

Local Impact Report

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Tycroes Solar

Prepared by:
Gary Glenister BSc(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

On Behalf of:
Llinos Quelch – Head of Planning
Carmarthenshire County Council
3 Spilman Street
Carmarthen
SA31 1LE

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A CONTEXT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An application for a Solar Park with an export capacity of 40MW by Spring Dev 02 Ltd was submitted to the Welsh Ministers on the 7th May 2020 for consideration under the Developments of National Significance (Wales) Regulations 2016.
- 1.2 Consideration of the application was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and was accepted on the 2nd September 2020.
- 1.3 The report below is an assessment of the likely local impacts from the perspective of Carmarthenshire County Council as the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site totals 46.8ha and is split into three parcels of land referred to as Area 1, 2 and 3 described below.
- 2.2 Area 1 is a 24ha parcel of land forming the eastern site which is 0.5km to the south west of the current built up area of Tycroes. This site is currently improved grazing land and forms an extension to the 12MW Clawdd Ddu solar park that was constructed in approx. 2014. The site is set within defined hedgerow boundaries. The site is relatively close to the A483 and settlement of Tycroes, however is on falling land so faces away from the main public views. There is however a road to the South East and footpaths crossing though and near the site, so it is subject to public view. The site is also visible from the higher ground to the South East which falls outside the County boundary which is defined by the River Loughor. The impact of the site is likely to be similar to the adjacent Clawdd Ddu in terms of landscape and visual amenity, so an assessment can be made by looking at the adjacent development.
- 2.3 Access to Area 1 is proposed to utilise the access route that was used to serve the Clawdd Ddu solar farm that was developed approximately 6 years ago. The proposed access is a farm road which joins the A483 opposite the eastern most part of Coopers and runs in a southerly direction to the East of Tycroes Business Park.
- 2.4 Area 2 is a 1.8ha parcel of land forming the central site to the south west of a small settlement known as Coopers. The site is an area of improved grassland within defined hedgerow boundaries. The site is

the remnant of a larger parcel of land that was proposed to be included but reduced in size due to suitable Marsh Fritillary habitat being identified through the earlier stages of the process. The site is therefore a small 'stepping stone' between the two main sites.

- 2.5 Access to Area 2 is proposed onto the A483 via a wide existing access which serves two residential properties to the South West of Coopers.
- 2.6 Area 3 is a 21ha parcel of largely improved grazing land forming the western site situated to the East of the A48, 1.5km North of Pont Abram roundabout. The site lies between the New Lodge Farm site to the North which has a waste transfer station and other commercial businesses, the A48 dual carriageway to the West and open countryside including a wooded river valley to the East and South. The site wraps around the North and West of the property known as Ty Isaf.
- 2.7 Access to Area 3 is via an existing junction onto the A48 which serves a property known as Ty Isaf via an unclassified road. The access is immediately north of an established rest area with cafe. This junction is accessible from the north and south albeit north bound traffic would have to cross the opposing carriageway. Egress from the junction can only be in a southerly direction.
- 2.8 The cable route is a linear feature which links the three Areas and goes on to link the scheme to the National Grid via the Heol Ddu sub station. The route crosses areas of woodland and sensitive Marsh Fritillary habitat including a river but also utilises a stretch of Trunk Road verge along the A483.
- 2.9 None of the sites are covered by any local or national landscape or biodiversity designations.

3.0 **DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The scheme constitutes a solar farm with associated infrastructure. The design capacity is between 36-40MW of renewable energy with a Grid connection of 40MW available into the existing Heol Ddu sub-station. The best available technology will be used to maximise the output within this capacity for a period of 40 years.
- 3.2 Solar panels are proposed to be mounted on frames to form what are known as arrays. Arrays vary in length and have a height of 3.5m spaced so they have 4-5m clear space between them. They are orientated to the south with a tilt angle of 20-25 degrees to horizontal to maximise solar gain. The sites are not flat, so the proposed arrays would follow the topography of the land as seen on the Clawdd Ddu site adjacent to Area 1.

- 3.3 Electricity generated by the solar panels feeds into inverters fixed to the underside of the frames which are connected by cable to transformers with approximately 8-10 cabinets located through the scheme. Cabinets are proposed to be 5m by 2.5m with a maximum height of 3m. From the cabinets, electricity is fed by cable to an on site sub-station proposed on Area 1, on the site of the construction compound along the northern edge of the eastern site. This in turn is proposed to feed directly to the National Grid at the sub station at Heol Ddu to the north of Area 1.
- 3.4 The three sites are linked by cables which are proposed to be buried in 1.4m deep and 0.6m wide trenches. The cable route includes the A483 verge and land of sensitive ecological value so a combination of open trench excavation and sub soil horizontal drilling (HDD) is proposed to ensure the most sensitive solution in any given location.
- 3.5 The proposal is set within a 2.4m deer fence with CCTV cameras to provide surveillance.
- 3.6 In terms of delivery access, the three sites are independently treated with Areas 1 and 2 accessed via the A483 Trunk Road and Area 3 accessed via the A48 Trunk Road.
- 3.7 A scheme of landscaping and ecological management has been submitted which includes a matrix which calculates a net gain of 34.10% in habitat units and net gain of 22.95% in hedgerow units.
- 3.8 The application has been screened under the EIA regulations three times in the early stages of the process and as a result of amendments including the removal of sensitive parcels of land, has a negative screening and no Environmental Statement was deemed necessary under the EIA Regs. An environmental statement has not therefore been submitted for assessment. However, it is noted that the topics that would have been included in an ES have been covered separately for assessment. The impacts of which are set out in Section 5 below.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The following applications have been received within in the application sites. They have no relevance to the proposal however are included for completeness.

