

# Coed Ely Solar Farm

**Planning Appraisal**

July 2023



theurbanists

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# 1. The Development

The proposed development is for a ground mounted solar farm that will generate 6MWp. 5MWp will be connected directly into the National Grid where capacity has been reserved with Western Power Distribution and 1MWp will be provided to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital via a private wire connection. The infrastructure would have a lifespan of approximately 40 years. The development constitutes the following:

- **Removal:** Limited site habitat clearance to facilitate the development, mostly consisting of minor hedgerow clearance and removal of some low ecologically valued grassland habitat. The development has purposely been kept out of high ecologically valued habitat. Where clearance is required, it will be limited to the immediate area of the solar panel supporting structures, with the remaining existing site habitat retained and subject to management for enhancement purposes. During construction there would also be localised disturbance to some areas of low ecologically valued habitat for the purposes of facilitating plant access and the construction process, but this habitat would be restored and managed post construction and then subject to enhancement throughout the course of the operation of the development.
- **Proposed:** Solar panels mounted on metal framework. Each solar panel would typically be doubled up and be mounted approximately 2.5m above ground levels at the highest points, although heights would vary to respond to the localised site topography. Note these details are indicative as the exact specification would be defined through the design stages for the project. DNO's, Inverter Stations, Substations with enclosures for associated electrical equipment. Security fencing and CCTV around the boundary of the solar farm. Access tracks for maintenance purposes, although the existing site access tracks would be utilised to minimise habitat clearance. Underground cables from the solar array to supporting onsite infrastructure and from the solar farm to the local grid connection and to the Hospital.

**The development is proposed to maintain sufficient energy provision within the local area, to ensure Council assets are utilised for sustainable energy generation and provide green power to a local public asset.**

## 2. The Development Site

The development site is located to the west of the Coed Ely settlement and south of the Thomastown settlement. The site is approximately 15ha and was formerly a colliery and subject to landfill use. In spite of its industrial past; the site now has a greenfield character and is used for grazing livestock (this will continue alongside the development). The site is located west above the valley floor and typically slopes from west (the valley top) down to the east (the valley floor). There is currently direct access into the site from a private gated maintenance track that connects to the Coed Ely Estate road, which connects to the strategic highway network (the Ely Valley Road). A PRoW dissects the site, but this consists of a rural lane that is not part of the operational site area, and would be retained.

In the LDP the site falls outside of the designated settlement boundary and falls under the following designations: Special Landscaped Area, Sandstone Resourcing Area, and Land Reclamation Scheme. Immediately to the west of the site is the Tonyrefail Mountain SINC. The western extent of the site has been identified as being of SINC quality and no development is proposed in this area.

In respect of other statutory mapping the site is not designated as subject to flood risk constraints according to both the Development Advice Map and Flood Maps for Planning, although there is some localised surface water flooding that would require management as part of the development. No part of the site is identified as being of high-quality agricultural land (all parts are below the 3a category) and none is designated access or common land.

The site is located in a Pre-Assessed Area for wind energy, and to the west of the site is Graig Fatha Wind Farm, which stretches from the western boundary of the site into the wider valley landscape. To the east of the site is a large vacant strategic development site that could accommodate 31,000 sqm of employment space when delivered. The access to the site dissects the development plateaus of the strategic development site.

The majority of the site habitat is a mixture of semi-upland ‘ffridd’ habitats with mature hedgerows and tree planting demarcating the boundaries to traditional field patterns. The private wire connection will start from a Substation located in the East corner of Field 13. It will subsequently run alongside the east side of an unnamed track running parallel to the A4119. Current ducting is due to be in place alongside Ely Valley Road (A4119). The private wire route will follow this road until it reaches the intended recipient. It is expected to meet up to 25% of RGH’s energy demand with renewable electricity. Only a small section of ducting will therefore be required to facilitate the private wire; from the site via the private access track and from the Ely Valley Road to the private receptor.



Figure 1 - Main development site (not including the private wire route).



