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TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A **VIRTUAL MEETING** OF THE **PLANNING COMMITTEE** WHICH WILL BE HELD **AT 10.00 AM ON TUESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 2020** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Kevin Thomas
Telephone (direct line):	01267 224027
E-Mail:	Democraticservices@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

NOTE:-

If you require Welsh to English simultaneous translation during the meeting please telephone 0330 336 4321 Passcode: 71148189#

(For call charges contact your service provider)

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

PLANNING COMMITTEE

20 MEMBERS

PLAID CYMRU GROUP - 10 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Councillor Mansel Charles | Member of Llanegwad Community Council |
| 2. | Councillor Tyssul Evans | Member of Llangyndeayrn Community Council |
| 3. | Councillor Jeanette Gilasbey | Member of Kidwelly Town Council |
| 4. | Councillor Ken Howell | |
| 5. | Councillor Carys Jones | |
| 6. | Councillor Alun Lenny (Chair) | Member of Carmarthen Town Council |
| 7. | Councillor Jean Lewis | |
| 8. | Councillor Dorian Phillips | |
| 9. | Councillor Gareth Thomas | Member of Llenedi Community Council |
| 10. | Councillor Eirwyn Williams | |

LABOUR GROUP - 4 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Councillor Penny Edwards | |
| 2. | Councillor John James | Member of Pembrey & Burry Port Community Council |
| 3. | Councillor Dot Jones | Member of Llannon Community Council |
| 4. | Councillor Kevin Madge | Member of Cwmamman Town Council |

INDEPENDENT GROUP - 4 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor Sue Allen | Member of Whitland Town Council |
| 2. | Councillor Ieuan Davies | |
| 3. | Councillor Joseph Davies | |
| 4. | Councillor Irfon Jones (Vice-Chair) | Member of Bronwydd Community Council |

NEW INDEPENDENT GROUP – 2 MEMBERS

1. **Vacancy**
2. **Vacancy**

SUBSTITUTES ARE TEMPORARILY ALLOWED UNTIL THE 30TH APRIL 2021

A G E N D A

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**
- 3. AREA EAST - DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS** 5 - 28
- 4. AREA SOUTH - DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS** 29 - 38

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**ADRODDIAD PENNAETH
CYNLLUNIO,
CYFARWYDDIAETH YR
AMGYLCHEDD**

**REPORT OF THE
HEAD OF PLANNING,
DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENT**

**AR GYFER PWYLLGOR CYNLLUNIO
CYNGOR SIR CAERFYRDDIN**

**TO CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**AR 22 MEDI 2020
ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**I'W BENDERFYNU/
FOR DECISION**

*Ardal
Dwyrain/
Area East*



Mewn perthynas â cheisiadau y mae gan y Cyngor ddiddordeb ynddynt un ai fel ymgeisydd/asiant neu fel perchennog tir neu eiddo, atgoffir yr Aelodau fod yn rhaid iddynt anwybyddu'r agwedd hon, gan ystyried ceisiadau o'r fath a phenderfynu yn eu cylch ar sail rhinweddau'r ceisiadau cynllunio yn unig. Ni ddylid ystyried swyddogaeth y Cyngor fel perchennog tir, na materion cysylltiedig, wrth benderfynu ynghylch ceisiadau cynllunio o'r fath.

In relation to those applications which are identified as one in which the Council has an interest either as applicant/agent or in terms of land or property ownership, Members are reminded that they must set aside this aspect, and confine their consideration and determination of such applications exclusively to the merits of the planning issues arising. The Council's land owning function, or other interests in the matter, must not be taken into account when determining such planning applications.

COMMITTEE:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	22 SEPTEMBER 2020
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF PLANNING

INDEX - AREA EAST

REF.	APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
E/39554	PROPOSED ONE PLANET DEVELOPMENT FAMILY DWELLING AT LAND SOUTH EAST OF CAERGROES, PENYBANC, LLANDEILO, SA19 7TB

APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

Application No	E/39554
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Application Type	Full
Proposal & Location	PROPOSED ONE PLANET DEVELOPMENT FAMILY DWELLING AT LAND SOUTH EAST OF CAERGROES, PENYBANC, LLANDEILO, SA19 7TB