E/02108 CONSTRUCT TWO LANE SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY 7.3M WIDE WITH GRASS VERGE, FOOTWAY AND CYLCEWAY AND NECESSARY STRUCTURES AND ROUNDABOUTS (ROUTE STARTS AT COOPERS CORNER IN THE WEST AND THE ROUTE RUNS DUE EAST TO PENYGARN ROAD BEFORE CURVING NORTH TOWARDS

PANTYFFYNNON FARM THEN CROSS RIVER AND RAILWAY BEFORE CONTINUING ALONG THE RIVER AND JOIN THE RECENTLY BUILT ROUNDABOUT AT TESCO) - Withdrawn. 03/07/2001

S/02081 FARM TRACK - Agricultural Det. Pp Not Required - Committee 19/10/1999

S/00108 ACCESS ROADWAY 3M WIDE - Full Granted - Committee 19/09/1996

D4/6410 TOURING CARAVAN SITE – Refused 16/09/1982

D4/254 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY – Granted 29//07/1974

B IMPACTS

The likely local impacts of the development on the area are considered as follows

5.0 CLIMATE CHANGE – POSITIVE

5.1 The Welsh Government has a target of 70% energy production by renewable means by 2030. Carmarthenshire set a target of being a carbon neutral authority by 2030 when it declared a climate emergency in 2019. It is estimated that the proposal would generate renewable electricity for over 15,290 average homes per year based on Ofgem typical consumption figures. This is which is equivalent to displacement of 10,665 tonnes of CO2 per year or 426,600 tonnes over the 40 year operational lifespan of the scheme. The scheme would therefore have a **positive** impact on climate change.

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT – NEUTRAL / NEGATIVE

6.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment methodology is considered to be acceptable. Overall the local impact is considered likely to be **neutral / negative** and this is based on the following assessment of the different aspects.

6.2 Effects on Existing Landscape Elements – NEUTRAL

The LPA is in general agreement with the assessments presented within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and it is accepted that these assessments form the basis for determination by the Decision Maker.

6.3 **Effects on Landscape Character – NEUTRAL to NEGATIVE**

The LPA is in general agreement with the assessments presented within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and it is accepted that these assessments form the basis for determination by the Decision Maker.

6.4 **Effects on Visual Amenity – NEUTRAL to NEGATIVE**

The LPA is in general agreement with the assessments presented within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and it is accepted that these assessments form the basis for determination by the Decision Maker.

6.5 **Cumulative Effects – NEUTRAL / NEGATIVE**

The site is seen in the context of the existing Clawdd Ddu solar park that is adjacent to Area 1. The LPA is in general agreement with the assessments presented within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and it is accepted that these assessments form the basis for determination by the Decision Maker.

7 **LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (LEMP) – NEUTRAL / POSITIVE**

7.1 Subject to further information or appropriate requirements as set out below, the scheme would have a **neutral to positive** impact on the local landscape through the implementation of the LEMP.

7.2 The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan does not provide sufficient detail of the long-term management responsibilities and agreements to enable approval or to ensure a framework for effective compliance monitoring and enforcement. An appropriate requirement is suggested below.

8 **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY – NEUTRAL / NEGATIVE**

8.1 The site being split into three Areas will have varying degrees of impact. It is noted that a specific Residential Visual Amenity Assessment, which addresses individual properties has not been provided. However, it is noted elsewhere that the glint and glare assessment has highlighted some

impact on neighbouring properties for parts of the year. It is further noted that an assessment has not been carried out in respect of properties in the village of Garnswllt on high ground to the East beyond the county boundary in the City and County of Swansea, at a distance of approximately 2km.

8.2 View is not a material planning consideration, however the presence of development within a landscape can have an impact on residential amenity albeit for a temporary period during the lifetime of the proposal. It is noted that there are relatively few properties affected but for those that are, the impact could be significant. It is advised that the Decision Maker undertake site visits to corroborate the assessments set out in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and weigh these against other policy objectives.

8.3 Given the cumulative impact of the proposal seen alongside the existing Clawdd Ddu solar park, and in the absence of an assessment that demonstrates otherwise, it is considered likely that the scheme would have a **neutral** impact in respect of Areas 2 and 3 and potentially **negative** impact on residential amenity in respect of Area 1.

9.0 **NOISE – NEUTRAL**

9.1 It is noted that a noise impact assessment has not been submitted with the application. However, it is noted that there are no residential properties immediately contiguous with the site that are not financially linked. Noise is therefore likely to be **neutral**. However, given the lack of information to the contrary it is suggested that requirements be imposed to ensure that noise at third party properties does not exceed background noise levels.

10.0 **GLINT AND GLARE – NEGATIVE**

10.1 A glint and glare assessment has been submitted which has been prepared by a specialist consultant. The assessment concludes that it would be geometrically possible for glint and glare to occur at seven locations on the A48 and eight locations on the A483 however given existing intervening vegetation there is not likely to be an impact. At two locations, the impact is considered low so no mitigation is said to be required.

10.2 The assessment includes analysis of twenty residential properties immediately around the sites, however it is noted that properties further afield on higher ground approximately 2km to the East of Area 1 have not been assessed. The properties to the East are on higher ground so would potentially have a different perspective albeit at a further distance. Ten properties would have potential impacts, of which four would have no impact due to intervening vegetation. Six properties would have a 'low'

impact due to effects being limited to less than three months of the year. The report concludes that there would be a low impact and does not therefore recommend mitigation.

10.3 It is noted that some properties would be affected from the area surrounding the site and those at a further distance to the East have not been assessed, so whilst the numbers of affected properties identified is relatively low, for those properties affected there would be a **negative** impact during those three months.

11.0 **ECOLOGY – NEUTRAL / POSITIVE**

11.1 After an assessment of issues within the remit of the LPA (there are other ecological matters which fall under the remit of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) as responsible authority), ecology is considered to be **neutral / positive** overall but has been broken down and assessed as follows:

11.2 **Improved and Semi improved Grassland habitats – Positive.** The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) concludes the following, ‘The current improved grassland habitats have limited value for foraging bats’ and ‘negligible ecological value’. ‘Management of the operational solar farm will likely include grazing at low stocking levels with no silage cuts, and no biocide or fertiliser inputs. Over the life of the solar PV array, beneath-panel plant diversity will increase along with associated diversity, and numbers of flying insects. This would have a beneficial effect for local foraging bat populations’ and ‘deliver ecological grassland enhancement and increase grassland diversity.’ The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals. However on the basis of the information provided we conclude that the proposal would have no significant impacts on improved and semi improved grassland and during the operational phase **minor – moderate beneficial** effects will be delivered via the proposed grassland management as specified in the LEMP. It is however considered that the LEMP should be updated where appropriate to detail an ongoing monitoring strategy for floral diversity, and that details of an appropriate sowing mix be agreed with the LPA, this can be delivered through a suitable planning requirement (see below).

