

STAGE 1 – INITIAL EIA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

1 Case Details	
A	Case reference 3261558 DNS
B	Brief description of development Solar farm development with an installed generating capacity of 21MW, accompanied by associated works and infrastructure.
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
(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? N/A
	<i>If Yes, provide reasons for your answer below. *If unsure, discuss with PET. Proceed to point (iii).</i>
	Choose an item.
(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 more 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 area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare.

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

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.)?	Approximately 79 ha of agricultural land will change use. The Screening Report (SR) confirms that the agricultural land is not best and most versatile. The SR states that the lifetime of the development will be 40 years, at the end of which the Site will be reinstated to its previous use. Construction will likely last 4 months, and it is not envisaged that will require significance changes in the topography. I do not consider the loss of 79 ha of agricultural land to be significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.	Unlikely significant effect.

5	Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?
Question 1(b) Cumulation with Existing and/or Approved Development		
<p>Are there any other factors which should be considered such as:</p> <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? 	<p>Yes. The SR indicates that there is an existing solar farm immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development on the northern boundary of the site. Consultation with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) highlighted that this is Woden Park Solar Farm. There are five solar farms identified within a 10km radius.</p> <p>I believe that there is potential for visual cumulative impacts as the Proposed Development and the existing Woden Farm Solar scheme together represent extensive ground coverage. However, I do not consider that the cumulative impact will be of more than local importance and as such unlikely to trig the need for EIA. However, any future planning application must be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment taking into consideration the cumulative aspect of this proposal.</p> <p>There is no transfrontier impact.</p>	<p>Unlikely significant effects.</p>
Question 1(c) Use of Natural Resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity		
<p>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?</p>	<p>Yes. As identified above, the development would use approximately 79 ha of land for 40 years. The development will also consume the materials required to construct the for construction. However, the scale of resource use is unlikely to be significant in terms of the EIA regulations.</p>	<p>Unlikely significant effect.</p>

5	Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?
Question 1(d) Production of Waste		
Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes, there will be some waste produced during construction and decommissioning. Best practice and re-use / recycling of the panels after decommissioning could help to minimise this. On balance, I do not consider that the development is likely to lead to significant effects in regard to solid waste.	Unlikely significant effect.
Question 1(e) Pollution and Nuisances		
Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	No	
Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes, some during construction, operation and decommissioning. Scale of emissions unlikely to be significant	Unlikely significant effect.
Will the Project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air , or lead to risks of contamination of land or water (including surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea)?	No	
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 small risk of an accident during construction and decommissioning, but I do not find these to be significant in terms of likely effects.	Unlikely significant effect.
Question 1(g) Risks to Human Health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)		

5	Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?
Will there be any risk to human health during the construction and/or operation of the development	No	
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?	No	
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 LPA consultation response indicates that there is a Public Rights of Way (PROW) immediately south of the Proposed Development and that the site will be highly visible to the users of the PROW. The SR indicates that planting mitigation will be used to reduce such impacts. The LPA considers that the size and extent of the development and associated visual impacts need to be carefully considered, but such impacts are likely to be local in their nature and not sufficient to give rise to the need for an EIA for this reason.	Unlikely significant effects.
Are there any transport routes which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes- construction works will generate additional traffic on the local network. The SR states that construction period will be relatively short, expecting to last approximately 3 - 4 months. Component parts would be delivered on HGV lorries with no abnormal loads. The average daily number of delivery vehicles throughout the construction period would be expected to be relatively low, likely in the region of 5-20 per day, utilizing points of access to the major road network immediately adjacent to the	Unlikely significant effects.