Applicant(s)	MATTHEW AND CLAIRE DENNEY-PRICE
Case Officer	Kevin D Phillips
Ward	Manordeilo and Salem
Date registered	03 October 2019

Reason for Committee

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee following the receipt of more than one objection from third parties

Site

The application site comprises an 8.9 acres parcel of land which lies in a countryside location approximately 270 meters to the south east of Caegroes farm which is North of the village of Penybanc which is approximately 1.4 kilometres north-west of town of Llandeilo. The land is bordered to the north and east by mature woodland (approximately 3.5 acres in area) that follow the route of two streams, there is a further field to the south and the unclassified 4038 road and boundary hedgerow lies to the west. There are two existing accesses to the field, one at each end of the field and the northern access has stone as part of a track at the entrance into the field and the southern access enables entry for the lower half of the field where there are two shelters for livestock and bee hives. The land has been fenced off to enable partition of the ground for the areas for livestock and crop production/vegetable growing, and chickens.

Proposal

The proposal comprises of the erection of a timber clad "L" shaped One Planet Dwelling (measuring 13m x 16m, 4.2 metres high, with three bedrooms) to be sited at the north eastern corner of the 5.4 acres of grazing land. This land is carved into 5 separate areas with a poultry paddock to the north west; herb, fruit and fruit trees at the north east adjacent to the dwelling; grazing and hay paddock to the central east and west; and the lower southern area to contain an orchard, vegetable growing beds, a polytunnel, workshop, livestock buildings, apiary with wildflowers and pond.

In addition to the plans submitted, the application is supported with the submission of an OPD Management Plan, OPD Supporting Information, Preliminary Ecological Assessment, and the Ecological Footprint Calculation.

The existing and proposed ancillary buildings on site are required for the purposes of storage, production and processing, in support of the following land based activities which have been proposed:

- Beekeeping – for consumption and the sale of honey and bee wax related products;
- Vegetables and soft fruit – a vegetable and soft fruit garden area, together with a polytunnel for the production of fruit and vegetables for the applicant and family’s own consumption with any surplus being sold on;
- Assorted salads and salad bags for consumption and sale;
- Poultry and turkeys– consumption and sale of eggs and sale of poultry and turkeys;
- Herbs production and sales;
- Wild blooms bouquet sales;
- Christmas table blooms and wreaths sales;
- Manure briquettes for use and sale;
- Willow weaving and felting sales.

The development is intended to support a vegetarian family which includes the applicants and their four children, providing their basic household needs from their own food from the proposed land-based activities. The applicants also propose to harvest their own energy through renewable sources, source water from rainwater harvesting and surrounding watercourses and minimising and managing all waste in an environmentally sustainable way.

It is proposed that the development will utilise the existing access into the site off the County Road and it is proposed that the dwelling, buildings, and ancillary structures together with the associated land would form a “One Planet Development”.

The application originally proposed an elaborate architecturally drawn dwelling at the north west of the site, adjacent to the highway, which drew objection due to its prominent location. The objection resulted in the submission of a revised dwelling within the principles of low impact development promoted by Welsh Government One Planet Development, of a simpler form with timber cladding and a live green roof, sited at the lower north east corner of the site, adjacent to the mature woodland.

Planning Site History

There is no relevant planning history on the application site.

Planning Policy

[Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan](#) (Adopted December 2014) ('the LDP')

Policy GP1 (Sustainability and High Quality Design)
Policy TR2 (Location of Development – Transport Considerations)
Policy TR3 (Highways in Development – Design Consideration)
Policy EQ4 (Biodiversity)

[Carmarthenshire Supplementary Planning Guidance](#)

National Planning Policy and Guidance is provided in [Planning Policy Wales](#) (PPW) Edition 10, December 2018 and associated [Technical Advice Notes](#) (TANs) published by Welsh Government, specifically Technical Advice Note 6 (TAN 6) – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities.

Practice Guidance for One Planet Development (OPD) (2012) which provides practical guidance in support of TAN 6.

<https://gweddill.gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/oneplanet/?lang=en>

Summary of Consultation Responses

Head of Transportation & Highways - Any planning permission shall be subject to the application of 6 highways related conditions.