Figure 2 - Selection of photographs of the main site area. Including views of the valley top with existing turbines (top row), agricultural fields on the lower part of the site and existing access route (bottom row).

## 3. Planning Policy Designations

### 3.1 Designations

The site is the subject of the following LDP designations:

- Special Landscaped Area.
- Sandstone Resourcing Area.
- Land Reclamation Scheme.

Neighbouring designations include:

- Tonyrefail Mountains SINC.

### 3.2 Constraints

No designated constraints in the LDP, but note the following:

- Outside settlement boundary.
- High risk coal mining area.
- Existing trees, wooded areas and hedgerows onsite
- Priority species on site and part of site deemed of SINC value.
- No scheduled heritage assets on site, but within the local area.
- Known historic landfill and tip use requires investigation.
- PRoW dissects the site, though not a physical constraint.
- Surface water drainage requires careful design.
- Steep topography requires design to be integrated to levels.
- Site is visible from the surrounding settlement. LVIA required.

The Development Advice Maps, Flood Maps for Planning, ALC Maps and PROW maps have been reviewed. These identify no concerns:

- Site is not of high quality agricultural land (all below 3a).
- No designated flood risk, but small areas of surface water risk.
- Site is not common land or access land.



- No PRoW in the proposed operational development area.

Extracts from the proposals and constraints maps of the Development Plan and other statutory maps reviewed are provided below.

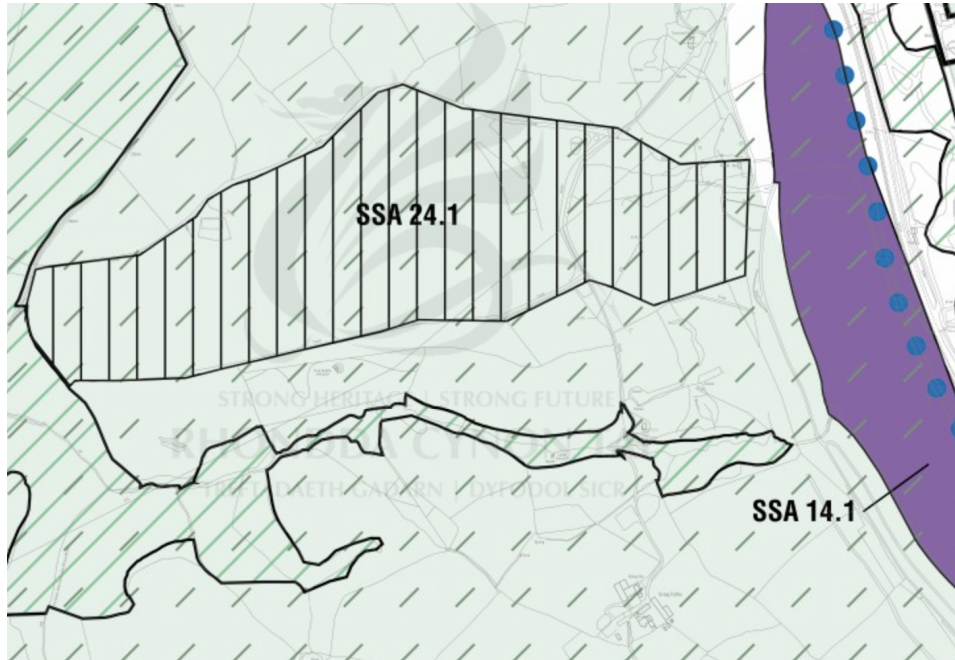


Figure 3 - LDP Proposals Map.



Figure 4 - LDP Constraints Map.



Figure 5 - Extract from the Development Advice Maps (no flood risk).

