



Land at Pentre Bach Farm, Torfaen, Solar Farm

Heritage Statement

On behalf of **Elgin Energy Es Co Ltd**

Project Ref: 333100902 | Rev: 2 | Date: July 2024

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Site

1.1.1 Stantec has been instructed by Elgin Energy EsCo Ltd (“the Applicant”) to provide heritage consultancy services to support the submission of a full planning application for the construction of a ground mounted photovoltaic solar farm and energy storage facility, together with associated equipment, infrastructure, and ancillary works on land at Pentre Bach Farm, Llantarnam, Torfaen (“the Site”).



Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan with the Site outlined in red

1.1.2 The Site is located within the administrative boundary of Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) and is situated on Land at Pentre Bach Farm adjacent to Pentre Lane. It currently comprises agricultural land, woodland and with mature planting and hedgerows to all boundaries.

1.2 Document Purpose

1.2.1 Paragraph 6.1.9 of Planning Policy Wales 12 (2024)¹ (PPW12) requires that any decision made must fully consider any impact on the Historic Environment and the significance of any affected historic assets and their contribution to the character of place. This is the purpose of this report.

¹ Planning Policy Wales, 2024

2 Scope and Assessment Methodology

2.1 Scope

2.1.1 This document will set out a brief history of the Site and its surroundings together with a statement of significance of those historic assets affected by the proposals. It will go on to consider the potential impacts of the proposed works within the legislative and policy context.

2.1.2 The scope of this assessment in respect to historic assets includes the following designated and non-designated assets:

Designated historic assets:

- World Heritage Sites
- Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings (listed as Grades I, II and II*)
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
- Registered Historic Battlefields
- Protected Wrecks
- Conservation Areas

Non-designated historic assets:

- Locally listed buildings, buildings of local merit
- Monuments listed in the Torfaen Historic Environment Record.

2.1.3 A 1.5km study area has been deemed appropriate and proportionate for the consideration of impact on designated and non-designated historic assets. This has been agreed via with CADW via email dated 1 December 2020 and through the Screening Opinion issued by TCBC dated 21 January 2021, included at **Appendix A**.

2.2 Policy Framework

2.2.1 The relevant decision-making framework is summarised below with reference to the historic environment constraints. The full legislative and policy framework is set out in **Appendix B**.

National Policy

Planning Policy Wales 12th Edition 2024 (PPW12)

2.2.2 PPW12 sets out government planning policy. Chapter 6 sets out policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This Section sets out the objectives of the Welsh government in order to conserve and enhance the historic environment, ensuring that due consideration is given to historic assets through the planning process.

Local Development Framework

- 2.2.3 The current Torfaen Local Development Plan² was adopted in 2013 and provides a framework for local decision-making, setting out the Council's policies against which proposals will be assessed. Policy S7: Conservation of the Natural and Historic Environment, Policy BW1 and HE1-2 are the relevant historic environment policies.

On July 18 2023 a delivery agreement for the Replacement Torfaen Local Development Plan 2022 – 2037 was agreed with the Welsh Government. This included a timetable for the replacement plan's production. Policy S17 is the relevant Historic Environment policy, however given the early stages of consultation it can be given no weight in the planning process.

Other Guidance

- 2.2.4 This assessment has been undertaken with reference to the following local and national guidance documents:

Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment – 2017³ (TAN24)

- 2.2.5 TAN24 should be read in conjunction with PPW12. The purpose of TAN24 is to provide guidance on how the historic environment should be considered in the plan making and decision-making process.

Cadw: Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales – 2011 (CPSMHE)⁴

- 2.2.6 CPHE was published by Cadw to provide guidance on assessing the potential impacts of a development proposal on the significance of any historic asset/assets and to assist in decision-making where the historic environment is affected by the planning process.

- 2.2.7 The document sets out six principles for the management of the historic environment in Wales. It reiterates the importance of understanding the significance of historic assets early in the development process and sets out the four component values that should be considered: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal. It also guides that adverse impacts to historic assets should be eliminated or minimised where possible but recognises that it is often necessary to balance the impacts against the benefits of a proposal. It also provides more detailed advice and guidance in respect to how the principles can be applied in practice, considering issues such as maintenance, repair and intervention.

Cadw: Setting of Historic Assets in Wales – 2017⁵

- 2.2.8 Setting of Historic Assets in Wales provides an explanation of setting, and how it can contribute to the significance of historic assets. The document sets out a four-stage approach to assessing the impact of development proposals within the setting of historic assets.

² Torfaen County Borough Council Local Development Plan; 2013, accessed via [Local Development Plan | Torfaen County Borough Council](#)

³ Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment, 2017

⁴ Cadw: Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales, 2011

⁵ Cadw: Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, 2017

Cadw: Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales – 2017⁶

- 2.2.9 This document has been produced to assist applicants in the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessment to accompany applications affecting historic assets. It provides clear guidance on why these assessments are required and what should be included within them.

BS7913:2013 – Guide to the conservation of historic buildings⁷

- 2.2.10 British Standard BS7913:2013 sets out general information, advice and guidance on the principles of the conservation of historic buildings and their settings.

Data Sources

- 2.2.11 The historic assets have been identified following consultation of the following sources:

- Cadw National Historic Assets of Wales⁸
- Torfaen Local Development Plan, 2013
- Torfaen Historic Environment Record⁹
- Site survey

Methodology

- 2.2.12 The “Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales” (2011) document and “Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment” (2017) set out the definitions for significance and setting. These definitions have been used in the preparation of this Heritage Statement.

- 2.2.13 Paragraph 1.7 of TAN 24 defines a historic asset to be:

“An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.”

- 2.2.14 “CPSMHE describes significance thus:

“The significance of an historic asset embraces all of the cultural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people’s perceptions evolve.”

- 2.2.15 It further ascribes four heritage values which need to be understood before the significance of a historic asset can be assessed: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic, and Communal.

- 2.2.16 The setting of a historic asset is described in TAN24 as:

“The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may

⁶ Cadw: Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, 2017

⁷ BS7913:2013 – Guide to the conservation of historic buildings, 2013

⁸ National Historic Assets of Wales available online at <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/cof-cymru/>

⁹ Torfaen Historic Environment Record, accessed via <https://archwilio.org.uk/her/chi1/arch.html?county=Torfaen&lang=eng>

make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. Setting is not a historic asset in its own right but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset.”

2.2.17 The methodology for appraising significance is an exercise of professional judgement informed by an evidence base comprising desk-top research of primary and secondary source material together with a visit to the Site and the surrounding area. Source material consulted as part of this exercise includes historic Ordnance Survey plans, historic aerial photographs and other archival material.

2.2.18 The assessment of setting has been undertaken with reference to the assessment steps set out in Cadw: Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (2017). This sets out a staged approach to taking decisions on setting as follows:

- Stage 1: Identify the Historic Assets;
- Stage 2: Define and Analyse the Setting;
- Stage 3: Evaluate the Potential Impact of Change or Development;
- Stage 4: Consider Options to Mitigate the Impact of a Proposed Change or Development;

2.2.19 Stage 1 and 2 are relevant to establishing the baseline condition; stages 3 and 4 deals with assessing the impact of the change and measures for mitigating any identified impact.

2.3 Assumptions and limitations

2.3.1 The following assumptions and limitations apply to this assessment:

- The baseline assessment has been based on information readily available at the time of undertaking the assessment;
- The baseline assessment relies on the accuracy of secondary source data. There is always some degree of uncertainty in relation to these sources;
- During the visit to the Site and surrounding area, weather conditions, the time of day and seasonal factors influenced the visual assessment and photographic record of the environment; and
- Access to private properties has not been obtained.

3 Statement of Significance

3.1 Brief History of the Site and Surrounding Area

- 3.1.1 The Site is located within rural south-east Wales, to the south of the town of Cwmbran and currently comprises agricultural fields with mature field boundaries of mature trees and vegetation. A brief history of the development of the Site and its environs, as well as an analysis of the historic maps is provided below.
- 3.1.2 A key historic feature within the landscape was Llantarnam Abbey, founded in the 12th century. The Abbey dominated much of the surrounding landscape, clearing woodland and setting up monastic farms known as granges, including Pentre Bach Farm. After its dissolution in 1536, the Abbey was bought by William Morgan of Pentrebach, a member of Parliament and High Sheriff. The surrounding area continued to be largely characterised by these farmsteads and agricultural fields, much of which remained under the ownership of the Morgan family.



Figure 3.1: 1886 OS Map

- 3.1.3 The first 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey Map (OS map) of 1886 (Fig.3.1) depicts the Site as enclosed fields and areas of woodland, labelled as Coed yr Helygos and Pentre Bach Wood. The area is characterised by a series of farmsteads and small settlements scattered throughout the landscape. Pentre Bach Farm is visible to the south-east of the site, there appears to be fewer buildings than are currently present on the farmstead and an orchard surrounds the house to the south and west. The Limekilns are marked on the map, within Pentre Bach Wood. The Zoar Baptist Chapel is also visible within the small settlement of Castell-y-Bwch.



Figure 3.1: 1902 OS Map

3.1.4 The 1902 OS Map shows the form of the site largely unchanged from the previous map. However, an 'Old Quarry' is labelled within the southern portion of the site. This is thought to relate to the lime kiln to the north-east of the site. The limekiln is labelled as 'Old Limekiln' indicating that it was no longer in use by the publication of this map.



Figure 3.2: 1922 OS Map

3.1.5 The 1922 OS Map depicts some change to the site, Coed yr Helygos wood is now named Henllys Wood and appears reduced size, occupying a smaller portion of land in the western portion of the site. Pentre Bach Wood is shown to be renamed Limekiln Wood.

3.1.6 There is little change to the Site or surrounding area in the subsequent OS Maps.

3.2 Statement of Significance

3.2.1 A full list of all historic assets within the 1.5km study area has been provided in the Gazetteer of Historic Assets and Historic Assets Plan enclosed at **Appendices C and D** along with a high-level assessment of their heritage significance. This assessment combined with the desk-top review and the site visit has identified the following historic assets as having the potential to be impacted by the proposed development:

- Pentre Bach Farm – Grade II*
- Lime kiln to N of Pentre-Bach (partly in Cwmbran Central) – Grade II
- Lime kiln N of Pentre-Bach (partly in the Llantarnam community) – Grade II
- Zoar Baptist Chapel – Grade II

3.2.2 Pre-application discussions were held with TCBC, and the pre-application response dated June 2020 (**Appendix A**) confirms the historic assets above require assessment.