Valuations Manager - Further to our recent conversation and the supporting information provided by the applicants our additional comments are as follows:-

- The EFA calculator figures are exceptionally low. We would question if these are accurate and attainable.
- The keeping of horses on the land is not considered ideal, however the applicants have demonstrated their experience in this area and have a practical use for them and the manure.
- The vegetable growing area is still considered small at 80sq.m. A typical standard allotment suitable for feeding a family of four is 250sq.m. We note however that additional areas and polytunnels are proposed.
- Woodland management proposed is fairly light touch and not aimed at production. This has the potential for more beneficial use as the site becomes established.
- Water – Concerns remain regarding the water supply. Essential criteria 3.64 of Tan 6 requires that 'all water needs are met from water available on site'. Usually this is primarily in the form of mains or spring water supplemented by rainwater. In this case it is rainwater only, although the information provided suggests this can be adequately managed. If not, then the viability of the site could be compromised.
- There is a broad and growing spread of skills and production planned for the site including (but not exhaustively) Honey, wild flowers, manure briquettes, willow

weaving, felting etc. The range of outlets and market for the produce has not been clearly identified.

- Whilst the projected income is modest and broadly considered attainable. The ability for a family of six to live reliably on this remains to be proven. Careful monitoring and progress reporting will be key.
- The revised house location appears far less intrusive. Whilst we haven't had sight of the revised build specification, we would anticipate that this could all be removed should the project fail and that the Exit Strategy adequately covers this?

As noted previously the application is well presented and appears well considered. From an agricultural stand-point this type of development does not make sense from a traditional farm business perspective. We note that due to the recent lockdown and

Covid-19 restrictions we have not been on site to observe progress to date. The proposal

is considered broadly acceptable and there is scope for certain aspects to be developed/improved within the first 5 years. On the basis of what we have seen to date we have no objections to a temporary consent being granted subject to the necessary monitoring and annual reports being obtained.

Head of Public Protection - No adverse comments to make on the application.

Manordeilo and Salem Community Council - Strongly object for the following reasons:-

- Vehicle parking is noted as to be provided onsite. This appears incompatible with a low/zero carbon lifestyle unless it is to be exclusively for visitors.
- However, there are no practical sustainable transport options to and from the site, as narrow country roads are dangerous for walking (with no pavements) and public rights of way are incomplete and unkempt. There is no bus service through Penybanc, and cycling appears unlikely given the applicants' stated desire to sell their crafts and wares at local markets/fayres (of which there are no regular events of this type in the community).
- The application form states that solar panels and biomass are to be installed as standalone developments of significant sizes (6.9MW total). However, these are not illustrated on the planning documents available, which is a considerable omission. Their size and placement requires scrutiny and, if they are to be added later, raises questions over how the energy needed on the site will be generated initially.
- The application form also states that there are no arrangements for waste storage or recycling. Yet, the supporting letter by the applicants details that waste is to be recycled. How then will this be achieved and what will happen to waste that is currently non-recyclable?
- The Welsh Government Guidance for One Planet Developments indicates that a majority of water needs must be met from the site as a minimum. Yet there are no indications as to how this will be achieved (especially as the only water course is over

20m away down a steep slope and with no plan proposal to make use of this source). There have already been serious problems for residents within the wider community of Manordeilo & Salem and its bordering communities over access to clean water. Shortages have occurred for many residents not on the main water system because of longer and drier summers - how will this be mitigated?

- What evidence is there that the site can actually sustain a family? For example, given the lack of a diverse selection of forage for bees in the area and the unpredictability of weather patterns in spring, how much honey is likely to be produced?
- There is no evidence that there is a reasonable market for homegrown fruit and vegetables in the area to provide any realistic income for a family. A business venture selling such produce several years ago to local residents ultimately failed due to lack of support. There is also already significant competition from farmers in supplying free range eggs.
- Selling crafts and wares at local markets and fayres is unlikely to prove profitable because the local market is saturated. Christmas fayres in the wider area already provide platforms for dozens of competitors - none of whom can afford to rely on this income.
- Are the family DBS-checked and what experience do they have in hosting activities and events?
- The above points are deemed relevant to the application because the Welsh Government Guidance for One Planet sites states that: "the site needs to generate enough income to pay for the basic requirements of all the residents on the site which the site is unable to provide directly". The plans within the supporting documents do not provide enough evidence to suggest that they have a realistically possibility of success.
- Finally, aluminium is proposed to be used to clad the windows and steel panels are suggested for the roof. How will it be ensured that these are produced and transported to the site in a manner consistent with low carbon generation?