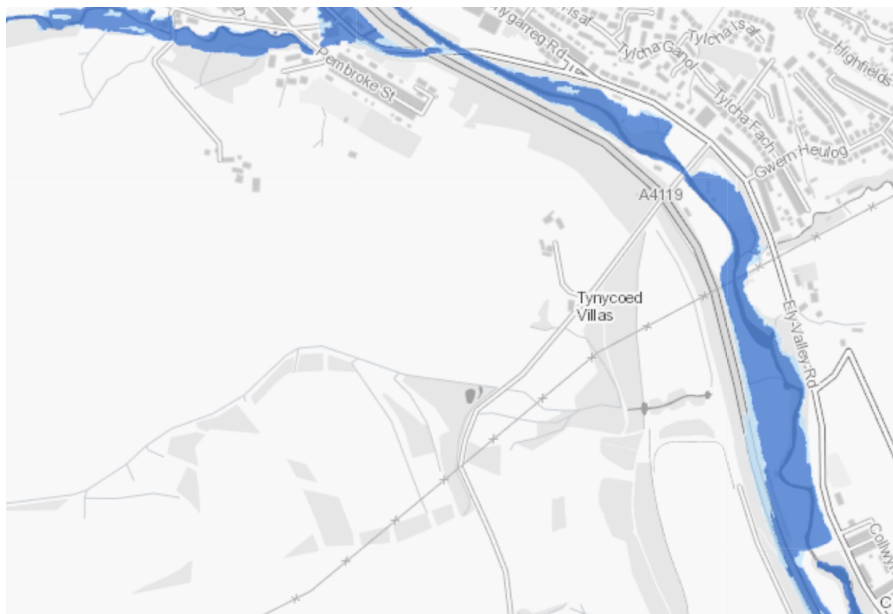


Figure 6 - Extract from the Flood Map for Planning (no flood risk).



## 4.Planning History

A review of the planning history of the site identifies a number of permissions associated with the existing wind energy developments and also a meteorological mast; all evidence of the site area's appropriateness for energy infrastructure:

- **12/0704/10:** Erection of up to seven wind turbines up to 110 metres tip height, access tracks, cables, electrical substation and associated ancillary equipment. These are located to the west of the development site and have been delivered.
- **18/1161/10:** New section of track and upgrades to an existing track to accommodate the delivery of a single wind turbine positioned on land at Graig Fatha Farm. The access track is located in the development site and the turbine to the south
- **12/1029/10:** Proposed temporary 70.76m meteorological monitoring mast accommodating anemometers and vane, together with supporting steel wires.
- **15/1605/15** then extended the permission.

To the east of the development site there is planning permission for strategic employment:

- **09/0386/13:** Employment development, up to 30,937m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area: non-residential institutions (use class D1, up to 3,716m<sup>2</sup>); outdoor recreation up to 0.71ha with ancillary changing room facilities and energy centre (Outline).

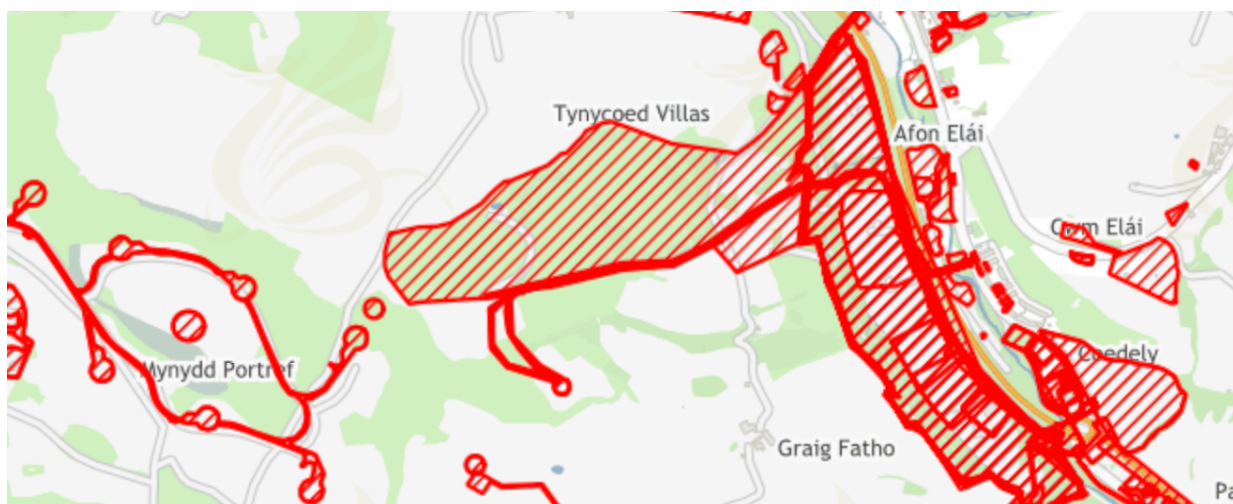


Figure 7 - Planning history (red boundaries) around the site.