11.3 **Marshy Grassland – neutral.** The submitted PEAs conclude the following ‘Marshy grassland in Field F8 has potential to support marsh fritillary. (European protected species fall under the remit of NRW so we will not comment on impact to the protected species itself.) A working method statement is provided for works in this area. The cable route will cross the eastern edge of this field to minimise impact from plant movements. Works will be completed in the summer months when the ground is likely to be dry. This will minimise any impact from trenching operations. The trench will be created using a tracked mini digger. Topsoil and subsoil will not be mixed and will be returned in sequence. Works will be limited to the cable route and the footprint of the mini digger. After a settling period of at least 12 months, 200

Devil's-bit Scabious plugs will be planted into the cable route within Field F8.' These mitigation measures are described in the submitted CEMP and LEMP. The Cable PEA states that 'Horizontal direct drilling under Field F13 will ensure the proposed cable route will have no significant effect on this area of marshy grassland habitat.' The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals in relation to Field 8. However on the basis of the information provided we conclude that the proposals would have no significant impacts on marshy grassland habitats if the proposed mitigation measures are followed and we consider that during the operational phase **neutral - minor beneficial** effects will be delivered via the proposed plug planting as specified in the LEMP.

- 11.4 **Streams and rivers – neutral.** The submitted PEAs conclude the following, 'All streams on site will remain intact and no mitigation for habitat loss is required. However, mitigation should be adopted to avoid accidental damage during the construction phase'. The cable PEA states that 'Horizontal direct drilling under the Afon Gwili will ensure the proposed cable route will have no significant effect on this habitat.' Pollution Prevention measures are described in the submitted CEMP and suitable watercourse buffers are proposed in the submitted LEMP. The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals in relation to streams on site, only the Afon Gwili. However on the basis of the information provided we consider that with adequate pollution prevention measures in place and appropriate buffers maintained, significant effects are considered unlikely. During the operational phase there is potential for enhancement of this habitat associated with the reduction in intensive agricultural practices on the site and the adoption of appropriate buffer zones, as proposed in the LEMP, therefore it is considered that during the operational phase, the effect of the development on rivers and streams habitat will be **neutral – minor beneficial**.
- 11.5 **Woodland – neutral.** The submitted PEAs states the following, 'Woodland features will remain intact and no mitigation for habitat loss is required. However, mitigation should be adopted to avoid accidental damage during the construction phase.'. The submitted Cable PEA states that 'Horizontal direct drilling under Woodland W1/W2, will ensure the proposed cable route will have no significant effect on this area of habitat.' Suitable Woodland buffers are proposed in the submitted LEMP. The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals in relation to all woodlands on site, only W1/W2. However, on the basis of the information provided we consider that with the appropriate woodland buffers maintained, significant effects to Woodland habitats are considered unlikely and therefore the effect of the development on woodland habitats will likely be **neutral**.
- 11.6 **Breeding birds – neutral / positive.** The submitted PEAs conclude the following, 'Boundary habitats will support widespread and common nesting bird species. Any activities which impact these habitats have potential to adversely impact nesting birds and is likely to require mitigation for nesting birds. Hedgerows and woodland should be protected from accidental damage during the construction phase

by a suitable buffer. Any activities affecting hedgerow and shrubs habitats should be completed during the period September to February inclusive, outside the accepted bird nesting season.’ The submitted LEMP includes a scheme of bird nesting boxes. The Cable PEA states that ‘Marshy grassland in F8 will be subject to trenching in the bird nesting season to minimise impacts associated with damp ground. Prior to the start of works this habitat should be thoroughly inspected by a suitably qualified person prior to disturbance. If nesting birds are found, all activities likely to damage the immediate area should be delayed until chicks have fledged’ The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals in relation to breeding birds. However, we consider that with the mitigation and enhancement measures identified very few impacts are likely to occur both during construction and operation on birds breeding and overall, we consider no significant impacts on breeding birds are likely. It is considered that during the operational phase, the effect of the development on breeding birds particularly in boundary habitats will be **neutral – moderate beneficial**, mitigation will be delivered via construction timing and checks, the implementation of buffer zones, the strengthening of hedgerow boundaries and the provision of bird boxes.

11.7 **Reptiles – neutral / positive.** The submitted PEAs conclude the following ‘Marshy grassland in Field F8 has potential for widespread and common reptiles. Reasonable avoidance measures are recommended’ The reasonable avoidance measures are described in the CEMP and LEMP. The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals in relation to reptiles. However, we consider that with the mitigation measures identified very few impacts are likely to occur both during construction and operation on reptiles and overall, we consider no significant impacts on reptiles are likely. It is considered that during the operational phase, the effect of the development on reptiles will be **neutral – minor beneficial**, there is potential that the proposed grassland management as specified in the LEMP will provide enhanced habitat suitable for reptiles.

12.0 TREES AND HEDGEROWS – POSITIVE

12.1 **Hedgerows** - The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEAs) conclude the following, ‘Approximately 3 metres of hedgerow will be removed to provide access into Site 2, and mitigation for this habitat loss should be adopted’. Suitable mitigation is described in the submitted LEMP. The PEA also states that ‘Elsewhere these features will remain intact and no mitigation for habitat loss is required. However, mitigation should be adopted to avoid accidental damage during the construction phase.’ Protection measures are described in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statements, CEMP and LEMP. The Cable PEA states that ‘The cable trench will be dug under hedgerows and supporting hedge banks. This will require hand-digging to avoid the roots of large shrubs and trees.’ These measures are again described in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement, CEMP and LEMP. From the information submitted only 3m of hedgerow on the site will be removed and it is intended to

replant this following construction as described in the submitted LEMP. The submitted reports do not comment on the significance of the proposals on hedgerow habitats. The LEMP describes enhancement of hedgerows through appropriate management and new planting of gaps and the strengthening of existing hedgerows. Based on the information submitted we conclude that the proposal would have no significant impacts on hedgerows if the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures are delivered and consider that during the operational phase, **positive minor – moderate beneficial** effects will be delivered via the proposed hedgerow enhancements. It is considered however that the LEMP should be updated where appropriate to detail an ongoing monitoring strategy for hedgerows, this can be delivered through a suitable planning requirement (see below).