Local Member(s) - Councillor J Davies is a member of the Planning Committee and has made no prior comment.

Sustainable Drainage Approval Body - New legislation relating to surface water management of new developments now requires approval from Sustainable Drainage Approval Bodies (SAB) throughout Wales.

SABs now evaluate and approve drainage applications for new developments where for example, construction works have drainage implications and cover a construction area greater 100m².

As the development construction area proposed is likely to be greater than 100m², the developer will need to apply for SAB approval.

Please note that SAB applications are separate from planning applications and construction works must not commence before SAB approval is obtained.

All representations can be viewed in full on our [website](#).

Summary of Public Representations

The application was the subject of notification by way of a site notice.

42 representations were received, 18 objecting, 24 in support.

The objections refer to:-

- The dwelling and buildings will have a harmful impact upon the landscape
- The application will not adhere to the Welsh Government guidance in relation to OPD development
- There will be a significant increase to traffic from/to the site
- The development is outside of the settlement limits for Penybanc
- The proposal will set a precedent for other similar proposals in the locality
- The proposal is to circumvent planning policy and to obtain a dwelling in the countryside
- The Business plan submitted does not give sufficient information to allow confidence that the OPD requirements of being self-sufficient will be achieved
- Insufficient information in relation to transport from/to the site is provided
- The solar panels will be visually harmful to the locality
- The dwelling cannot be carbon neutral when there are steel roofing, glulam timber beams, plasterboard, Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer roof waterproofing proposed in the construction
- The ability to achieve the global footprint requirement of 1.88 gha is questioned
- The monitoring of OPD development is poor and it is feared that it will not be possible to ensure that the proposal will adhere to the OPD requirements
- The site will be visible from Dinefwr park and will harm views from there

The representation in support refers generally to:-

- General support for OPDs and of the applicants and the success of their business so far.
- Supportive of applicants and family and their intended contribution to the local community.

- Fully support the proposal and OPD's in general. The proposed development will sustain the village and nearby areas with organic produce.
- Applicants are hardworking and if the LPA support the development it is considered that the applicants will be able to meet the OPD requirements.
- General support for OPD commenting that there is room for more OPD's in the area and that there are conversations as to how OPDs in the area may support each other by working collaboratively or even collectively taking place.
- The produce from the applicants will be of a very high quality and an asset to the local community.

All representations can be viewed in full on our [website](#).

Appraisal

Principle of Development

The proposal falls to be considered under national policy on One Planet Development in the countryside that is contained in Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (PPW) and Technical Advice Note 6 (TAN 6) – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities. Practice Guidance for One Planet Development (OPD) issued in October 2012 provides practical guidance in support of TAN 6. Whilst the Welsh Government supports the principle of low impact development it also places an emphasis on the need to ensure that it is properly controlled.

The Practice Guidance sets out the essential characteristics that all OPDs in the open countryside must have. These are that OPDs must:-

- have a light touch in the environment - positively enhancing the environment wherever possible through activities on site;
- be land-based - the development must provide the minimum needs of residents in terms of food, income, energy, and waste assimilation in no more than five years;
- have a low ecological footprint - the development must have an initial ecological footprint of 2.4 global hectares per person or less with a clear potential to move to 1.88 global hectares per person over time - these are the ecological footprint benchmarked for OPDs over time;
- have very low carbon buildings in both construction and use;
- be defined and controlled by a binding management plan which is reviewed and updated every five years;
- be bound by a clear statement that the development will be the sole residence for the proposed occupants.

TAN6 requires proposals for OPD in the open countryside to quantify how the inhabitants' requirements in terms of income, food, energy, and waste assimilation can be obtained

directly from site. The land use activities proposed must be capable of supporting the needs of the occupants, even on a low level or subsistence basis, within a reasonable period (no more than 5 years). This should be evidenced by a management plan produced by a competent person(s). The management plan should set out the objectives of the proposal, the timetable for the development of the site and the timescale for review. It should be used as the basis of a legal agreement relating to the occupation of the site, should planning permission be granted. The content of the Management Plan will be assessed against the OPD guidance below.