## 5. Planning Policy

Section 3 identified the relevant statutory planning policy designations. This section identifies the wider planning policy context in which a future planning application for the development will be considered.

### 5.1 Local Planning Policy

#### 5.1.1 RCT Local Development Plan (Adopted 2006 - 2021)

The Adopted Local Development Plan sets out the local planning policy framework for guiding development within the County Borough. It designates sites for protection and/ or enhancement and allocates sites for development. Those relevant to the site have been identified in Section 3. The Development Plan also provides written policies to guide development. **The most relevant policies to the proposed development in the Plan are identified below; these are the policies the development will need to satisfy in order to secure planning permission:**

- CS2 - Development in the South: Advises that in the Southern Strategy Area (the site location) the focus will be on sustainable growth. The policy provides a series of guides, including delivering inward investment to strengthen the economy.
- AW2 - Sustainable Locations: States development will only be supported in sustainable locations and provides definitions for sustainable locations. These include in the settlement boundary, or when development would not conflict with surrounding uses.
- AW5 - New Development: Provides criteria to guide new development. Those relevant to the proposed development relate to amenity and include having no unacceptable impact on the character of the surrounding area, protecting existing landscape and ecology features, having no impact on the amenity of neighbours and being compatible with adjacent uses.
- AW6 - Design and Placemaking - Seeks to raise the standard of design across the County Borough and defines a series of guiding criteria for development to follow.

Key advice includes appropriate siting, appearance, scale, height and massing; and protecting and enhancing landscape and biodiversity.

- AW7 - Protection and Enhancement of Built Environment: Sets out guidance to ensure that development protects archaeology and also open space and public rights of way.
- AW8 - Protection and Enhancement of Natural Environment: States that development will be permitted when it would not cause harm to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, and also where there would be no unacceptable impacts on features of importance to landscape and nature conservation
- AW10 - Environmental Protection and Public Health: Advises that development will only be permitted when there would be no unacceptable impact on public health and amenity. Key considerations include light, air and noise pollution, flooding and water pollution and contamination and land instability.
- AW12 - Renewable Energy: Advises that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable effect upon soil conservation, agriculture, nature conservation, wildlife, natural and cultural heritage, landscape importance and public health and residential amenity. These will be material planning considerations for the development.
- SSA 23 - Special Landscape Areas: Identifies a series of Special Landscape Areas in the Southern Strategy Area. These include Mynydd Hugh and Llantrisant Forest, in which the site is located. Development proposals in these areas are required to conform to the highest design standards.
- SSA 24 - Land Reclamation Scheme: Identifies reclamation schemes, which includes the site that is part of the Coed Ely reclamation aftercare scheme.

The vision driving the Development Plan is to create the environment to enable the people of the County Borough to meet their potential. **Objective 8 of the Plan identifies a commitment to increase the supply of renewable energy from a range of supplies. Policy AW12 is particularly important to the proposed development, and it supports renewable energy projects where they demonstrate no unacceptable impacts on natural resources and the amenity of residents.**

### 5.1.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance

In addition to the Development Plan policies there are a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance documents that expand upon the policies outlined in the Development Plan. The Guidance most relevant to the proposed development is Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Guidance which advises on how developers can protect and enhance biodiversity. The Development Plan references Supplementary Planning Guidance on Renewable Energy. However, this document has not yet been published and we understand is pending the Local Development Plan review.