13.0 ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION – NEUTRAL

13.1 The sites are accessed off the main trunk roads, the A48 and A483 which are under the remit of the South Wales Trunk Roads Agency (SWTRA) so they have a minimal impact on the County road network. Area 1 is proposed to be accessed via the Clawdd Ddu access that is proven to be fit for purpose through the development of the existing solar park. Area 2 is an existing access off the trunk road that serves two properties and an agricultural field access. There is sufficient visibility to access Area 2 from the trunk road. Area 3 has an existing access off an unclassified road U2310 which has a junction onto the A48 trunk road. It is proposed to have a 'left in left out' arrangement so vehicles do not have to cross the A48 dual carriageway and management of the deliveries so they are coordinated on the unclassified road. The applicant states that a construction traffic management plan will be submitted and therefore a suitable Grampian requirement is suggested below.

13.2 To the South East of Area 1 is an unclassified road which would not be suitable for construction traffic and a requirement is suggested to preclude use of this road at any stage during construction.

13.3 On balance, the close proximity of all three sites to the trunk road network is likely to have a **neutral** local impact overall in terms of additional traffic generation and access.

14.0 SOCIO ECONOMIC – POSITIVE

14.1 No economic benefit analysis has been submitted, however the transport assessment suggests that there would be between 60 and 120 people employed in the 18 week construction phase. Temporary workers both local and from further afield would spend in the local area during construction. The site is also in multiple ownership so the landowners would have a direct income from leasing the land. There would also be maintenance and management contracts for the operational phase. On balance there is likely to be a **positive** impact on the local economy.

14.2 Whilst not a material planning consideration (hence there is no comment) it is good practice to provide a contribution to benefit the local community.

15.0 **BUILT HERITAGE – NEUTRAL**

15.1 The application has been accompanied by a Heritage Impact and Setting Assessment Report. It is noted that the proposal has no direct impact on recorded built heritage assets, however there is evidence to suggest that there are potential unrecorded assets present when cartographical and Lidar evidence is reviewed. The assessment identified several Scheduled Ancient Monuments at Bryn Maen Standing Stone (CM192); Bryn Y Rhyd Standing Stone (CM193); The Earthwork on Graig Fawr (GM386); and Two Burial Chambers on Graig Fawr (GM513) that are situated on high ground to the South East. The site is also relatively close to two Listed Buildings at Plas Mawr LB18453 and Plas Newydd Mill LB19451.

15.2 The site, in particular Area 1 is considered to be visible from the higher ground to the South East which is home to the burial chambers and earthwork referenced above, so there is likely to be an impact when viewed from their setting. However it is noted that this would be at a distance of approx. 2.7km so the impact is considered to be **neutral**.

15.3 Taking a precautionary approach consistent with the adjacent Clawdd Ddu solar site and based on the advice of the LPA's historic advisors, a requirement for a written scheme of investigation is suggested below.

16.0 **PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY – NEUTRAL**

16.1 The proposed Area 1 is crossed by footpath 34/27 and 34/28. The transport assessment states that the routes are safeguarded with a separate application proposed to temporarily divert the route during construction. It is noted that an application to divert the footpath has been submitted to the Local Authority and is under consideration. Subject to successful diversion, the proposal would have a **neutral** impact.

17.0 **FLOODING - NEUTRAL**

17.1 The application has been accompanied by a flood risk assessment. It is noted that none of the sites are classified as high risk of flooding in terms of TAN15. The sites would be permeable in that arrays and fencing will not form a physical barrier to water. The river to the East of Area 3 is proposed to be

unaffected by the cable route as directional drilling is proposed to lay the cables underneath. Overall, the scheme is likely to have a **neutral** impact. The scheme will also be subject to sustainable drainage approval so any localised impacts can be addressed.

C POLICY

18.0 RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES AND AN APPRAISAL OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP AND RELEVANCE TO THE PROPOSAL

18.1 Adopted in December 2014, the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out the Authority's policies and proposals for future development and use of land. Whilst the Plan should be read as a whole, there are a number of specific policies that apply to renewable energy proposals and more specific issues such as the natural and historic environment.

18.2 Renewable Energy

18.3 Policy SP1 is the general policy on renewable energy and this is supplemented by more specific policy for non wind energy in Policy RE3. The test for large non wind renewable schemes is whether there is an over riding justification for the scheme and whether there is demonstrable harm to the landscape in terms of visual impact, noise, ecology and surface water. This is the balance that has to be assessed through careful consideration of the submitted EIA verses the national renewable targets.

18.4 SP11 Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency

Development proposals which incorporate energy efficiency measures and renewable energy production technologies will be supported in areas where the environmental and cumulative impacts can be addressed satisfactorily. Such developments will not cause demonstrable harm to residential amenity and will be acceptable within the landscape. Each proposal will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Large scale wind farms will only be permitted within Strategic Search Areas.

18.5 Policy RE3 Non-wind Renewable Energy Installations

Proposals within Development Limits

Proposals for non-wind renewable energy installations will be permitted within defined Development Limits, provided they do not cause an unacceptable impact to the character of the local area and to the amenity of adjacent land, properties, residents and the community. Proposals will not be permitted if they negatively impact upon archaeology or the setting and integrity of Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or other features or areas of historical value.

Proposals outside Development Limits

Proposals for small scale non-wind renewable energy installations outside defined Development Limits are required to satisfactorily justify the need to be sited in such a location. Such proposals should be sited in close proximity to existing buildings and structures and will not cause demonstrable harm to the landscape.

Large scale schemes located outside defined Development Limits may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where there is an overriding need for the scheme which can be satisfactorily justified, and the development will not cause demonstrable harm to the landscape.

Proposals that would cause demonstrable harm to the landscape, visual impact, noise, ecology, or ground and surface water as a result of the cumulative effect of renewable energy installations will not be permitted.

18.6 The general policy for development is Policy GP1 which refers to the impact on local features and ensuring the amenity of residents is not adversely affected.