The proposal will also be assessed against the relevant LDP policies, namely Policies GP1 (Sustainability and High Quality Design), TR2 (Location of Development – Transport Considerations), TR3 (Highways in Development – Design Consideration) and EQ 4 (Biodiversity).

Management Plan

A Management Plan and Ecological Footprint Analysis has been provided and this has been prepared by the applicants setting out how they intend to comply with the OPD requirements.

Business and Improvement Plan

The Business and Improvement Plan is essentially the core of the overall management plan and is made up of a number of elements which are discussed in turn below:-

Land-Based Activities

The land based activity element of the management plan centres on justifying the need to live on site and how the site will sustain occupants' minimum food needs and how income will be derived from the land, within the first five years of first habitation on the site. This is the basis of the need to live on site and the reason why the site should be the sole residence of occupants.

Food production – The Practice Guidance states that OPD should be expected to be able to produce at least 65% of basic food needs on the site or a minimum of 30% on the site with the further 35% being purchased or bartered using the income or surplus produce from other produce grown or reared on the site.

The submitted Management Plan indicates that the applicants' diet is mainly based on fruit, vegetables, nuts, grains, dairy produce, and eggs and as a vegetarian family they do not eat meat and fish. It is also planned to experiment with mushrooms and nuts further increasing their self-sufficiency off of the land. They will produce their own eggs, honey, jams and chutneys on site and will forage for blackberries, raspberries, hazelnuts, and elderflower amongst other naturally found produce such as nettles and dandelions. They are experienced home growers from family members plots on a small scale and have had hands on experience sowing, maintaining, and harvesting the produce. The summer months will be spent naturally foraging, freezing blackberries and raspberries to name but a few, for use all year round.

It is intended to follow a labour intense management of the land. No heavy machinery will be used at any stage to prepare the land for their produce. There are currently 2 ponies on site, both of whom will be used to traditionally work the land. They will be used when

needed to harrow any areas ready to sow produce and to harrow manure over grazing areas when rested to naturally fertilize the land. The ponies will be used for foraging and transportation of goods and produce that are too heavy to carry. Some of their manure will be pressed, dried and turned into manure briquettes for heating and cooking purposes, excess produce of manure briquettes can be sold off providing enough income to then in turn buy any necessary supplementary food needed for the ponies, however with careful land management of the grazing pasture it is conveyed that this cost will be minimal. It is intended to have a protected crop area within the polytunnel which will help to ensure a winter cropping season of salads and heat loving vegetable crops such as carrots, garlic, broad beans, radish, and onions. It is also intended to experiment with cherries, peaches, and grapes.

There will be naturally fed free range hens on site who are rehomed ex-battery hens. The good laying hens produce between 250-300 eggs per year, currently there are 12 hens, increasing to 24 all of which lay each day giving 84 eggs per week for the family of 6. Already there are surplus eggs with a minimal amount of hens which are then sold. The free-range hens are fed mainly on green kitchen waste allowing them to be kept without the added cost of brought in grain or corn.

Apple trees have been planted, however the nature of their yield dictates that we expect to produce an established yield from these by the end of year 5. Pear trees follow the same nature of yield and establishment, 2 of these have been planted on site to help achieve the 5 year goal of self-sufficient living and meeting the minimum needs. In terms of storage and preservation of produce, the root crops will be stored in a cold cellar to maximise storage time, crops such as onion, garlic and herbs will be dried and stored for use over the winter months in airtight containers, many crops will be pickled and made into chutneys and some into jams, and a small freezer will be run from generated energy from photovoltaic panels in which it will be able to freeze some produce such as blackberries.

The vegetable plot is double dug to a minimum size of 74 square metres, which produces enough yield to support the family of 6. This will increase in scale by years 4 and 5, when it will be able to visualise the produce yield from years 1 and 2 and compare the annual monitoring reports. There will also be more time to dedicate to a larger vegetable growth area after the completion of the construction of the dwelling and surplus produce will be used for sale/bartering purposes. By gradually increasing the plot size in this way it will ensure there is never any produce wastage from too high a yield.