3.2.3 An online search of the HER records for Torfaen revealed several records in close proximity to the site, however the majority of these relate to archaeological monuments or listed buildings. After a site survey, it is not considered that the scheme has the potential to impact the listed buildings within the HER and they have therefore not been assessed within this report. The scope of this report does not include a consideration of the archaeological potential of the Site, so the remaining assets have not been assessed.

3.2.4 To better understand the potential magnitude of impact on those historic assets identified above, their heritage significance is considered in detail below.

3.3 Pentre Bach Farm

3.3.1 Pentre Bach Farm is Grade II* listed and therefore an asset listed in the upper tiers (CADW ref 3126) of designation, which are recognised to be “particularly important buildings of more than special interest” (Understanding Listing in Wales, CADW, September 2018).



Figure 3.3: Pentre Bach Farm, taken 24.08.20

- 3.3.2 The asset comprises a 16th century gentry house that was previously a grange known as Cefn y Fyrnach to nearby Abbey. The abbey and house were both in the ownership of the Morgan family. The asset also includes a large brick 17th century mansion later converted into a barn, now in poor condition.
- 3.3.3 The farmhouse's special interest is primarily derived from its historical interest, having been a high-status gentry house with connections to a prominent local family and Llantarnam Abbey. It illustrates the status and wealth of the Morgan family and forms part of the historic complex of Llantarnam Abbey which had multiple granges, providing evidence for how such abbeys functioned and came to be adapted post-Dissolution. The abbey would have played a major role in the local economic, social, and religious lives of the local community, which also contributes to the communal value of the asset.
- 3.3.4 The farmstead also holds evidential value in the fabric, with the surviving fabric providing evidence for the different phases of the building allowing an understanding of its development and adaptation over time. This includes the addition of the ceiling to the hall in the late 16th century and surviving plaster ceilings of c.1600 in the farmhouse, and the multiple phases and later changes that illustrate the conversion of the brick mansion house to a large agricultural barn.

Setting

- 3.3.5 Pentre Bach Farm has an enclosed immediate setting as a farmstead. It is surrounded by other ancillary buildings relating to the agricultural use. The farm is more widely set within rural south Wales in an area characterised by the surrounding agricultural landscape and canal system. The rural, open character of the surrounding landscape contributes visually to an experience and appreciation of the asset as a farmstead and allows this relationship with the land to be readily understood.

3.3.6 The asset is located adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the Site. It is likely that the land on which the solar farm is proposed forms part of this historic landholding associated with the asset. As a former monastic grange and the Site's ongoing use as a farmstead post-Dissolution, Pentre Bach Farm shares a functional and historic association with the surrounding landscape that forms part of the agricultural landholding. Due to the close proximity between the site and the asset, there is some intervisibility, however, this is limited as a result of the change in topography and dense screening in the form of mature trees and vegetation.

3.4 Lime Kilns

3.4.1 To the east of the site are two lime kilns separately listed at Grade II (CADW refs 82036 and 81869). As Grade II listed structures, these are "buildings of special interest which justify every effort being made to preserve them" (Understanding Listing in Wales).

3.4.2 The lime kilns date to the early 19th century and are representative of the local Monmouthshire typology with a rectangular plan and two kiln eyes. They have been constructed into a bank at the edge of a field and have later been used as animal shelters. Today they are in a state of disrepair and are partially collapsed, diminishing their significance.

3.4.3 The list descriptions note that they are designated for their industrial archaeological interest. As such, their primary value can be considered to be evidential, derived chiefly from the surviving fabric which provides evidence for the construction of kilns in the early 19th century specific to the Monmouthshire region. Field lime kilns were constructed where wood and limestone were readily available, and where the lime product was used to improve nearby agricultural land.



Figure 3.4: Lime Kiln, taken 24.08.20.

Setting

3.4.4 The setting of the assets comprises a pocket of woodland and open farmland which contributes to an understanding of their historic use as both lime kilns and animal shelters.

Their close proximity to Pentre Bach Farm also helps in an appreciation of their function within the agricultural landscape.

- 3.4.5 The assets are located adjacent to the eastern border of the Site. The Site forms part of the agricultural setting in which the kilns are located. In its current form, the site makes a positive contribution in an appreciation of how the kilns functioned within the working agricultural landscape. Due to the close proximity between the site and the asset, there is some intervisibility, however, this is limited as a result of the change in topography and dense screening in the form of mature trees and vegetation.

3.5 Zoar Baptist Chapel

- 3.5.1 To the west of the Site is the Zoar Baptist Chapel listed at Grade II (CADW ref 20183). Grade II listed structures are considered to be “buildings of special interest which justify every effort being made to preserve them” (Understanding Listing in Wales).



Figure 3.5: Zoar Baptist Church, taken 24.08.20

- 3.5.2 The Baptist Chapel was built in 1836 in the Gothic style. It has since been converted into a house. It is rendered externally with a half-hipped slate roof. There is a large porch to the south front. There are architectural features of note including the pointed entrance doorway with Y-traceried overlight and boarded double-doors; three-pointed arched windows with Y-tracery. The list description notes that the interior is largely unaltered, it is unknown how much of this fabric survives from the conversion. There is high architectural and artistic value in these surviving features which are typical of 19th century Baptist chapels. There is also evidential value in the original fabric of the building and what it can tell us about its historic function and use. There is further evidential value in the churchyard which contains a burial ground with remains of past residents.
- 3.5.3 The chapel would have played a major role in the local social and religious lives of the local community, which contributes to the communal and historic value of the asset.

Setting

- 3.5.4 The chapel once functioned as a religious building but now has a rather domestic character as a residential dwelling. Its immediate setting reflects this change in function, what was once an

extensive churchyard with associated gravestones is now an area of hardstanding and garden relating to the domestic use. The chapel is set back from the public highway and the now domestic area is surrounded by a low wall. The chapel is located within the small community of Castell-Y-Bwch, which has a linear pattern of development. The chapel is set high on a ridge and overlooks agricultural fields which help to contribute to the assets' rural context.

- 3.5.5 The Site is located to the east of the asset and forms part of the wider agricultural setting of the chapel. Due to the ridge on which the chapel is located, there are wide ranging views to the wider landscape, there is therefore some intervisibility between the asset and the site. Whilst the Site forms part of the agricultural setting, it is a small part of a much wider expanse of agricultural fields, as such the Site only offers a minor contribution to how the Chapel is experienced within its rural context.

4 Impact Assessment

- 4.1.1 The application seeks consent for the construction of a ground mounted photo-voltaic solar farm with electrical generating capacity of up to 35MW with associated equipment and infrastructure. The impacts of the proposals are considered below, with reference to Assessment Step 3 and 4 of the Setting Guidance. A summary of impacts is provided in **Table 4.1**.
- 4.1.2 The nature of the proposed development is such that the anticipated impacts of the development will be for a period of 25-35 years, with provisions to ensure that the panels are removed after this time and the land restored to its previous use.

Impact on Pentre Bach Farm

- 4.1.3 The proposals will not result in any direct impact to the designated asset and any impact will arise through the introduction of development within its wider setting. The Site lies to the rear of the farmstead, separated from the listed building by more recent farm buildings.
- 4.1.4 The proposed development would result in a change to the character of the agricultural setting of the historic asset. It was agreed during initial discussions with TCBC that, at this proximity, the proposed solar farm has potential to be visually intrusive within the setting of Pentre Bach Farm to a degree that would erode the agricultural character of its setting in this orientation. Following this engagement with TCBC, the field parcels bordering the north of the farm complex have been removed from the developable area and retained as open space.
- 4.1.5 A large arc of open agricultural land within the setting to the farmstead would be retained as existing, including the aspects facing the front elevation of the historic house (southeast) and the outward facing elevation of the barn (northeast). This land is at closest distance to the curtilage of the farmstead and its removal from the developable area will create a significant landscape buffer that will further reduce the impact of the proposals on the setting of the listed building.
- 4.1.6 The proposed site layout plan (Drawing Ref: 9007 Rev I) shows the development pulled away from the field parcels immediately bordering the north of the farmstead. The application Site red line boundary has been amended accordingly so that this area of land lies outside the application Site. This change creates a sufficient landscape buffer to be retained that reduces the potential scale of visual impact. The land within these parcels slopes upwards and partially screens views to other parts of the Site where development would have less visual impact by virtue of the topography as well as its location at greater distance from the farmstead.
- 4.1.7 Through careful consideration of the boundary treatment on the edge of the developable area, further visual screening from the farmstead towards the Site is provided through an appropriate landscaping buffer to filter views from within the surrounding landscape and from the farmstead. The existing hedgerow to the east boundary of the Site in proximity to the farmstead will be reinforced and managed to a minimum height of 2.5 – 3.0m. The perimeter security fence will be positioned adjacent to the hedgerow inside the application site. At a height of 2450mm, the fence would be screened by the hedgerow and not visible from the farmstead to the east. An additional 15m of existing grassland is to be retained as grazing pasture to the west of the boundary treatment.
- 4.1.8 The design and placement of other necessary infrastructure has also been carefully considered in order ensure sufficient distance from the asset as to minimise the potential scale of visual impact.
- 4.1.9 A construction area is to be located to the northeast of the farmstead on the opposite side of the access road. The area will contain sufficient turning space for HGVs, loading and storage

areas, staff parking and welfare facilities. It is anticipated that the area will be in use for a period of 15 to 18 weeks during the construction phase of the Development. During the peak construction week, the maximum number of vehicles travelling to and from the Site will be approximately 13 vehicle trips per day. This peak level of traffic movement is not considered to be significantly greater than levels that could be expected for a busy farm. The use of this open field as a construction compound would alter the agricultural character of this part of the setting, however given the low-medium intensity of the activity taking place and its very temporary nature, the change would have only a fleeting, and therefore minimal, impact on the significance of the farmstead.