### 5.1.3 RCT Local Development Plan (Emerging)

Rhondda Cynon Taf is currently preparing a Revision to its Local Development Plan (LDP) for the period up to 2037. The Replacement Development Plan is at pre deposit stage, with a consultation on the Preferred Strategy due in July 2023. The proposed development will thus likely be determined before the Plan has Deposit status.

## 5.2 National Planning Policy

In addition to local planning policy, the proposed development will be assessed against national planning policy. The most relevant aspects of key national policy documents are summarised below.

### 5.2.1 Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the Welsh Government's land use planning policy for Wales. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development, and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. PPW has substantial weight in the planning process. **On renewable energy, PPW identifies that low carbon electricity must become the main source of energy in Wales and that the planning system should secure an appropriate mix of renewable energy provision. PPW tasks Planning Authorities to facilitate all forms of renewable energy development.**

### 5.2.2 Future Wales

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 was adopted in February 2021 as the National Development Framework. As a spatial plan, Future Wales sets the direction on where we should be investing in infrastructure and development for the greater good of Wales and its people up to 2040.

Future Wales provides a strategy to address key national priorities through the planning system. Priorities include decarbonisation and climate-resilience. The latter is also identified as a Future Wales Outcome.

Future Wales sets out a series of policies to guide development across Wales. Policy 17 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure) is particularly relevant to the proposed development. It states that the principle of developing renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies and at all scales to meet our future energy needs is supported. Furthermore, 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 to generate 70% of consumed electricity by renewable means by 2030 in order to combat the climate emergency.

The policy also identifies Pre-Assessed Areas for Wind Energy, where 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. **The proposed development is located in a Pre-Assessed Area for wind, and as per the planning history, a major wind farm is located adjacent to the site.** Renewable energy development must demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment and nearby communities.

### 5.2.3 Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public officials in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions on the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. This includes considering the needs of future generations, as well as the current generation. The Act establishes a duty on public bodies in

Wales to work towards achieving the seven well-being goals outlined in the Act. These include:

1. A prosperous Wales.
2. A resilient Wales.
3. A healthier Wales.
4. A more equal Wales.
5. A Wales of cohesive communities
6. A thriving culture and a thriving Welsh language
7. A globally responsible Wales.

**Securing sources of renewable energy is identified as being essential to achieving well-being goals 1, 2, 5 and 7.**

## 5.2.4 Technical Advice Notes

Technical Advice Notes (TANs) should be read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales. TANs are taken into account by the Planning Authority when determining development proposals. The TANs outlined below will be relevant to the determination of the development.

- TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning: Provides advice on how the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation.
- TAN 12: Design - Provides advice on how sustainability, through good design, may be facilitated through the planning system. It sets out the core design principles that any development proposal must follow to help create a sustainable environment and exhibit a high level of design quality.

## 6. Assessing the Principle of Development

This section explores the principle of development against the local and national planning policy identified in section 5. It also then considers some of the material planning considerations for the proposed development and sets out how they will be managed through the design and preparation of the development.

### 6.1 The Principle of Development

National planning policy is overwhelmingly supportive of appropriate renewable energy developments **and therefore it is considered that there is ‘in principle’ support for the proposed development.** Appropriate renewable energy development is deemed to be that which can be delivered without unacceptable impact on natural resources and the amenity of local residents and communities. A snapshot of the support provided in national policy that underpins the judgement for ‘in principle support’ is below:

- Planning Policy Wales - States that “the benefits of renewable and low carbon energy, as part of the overall commitment to tackle the climate emergency and increase energy security, is of paramount importance.”
- Planning Policy Wales - Planning Authorities are to ensure their area’s full potential for renewable and low carbon energy generation is maximised and renewable energy targets are achieved.
- Future Wales - “Wales can become a world leader in renewable energy technologies. Our wind and tidal resources, our potential for solar generation, our support for both large and community scaled projects and our commitment to ensuring the planning system provides a strong lead for renewable energy development, mean we are well placed to support the renewable sector”.
- Future Wales - Policy 17 identifies Pre-Assessed Areas, which is an area that has been modelled to identify the likely impact on the landscape of delivering major wind energy developments and where it has been found that the landscape is capable of



accommodating development in an acceptable way. **The development is located in such an area; this is a significant strength in the case for the development.**

- Wellbeing of Future Generations Act - Securing a supply of renewable energy is identified in guidance around the Act as essential to achieving wellbeing goals 1 (a prosperous Wales); 2 (a resilient Wales); 5 (a Wales of cohesive communities); and 7 (a globally responsible Wales).