18.7 **Policy GP1 Sustainability and High Quality Design**

Development proposals will be permitted where they accord with the following:

- a) It conforms with and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing, elevation treatment, and detailing;**
- b) It incorporates existing landscape or other features, takes account of site contours and changes in levels and prominent skylines or ridges;**
- c) Utilises materials appropriate to the area within which it is located;**
- d) It would not have a significant impact on the amenity of adjacent land uses, properties, residents or the community;**
- e) Includes an integrated mixture of uses appropriate to the scale of the development;**
- f) It retains, and where appropriate incorporates important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, spaces, trees, woodlands and hedgerows) and ensures the use of good quality**

hard and soft landscaping and embraces opportunities to enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity;

- g) It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, which ensures security through the ‘designing-out-crime’ principles of Secured by Design (including providing natural surveillance, visibility, well lit environments and areas of public movement);**
- h) An appropriate access exists or can be provided which does not give rise to any parking or highway safety concerns on the site or within the locality;**
- i) It protects and enhances the landscape, townscape, historic and cultural heritage of the County and there are no adverse effects on the setting or integrity of the historic environment;**
- j) It ensures or provides for, the satisfactory generation, treatment and disposal of both surface and foul water;**
- k) It has regard to the generation, treatment and disposal of waste.**
- l) It has regard for the safe, effective and efficient use of the transportation network;**
- m) It provides an integrated network which promotes the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport which ensures ease of access for all;**
- n) It includes, where applicable, provision for the appropriate management and eradication of invasive species.**

Proposals will also be considered in light of the policies and provisions of this Plan and National Policy (PPW: Edition 7 and TAN12: Design (2014)).

18.8 Historic Environment

18.9 The general Policy on the Historic Environment is SP13 with specific guidance provided by Policy EQ1. It is noted that there is no direct impact on recorded historic assets, however the longer distance impacts on the setting of assets on high ground to the South East of Area 1 needs to be considered.

18.10 SP13 Protection and Enhancement of the Built and Historic Environment

Development proposals should preserve or enhance the built and historic environment of the County, its cultural, townscape and landscape assets (outlined below), and, where appropriate, their setting. Proposals relating to the following will be considered in accordance with national guidance and legislation.

- a) Sites and features of recognised Historical and Cultural Importance;**
- b) Listed buildings and their setting;**
- c) Conservation Areas and their setting;**

d) Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other sites of recognised archaeological importance.

Proposals will be expected to promote high quality design that reinforces local character and respects and enhances the local setting and the cultural and historic qualities of the plan area.

18.11 Policy EQ1

Protection of Buildings, Landscapes and Features of Historic Importance

Proposals for development affecting landscapes, townscapes buildings and sites or features of historic or archaeological interest which by virtue of their historic importance, character or significance within a group of features make an important contribution to the local character and the interests of the area will only be permitted where it preserves or enhances the built and historic environment.

18.12 Natural Environment

18.13 Policies SP14, EQ4, EQ5 and EQ7 seek to protect species, habitats and features of ecological importance including a specific policy relating to the Marsh Fritillary butterfly which is a mobile feature of a nearby SAC. This has been further reinforced by the Environment Act which requires ecological enhancement from development proposals.

18.14 SP14 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

Development should reflect the need to protect, and wherever possible enhance the County's natural environment.

All development proposals should be considered in accordance with national guidance/legislation and the policies and proposals of this Plan, with due consideration given to areas of nature conservation value, the countryside, landscapes and coastal areas, including those outlined below:

- a) Statutory designated sites including Ramsar sites, SPAs, SACs, SSSIs and National Nature Reserves;**
- b) Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Value, including protected species and habitats of acknowledged importance as well as key connectivity corridors and pathways; (Policy EQ4 and EQ5)**

- c) Regional and Locally important sites (and their features) including Local Nature Reserves and RIGS; (see Policy EQ3)**
- d) Areas of identified Landscape and Seascape quality; (including SLAs)**
- e) Features which contribute to local distinctiveness, nature conservation value or the landscape; (see Policy EQ5)**
- f) The Open Countryside; (see Policy GP2)**
- g) The best and most versatile agricultural land; (Grade 2 and 3a)**
- h) Natural assets: including air, soil (including high carbon soils) controlled waters and water resources. (See Policies EP1 and EP2)**

18.15 Policy EQ4 Biodiversity

Proposals for development which have an adverse impact on priority species, habitats and features of recognised principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity and nature conservation, (namely those protected by Section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and UK and Local BAP habitats and species and other than sites and species protected under European or UK legislation) will not be permitted, except where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) The impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated, acceptably minimised or appropriately managed to include net enhancements;**
- b) There are exceptional circumstances where the reasons for the development or land use change clearly outweighs the need to safeguard the biodiversity and nature conservation interests of the site and where alternative habitat provision can be made in order to maintain and enhance local biodiversity.**

18.16 Policy EQ5 Corridors, Networks and Features of Distinctiveness

Proposals for development which would not adversely affect those features which contribute local distinctiveness/qualities of the County, and to the management and/or development of ecological networks (wildlife corridor networks), accessible green corridors and their continuity and integrity will be permitted.

Proposals which include provision for the retention and appropriate management of such features will be supported (provided they conform to the policies and proposals of this Plan).

18.17 EQ7 Development within the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG Area

Proposals will be permitted where they accord with the Council's commitment to promote and contribute to the delivery of the Conservation Objectives of the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation (CMM SAC) in line with the Habitats Directive. Where applicable, proposals in the SPG area will be required to contribute towards increasing the quality and amount of suitable habitat for Marsh Fritillary butterfly available within the SPG Area. The SPG Area is defined on the Proposals Map.

In order to achieve these objectives, and to mitigate for the loss of potential supporting habitat and connectivity for the marsh fritillary butterfly that may result through the development, the Council will, where applicable, seek to secure Planning Obligations (in accordance with policy GP3 and the provisions of the SPG for the CMM SAC) from relevant developments within the SPG area. The agreed contribution will be negotiated on a case by case basis subject to the provisions and requirements of the CMM SAC SPG.

18.18 Highways

18.19 The general policy on highway matters is TR3, however it is noted that all three Areas are accessed onto or close to the Trunk Road network so a strategic highway view is recommended as well as an assessment of the local network.