- 4.1.10 The construction area will serve as an operational access point for maintenance vehicles when the site is operational. There will be minimal traffic movement during the operational phase and minimal change to this part of the setting of the listed farmstead.
- 4.1.11 Notwithstanding the above, it is acknowledged that setting attributes are both visual and non-visual, and the change in character to the wider Site has potential to erode the agricultural setting of the farmhouse. It is accepted that the proposed development will result in a change to the character of the land and wider agricultural setting of Pentre Bach Farm for a period of between 25-35 years. However, through careful consideration of the proposed layout, boundary treatments and landscape strategy, the scheme provides sufficient mitigation which minimises the impact of the proposed development on the adjacent Grade II* listed building, preserving its heritage significance.

Impact on Lime Kilns

- 4.1.12 The proposals will not result in any direct impact to the designated Limekilns. As such, any impact will arise through the introduction of development within their wider landscape setting.
- 4.1.13 The special interest of the kilns is primarily derived from their evidential value and the proposed development will have no impact on this attribute. The kilns are derelict and set within thick undergrowth and they are already separated from the Site by a landscape buffer which includes the existing woodland pocket. There is little intervisibility between the assets and the Site. Furthermore, the southeasternmost parcels of land have been removed from the developable area creating an increased landscape buffer between the Site and the assets, thereby further minimising the potential for any adverse visual impact.
- 4.1.14 As noted previously, the Site does not make any meaningful contribution to the setting of the assets, other than forming part of their wider landscape setting. Given the degree of separation, combined with the retained open land to the southeast of the Site, the existing landscape features and topography, it is not considered that the development would result in any impact to the setting of the Grade II listed buildings. As such, the development would preserve the special interest of the Lime Kilns and their setting.

Impact on Zoar Baptist Church

- 4.1.15 Zoar Baptist Chapel is located over 500m from the Site and whilst the development will be visible in medium and long-distance views from the asset, the Site makes no meaningful contribution to its heritage significance. The Site forms part of the wider agricultural setting of the asset, however by virtue of the intervening distance and existing landscape features it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any meaningful change to the way in which the asset is experienced and there would be no harm to its heritage significance.

Table 4.1: Heritage Assets

Heritage Asset	Designation	Significance	Impact	Mitigation
Pentre Bach Farm	Grade II* listed Record No: 3126	High	The Site forms part of the agricultural land in the historic ownership of the farmstead and therefore shares a historic functional association. The Development will have an impact on the contribution that the Site makes to the significance of the farmstead by virtue of its change in character. The southernmost land parcels make an important visual contribution in forming part of the agricultural setting. While the Development will not be visually prominent in views to and from the listed building, it will nevertheless effect a change to the character of land within the wider setting. This change will be temporary.	The mitigation proposed comprises the retention of the southernmost field parcels as open land along with existing field boundaries. This, together with supplementary landscaping to reinforce existing hedgerows will enhance the screening effect that will significantly reduce the scale of impact on the immediate setting of the farmstead.
Lime Kiln to N of Pentre Bach Farm	Grade II listed Record No: 81869	Moderate	The lime kilns to the east of the Site are in a state of dereliction located within vegetation forming a field boundary on land outside of and visually separated from the Site by field boundaries and the topography. The proposals will not give rise to a significant effect on these historic assets.	The existing separation distance and landscape features provides sufficient visual and physical separation between the assets and the Site. The removal of the southernmost field parcels as open land will provide further mitigation which will reduce the perceived impact on the setting of the listed buildings.
Lime Kiln to N of Pentre Bach Farm	Grade II listed Record No: 82036	Moderate		
Zoar Baptist Chapel	Grade II listed Record No: 20183	Moderate	The Zoar Baptist Chapel is situated on higher ground over 500m from the Site. The chapel enjoys extensive easterly views over the landscape afforded by its elevated position. Whilst the Development will be visible within these views, the Site is one component in an extensive landscape view such that it will not give rise to a significant effect on this historic asset.	None Required

5 Conclusions

- 5.1.1 The assessment in the preceding section has concluded that there would be some impact on the setting of the Grade II* listed Pentre Bach farm, by virtue of the proposed development resulting in a change in character to its wider landscape setting.
- 5.1.2 TCBC Local Development Plan contains a number of heritage policies; however, given the nature of the proposed development the most relevant for the purposes of this assessment is LDP Policy BW1: C: Built Environment. This policy guides that proposals should contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the built environment where possible.
- 5.1.3 National planning policy guidance is set out in PPW12; Chapter 6 sets out the policy direction for the historic environment. Paragraph 6.1.5 guides that the planning system must protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment, and that decisions are based on an understanding of significance of historic assets. It also requires that the character of historic buildings is safeguarded, the special architectural and historic interest is preserved, and that the contribution the historic environment makes to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and quality of life is recognised.
- 5.1.4 Paragraph 6.1.9 requires that decision making in relation to heritage impacts should be based upon a full consideration of the significance of a historic asset and the impact of the proposal on that significance. The greater the significance and/or impact then the greater the benefit needed to justify any harm.
- 5.1.5 Paragraph 6.1.10 states that there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of a listed building and its setting, and that in all cases the primary material consideration should be the statutory requirement to have a special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 5.1.6 The potential scale of impact on the setting, and by extension significance of the Grade II* listed building, has been significantly mitigated through the proposed layout and landscape strategy for the Site. This report has demonstrated that any harm would therefore be of a low level and that the statutory tests set out in the 1990 Act have been met.
- 5.1.7 The proposals are also considered to be in accordance with the national and local heritage planning policy framework and would preserve the special interest of the Grade II* listed Pentre Bach Farm, the Grade II listed Lime Kilns and Grade II listed Zoar Chapel.

Appendix A Correspondence with CADW and LPA



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Plas Carew, Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed
Parc Nantgarw, Cardiff CF15 7QQ
0300 025 6000
email cadw@gov.wales/cadw@llyw.cymru
www.cadw.gov.wales

Rob Sparey
The Planning Inspectorate

dns.wales@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Eich cyfeirnod Your reference	DNS 3239190
Ein cyfeirnod Our reference	
Dyddiad Date	15 January 2021
Linell uniongyrchol Direct line	0300 0250566
Ebost Email:	Cadwplanning@gov.wales

Dear Rob

**Screening Opinion under Part 2, Regulation 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017: Proposed Soar Farm
Land at Pentre Bach adjacent to Pentre Lane, Torfaen**

Thank you for your letter of 24 December 2020 asking for Cadw's view on the likely impact of the proposed development described above on the environment and whether or not Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required.

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

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

Advice

Cadw does not consider that the effect, on the historic environment as a whole, will be significant enough to warrant an EIA.

The designated historic assets listed in Annex A are located inside 3km of the proposed development and are potentially affected by the proposal.

Assessment

Mae'r Gwasanaeth Amgylchedd Hanesyddol Llywodraeth Cymru (Cadw) yn hyrwyddo gwaith cadwraeth ar gyfer amgylchedd hanesyddol Cymru a gwerthfawrogiad ohono.

The Welsh Government Historic Environment Service (Cadw) promotes the conservation and appreciation of Wales's historic environment.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh.



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



A screening report prepared by Barton Wilmore has considered the impact of the proposed development on the setting of all of the assets inside 1.5km and concluded that it will not have a significant impact on them. Given the current information available, we concur with the result of that appraisal and in our opinion there will be no significant impact on the settings of the designated historic assets further away either. Consequently there will be no historic environment reasons for a EIA to be commissioned.

It is noted that an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, including a Heritage Statement is being prepared for this development and this report should be included with the application in order to check that the initial appraisal included in the screening report is correct and that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the settings of any designated historic asset.

Yours sincerely

Jenna Arnold

Diogelu a Pholisi/ Protection and Policy

Annex A

Scheduled Monuments

MM045 Cairns West of Craig y Dyffryn
MM046 Round Cairn 315m S of Upper Wenallt
MM136 Churchyard Cross
MM137 Llantarnam Abbey Tithe Barn
MM271 Llanderfel Church
MM309 St. Peter's Churchyard Cross, Henllys

Registered Parks and Gardens

PGW (Gt) 25 Llantarnam Abbey (grade II)

Listed Buildings:

2915	Church of Saint Peter	II*
3053	Croesllanfro House	II
3054	Barn and attached range at Croesllanfro Farm	II
3121	Church of St Michael and All Angels Churchyard cross at the Church of Saint Michael and All	II*
3122	Angels	II
3123	The Greenhouse Public House	II
3126	Pentre-Bach and attached outbuildings	II*
3128	Ruins of barn at Llantarnam Abbey	II
3137	Ty-coch Farmhouse	II
3140	Llanyrafon	II*
3148	Llanderfel Farmhouse	II
18285	Malpas Court	II
20183	Zoar Baptist Chapel	II
20525	Woodlands House	II
20740	Elim United Reformed Church and attached Schoolroom	II
21942	Parish Church of St. Mary	II
21943	Lychgate at Malpas Church	II
21944	Allfrey Tomb, Malpas Church	II
21945	Malpas Vicarage	II
21946	Hollybush Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal (partly in Bettws Community) Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal SE of	II
21947	Pentwyn (partly in Bettws community) Ty-ffynnon Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon	II
21948	Canal & attached revetments and Lock Hollybush Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon	II
21949	Canal (partly in Malpas community) Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal SE of	II
21950	Pentwyn (partly in Malpas community) Ty-ffynnon Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon	II
21951	Canal and Lock (partly in Malpas community) Gwastad Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
21952	and Lock (partly in Shaftesbury Community) Gwastad Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
25734	and Lock (partly in Bettws community)	II
26082	Brook House and railings	II
26986	Glan-y-nant Farm	II
27026	Llanyrafon Mill	II
27059	Ty'r Ywen Farmhouse	II
27060	Barn at Ty'r Ywen Farm	II