Local planning policy is more prescriptive, reflecting its development management purpose. **However, in principle support for the scheme is considered to exist, as the sensitive site bespoke design approach ensures the development can meet the requirements of policy.**

- CS2 - Development in the South: The proposed development would create renewable energy, provide green energy into the grid and a local public facility; helping to strengthen the economy as required by the policy. of guides, including delivering inward investment to strengthen the economy.
- AW2 - Sustainable Locations: The development site by its nature is outside of the settlement boundary, but it would not conflict with surrounding uses as required by the policy. Surrounding uses consist of agricultural and energy generation, which co-exist in the countryside landscape. The development would replicate this existing arrangement.
- AW5 - New Development: The proposed development will be designed so that it retains the natural landscape and ecology features on the site, it will also be assimilated into the site topography to reduce its visual presence. As the policy requires this will ensure that the development safeguards natural resources and amenity of neighbours.
- AW6 - Design and Placemaking - The infrastructure proposed as part of the development is relatively small in scale and height. The siting of the development has also been led by the ecological character of the site and its topography. The development thus meets the requirements of the policy.

- AW7 - Protection and Enhancement of Built Environment: The risk to unknown archaeology is minimal given the nature of the proposed development and the historic reclamation works that have taken place. However, a desktop archaeology assessment is to be undertaken. The development would safeguard an existing public right of way and would not impact on open space. The development thus satisfies the policy requirements.
- AW8 - Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment: There is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation to the west of the development site, but the development would not impact directly on it and development has been kept out of the western extent of the site to provide a buffer and protect ecology in that area and ensure no indirect impacts on the SINC.
- AW10 - Environmental Protection and Public Health: The nature of the development means it would have no impact on light, air and noise amenity. To ensure flood risk is not increased the development would have a SuDS system that maintains the existing run off rate and ensures no water pollution from soil erosion. The operation of the scheme would not result in pollution. Contamination and land instability would be prevented by constructing in accordance with the findings of site investigations.
- AW12 - Renewable Energy: The development will maintain the majority of the existing habitat and soil resources; the remainder will be subject to enhancement. Agricultural activity will also continue with grazing happening within the development as part of the biodiversity enhancement strategy. The retention and enhancement of the site habitat shall ensure no undue impact on wildlife and the natural environment. Finally, the integration of the development infrastructure into the site topography and avoiding ecologically rich areas of the site will ensure that the development would not be visually overbearing to the residents, which are located a considerable distance from the development. **It is considered that the development is fully in alignment with this key local policy.**
- SSA 23 - Special Landscape Areas: The development site is part of a Special Landscape Area, but the approach to working with the localised site topography and retaining large areas of the site that are ecologically and landscape rich will ensure that it will not have a significant impact on the wider Area. The Landscape Area is part

of the Pre-Assessed Area for wind development and there are already significant wind energy infrastructure framing views of the site.

- SSA 24 - The site is part of the Coed Ely reclamation aftercare scheme. Construction of the development will therefore be informed by desktop research and site investigation to ensure contamination and land instability are fully considered. The nature of the development means significant excavation and intrusion will be minimal, so risks posed by contamination and ground instability are low.

## 6.2 Overview of the Material Planning Considerations

The design of the proposed development site is in the process of being finalised, but in its draft state it is considered to be acceptable through each of the main material planning issues that will be considered by the Planning Authority during the determination of the planning application. A summary of the development against the key material planning considerations is below.