18.20 Policy TR3 Highways in Developments - Design Considerations

The design and layout of all development proposals will, where appropriate, be required to include:

- a) An integrated network of convenient and safe pedestrian and cycle routes (within and from the site) which promotes the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport;**
- b) Suitable provision for access by public transport;**
- c) Appropriate parking and where applicable, servicing space in accordance with required standards;**
- d) Infrastructure and spaces allowing safe and easy access for those with mobility difficulties;**
- e) Required access standards reflective of the relevant Class of road and speed restrictions including visibility splays and design features and calming measures necessary to ensure highway safety and the ease of movement is maintained, and where required enhanced;**
- f) Provision for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems to allow for the disposal of surface water run off from the highway.**

Proposals which do not generate unacceptable levels of traffic on the surrounding road network and would not be detrimental to highway safety or cause significant harm to the amenity of residents will be permitted.

Proposals which will not result in offsite congestion in terms of parking or service provision or where the capacity of the network is sufficient to serve the development will be permitted. Developers may be required to facilitate appropriate works as part of the granting of any permission.

19.0 **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

19.1 The following SPG documents are of relevance to the proposed scheme.

19.2 **Wind and Solar Energy**

19.3 Adopted in 2019, the Wind and Solar Energy SPG sets out the policy and site selection consideration for a range of renewable energy proposals including solar.

19.4 Paragraph 6.3.3 sets the scene for solar proposals. “The policy states that “large scale schemes located outside defined Development Limits may be permitted in exceptional circumstances”. The purpose of this statement is to ensure that only feasible schemes will be permitted and will contribute to meeting the national renewable targets. Large solar parks can be very visible in the landscape and applications should be supported by appropriate supporting information to enable a comprehensive assessment of the scheme to ensure it will not cause demonstrable harm to the landscape.”

19.5 Reference is drawn to the Carmarthenshire Solar PV Development Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study for assessing the suitability of sites and provides guidance for site selection and the policy considerations.

The SPG is included in full in Appendix A and a link is provided below.

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1219839/adopted-spg.pdf>

19.6 **Nature Conservation and Biodiversity**

19.7 The SPG draws together the requirements of local and national policy and helps developers identify the nature conservation implications of their developments.

19.8 The introduction sets out the context of the SPG as follows:

“1.3 The Council recognises the important contribution that planning can make to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity within the County, including habitats and species of international, national and local importance and that biodiversity conservation and enhancement has an integral role in sustainable development and is fundamental to the social and economic wellbeing of Carmarthenshire’s residents. It is recognised that the development of our urban and rural areas can have significant impacts resulting in a decline of biodiversity. It is also recognised that development can have positive impact where management, restoration and enhancement features for habitat and species are incorporated.

1.4 The aim of this SPG is to ensure that the provisions of national policy and that of the LDP are delivered at a local level and that planning applications are accompanied by the correct information that follows best practice guidelines.”

19.9 The SPG is included in full in Appendix B and a link is provided below.

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/3723/nat-env-and-biodiversity-draft-spg.pdf>

19.10 **Caeau Mynydd Mawr**

19.11 Area 2 and 3, and part of Area 1 is within the area defined in the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG which relates to the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly, a mobile species associated with the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Special Area of Conservation (SAC). European Protected Species are within the remit of NRW rather than the LPA, however for completeness, the SPG was adopted in December 2014 and is found on the following link.

The SPG is included in full in Appendix C and a link is provided below.

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/3699/caeau-mynydd-mawr-spg-adopted.pdf>

20.0 **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES**

20.1 National planning guidance is set out at three levels.

- 20.2 The draft **National Development Framework** has been through consultation and been renamed “Future Wales – the National Plan 2040” which sets out the overarching policy for large renewable schemes in the context of the climate emergency that has been declared and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. The quotes below are from the proposed amended wording post consultation. This level of policy proposes to set targets for Wales as a whole and provides search areas for renewable energy to achieve the following Welsh Government targets:
- For 70% of electricity consumption to be generated from renewable energy by 2030.
 - For one gigawatt of renewable energy capacity to be locally owned by 2030.
 - For new renewable energy projects to have at least an element of local ownership from 2020.
- 20.3 The stated aim is “The role of Future Wales is defined by legislation and by the Programme for Government - Prosperity for All: the national strategy. This states that it has an important role in driving sustainable growth and combating climate change by guiding strategic development over the next 20 years.”
- 20.4 Future Wales states that it seeks to achieve a Wales where people will live “In places which are decarbonised and climate-resilient. The challenges of climate change demand urgent action on carbon emissions and the planning system must help Wales lead the way in promoting and delivering a competitive, sustainable decarbonised society. Decarbonisation commitments and renewable energy targets will be treated as opportunities to build a more resilient and equitable low-carbon economy, develop clean and efficient transport infrastructure, improve public health and generate skilled jobs in new sectors. New homes will be energy efficient and will help communities adapt to the changing climate.”
- 20.5 A traffic light system is set out to sift acceptability but there is an acceptance that there will be an impact so priority areas are defined. Future Wales states “Large scale wind and solar renewable energy development can be visually prominent. A strategic review of landscape and visual impact identified the Priority Areas for Solar and Wind Energy as the most appropriate locations to accommodate landscape change. There is, therefore, an acceptance of landscape change in these areas. However, the design and micro siting of proposals must minimise the landscape and visual impact, particularly those in close proximity to built-up areas.”
- 20.6 Policy 17 of the amended draft plan states:

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure The Welsh Government strongly supports the principle of developing renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies and at all scales to meet our future energy needs. In determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon energy development, decision-makers must give significant weight to the need to meet Wales' international commitments and our target to generate 70% of consumed electricity by renewable means by 2030 in order to combat the climate emergency. In Pre-Assessed Areas for Wind Energy the Welsh Government has already modelled the likely impact on the landscape and has found them to be capable of accommodating development in an acceptable way. There is a presumption in favour of large-scale wind energy development (including repowering) in these areas, subject to the criteria in policy 18. Applications for large-scale wind and solar will not be permitted in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and all proposals should demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment. Proposals should describe the net benefits the scheme will bring in terms of social, economic, environmental and cultural improvements to local communities. New strategic grid infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of energy should be designed to minimise visual impact on nearby communities. The Welsh Government will work with stakeholders, including National Grid and Distribution Network Operators, to transition to a multi-vector grid network and reduce the barriers to the implementation of new grid infrastructure.

