parcel within the SIP or its use for photovoltaic panels.

PEDW advised that the SIP application documents should provide a clear account of the relationship between the two proposals.

Deemed and Removed Consents – ability to incorporate other construction licences (e.g. Section 247 Highway Orders, FRAPs, ordinary watercourse consents etc.) in with the ICO.

The project team asked which other construction licences or consents could be deemed or removed through the ICO, including section 247 highway matters, flood risk activity permits and ordinary watercourse consents.

PEDW pointed to Schedule 3 of the Act (Consequential Amendments and Repeals) include the list of consents which could not be sought any longer if the project is classed as SIP i.e. the consent is repealed and provision should be included in the ICO to the same effects.

In addition to this, there are consents which are either completely remove or could be deemed in an ICO. These are listed in Schedules 2 and 3 to the Infrastructure Consent (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2025:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2025/887/contents>

The consents listed in Schedule 3 of the SIP Miscellaneous Regulations would require the assent of the normal consenting authority. This can be obtained during pre-application consultation, and it will form part of the consultee substantial responses. However, PEDW stresses that the issue of deeming consents via provisions in the ICO would ultimately depend on the availability of information to both the Examining Authority and the consenting authority which will be consulted

upon. Some consent would normally require a level of details which is usually available only post-consent because they depend on construction details.

PEDW has provided a list of potential additional information which may be submitted to support the ICO when seeking deemed consents. This list is based on additional information which are already required as part of the application validation. It is provided as Annex 1 of the application form and it is not meant to be exhaustive. It is however important that prospective Applicant submit as much supporting information as possible if they wish to deem a consent.

The application form is available here: <https://www.gov.wales/significant-infrastructure-projects-sip-application-form>

PEDW confirmed that further advice on specific deemed or removed consent queries may be sought through its pre-application advice service.

The project team confirmed that they are anticipating another meeting with PEDW to discuss the findings of the completed Scoping Direction in due course. PEDW's pre-application fee schedules (including for EIA Scoping Directions) can be found here: <https://www.gov.wales/fees-significant-infrastructure-project-sip-applications>