It is intended to have a mixture of established herbs both in the wild flower meadow and also in the polytunnel, dependent on their desired growing climate. Most of the herbs sown will be perennial so with good management will bloom each year keeping outgoing costs of buying new herb plant/seeds down to a minimum. Many of the perennial herb flowers are also edible and will be added to the fresh salad bags. Ty Derwen Honey currently has 2 hives in the apiary consisting of 10,000 bees in each colony; this will be increased to 4. The current hive produces between 10kg-20kg of honey per year giving us a minimum of 29 jars of 340g honey/hive. Fully established hives have the potential production of honey to increase to 35kg per year; current calculations for year one and two on the minimum production of 10kg per hive, however it is conveyed that it is endeavoured to exceed this.

In addition, wild flower blooms, Christmas wreaths, table decorations, and baskets will be sold at local farmers markets, craft fayres, community events, school fayres, fetes, shops, directly from the holding as well as an online ordering service.

Energy is to be obtained from horse manure. Horse manure does not smell once it has dried, the odour evaporates in the drying process. Each briquette will burn on average for 1 hour. For maximum effect, once dried the briquettes need to be stored in a cool dry place so as not to adsorb any moisture. After the briquettes have been burnt, the ashes can be used as a natural fertilizer making this heating source totally waste free. Currently the manure briquettes are being stored, friends and family also have some as and when needed. 2 briquettes can be produced from one horse manure deposit, on average they deposit 8 times/day giving us 16 briquettes per day per pony, so a total of 32 briquettes a day.

The guidance recognises that even if a site is able to support the majority of the occupants' basic food needs, it is expected that monetary income will need to be generated to enable the purchase of other basic needs, such as clothes, travel, IT/communications and Council Tax and the remaining food needs which cannot be grown or reared on the site or gained through bartering. OPD's must earn their occupants' sufficient income to meet their minimum income needs through sales of produce from the site (which may involve processing and adding value). It may also include other income streams derived from the productive and regenerative capacity of the site, such as from training and education courses, or consultancy directly linked to land-based activities on the site.

The Management Plan includes a breakdown of the applicant's minimum annual needs for the current year and also those predicted by Year 5 and the Council's Agricultural Advisor (Property Team) has commented on the proposals and states that the yields and potential sales prices appear to be in line with agricultural market prices and that the income target for year 5 is not wholly unrealistic. It is conveyed that the proposal is well presented and appears well considered. The proposal is considered broadly acceptable and there is scope for certain aspects to be developed/improved within the first 5 years. On the basis of what has been seen to date there are no objections to a temporary consent being granted subject to the necessary monitoring and annual reports being obtained. However, it is considered that there are risks that exist such as the likely seasonal and annual fluctuations that can be expected. That said, there are multiple land-based activities proposed and this would help to spread the risk. Furthermore, any such issues could only be thoroughly assessed and properly identified and mitigated during the course of the development. The monitoring process would ensure that the OPD targets in terms of food and income are being met and thus that the development is properly controlled.

The intention of land based OPDs are to support the minimum food and income needs of the occupants. This is the main reason that justifies in planning terms, such developments. Therefore, it is of critical importance that the number of occupants is directly related to the ability of the site to support them and the number of people to run the site effectively. The Management Plan explains that the applicants and four children would reside at the site. As stated above, the information provided within the management plan in respect of food production and income is sufficiently detailed to conclude that, on balance, there is a realistic prospect of the site and proposed development being able to provide for the basic needs of the intended occupants.

In terms of labour requirements, whilst no labour calculations for all the proposed land-based activities have been provided with the application, the applicants indicate that they intend to carry out the majority of work themselves, using volunteers to help as and when required.

Energy and Water - the Practice Guidance acknowledges that energy and water are both resources which development consumes, and so create environmental impact. It is an essential characteristic of OPD that the use of these resources is minimised and re-used wherever possible and that the energy needs of inhabitants come from the site. The guidance indicates that this should also be the case for water, unless a more environmentally sustainable alternative can be demonstrated. In terms of energy consumption, the Management Plan states that the applicants intend to meet their energy needs from the site.