20.7 In respect of Developments of National Significance, Proposed Policy 18 of the amended draft sets out criteria as follows:

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance

Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy projects (including repowering) qualifying as Developments of National Significance will be permitted subject to policy 17 and the following criteria:

1. Outside of the Pre-Assessed Areas for wind developments and everywhere for all other technologies, the proposal does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding landscape (particularly on the setting of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty);
2. The proposal is designed to minimise its visual impact on nearby communities and individual dwellings, and the cumulative impact of the proposal, with other existing or proposed development, is acceptable;
3. There are no adverse impacts on international and national statutory designated sites for nature conservation (and the features for which they have been designated), protected habitats and species;
4. The proposal includes biodiversity enhancement measures to provide a net benefit for biodiversity;
5. There are no unacceptable adverse impacts on statutorily protected built heritage assets;

6. There are no unacceptable adverse impacts by way of shadow flicker, noise, reflected light, air quality or electromagnetic disturbance;
7. There are no unacceptable impacts on the operations of defence facilities and operations (including aviation and radar) or the Mid Wales Low Flying Tactical Training Area (TTA-7T);
8. There are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the transport network through the transportation of components or source fuels during its construction and/or ongoing operation;
9. The proposal includes consideration of the materials needed or generated by the development to ensure the sustainable use and management of resources;
10. There are acceptable provisions relating to the decommissioning of the development at the end of its lifetime, including the removal of infrastructure and effective restoration.

20.8 **Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 December 2018 (PPW10)**

- 20.9 PPW10 provides general policies for development in Wales, within the framework of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. Underlying PPW10 is sustainability. The following definition is provided: ““Sustainable Development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals. Acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle means that a body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” General support is given to renewable energy subject to other local considerations.
- 20.10 Paragraph 5.9.17 states “Planning authorities should give significant weight to the Welsh Government’s targets to increase renewable and low carbon energy generation, as part of our overall approach to tackling climate change and increasing energy security. In circumstances where protected landscape, biodiversity and historical designations and buildings are considered in the decision making process, only the direct irreversible impacts on statutorily protected sites and buildings and their settings (where appropriate) should be considered. In all cases, considerable weight should be attached to the need to produce more energy from renewable and low carbon sources, in order for Wales to meet its carbon and renewable targets.”
- 20.11 Paragraph 5.9.18 provides criteria for consideration.
- “Planning authorities should also identify and require suitable ways to avoid, mitigate or compensate adverse impacts of renewable and low carbon energy development. The construction, operation, decommissioning, remediation and aftercare of proposals should take into account:

- the need to minimise impacts on local communities, such as from noise and air pollution, to safeguard quality of life for existing and future generations;
- the impact on the natural and historic environment;
- cumulative impact;
- the capacity of, and effects on the transportation network;
- grid connection issues where renewable (electricity) energy developments are proposed; and
- the impacts of climate change on the location, design, build and operation of renewable and low carbon energy development. In doing so, consider whether measures to adapt to climate change impacts give rise to additional impacts.”

20.12 Technical Advice Note 8 (TAN8) 2005

20.13 TAN8 sets out more specific guidance for renewable energy proposals. TAN8 is now somewhat dated and mostly refers to wind energy and defines strategic search areas. However there is a section on other technologies which provides the following advice.

20.14 Other Onshore Renewable Energy Technologies

20.15 Paragraph 3.2 states “Other onshore technologies provide energy in the form of electricity and heat. Some of the 2010 renewable electricity target will be met from these technologies, but the likelihood is that it will only be a small proportion. This is, however, neither to underestimate their value nor a sign of any lack of the Assembly Government’s commitment to their implementation. The technologies are described below and their planning implications identified. Many can be accommodated through standard planning policies on design and rural and employment development. Annex C provides more technical detail and definitions to assist local planning authorities and the public in understanding their characteristics. Solar Thermal and Solar Photo-Voltaic (PV)”

20.16 Paragraph 3.15 states “Other than in circumstances where visual impact is critically damaging to a listed building, ancient monument or a conservation area vista, proposals for appropriately designed solar thermal and PV systems should be supported.”

20.17 All Planning Policy is set within the over-arching Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which seeks to establish Wales as a sustainable country as described above with the following underlying goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsive Wales

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

20.18 Area 2, 3 and part of Area 1 is within an area affected by a mobile feature of a Special Area for Conservation (SAC). Given the significant amount of the site within the SPG area a Habitat Regulations Assessment needs to be carefully considered under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, however this is a matter for comment by NRW as it is outside the remit of this authority. Further details are found in the Caeau Mynydd Mawr SPG referenced above.

D CONDITIONS, REQUIRMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS

21.0 SUGGESTED PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

21.1 The following requirements are considered necessary.

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The permission hereby granted shall be for a period of 40years from the date when electricity is first exported to the national grid. The date of first electricity exportation to the grid shall be notified in writing by the developer to the Local Planning Authority within 14 days of first export.
- 3 No later than 12 months before the expiry of the permission (or within 3 months of the cessation of electricity production if for any reason the scheme permanently ceases to produce electricity before the end of lifespan stated.) the following schemes shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority providing for:-
 - (a) a decommissioning scheme for the removal of all surface elements of the photo voltaic solar farm and associated development and any foundations or anchor systems to a depth of 1m below ground level;

(b) a restoration and aftercare scheme, following consultation with such other parties as the Local Planning Authority considers appropriate.

(c) ecological surveys to inform the decommissioning process (see notes below).

The approved decommissioning schemes shall be fully implemented within 12 months of the expiry date or cessation of electricity generation whichever is sooner.

If for any reason the scheme is implemented in full or in part and does not produce electricity within 12 months of commencement, the decommissioning requirements above shall be triggered.