81033	Cwrt Henllys	II
81034	Pandy-mawr and attached barn	II
81035	Remains of churchyard cross, Church of Saint Peter	II
81344	Range on left (east) side of yard at Croesllanfro Farm Aqueduct over Dowlais Brook on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, partly in Cwmbran Central Community	II
81859		II
81860	Bridge on drive at Llantarnam Abbey	II
	Canal bridge at Drapers Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
81861	Canal bridge at Rachels Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
81862	Canal bridge at Shop Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
81863	Canal bridge at Top Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
81864	Canal bridge at Tredegar Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
81865	Canal bridge S of Tamplin Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	II
81866	Forecourt walls and gates at Llantarnam Abbey	II
81867	Garden walls and gates at Llantarnam Abbey	II
81868	Lime kiln to N of Pentre-Bach (partly in Cwmbran Central)	II
81869	Memorial to T. Leadbetter in churchyard of Church of St Michael and All Angels	II
81870	Porth Mawr gateway, lodge, walls and railings at Llantarnam Abbey	II
81871	The Cottage and attached walls of walled garden at Llantarnam Abbey	II
81872	The Monks Cell at Llantarnam Abbey	II
81873	Two statues in garden to E of Llantarnam Abbey	II
81874	Lime kiln on S side of Garth Road	II
82034	Aqueduct over Dowlais Brook on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal (partly in the Llantarnam community)	II
82035	Lime kiln N of Pentre-Bach (partly in the Llantarnam community)	II
82036	Llantarnam Abbey	II*
85246	Court Road Industrial Estate Sign	II
87770		II

**Heritage
Planning Application Consultation Response Form**

	<p>To : TCBC Development Control Planning</p> <p>DC Officer : Claire Hall</p> <p>Planning Application Number: 20/PE/0090/PREAPP</p> <p>Site: Land adj to Pentre-Bach Farm, Llantarnam</p> <p>Proposal: <u>Construction of solar farm</u></p> <p>Heritage Officer: Joanna Hughes Date: 09/06/2020</p>
	<p>The Heritage Officer, in responding to the above application, provides the following substantive response:</p>
	<p>No comment</p>
	<p>No objection</p>
	<p>Concerns have been identified (see below for how those concerns can be addressed by the applicant)</p>
	<p>Objection – on the grounds set out below</p>
	<p>OBSERVATIONS / COMMENTS (Desk based Assessment)</p>
	<p>The following heritage constraints are identified within the radius of 1km: Pentre-Bach and attached outbuildings (Cadw ref 3126) Grade II* Limekilns North of Pentre-Bach (Cadw 8189/82036) Grade II Zoar Baptist Chapel (Cadw 20183) Grade II. Brecon and Monmouthshire Canal Conservation Area – several structures are Grade II listed.</p> <p>A site visit has not be carried out. LANDMAP visual and sensory layer and historic landscape layer describes the landscape as rolling lowland with undulations with irregular fieldscapes. The cultural landscape value is moderate, with attractive views both in and out. The value for the scenic and character criteria is evaluated as moderate.</p> <p>It is not known if the land adjacent to Pentre-Bach Farm is in the same ownership as the farmhouse and outbuildings. If so the proposed solar farm would be beneficial in enabling development of the heritage site, with the below considerations evidenced.</p> <p>There are serious concerns in regard to the great detrimental impact the proposal would have on a Grade II* asset. The grade of the listed building should not be taken lightly, nor the significance of such a heritage asset within the Authority’s Listed Building stock. The proposed layout leaves no buffer zone between the proposal and residential curtilage of the listed building. LANDMAP’s findings highlight the cultural value of the landscape is deteriorating. The evaluation of the landscape aides appraisal of the setting of the Listed Building. As such it is considered the topography, and north west area proposed for the solar farm would have a high impact on the significance of the building and its setting. The setting is not solely views of the asset from within the curtilage, or externally from the surrounding area, the setting as enshrined</p>

within ICOMOS' The Burra Charter 2013 can be tangible and intangible such as the function of the site, its siting within its historic curtilage; as well as, sensory and scenic associations.

The accoutrement of such a proposal will also need to consider: potential solar glare, fencing, lighting, and substation (if required), access, and security measures – all will have a collective impact upon the setting of the Listed Building.

The extent and scale of the proposal will require an LVIA in order to assess the full impact of the development within the landscape and setting of the surrounding listed assets 1.5km away. It may be acceptable that a portion of a solar farm is acceptable, which is sited away from the farmhouse and lime kilns. With mitigation in place to reduce impact, seasonal changes should be considered on mitigation proposals. The scale of such a proposal should be instructed on the above assessment, evaluating as part of the process the impact on the historic environment – a large scale operation may not have a detrimental impact upon the assets 1.5 to 1km away.

The proposed scale would have a high impact on the significance and setting of the adjacent farmhouse. A proposal focussed to the northern section of land, may not impact upon the curtilage of the Listed Building, and could create a sufficient buffer zone. Which could provide needed separation between the operations of the solar farm, and Farmhouse significance and setting.

It is strongly advised applicants review PPW Chapter 6, and TAN 24 with serious consideration of Cadw's Managing Change Series particularly Managing the Setting of Historic Assets.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

National Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

s. 66 In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

s.72 In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Planning Policy Wales 10

6.1.6 Safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved.

6.1.9 Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place.

6.1.10 There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement

to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

6.1.16 Preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance or leaves them unharmed.

Technical Advice Note TAN 8

3.15 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.

Technical Advice Note TAN 24

Reference is also made to the following Managing Change Documents supporting TAN 24;

- Managing Historic Character
- Managing Setting of Historic Assets

Torfaen County Borough Council – Local Development Plan

LDP Policy S1 defines settlement boundaries.

Policy S1 states that 'development proposals in the countryside will be dealt with in line with relevant LDP policies and national planning policy'. Development may be acceptable outside the urban boundaries where it 'constitutes an appropriate rural use, i.e. development which is in keeping with the countryside, which would not cause unacceptable harm to a countryside setting' (LDP paragraph 5.1.1). LDP Policy S2 requires that development proposals demonstrate 'they have taken account of the following principles and where relevant that they' [in brief]: a) Contribute to the regeneration of existing communities; b) Meet sustainable transportation priorities, including reducing reliance on the private car; c) Conserve and enhance the natural and built environment; d) Promote the efficient use of land; e) Maximise the efficient use of existing community infrastructure; f) Utilise sustainable construction techniques; g) Promote sustainable economic and employment growth; and h) Are located within the urban boundary unless it is acceptable in the countryside.

LDP Policy S4 requires development proposals to 'have full regard to the context of the local natural and built environment and its special features through:

- Promotion of local distinctiveness by sympathetic design, material selection and layout including public art;
- Delivering a mix of uses to complement existing facilities and aim to address local deficiencies; and
- Ensuring that location and layout integrates and contributes to local accessibility.'

LDP Policy BW1. Proposals will be considered favourably where they comply with a number of criteria, where relevant. These are [in brief]:

A. Amenity and Design i. The proposal does not constitute over development of the site in terms of the scale, density, massing and form; ii. Design and visual appearance takes account of local context; iii. Urban fabric of an area is respected; iv. Landscaping and planting proposals enhance the site and wider context; v. Extensions to buildings complement and enhance the original building, its curtilage and the wider area; vi. Crime and anti-social behaviour are designed out of the proposals; and vii. Design is inclusive and accessible.

B. Natural Environment i. The proposal does not result in unacceptable adverse effects in respect of contamination, pollution, flooding etc.; ii. There are no significant adverse effects upon European designated sites or designated conservation objectives; iii. No significant adverse effects on nationally

designated sites; iv. The proposal contributes to the conservation and / or enhancement of the strategic biodiversity network and does not result in significant adverse effects on the network; v. There is no unacceptable loss or harm to features of landscape importance, including trees and woodland; and vi. There is no unacceptable adverse impact upon the water environment.

C. Built Environment i. The proposal contributes to the preservation and enhancement of the historic built environment wherever possible; ii. The proposal does not detrimentally affect the character of the immediate and surrounding built environment; and iii. Wherever practicable, existing materials are re-used or recycled.

D. Utilities Provision i. The proposal does not prejudice the existing or proposed level of service provision; and ii. Adequate foul sewerage is provided in areas served by public sewers.

E. Design and Transport i. Adopted parking provisions are followed; ii. New access roads are appropriately designed; iii. Highway safety and amenity are protected where access onto an existing highway is required; iv. The road network is capable of safely and effectively sustaining additional traffic generated by the proposal; v. Freight trips are properly considered; and vi. A Green Travel Plan is produced where appropriate.

LDP Policy S7 seeks to 'ensure the conservation and enhancement of the Natural, Built and Historic Environment of Torfaen'.

Joanna Hughes
Uwch Swyddog Treftadaeth/Senior Heritage Officer

Your ref/Eich cyf:
Our ref/Ein cyf: 20/PE/0090/PREAPP
Date/Dyddiad: 28 April 2020

Please contact/Cysyllter â: Mrs Claire Hall
Direct line/Llinell ffôn: 01633 647312
Direct fax/Llinell ffacs: 01633 647328
Email/Ebost: planning@torfaen.gov.uk

Ben Lewis
Barton Willmore
Greyfriars House
Greyfriars Road
Cardiff
CF10 3AL

Dear Mr Lewis

RE: Proposed ground mounted photo-voltaic solar farm with an electrical generating capacity of up to 35 MW together with associated equipment, infrastructure and ancillary works