- **Ecology** - Although the development is to be delivered on reclaimed land that has previously been used for industrial uses, it is now largely greenfield in nature, and if the development is unmitigated there could be effects on protected species and the loss of valuable existing natural habitat. However, the proposed development is being informed by Extended Ecology Phase 1 and Phase 2 Surveys and Report(s) which have identified priority species present on the site (nesting bird species including cuckoo, skylark and meadow pipit), provided guidance on how these should be protected and defined areas of habitat that should be protected from development. For example, the western extent of the site which is marshy grassland is being excluded from development due to its habitat value at the recommendation of the ecology surveys. A Wildlife Protection Plan, Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Plan are also being prepared to ensure the identified ecological impacts are fully mitigated. The ecology work undertaken to date has identified an opportunity to increase the value of the site habitat through appropriate management and enhancement. Off-site ecological effects are extremely unlikely as there will be no works required outside of the designated site area. This is particularly the case for the adjacent Tonyrefail Mountain SINC as the western extent of the development site will not be subject to

development (as stated above) and there will be no direct works in the SINC. **On this basis significant ecology effects are considered to be limited or unlikely.**

- **Landscape and Visual Character** - The development site is now largely greenfield in character, so the proposal would result in a material change in the landscape character of the site that could arise in landscape character effects. The site is also part of a designated Special Landscape Area and therefore its development may result in some minor effects on the wider Landscape Area. The development site is located some distance from residential receptors in Coed Ely, but the site is elevated and can be seen via long distance views from the opposite valley slope and parts of the valley floor. Visual effects may therefore arise alongside the landscape character effects. **However, it is considered that any potential effects would be minimal as the site is located some distance away from residential receptors, the proposed panels would have a low profile and the site is partially screened by its topography and the existing mature trees and hedgerows, the vast majority of which would be retained on the site as part of the development, and help to screen it and reduce the extent of landscape character change.** Views of the site are also framed by the Graig Fatha Wind Farm, and the site is also located in a Pre-Assessed Area for wind energy generation, demonstrating that the landscape is considered to be suitable to assimilate large scale energy generation. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be prepared as part of the planning application to ensure that the landscape and visual effects are fully considered and appropriate mitigation is delivered and integrated into the development site. Furthermore, Glint and Glare effects will also be designed out by responding to a Glint and Glare assessment.
- **Archaeology and Historic Site Impact** - The site has been subject to extensive reclamation and the proposed development would not require significant intrusion into the ground. However, given its previous use there is some potential for unknown archaeological features to be present on the site, from which effects could arise, **although in light of the historic use and nature of the proposed development any effects are likely to be minimal.** A Heritage Desk-Based Assessment will be undertaken in the planning application to fully assess this aspect. Additionally, the site may be visible from two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (the St Peter's Church is 1500 metres to the west and the Beacons Round Barrows is 2000 metres to the south

within Llantrisant Forest). There may be effects on views from these Monuments **but the significant distance and local topography would minimise any effects. Significant effects on the setting of the Monuments are also considered to be very unlikely given their distance from the development site.** A Heritage Desk-Based Assessment will be undertaken to fully assess any effects on archaeological and heritage assets.

- **Loss of Agricultural Land** - The site is not of high-quality agricultural land (all parts of the site are below 3a grade). **Significant effects on agricultural land resources are not therefore considered to be likely.** Currently, the land is grazed and this will continue as part of the development operation minimising the loss of lower quality agricultural land. Furthermore, as part of the ongoing enhancement of the land during the operation of the development it is proposed to undertake targeted grazing to ecologically enhance the land.
- **Impact on Trees and Hedgerows** - There are mature trees and hedgerow on the site that could be subject to effects if a sensitive design approach is not followed. However, this will not be the case. The mature trees and vast majority of the hedgerows located on the site are to be retained on site alongside the new solar farm and the layout has purposely been designed to remove any requirement for tree removal. **On this basis significant effects on mature trees and hedgerows are considered to be very unlikely and there is no further requirement to assess impact on trees and hedgerows. Areas of hedgerow to be removed will be replaced in quantity with species rich equivalents.**
- **Flooding and Water Resources** - The change of the site from greenfield land to solar panels, substations and associated hardstanding (access tracks) could result in drainage and water quality effects if an appropriate sustainable drainage design is not prepared. A SAB compliant Drainage design is to be prepared, though, to manage site drainage and address localised surface water flooding. The drainage infrastructure would ensure that current greenfield runoff rates are maintained and SuDS fully integrated into the development design. **Subject to the implementation of an appropriate drainage design it is considered that there would likely be no significant flood effects and no effects on water resources.** The site is in Flood