The applicants state that they are intending utilising eight 100kw solar panels to meet their needs. The applicant proposes that all electricity on site would be generated by the proposed solar array with excess energy stored in batteries which would provide flexibility of demand and use. Photovoltaic panels will charge the battery bank which will in turn provide electricity via an inverter. Any excess energy made once the batteries are fully charged will be used to power an immersion heater to further heat up a thermal store, this will work in conjunction with the hot water solar panels and therefore reduce the energy needed from a wood burner in the summer months when the house is naturally warmer from solar gain. It is intended to have a woodburning stove with a back burner for cooking and heating purposes. This will be used mainly in the winter months and fuelled with manure briquettes and fallen trees which will be logged, dried, and stored for colder weather. Cooking in the summer months can be done on an outdoor stove using manure briquettes and logs, by cooking outside the house will not become too hot. The summer months are naturally brighter, and they will benefit from more solar gain, the energy stored in the summer months could easily power an "A" rated electric oven.

The primary source of water will be rain-water harvested from structures on site. The dwelling will be the main source of water collection along with the polytunnel, mobile field shelter, poultry housing and workshop. Any balance can be drawn from watercourses surrounding the site with careful consideration and monitoring to ensure no over-abstraction of the natural watercourse. The rainwater will be collected via guttering and then stored in 1000 litre IBCs food grade containers which are already onsite. The containers will be clad in larch or recycled timber to ensure no algae growth. The overflow from the IBCs tanks will run down into a pond which will also act as a water collection area and this water can be used on growing areas.

Waste Assimilation – Waste produced by both domestic and other activities on site is likely to include, domestic food waste, grey water, human waste, packaging and paper, green waste from growing food and timber and livestock manures.

The practice guidance provides essential criteria for the assessment of waste on site. It states:-

- All biodegradable waste on site is assimilated on site in environmentally sustainable ways;
- The only exception to this is the occasional off-site disposal of small non-biodegradable amounts of waste which cannot be assimilated on site which arise from things used on site wearing out or breaking irreparably;
- All waste handling and assimilation on site must comply with natural Resources Wales guidelines.

The applicants propose to grow most of their food on site therefore food packaging waste would be reduced and collected by Council refuse services. Any uncooked food waste would be fed to poultry or composted, and any cooked waste would be processed and broken down. Human waste would be collected in the proposed composting toilet and once broken down would be used on the land to boost soil fertility, mainly at the base of trees and shrubs. Animal manure and soiled animal and poultry bedding would be added to compost whilst green waste from tree cutting and the vegetable garden would be fed to livestock where possible or otherwise shredded and added to the compost. Grey water will not be wasted, the household will use only environmentally friendly washing and cleaning products. Grey water can therefore be collected via drain-pipes into water butts, through a filtration system such, and in turn used on the non-edible trees and plants on site. Inorganic waste which is imported from off site and cannot be decomposed would be minimised, re-used and recycled where possible.

It is considered that the proposed strategy to minimise, assimilate and reuse/recycle waste would meet the requirements of the practice guidance. Furthermore, the applicants' will be required to provide evidence that the re-use of organic waste on site has increased the overall fertility and productivity of the site in the annual monitoring report.

Zero Carbon Buildings

The OPD Practice Guidance lists the essential criteria in respect of the environmental performance of proposed buildings:-

- Domestic and ancillary buildings will be 'zero carbon' in construction and using the up to date Welsh definition of zero carbon;
- Proposals will identify which structures require Building Regulations approval and is obtained either before or during construction;
- All structures identified for removal in the Exit Strategy are capable of removal with low environmental impact.

The guidance also states that the buildings should make as much use of recycled materials as much as possible. The information submitted indicates that the dwelling and ancillary buildings will be constructed from local and natural materials and are considered to be sited so as to reduce their visual and landscape impact.

The application originally proposed an elaborate architecturally drawn dwelling at the north west of the site, adjacent to the highway, which drew objection due to its prominent location. The objection resulted in the submission of a revised dwelling within the principles of low impact development promoted by Welsh Government One Planet Development, of a simpler form with timber (larch) cladding and a live green roof to the southern elevation. Insulation is proposed to be straw bale, internal finish in traditional cob and larch, northern roof will be reclaimed steel sheets to aid with rainwater harvesting, and reclaimed windows and doors are proposed. The dwelling has been designed to utilise passive solar gain from south facing windows, sited at the lower north east corner of the site, adjacent to the mature woodland.