AT: Land At Pentre Bach, Pentre Lane Llantarnam Cwmbran Torfaen

1.	Our advice is based on the following information: Pre-application enquiry form, drawing nos.9000 Rev.A (red-edged site location plan) 9300 Rev.A (concept masterplan), detailed covering letter (ref. 29522/A3/TE/BL/lb dated 14 th February 2020 with appended Agricultural Land Classification Survey) and DNS pre-application advice from PINS (dated 27 September 2019) all received on 14 February 2020 (validated on 25 February 2020 on receipt of the statutory £1500 fee). This is a Development of National Significance (i.e. the planning decision is to be made by Welsh Government).																								
2.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="245 1346 555 1489">Site History App Number</th> <th data-bbox="555 1346 826 1489">Proposal</th> <th data-bbox="826 1346 1050 1489">Status</th> <th data-bbox="1050 1346 1305 1489">Received Date</th> <th data-bbox="1305 1346 1546 1489">Decision Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="245 1489 555 1601">16/P/01421/ FUL</td> <td data-bbox="555 1489 826 1601">Alterations to existing building</td> <td data-bbox="826 1489 1050 1601">Approved with conditions</td> <td data-bbox="1050 1489 1305 1601">20.12.2016</td> <td data-bbox="1305 1489 1546 1601">02.08.2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="245 1601 555 1736">16/P/01422/ LBC</td> <td data-bbox="555 1601 826 1736">Alterations to existing building</td> <td data-bbox="826 1601 1050 1736">Approved with conditions</td> <td data-bbox="1050 1601 1305 1736">20.12.2016</td> <td data-bbox="1305 1601 1546 1736">02.08.2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="245 1736 555 1892">18/P/0007/ FUL</td> <td data-bbox="555 1736 826 1892">Construction of an all-weather riding</td> <td data-bbox="826 1736 1050 1892">Approved with conditions</td> <td data-bbox="1050 1736 1305 1892">04.01.2018</td> <td data-bbox="1305 1736 1546 1892">20.04.2018</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Site History App Number	Proposal	Status	Received Date	Decision Date	16/P/01421/ FUL	Alterations to existing building	Approved with conditions	20.12.2016	02.08.2017	16/P/01422/ LBC	Alterations to existing building	Approved with conditions	20.12.2016	02.08.2017	18/P/0007/ FUL	Construction of an all-weather riding	Approved with conditions	04.01.2018	20.04.2018
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	<p>ménage and associated change of use of one barn to a stable block</p> <p>18/P/0182/ LBC</p> <p>Change of use of one barn to a stable block and associated alterations</p> <p>18/P/0420/ CND</p> <p>Discharge of condition 3 & 4 of 18/P/0182/ LBC - Scope of Works</p>	<p>Approved with conditions</p> <p>Approved</p>	<p>21.03.2018</p> <p>14.06.2018</p>	<p>06.06.2018</p> <p>19.07.2018</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Relevant Planning Policies:</p> <p>National Policy</p> <p>The development is affecting a Grade II* Listed Building.</p> <p>Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) - Section 66: In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.</p> <p>Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, December 2018)</p> <p>Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)</p> <p>Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005): 3.15 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.</p> <p>Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Noise (1997)</p> <p>Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18: Transport (2007)</p> <p>Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017)</p> <p>The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty on the Council to maintain and</p>			

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enhance biodiversity, promote the resilience of ecosystems and increase their ability to adapt to events such as the impacts of climate change.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or wellbeing) objectives.

Welsh Assembly Government/Cadw "Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales" (March 2011):

"49. Enabling development that would secure the future of an important historic asset but contravene other planning policy objectives will be unacceptable unless:

- a. it will not materially harm the heritage values of the historic asset or its setting; and*
- b. it avoids detrimental fragmentation of management of the historic asset; and*
- c. it will secure the long-term future of the historic asset and, where applicable, its continued use for a sympathetic purpose; and*
- d. it is necessary to resolve problems arising from the inherent needs of the historic asset rather than the circumstances of the present owner or the purchase price paid; and*
- e. sufficient subsidy is not available from any other source; and*
- f. it is demonstrated that the amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the historic asset and that its form minimises harm to other public interests; and*
- g. the public benefit of securing the future of the historic asset through such enabling development decisively outweighs the disbenefits of breaching other public policies.*

50. Enabling development is development that would deliver substantial heritage benefits but which would be contrary to other objectives of national, regional or local planning policy. It is an established planning principle that such development may be appropriate if the public benefit of rescuing, enhancing or even endowing an important historic asset decisively outweighs the harm to other material interests. Enabling development must always be in proportion to the public benefit it offers.

51. If it is decided by a local authority that a scheme of enabling development meets all the criteria set out above, planning permission should be granted only if:

- a. the impact of the development is precisely defined at the outset, normally through the granting of full rather than outline planning permission;*
- b. the achievement of the heritage objective is securely and enforceably linked to the enabling development;*
- c. the place concerned is repaired to an agreed standard or the funds to do so made available as early as possible in the course of the enabling development, ideally at the outset and certainly before completion or occupation; and*
- d. the planning authority closely monitors implementation, if necessary acting promptly to ensure that obligations are fulfilled."*

Adopted Torfaen Local Development Plan (December 2013)

Strategic Policies

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LDP Policy S1 - Defines the Urban Boundaries to promote the full and effective use of urban land, to allow for development to contribute to the creation of sustainable communities and define the urban area within which there is a presumption in favour of development. Land outside Urban Boundaries is within the Countryside where development is restricted.

LDP Policy S2 - Gives a set of Sustainable Development criterion that should be taken into account in the design of development proposals.

LDP Policy S3 - Provides criterion that should be considered to seek to mitigate the causes of further climate change and adapt to the current and future effects of climate change such as promoting sustainable design.

LDP Policy S4 - seeks that new development must have full regard to the context of the local natural and built environment and its special features including criterion on sustainable design and promoting a mix of uses.

LDP Policy S7 - seeks to ensure that development proposals promote the conservation and enhancement of the Natural, Built and Historic Environment.

LDP Policy S8 - outlines the planning obligations will be required on development proposals to address impacts of development and to make the proposal acceptable in land use planning terms; with key priorities being stated.

Borough Wide Policies

LDP Policy BW1 - provides a detailed Borough wide General Policy on Development Proposals with criterion covering 'Amenity and Design', the 'Natural Environment', the 'Built Environment', 'Utilities Provision' and 'Design and Transport', against which all planning applications will be determined in conjunction with other relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.

LDP Policy BG1 - states development proposals will not be permitted where they would cause significant adverse effects to local nature conservation designated sites, including the features of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), or Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS), subject to two criterion.

Topic Based Policies

LDP Policy C1 identifies Green Wedges in order to prevent coalescence between settlements and to maintain the open character of these areas:

Policy C1/1 Cwmbran and Newport

Policy C1/2 Ponthir and Caerleon

Policy C1/3 Mamhilad and New Inn, Pontypool.

LDP Policy C2 identifies Special Landscape Areas, where development proposals will be expected to conform to high standards of design and environmental protection which is

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	<p>appropriate to the LANDMAP character of the area: Policy C2/1 Llandegfedd Reservoir Policy C2/2 South Eastern Lowlands Policy C2/3 Southern Lowlands Policy C2/4 South West Uplands Policy C2/5 Blaenavon Heritage Landscape Policy C2/6 Eastern Uplands Policy C2/7 Afon Lwyd Valley Policy C2/8 Western Uplands.</p> <p>LDP Policy M1 safeguards important mineral resources within Aggregate Safeguarding Areas and Coal Safeguarding Areas subject to two criteria.</p> <p>Supplementary Planning Guidance ('SPG')</p> <p>Planning Obligations (Adopted September 2016) The SPG sets minimum criteria and thresholds for contributions towards: Affordable Housing; Highways and Transport; Educational Facilities; Community Facilities and Regeneration; Ecology and Biodiversity and Recreation and Public Open Space.</p> <p>CSS Wales Parking Standards 2014 (Adopted SPG for Torfaen).</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Consultation Responses:</p> <p>Ecology Officer</p> <p>Having looked through the documents provided I would agree in full with the comments put forward by our Landscape Officer, particularly with consideration for a 15m buffer zone for existing woodland & 5m buffer for any existing hedgerows, and also to preserve and enhance any existing hedgerows. Given that we are now entering into the optimum season for surveying species and habitats I recommend a full Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) which should include: an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey; a Protected Species Survey (badgers, bats, dormouse etc.); a tree assessment to include any ancient woodland; a hedgerow assessment.</p> <p>It should also include details of proposed mitigation for any loss as well as enhancement measures, in accordance with Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 10 which sets out that 'Planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that developments should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity'(para 6.4.5). This, and subsequent policies in Chapter 6 of PPW 10 respond to the Section 6 Duty of the Environment</p>

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(Wales) Act 2016

Highways And Transportation

Pentre Lane from the junction with Trawsmawr Lane is unsuitable for Heavy Goods Vehicles and could not accommodate the traffic that would be associated with the construction of a solar farm.

I am unable to support this proposal from a highway standpoint.

The above observations are given without prejudice to my position in respect of the highway requirements should a formal planning application be made in respect of this proposal

Drainage Officer

No reply received

Landscape Officer

Planning Policy Wales TAN 8 Planning for Renewable Energy para 3.15 states that:

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.

A Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment should be undertaken for the site to ascertain the susceptibility, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape within which the development would sit is to change. Guidance for this is provided by the following document: Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment in relation to on-shore wind and solar photo-voltaic developments: Annexe 1 Methodology Guidance for Assessors August 2018.

This assessment requires the landscape character of the landscape within which the site sits to be established. Landscape character areas (LCA's) reflect "the extent to which a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements, features and qualities occurs within the [character] area, to give a clear sense of place" that "makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse" Characteristics and qualities that are typical or commonplace to find in the area are identified, as

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opposed to what is rare or special, and LCAs also identify any unique features that define the area.

LANDMAP should be used to establish the landscape character of the site. Guidance suggests that the Visual and Sensory should be the lead layer focusing on experiential characteristics and qualities with cultural aspect taken as an influence on landscape rather than significant feature.

A summary of the LANDMAP assessment for the site is as follows using the specific criteria suggested in Annexe 1 Methodology Guidance for Assessors August 2018

VISUAL AND SENSORY evaluated as Overall Moderate.

Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation Moderate (pleasant rural landscape with some attractive views , often partially enclosed /restricted by landform and more distant effect of built form, moderate sop, and relatively unspoilt, with no single noteworthy quality) Justification of overall evaluation all criteria moderate

Evaluation Criteria: Scenic quality Moderate (partially enclosed)

Evaluation Criteria: Integrity Moderate (urban edge/pylons)

Evaluation Criteria: Character Moderate (mod sop)

Evaluation Criteria: Rarity Moderate (n/a) Description

Summary Description Enclosed series of hollows and valleys ranging from approximately 20m to 150mAOD with defined wooded blocks and vegetated boundaries. Pleasant rural character overall, but the sharp urban edge to the north detracts from this locally, and sensitises the observer to other detractors that include overhead power lines and traffic noise from Cwmbran Drive. Possibly due to its location adjacent to the urban area, the area has a network of Public Rights of Way and a cycle route along the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, which provide recreational facilities for the residents of southern Cwmbran.

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Physical form and elements: Settlement pattern
Clustered

Physical form and elements: Boundary type
Managed Hedge

Recommendations

Guideline Medium Term (Protect woodland:
broadleaf.)