- 4 No development shall take place until a detailed layout plan of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include the precise location of the arrays, transformer buildings, sub-station, fencing, CCTV, lighting and the landscape and ecological mitigation.
- 5 The rating level of the noise emitted from the proposed development shall not exceed the existing background noise level. The noise levels shall be determined at the nearest non-financially involved noise sensitive premises or at another location that is deemed suitable by the authority. Measurements and assessments shall be made in accordance with BS 4142: 2014 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound. Where the background noise levels shall be expressed as LA90 1hr and the ambient noise levels shall be expressed at Laeq 1hr.
- 6 At the written request of the Local Planning Authority, the operator within a period of 1 month shall undertake and submit to the authority a noise assessment conforming to BS 4142: 2014 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound to determine whether noise arising from development exceeds the level specified in Requirement 5 above. The assessment shall be undertaken under the supervision of the Local Authority. In the event that Requirement 5 is exceeded then the submitted survey shall also include mitigation measures to ensure compliance with the noise level specified in Requirement 5. The development shall then be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

- 7 No development hereby approved shall be commenced until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CTMP shall provide details of the measures set out in Section 5 of the Transport Statement.
- 8 There shall at no time be any means of construction vehicular access to the development from C2134 Road.
- 9 The panels shall be erected and orientated in such a manner, so as not to give rise to glare and dazzle to road users.
- 10 No development or site clearance shall take place until a Landscape Design Scheme (LDS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The LDS shall specifically provide plant stock and planting specifications for: -
- (a) Additional new native species tree planting to the immediate inside of existing hedge lines in locations where there are: no existing hedge line trees; and there would be no potential shading of PV arrays by expected 40 year future canopy growth.
- The LDS shall include sufficient information to enable effective compliance monitoring or enforcement to include: -
- Plant specification: -
 - Plant species, varieties and cultivars
 - Planting stock specification (stock size, form, root condition etc.)
 - Planting specification: -
 - Depths of topsoil and subsoil; ground preparation and cultivation
 - Dimensions of planting pits or trenches and proposed backfill material
 - Planting densities/spacing or numbers
 - Methods of weed control, plant protection and support
 - Seed mix specifications and sowing rates; and/or turf specification
- 11 The approved Landscape Design Scheme (LDS), as submitted to discharge requirement 10 shall be fully implemented in the first planting season following the commencement of development. Any new landscape elements constructed, planted or seeded; or existing landscape elements retained; in accordance with the approved LDS which within the lifetime of the proposed development are removed; die; become diseased; damaged or otherwise defective, to such extent that, in the opinion of the local planning authority, the function of the

landscape elements in relation to this planning approval is no longer delivered, shall be replaced in the next planting or seeding season with replacement elements of similar size and specification.

- 12 No development hereby approves shall take place until additional Landscape Maintenance and Management (LMM) information has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The LMM information shall include the following: -
- i) LMM Responsibility Plan which provides clear definition of the land control status of all areas within and forming the application boundary including:
 - The extent of land subject to lease agreements to PV operator(s)
 - The extent of land subject to other ownership and details of the constituent landowners.
 - ii) Details of the management agent (individual, body or organisation) responsible for implementation of each area of distinct control.
 - iii) Details of the legal agreements by which delivery of the LMM scheme will be secured and continued through any changes to land control responsibility.
- All landscape maintenance and management operations shall be fully implemented as approved.
- 13 The scheme hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statements and associated plans.
- 14 The proposed solar scheme hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- 15 No development hereby approves shall take place until an updated Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The updated LEMP shall address monitoring of hedgerows and floristic diversity, and details of sowing mixtures. The LEMP shall be subject to 5 yearly review to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 16 No development shall take place until a qualified and competent archaeologist has submitted a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for approval in writing by the local planning authority. This WSI will describe the different stages of the work and demonstrate that it has been fully resourced and given adequate time. On behalf of the local planning authority, their archaeological advisors (DAT DM) will monitor all aspects of this work through to the final

discharging of the condition. This work will not be deemed complete until all aspects of the WSI have been addressed and the final report submitted and approved.

21.2 SUGGESTED PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- 21.3 Decommissioning Bond – to safeguard decommissioning works should the company be unable to fulfil the above requirements. It is suggested that an index linked annual bond payment be made to the local planning authority which is reviewed periodically to ensure the decommissioning works can be carried out. The bond can be returned on completion of the works.
- 21.4 In order to implement the provisions of the Landscape Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) an appropriate legal agreement with any associated landowners may be required.

21.5 SUGGESTED NOTES

- 21.6 As highlighted in the LEMP it will be necessary to conduct a further ecological survey prior to decommissioning (As requested in Requirement 3 above) to record the presence of protected and notable species and habitats. There may be requirements for species specific surveys and mitigation in order that works are carried out in line with current planning policy and wildlife legislation. The LEMP states that 'after 40 years of operation it is likely that the site will be restored to its original condition. Prior to any restoration, habitats will be assessed by a suitably qualified ecologist to determine their value and potential to support species of restricted distribution. These pre-decommissioning surveys will establish the value of the site for biodiversity and form the basis of a formal decommissioning strategy for biodiversity.'

E PUBLICITY

22.0 SITE NOTICES

- 22.1 In accordance with the Developments of National Significance (Wales) Regulations 2016 the local planning authority posted English and Welsh site notices to publicise the application and entered the application on the public register of applications.
- 22.2 Given the size of the proposal a total of six site notices were posted. A copy of the notice in English and Welsh, plan showing the location of site notices and photographs of them in situ is included in Appendix D.

F CONCLUSION

23.0 SUMMARY OF THE POSITIVE NEGATIVE AND NEUTRAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

23.1 After careful consideration of the submission and internal consultation within the LPA, the following is a summary of the local impacts identified.

Climate Change – **POSITIVE**

Landscape and Visual Impact – **NEUTRAL / NEGATIVE**

Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – **NEUTRAL / POSITIVE**

Residential Amenity – **NEUTRAL / NEGATIVE**

Noise - **NEUTRAL**

Glint and Glare – **NEGATIVE**

Ecology – **NEUTRAL / POSITIVE**

Trees and Hedgerows - **POSITIVE**

Access and Transportation – **NEUTRAL**

Socio Economic – **POSITIVE**

Built Heritage – **NEUTRAL**

Public Right of Way – **NEUTRAL**

Flooding - **NEUTRAL**

G APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – WIND AND SOLAR SPG

APPENDIX B – NATURE CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY SPG

APPENDIX C – CAEAU MYNYDD MAWR SPG

APPENDIX D – SITE NOTICES, PHOTOS AND LOCATION