Zone A, so there would be no flood effects on the development, and due to the drainage design approach, the development would not exacerbate flood risk off-site.

- **Ground Contamination** - Part of the site is the former colliery site and has been subject to landfill use. Whilst the development does not require significant intrusion into the ground and the site has been subject to extensive reclamation it is possible that contamination effects could arise from delivering the development. The risk of this is considered to be low, however, provided best practice construction techniques are followed. The development would also be framed by a Phase 1 Desktop Ground Report and Coal Mining Risk Assessment, and in time Phase 2 Site Investigations. Combined these documents will frame the construction approach to ensure any remaining contamination is not disturbed. **On this basis significant contamination effects are considered to be unlikely.**
- **Local Highway Network** - The proposed development would not result in significant operational traffic and movements; indeed it would be limited to periodic maintenance. The operation of the development is therefore not likely to result in effects on the local highway network. Construction vehicle movement will be generated as a result of the development, but this will be temporal and movements can be organised outside of peak use times. The development also benefits from an existing established access that was used to construct the Graig Fatha Wind Farm and good connections to the strategic highway network. **Significant effects on the local highway network are therefore considered very unlikely.** A Transport Statement will be prepared to support the development and the CEMP will manage construction vehicle movements.

In summary, it is considered that the potential for significant environmental effects that could arise from the development are limited, and each would be fully considered and reduced by implementing a sensitive design and responding to appropriate technical assessments.

## 7. Application Documentation

A summary of the content prepared for the planning application is below:

- Site Location Plan
- Existing Site Plan
- Topographic Survey / Existing Levels Plan
- Proposed Site Layout Plan(s)
- Site Sections
- Proposed Cable Route (Private Wire Route)
- Temporary Site Set Down Details
- Security Fencing and CCTV Plan
- Fencing and Security Elevations and Details
- Transformer/Control Equipment Details
- DNO Substation Details
- Spares Cabin Details (if applicable)
- PV Panel Details
- Surface Water Drainage Design and Strategy with Drainage Details
- Existing Access Plans
- Proposed Internal Access Tracks Details
- Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan
- Design and Access Statement
- EIA Screening
- Transportation Statement
- Ecology Assessment
- Wildlife Protection Plan
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Glint & Glare Assessment
- Coal Mining Risk Assessment and Phase 1 Desktop Report
- Desktop Heritage Assessment



## 8. Conclusion

This Planning Appraisal has been undertaken for a proposed ground mounted solar farm that will generate 6MWp. The development is to be located to the west of the Coed Ely settlement and south of the Thomastown settlement. The site is approximately 15ha and was formerly a colliery and subject to landfill use. In spite of its industrial past; the site now has a greenfield character and is used for grazing livestock (this will continue alongside the development).

The appraisal identifies the statutory designations present on the site, identifies the planning history of the site and surrounding area and identifies the relevant national and local planning policy against which a future planning application for the development would be determined. The appraisal also considers the principle of development, using the identified planning policy to assess the scheme. The appraisal concludes that there is overwhelming support for renewable energy schemes that can be built and operate without significant impact on the natural and built environment and the amenity of neighbours. The appraisal sets out how this is considered to be the case for the proposed development, which would be integrated into the natural setting of the site, which is previously developed and part of a wider Pre-Assessed Area for wind development.

**To conclude, it is considered that the proposed development accords with national and local planning policy, and subject to appropriate design and preparation of the comprehensive planning application, it is considered that the development is appropriate to be granted planning permission. The appraisal includes the planning application scope prepared to support the planning application.**