Medium Term (Manage hedgerows)

Existing management Neutral

Existing management remarks: Existing
management - agriculture. Conserve as existing

Description

Physical Form And Elements: Topographic Form?
Rolling/Undulating

Physical Form And Elements: Landcover Pattern?
Field Pattern/Mosaic

Aesthetic Qualities: Scale? Medium

Aesthetic Qualities: Sense of Enclosure?
Enclosed

What is the sense of place/local distinctiveness
Moderate (pleasant rolling farmland with no
determining distinctive characteristics, but mix of
rural with tinge of urban edge)

Evaluation

Value: Moderate (n/a)

Condition: Good (n/a)

Trend: Constant (n/a)

Recommendations

Define the key qualities that should be conserved:
pattern

Define the key qualities that should be enhanced:
n/a

Define the key qualities that should be changed:
intrusion

Define the key elements that should be conserved:
hedges

Define the key elements that should be enhanced:
n/a

Define the key elements that should be changed:
pylons

HISTORIC : evaluated as Overall High

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Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Overall Evaluation High
Justification of overall evaluation The overall value assigned to this area reflects the well-preserved nature of the fieldscape and settlement pattern and the remarkable survival of a series of important late medieval/early post-medieval vernacular buildings, notable examples including Pant-yr-eos and Cwrt Henllys.

Evaluation

Condition: Good

Value: High (The overall value assigned to this area reflects the well-preserved nature of the fieldscape and settlement pattern and the remarkable survival of a series of important late medieval/early post-medieval vernacular buildings, notable examples including Pant-yr-eos and Cwrt Henllys.)

Trend: Constant

Recommendations

Existing management Generally Appropriate
Existing management remarks: Conservation Area (part) SSSI (part)

Principal management recommendations

Maintain as existing

Guideline Immediate (Keep as present, restrict development)

Immediate (Produce monument management plans)

Description

Summary Description / Key Patterns and Elements

Medieval/post-medieval agricultural landscape with dispersed settlement of scattered farmsteads centred on ecclesiastical and manorial centres.

Wealth of early post-medieval vernacular buildings.

Ancient woodland.

If Classification is "Other", specify here

Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria: Integrity Outstanding (Well preserved regular fieldscape interspersed with areas of ancient woodland, with a pattern of dispersed settlement consisting of medium to large farmsteads, including an important late medieval farmhouse at Cwrt Henllys. A small settlement focus identified in the southern tip of the area at Henllys village centred

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on the parish church.)

Evaluation Criteria: Potential High (This area has not yet been covered by a detailed historic landscape characterisation, so there is significant potential for further work to be undertaken on this landscape, in terms of desk-based work and field investigation. The early post-medieval vernacular architecture in this area has been surveyed by RCAHMW (Fox & Raglan, 1951-4).)

Evaluation Criteria: Rarity High (The only example of an extensive landscape of regular field enclosure within the Torfaen historic landscape.)

Evaluation Criteria: Survival High (The regular fieldscape shown in this area on the OS 1st edition map has survived largely intact up to the present day, defined by a well-preserved network of hedges and hedgebanks, although some hedge boundaries have been replaced by modern post-and-wire fencing. A number of farmsteads in this area contain fabric of late medieval or early post-medieval date, notable examples including Pant-yr-eos and Cwrt Henllys (GGAT PRN 00145g; PRN 00142g).)

Evaluation Criteria: Condition High

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

Paragraph 15.5 of Annexe 1 Methodology Guidance for Assessors August 2018: Fig 27 Landscape Susceptibility for solar PV development suggests that landscapes of the following character show a high degree of susceptibility to landscape change:

- a) Smaller scale, or well-defined land forms that may be disrupted by the rigid lines of panels
- b) Complex landforms with distinctive changes in level, including undulating landscapes, steeply sloping valley sides and hillsides, narrow valley floors, where would be highly visible.
- c) Smaller scale land cover, where a given size of Solar PV cover may be a dominant over the landscape-scale.
- d) Irregular field patterns or complex land cover habitat mosaics, such as pastoral farmland with hedgerows and individual trees and meandering watercourses, and abundant semi-natural habitats,

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where the geometry and simplicity of Solar PV would be in great contrast.

e) landscapes exhibiting older mediaeval enclosure patterns, relic features, ancient and broadleaved woodland.

f) Landscapes indicating a high level of historic continuity with the past, where contemporary functions build closely on the features left from past times

g) Scattered, low density or dispersed settlement, or unpopulated areas, where rural land use traditions, field patterns and land use predominate over built development

h) Where small-scale or historic settlement character prevails, showing an intimate response to natural resources and which retains a high degree of time depth, historic continuity and intactness, and where new development is of a small scale, and of siting and design that closely follows this character. These characteristics are exhibited by the landscape of the proposed site suggesting that the site has a high degree of susceptibility to landscape change.

Assessing site for Landscape quality

The proposed site is within the Southern Lowlands Special Landscape Area. Any proposals must seek not to impact on the special character of this area as described in the designation below.

Primary Landscape Qualities and Features

A large area of pleasant rolling, lowland agricultural landscape formed by a series of enclosed hollows and valleys ranging between 20 and 150 metres AOD. It provides for a distinct sense of enclosure and isolation. The majority of the area is of medium scale with muted colours. The western edge rises slightly higher to some 200 metres AOD on the lower side slopes of Mynydd Henllys. It includes Henllys Bog, designated a SSSI, a rich soligeneous lowland fen. Around Henllys are remnants of an earlier medieval landscape characterised by irregular field patterns although the majority of the area is post medieval, with regular fields bounded by hedgerows and in places hedgebanks. With associated sunken lanes there are a number of small spinneys and larger woodlands scattered across the area such as Coed Y Twlch near Greenmeadow. The Monmouthshire-Brecon Canal crosses the eastern part of the areas as does part of the National Cycle network. There are

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a number of detractors, particularly along the northern edge of the area on boundary with Cwmbran, and in the Cwmbran Drive area to the east. Furthermore the area is crossed by a number of overhead power lines.

Landscape sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity combines judgements of landscape susceptibility and landscape value. A full assessment is required to ascertain this level but from initial inspection of the LANDMAP data I would suggest a sensitivity of moderate-high or moderate would be likely depending on the ongoing planning context. Many/some of the key characteristics of the landscape would be adversely affected by the development of the solar farm but there may be some limited opportunity to accommodate renewable energy development without changing landscape character. Great care would be needed in locating infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) LANDMAP analysis would suggest that though the site has only a moderate Visual and Sensory assessment it is important as a Historical landscape with the site surrounded by listed buildings.
- b) A Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment for the site should be submitted to ascertain the susceptibility, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape within which the development would sit is to change.
- c) Full LVIA required with photomontages of views of site from surrounding uplands and all listed properties and their setting including Castell y Bwch public house, canal corridor conservation area, public right of way 416/40/1 which runs through the centre of the site and public right of way 416/39/1 which runs to the north of the site. Viewpoints to be agreed with TCBC Senior Landscape Officer.
- d) Cumulative impact of other approved solar farms within vicinity namely Cwrt Farm and Ty Coch should be assessed.
- e) Site is within Southern Lowlands SLA so the

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	<p>impact on the character of this landscape would need to be fully assessed.</p> <p>f) All existing woodland would require a 15m semi natural buffer with all existing hedgerows preserved and enhanced. Buffer to hedges should be at least 5m.</p> <p>g) The public right of way through and bordering the site would require a substantial green buffer at least 20m wide so that the experience of walking through the countryside is not impacted upon.</p> <p>h) Development of the site would create a loss in food production. Evidence from other successful sites should be shown to evidence the practicality of grazing within a large scale solar farm site.</p> <p>Forward Planning (LDP/Policy)</p> <p>LDP supportive of renewable energy generation. Policy S3. Renewable energy study currently being prepared by Carbon Trust should be ready soon. Site located in Green Wedge and SLA. The size of the site is particularly relevant to the green wedge allocation as the site stretches probably over 50% of the distance from Bettws to Hollybush and will have a negative effect on this allocation. Impact of proposal on SLA should be informed by full analysis of area and LANDMAP characteristics. Again size of site alone will have major negative effect on particularly Visual and Sensory Landscape, Historic Landscape, Cultural Landscape and potentially Landscape habitats. Site adjacent to Newport CC and their landscape allocations in the area were developed in association with Torfaen so their views on impact particularly relevant in our response.</p> <p>PROW Officer</p> <p>No reply received</p> <p>Environmental Health (noise/contam/housing)</p> <p>This development will require a noise impact assessment for the development as acknowledged in proposals</p> <p>Conservation Officer</p> <p>No reply received</p>
5.	Our initial views on the proposal:

It is the informal opinion of the Local Planning Authority that the development as proposed requires Environmental Impact Assessment. There is the potential for significant effects on the environment, particularly the visual impact on a sensitive landscape of historical, cultural and archaeological significance as well as traffic, ecology and hydrology issues. The development will have a significant detrimental impact on the setting of listed buildings (3126 Pentrebach Farm and 81869 & 82036 Limekilns).

The proposed site is crossed by a number of Public Rights Of Way (refs.416/39/1 and 416/40/1 in the Henllys Community), access to which must not be deterred or impeded by the siting of arrays or proposed site security measures. The location is close to the administrative boundary of Newport City Council which may have its own important assets that could be affected by the proposed development. The views of Newport City Council should therefore be sought prior to submission of any formal planning application.

The main issues are considered to be:

- The principle of the proposed development
- The impact on the supply of agricultural land
- The impact on the character and appearance of the countryside
- The impact on biodiversity, ecology and hydrology
- The impact on highway safety and amenity of residential occupiers
- The impact on the character, appearance and setting of heritage assets

Principle of development

The Torfaen Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Assessment (2013) study (which was produced to provide an evidence base for the Adopted LDP) identifies land in this area as the location for potential solar schemes and in principle the Local Planning Authority supports renewable energy projects through Policy S3 (d) and has granted planning permission for solar arrays elsewhere within the locality. However this area is a Special Landscape Area and within a Green Wedge (to prevent coalescence between Cwmbran and Newport), which would need to be considered and the potential benefits of renewable energy delivery balanced against these and other criteria.

Impact on agricultural land supply

Unfortunately the Local Planning Authority does not have sufficient expertise to validate or otherwise the findings of the submitted ALC Survey. This will therefore need to be independently verified by Welsh Government. National planning policy, in both PPW and TAN 6, seeks to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) from development. The loss of the stated usable Grade 3b (*moderate quality - land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year*) agricultural land would not be considered significant since much of it could still be put to grazing.