5	Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?
	site. Based on the above, I do not consider it to be of a scale to generate a significant effect.	
Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes- I do not consider it to be of a scale to generate a significant effect.	Unlikely significant effect.
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.	
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- The LPA consultation response highlights that the site falls within a mineral safeguarding area (limestone). As such policy MG22 of the Local Development Plan requires that mineral resources including limestone are safeguarded and new development only permitted subject to certain criteria, including that such resources can be economically extracted prior to development and that development would have no significant impact on the possible working of the resource or the resource is of poor quality/quantity. However, the LPA does not consider this to require EIA but request that the applicant should provide a mineral assessment to accompany any future application; I concur with the LPA's response.	Unlikely significant effect.
Question 2(c) Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment		

5	Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?
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 not within an area of international or national nature conservation importance. The LPA consultation response confirms that two Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are also situated within 300 metres of the southern and eastern boundaries of the site although not within the site itself. The nearest Site of Specific Scientific Importance is approximately 1.7 kilometres to the east. Due to the distance and nature of development it is not considered that any impact on these resources would be significant in EIA terms.</p> <p>The SR states that the proposal would be sited within field margins and avoid hedgerows, trees and belts of woodland and that hedgerows around the site would be maintained to screen the development from external views, and also provide biodiversity benefit.</p> <p>On balance, due to the scale and nature of the development, I do not consider that any effects on biodiversity are likely to be significant. However, an Ecological Impact Assessment should accompany any future application.</p>	Unlikely significant effect.
Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	

5		Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?	
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>Yes. The site is located within the Cwrt Yr Ala Basin Special Landscape Area. The LPA response states that, although it is considered that the size and extent of the development and associated visual impacts need to be carefully considered, such impacts are likely to be local in their nature and not sufficient to give rise to the need for an EIA for this reason.</p> <p>Based on the information before me, I do not consider that significant effects on landscape and visual receptors are likely.</p>	Unlikely significant effects.	
Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes- the LPA response states that the Site is located near to a large populated area and nearby public rights of way (including that immediately to the south), and as such, the land is likely to be clearly visible from adjoining public vantage points. Therefore visual impacts have to be considered in any future application, but I consider that they would be of local importance and do not trigger the need for EIA.	Unlikely significant effects.	
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	Yes- however, I do not consider the nature of the development likely to affect the nearby populated area in EIA terms.	Unlikely significant effects.	
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes- the Brynwell Farm Buildings within 100 metres of the southern boundary are Grade II listed. The LPA consultation response states that any application should be accompanied by appropriate	Unlikely significant effects.	

5	Detailed Screening Questions	
Questions to be considered	Yes/No/Unknown – provide description	For 'Yes/Unknown', are effects likely to be significant?
	heritage assessments but it is considered any associated impact would not in itself require an EIA. The SR states that the application will be accompanied by a full Heritage Impact Assessment. I am satisfied that significant effects are 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	
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?	No	
Has there already been a failure to meet environmental quality standards that is relevant to the project?	No.	

Statement of reasons – insert into Screening Direction

The proposed solar farm is located within the Cwrt Yr Ala Basin Special Landscape Area. There is an existing solar farm immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development on the northern boundary of the site (Woden Park Solar Farm). I believe that there is potential for visual cumulative impacts as the Proposed Development and the existing Woden Farm Solar scheme together represent extensive ground coverage. However, I do not consider that the cumulative impact will be of more than local importance and as such

unlikely to trig the need for EIA. I agree with the LPA that, due to the nature and size of the development, any landscape and visual impacts are likely to be of local importance and not sufficient to give rise to the need for an EIA.

*The LPA consultation response highlights that the site falls within a mineral safeguarding area. However, the LPA does not consider this to require EIA but request that the applicant should provide **a mineral assessment** to accompany any future application and I concur with the LPA.*

The SR states that the future application will be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Heritage Statement, Transport Statement, Flood Consequence Assessment, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Glint and Glare assessment. I believe a Mineral Assessment should also be included in the application.

On the balance of information before me, and given the nature and scale of the development, I am satisfied that any effects on sensitive receptors are unlikely to be significant. While further assessment work is required, as identified in the SR and consultee response, I find that this development is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment.

6		Outcome of assessment	
(ii)	If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it?	N/A	
(iii)	Is EIA required?	No	
Outcome		Action	
Schedule 2 development – threshold exceeded/ criterion met or Sensitive Area but not likely to have significant effects on the environment		Issue direction stating EIA Not Required (Letter 1)	
Name and Job Title of Assessor		Giulia Bazzoni: Planning & Environment Officer	
Date of Assessment		13 November 2020	