Character and appearance of the countryside

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The site and its surroundings are not covered by any national landscape designations however, at a local level, the site forms part of the Southern Lowlands Special Landscape Area (SLA) defined under LDP Policy C2/3 and a Green Wedge defined under LDP Policy C1/1 Cwmbran and Newport. LDP policy does not preclude new development within these areas but only allows new development where it can be demonstrated that it would not adversely affect the landscape character, landscape features or visual amenities of the SLA and not contribute to a coalescence of the settlements (between Hollybush/Cwmbran and Bettws/Newport).

Torfaen County Borough Council Local Development Plan Policy S7 Paragraph 5.7.7 states that *“areas of the County Borough that are designated as Special Landscape Areas (SLA’s) for their high landscape value will be afforded protection to ensure that their character and setting is not harmed by inappropriate development proposals. Development proposals within a SLA will be assessed against Policy C2”*.

Policy C2 paragraph 8.44.1 states that *“utilising the national LANDMAP information system SLA’s have been identified within Torfaen. They have been designated to protect areas that are considered to be important to the overall landscape, history, culture, biodiversity and geology of the County Borough. Areas identified have particular characteristics that combined reflect special areas that are intrinsic to the overall character of Torfaen’s environment”*.

Paragraph 8.44.2 states that *“the areas identified will be protected from any development that would harm the individual and distinctive features of the SLA’s. The policy is not designed to preclude development, although applicants will need to demonstrate that any development proposal will not have an adverse impact on the unique characteristics associated with the specific SLA”*.

Paragraph 8.44.3 states that *“applications for development within an identified SLA will need to consider the LANDMAP aspect areas and identify how the development proposal affects the aspects area”*.

The developer will therefore need to submit a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which analyses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development on the SLA, having regard to the advice of the Council’s Landscape Officer as outlined above.

The developer will also need to demonstrate how the development is in keeping with its countryside setting and also how the proposal will not have an adverse impact on amenity of those overlooking the site, the setting of the listed buildings and also the SLA in their submission. ZVI, photomontages and visual assessments will be useful in this regard. The visual effect of the proposal is a key consideration and the effect on recognised historic assets will be important. The site is located within a historic and culturally and archaeologically significant area. The views of Cadw and GGAT will be important in this regard.

Biodiversity, ecology and hydrology

Please see Ecology Officer comments above. In addition there is a PPW 10 requirement

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to secure enhancements for biodiversity on all new developments – this should also be included in any formal planning application that is submitted.

The site is in the vicinity of the proposed development area is Henllys Bog, one of a handful of valley mires left in the area. It is fed by numerous springs, and it is important that the development will not impact on this area of outstanding importance. The views of Natural Resources Wales (as a statutory advisor on SSSIs) will be important in this regard.

Rainfall run off from the solar panels will, during times of storm, artificially increase the time of concentration and volume into the existing land. Whilst it is accepted that this run-off will soak into/run over the surface of the existing land, and this area is not changed it will concentrate at the lower end of the site, and the Local Planning Authority would ask for assurances that this will not affect the greenfield run-off rates of the site.

Highway safety and amenity of residential occupiers

Please see Highways Officer comments above. The number of heavy vehicles travelling to the construction site on a daily basis will undoubtedly cause further damage to Pentre Lane and add to what is already a poor surface with many potholes. Details of the arrangements that will be put in place to monitor and repair damage caused by construction and decommissioning traffic should be provided.

Noise impact survey information to assess the likely effect on the occupiers of nearby residential properties will also be necessary.

Impact on heritage assets

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The proposed solar farm would fail to preserve the setting of the listed Pentrebach farm and buildings and therefore the Local Planning Authority, or in this case, Welsh Government Ministers, would be within its rights to refuse planning permission for this reason alone, having regard to the strict definition and desirability of preservation enshrined in Section 66 of Act. However the solar farm development also offers a potential income stream for the owner of the listed building(s) that could be used to restore the farm and its curtilage buildings. It could, therefore, be viewed as a form of enabling development with the finance being used to fund the restoration. This would be a matter for the Welsh Ministers to consider further.

Whilst the listed buildings and their setting should be preserved irrespective of any new development, the Local Planning Authority appreciates that this development provides an opportunity to assist with any necessary remedial works to enhance the listed buildings. This enabling aspect of the development could be seen as a benefit of the proposed development and a pragmatic solution to the issues affecting the future of the

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	<p>listed buildings. This benefit will need to be balanced with the other effects of the development (visual impact etc.) in assessing its suitability. Cadw's views on this should be sought at an early stage.</p>
6.	<p>Section 106 requirements: Potential contribution towards listed building restoration/enhancement(s) (subject to Cadw's acceptance of 'enabling development' concept). Biodiversity enhancement measures in accordance with Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.</p>
7.	<p>Information required in support of any planning application:</p> <p>As well as the statutory application validation requirements (forms, fee, community engagement etc.) it is recommended that the developer be advised that any planning application is submitted with the following accompanying information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full landscape and visual impact assessment, including ZVI assessment, photomontages and viewpoint locations (to be pre-agreed with Torfaen CBC and the neighbouring LPA), having regard to the site's location within a Special Landscape Area (LDP Policy C2/3) and LANDMAP information with Visual and Sensory, Cultural Landscape and Historic all valued as moderate to high; • A detailed archaeological and cultural heritage assessment of impacts including the setting of historic assets, as well as a desk-top archaeological study that may necessitate further site investigatory and evaluation assessment; • Traffic management plan, to include details of the routes taken, the number and type of vehicles both for the initial construction period and long term maintenance of the development; • Ecological assessment; • Hydrological assessment (including Flood Risk Assessment); • Noise assessment; and • A full justification of the benefits of the renewable energy project, including reference to the criteria contained at Adopted Torfaen LDP Policy S3 , particularly a consideration of the contribution made to local and national renewable energy and carbon reduction targets.
8.	<p>Relevant local community groups which could be consulted:</p> <p>Henllys Community Council. Gwent Wildlife Trust (owners of Henllys Bog SSSI), Open Spaces Society and Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust.</p> <p>Local Planning Authority Councillors (Two Locks & Henllys Ward): Cllr Ronald Burnett, Cllr Colette Thomas and Cllr Peter Jones – c/o Member Services, TCBC, Civic Centre, Pontypool NP4 6YB</p>

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The views given above are current at the date of this letter and are offered without prejudice to the outcome of a formal planning application. Site circumstances and policies may change and any subsequent application would be assessed in relation to those changes. A formal decision of the Council can only be made in response to a planning application for which further consultations would be carried out. These may, in turn, raise additional issues.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Claire Hall

Uwch Cynllunydd/Senior Planner

RHEOLI DATBLYGAU / DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

NEIGHBOURHOODS, PLANNING & PUBLIC PROTECTION/CYMDOGAETHAU,

CYNLLUNIO A DIOGELU'R CYHOEDD

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Appendix B Heritage Decision Making Framework

Legislation

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 gives statutory protection to any structure, building or site which is considered to be of particular historic or archaeological interest and regulates any activities which may affect such areas. Under the Act any work that is carried out on a Scheduled Monument must first obtain Scheduled Monument consent. It should be noted that the Act does not contain provision which affects changes to the setting of a scheduled monuments, this being a matter of planning policy.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 of the Act requires that the decision maker should have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting when exercising their planning functions. Section 72 sets out a similar duty, to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The 2016 Act made a number of amendments to the 1979 and 1990 Acts. However, the provisions relation to works affecting listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments remains unchanged. The Historic Environment (Wales) Bill 2023 is expected to come into force later this year. The bill is designed to bring clarification to the legislation surrounding built heritage in Wales while retaining earlier provisions affecting listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments.

National Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales 12th Edition 2024 (PPW12)

PPW12 sets out government planning policy. Chapter 6: Distinctive & Natural Places sets out policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This Section sets out the objectives of the Welsh government in order to conserve and enhance the historic environment, ensuring that due consideration is given to historic assets through the planning process.

Paragraphs 6.1.10 – 6.1.13 relates specifically to listed buildings, outlining the need to secure sound economic futures for historic buildings. The policy recognises that the optimum viable use of the building may no longer be the use for which it was originally intended but that proposals should protect and enhance the special characteristics of such buildings. The policy also sets out the requirement for applicants to fully justify their proposals, demonstrating a clear understanding of the significance of the listed building and the impact of any proposals on said significance.

Local Planning Policy

Torfean Local Development Plan, 2013

The Torfean Local Development Plan was adopted in 2013 and sets out the relevant planning policy against which development proposals will be assessed.

Policy S7: Conservation of the Natural and Historic Environment:

“Development proposals should seek to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the Natural, Built & Historic Environment of Torfean, in particular:

- a) Biodiversity resources;***
- b) Geodiversity resources;***

- c) Water Environment;**
- d) Landscape Setting;**
- e) Character of the built environment; and**
- f) Historic assets.**

Policy Justification

Built and Historic Environment

For the purposes of criterion (e), the character of the built environment includes local distinctiveness and setting of settlements and townscape character. The impacts of proposed development on this character will be assessed under Policy S4 and BW1.

The protection of the character of the BILWHS, from both inappropriate development and design is a key aim of the LDP. The Council does not seek to restrict development but promote development proposals that can contribute to the continued protection and enhancement of this important resource. Development proposals within the BILWHS will be assessed against national policy as contained in PPW (Paragraphs 6.4.8 & 6.5.24 - 5th Edition) and Policy HE2.

Other aspects of the Historic Environment should be preserved (as outlined in criterion (f)) where possible, whilst allowing sympathetic development to be brought forward. This includes the promotion of Heritage tourism which is promoted through Policy EET6. The heritage assets include the County Borough's Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest (including scheduled and unscheduled remains), other historic resources as contained on the Historic Environment Record (HER) and LANDMAP features of importance. These national designations are protected under separate legislation and national policy. Development proposals affecting buildings of local importance that do not benefit from statutory protection will be assessed against Policy HE1.

Whilst recognising the importance of the natural and built heritage of Torfaen within this Policy, such objectives will apply in respect of the Brecon Beacons National Park Area that falls within the TCBC boundary. TCBC recognises its duty under Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995 and the importance to ensure that development proposals in the TCBC area which are likely to affect the purposes for which the National Park is designated are carefully considered and do not prejudice the continued conservation and enhancement of the National Park in line with PPW para 5.3.6 - 5th Edition. Supporting LDP Objectives: 2, 7, 10, 12, 14 & 15.

Borough Wide Policy BW1 also sets out general development principles which will be applied to development across the Borough.

"C. Built Environment

- i) The proposal contributes to the preservation and enhancement of the historic built environment wherever possible (including heritage assets and their settings);***
- ii) The proposal does not detrimentally affect the character of the immediate and surrounding built environment; and***
- iii) Where practicable, existing construction materials on the site are re-used or recycled."***

Justification

The historic built environment is an important resource in Torfaen and should be protected wherever possible. Development proposals in proximity to historic resources should ensure proposed design is compatible with the existing built environment and ensure that the new development can be sited and designed to enhance the immediate environment. Similarly, the character of the non-historic built environment should be considered in new development proposals. Quite often new development offers the opportunity to enhance the immediate environment and unsympathetic developments will not be looked on favourably where they are of detriment to the character of an area. The Council has

adopted SPG on Design for Blaenavon and Pontypool Conservation Areas. Development proposals within the respective Conservation Areas will be expected to be in accordance with the design guidance in these documents. Policy S3 should also be referred to when exploring the potential of green infrastructure in the design of development.

Historic Environment

The Local Development Plan also sets out a number of 'Topic Based Policies'. The Historic Environment policies are set out below.

HE1: Buildings and Structures of Local Importance

Development proposals affecting buildings and structures of local importance which make a valuable contribution to the character and interest of the local area will not be permitted where the distinctive appearance, architectural integrity or their settings would be significantly adversely affected, unless the benefits of the proposals would outweigh such adverse effects.

Policy Justification

Throughout the County Borough there are buildings of local importance, which are not afforded statutory protection through listing but make an important contribution to the Historic Environment. Such buildings may be included on local lists of buildings of importance. The Council recognises that such buildings make an important contribution to the special qualities of the area and their architecture, construction and setting in the landscape are important to the character of the immediate area. A number of buildings are at risk of being altered or even demolished with little regard for their local importance. Such buildings should be retained, and appropriate uses sought to maintain their character. Such buildings will be included on a Local List along with justification for their inclusion. Where development proposals affect such buildings or structures the impact should be assessed as part of a planning application.

In assessing development proposals concerning the building, the Council will assess the degree to which the building remains in its original condition, quality of the individual building's architecture and position & influence on the townscape or landscape. Consideration will also be given to the effect of other development proposals on the setting and character of the building of local importance. Importantly however, the Council will give due regard to the difference between buildings of local importance and those that are statutorily listed and hence the level of protection they attract. Consideration will also be given to the building's setting. A local list of such buildings will be compiled from visual surveys and engagement with local interest groups and SPG will set out the methodology for such a list.

Appendix C Gazetteer of Historic Assets

Heritage asset	Date	Designation/ List Entry No.	Record Type	Description/Significance	Sensitivity
Pentre Bach Farm	16 th century	Grade II* No: 3126	Listed Building	The asset comprises a C16th gentry house that was previously a grange known as Cefn y Fyrnach to nearby Llantarnam Abbey. The abbey and house were both in the ownership of the Morgan family. The asset also includes a large brick 17th century mansion later converted into a barn, now in poor condition. The farmhouse's special interest is primarily derived from its historical interest, having been a high-status gentry house with connections to a prominent local family and Llantarnam Abbey. The farmstead also holds evidential value in the fabric, with the surviving fabric providing evidence for the different phases of the building allowing an understanding of its development and adaptation over time.	High
Lime kiln to N of Pentre-Bach (partly in Cwmbran Central)	19 th century	Grade II No: 81869	Listed Building	The lime kilns date to the early 19th century and are representative of the local Monmouthshire typology with a rectangular plan and two kiln eyes. They have been constructed into a bank at the edge of a field and have later been used as animal shelters. The list descriptions note that they are designated for their industrial archaeological interest. As such, their primary value can be considered to be evidential, derived chiefly from the surviving fabric which provides evidence for the construction of kilns in the early 19th century specific to the Monmouthshire region.	Moderate
Lime kiln N of Pentre-Bach (partly in the Llantarnam community)	19 th century	Grade II No: 1172247	Listed Building		Moderate
Canal bridge at Drapers Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	18 th century	Grade II No: 81861	Listed Building	Late C18th canal bridges on the Monmouthshire Canal. It is built with rubblestone and dressed sandstone. The canal was built by Thomas Dadford Junior, 1792-9, it ran between Newport and Pontnewynydd, with a branch between Crindau and Crumlin. There is historic value in the assets as part of the industrial development of the Gwent Valleys, its importance in historic transport and its well preserved nature.	Moderate
Canal bridge at Tredegar Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	18 th century	Grade II No: 81865	Listed Building		Moderate
Canal bridge at Shop Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	18 th century	Grade II No: 81863	Listed Building		Moderate
Canal bridge at Rachels Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	18 th century	Grade II No: 81862	Listed Building		Moderate

Heritage asset	Date	Designation/ List Entry No.	Record Type	Description/Significance	Sensitivity
Canal bridge at Top Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	18 th century	Grade II No: 81864	Listed Building		Moderate
Canal bridge S of Tamplin Lock on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal	18 th century	Grade II No: 81866	Listed Building		Moderate
Aqueduct over Dowlais Brook on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, partly in Cwmbran Central Community	18 th century	Grade II No: 81859	Listed Building	Late C18 th aqueducts carrying the Monmouthshire Canal. Two tunnels of squared stone with segmental arched openings each side of the canal. The canal was built by Thomas Dadford Junior, 1792-9, it ran between Newport and Pontnewynydd, with a branch between Crindau and Crumlin. There is historic value in the assets as part of the industrial development of the Gwent Valleys, their importance in historic transport and their well preserved nature.	Moderate
Aqueduct over Dowlais Brook on Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal (partly in the Llantarnam community)	18 th century	Grade II No: 82035	Listed Building		Moderate
Lime kiln on S side of Garth Road	19 th century	Grade II No: 82034	Listed Building	Early C19 lime kiln of the local Monmouthshire type, rectangular in plan with two kiln eyes. Restored June 1988 by Cwmbran Community Council. There is evidential and historic value in the kiln for its survival and its importance in the historic development of the area.	Moderate
Glan-y-nant Farm	17 th century	Grade II No: 26986	Listed Building	Former farmhouse dating to C17 th with C18 th and C19 th alterations. It is rendered over stone with a slate roof, there is modern glazing throughout. There is good quality timber framing within the interior. There is architectural and historic value in the house, namely for its early date, preserved C17 th character, and use of timber framed construction.	Moderate
Zoar Baptist Chapel	century	Grade II No: 20183	Listed Building	The Baptist Chapel was built in 1836 in the Gothic style. It has since been converted into a house. It is rendered externally with a half-hipped slate roof. There is a large porch to the south front. There are architectural features of note including the pointed entrance doorway with Y-traceried overlight and boarded double-doors; three-pointed arched windows with Y-tracery. The list description notes that the interior is largely unaltered, it	Moderate

Heritage asset	Date	Designation/ List Entry No.	Record Type	Description/Significance	Sensitivity
				is unknown how much of this fabric survives from the conversion. There is high architectural and artistic value in these surviving features which are typical of 19th century Baptist chapels. There is historic value in the chapel as an important public building within a small local community. There is further evidential value in the churchyard which contains a burial ground.	
Ty-ffynnon Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal and Lock (partly in Malpas community)	18 th century	Grade II No: 21951	Listed Building	Bridges built in c.1795. Built of rubblestone with segmental arch; stone voussoirs. The canal was built by Thomas Dadford Junior, 1792-9, it ran between Newport and Pontnewynydd. There is historic value in the assets as part of the industrial development of the Gwent Valleys, their importance in historic transport and their well preserved nature.	Moderate
Ty-ffynnon Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal & attached revetments and Lock	18 th century	Grade II No: 21948	Listed Building		Moderate
Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal SE of Pentwyn (partly in Bettws community)	18 th century	Grade II No: 21947	Listed Building		Moderate
Bridge over the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal SE of Pentwyn (partly in Malpas community)	18 th century	Grade II No: 21950	Listed Building		Moderate
Malpas Court	19 th century	Grade II No: 18285	Listed Building		Built 1834 - 1838 for Thomas Prothero of Newport: architect T H Wyatt, perhaps inspired by Llantarnam Abbey nearby. The house replaced the previous house nearer to main road. The house is built in the early Tudor style using brown rock-faced stone, stone chimneys, mullion and transom windows. It is two storeys with an attic. There are architectural features of note including octagonal buttresses, a semi-octagonal porch with elliptical arches and carved spandrels, and mullion and transom windows. There is architectural and historic value in the house as a good quality C19th house

Heritage asset	Date	Designation/ List Entry No.	Record Type	Description/Significance	Sensitivity
				in the Tudor style and its connections to the well-known British architect T H Wyatt.	
Ty-coch Farmhouse	17 th century	Grade II No: 3137	Listed Building	Farmhouse built in C17th, altered in earlier C19th. It is constructed with white-painted roughcast and a slate roof. There are architectural features of note including the C17th ovolo moulded oak mullion windows, hoodmoulds to some of the windows and internal moulded beams. There is architectural and historic value in the house for its early date, use of timber framed construction methods and the good quality architectural features. The house also served as a hiding place for Jesuit Priests from the nearby Llantarnam Abbey, this is also of historic value.	Moderate
Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal Conservation Area	N/A	N/A	Conservation Area	The canal was built by Thomas Dadford Junior, 1792-9, it ran between Newport and Pontnewynydd, with a branch between Crindau and Crumlin. There is special interest of the conservation area derives from its importance as part of the industrial development of the Gwent Valleys, its historic value in historic transport and its well-preserved nature consisting of a series of interlinked heritage assets which help us to understand how the canal system functioned.	N/A

Appendix D Historic Assets Plan

Heritage Assets Plan

- ◆ Listed Buildings
- ▭ Site Boundary



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20183

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3126

0 100 200 m