The proposals for the proposed dwelling are considered acceptable subject to obtaining Building Regulations Approval the outcome of which can be detailed in future monitoring reports.

The existing buildings include a workshop which is exempt from building regulations and will be constructed upon Planning Permission being granted at approximately 20 x 10ft, an existing mobile field shelter sourced locally, existing poultry housing made from recycled wooden pallets and an existing polytunnel.

The applicant also states that the structures and material used in the construction of the dwelling and ancillary buildings can be re-used as part of an exit strategy if the OPD on site fails to meet the commitments and targets in the management plan in year 5.

As such, and for the reasons set out above it is considered that on balance the development could be low carbon, both in construction and use.

Community Impact Assessment

The essential criteria are that:-

- There is a thorough assessment of all impacts of the proposal on neighbouring communities. One Planet Development in the open countryside should not impact negatively on neighbouring communities.
- Any negative impacts are mitigated.

The Management Plan includes an assessment of positive community impacts and mitigated negative impacts in association with low impact produces, farm and food processing facilities, participation in local economy, open days, and conservation of local honeybee populations.

In terms of positive community impacts, these include produce being prepared and sold locally to the community and therefore having a low carbon footprint, making the site accessible for community use and learning opportunities for others including children in addition to increasing the supply of locally bred bee colonies. Negative community impacts are identified as being potentially traffic generation associated with gate sales, events and other visitors to the site having a negative impact on other local producers.

The extent of the activities taking place at the site must be controlled and their frequency will need to be recorded in the annual monitoring report which the Council will have to assess and approve to ensure that the community impacts are positive. The proposals put forward must not be the dominant use; rather they are to supplement income derived from the site-based activities. These will be carefully monitored in the event that applicants receive planning approval.

In terms of competition with other local producers whilst the applicants acknowledge that selling their home produce could potentially impact on other local producers, they state that their intention is to collaborate with such producers and tailor their produce market to meet market demand. In addition, they state that the total amount of produce grown is only a fraction of the total consumed and as such there is ample demand.

Transport Assessment and Travel Plan

In accordance with the practice guidance, the applicants have provided the necessary assessment information in the form of a transport baseline, an assessment of movements proposed to and from the site (by car, public transport walk, bike) along with a Travel Plan which details how vehicle movements can be minimised in respect of each activity the movement is associated with.

The information provided provides a breakdown of the type and frequency of trips per year upon establishment and occupation of the site and a breakdown of the average distances per trip. Strategies to minimise trip generation include combined/shared journeys, purchase of bulk products, using public transport and cycling when possible. Whilst the household would primarily be reliant on a car or van for transport it is considered that the applicants' strategy, which if implemented would enable trip generation to be reduced and journeys kept to a minimum, is realistic given the self-sufficient lifestyle proposed.

Notwithstanding the above, the annual monitoring report should detail annual movements to and from the site and look at ways to continually reduce these if the proposals in the Travel Plan are not met.

Ecological Footprint Analysis

PPW requires One Planet Development to initially achieve an ecological footprint of 2.4 global hectares per person or less in terms of consumption and demonstrate clear potential to move towards 1.88 global hectares over time. The submitted EFA analysis explains the energy, housing and infrastructure, travel and transportation, food shop purchase, food homegrown, consumable goods and services plan and the calculation shows that the applicants' predicted footprint would be 0.58 global hectares per capita after first year and falling to 0.19 global hectares per capita after five years which would exceed the target set out in TAN6.

The GHA/person submitted for the application is very low which noted by the Valuation manager. It is conveyed by the applicant that throughout the submitted management plan it is relayed how the applicants intend to and are dedicated to living a low impact, sustainable lifestyle using only their fair share of the Earth's resources. By producing their food needs on site as well as their own energy, water and composting and reusing any waste products. It is conveyed that they are committed and confident that they can reach the targets of a lifestyle to be upheld as an exemplar model of OPD living.

In addition, the applicants have conveyed that they have examined the figures that they have put into the EFA on several occasions as they had also not expected such a low ecological footprint. The figures we have input into the online EFA calculator are a true representation of their current and predicted lifestyle and relate to the lifestyle changes once they will be living on site. They have used the EFA calculator to the best of their ability and the results given are those predicted by the online tool.

The applicants must provide the actual figures for assessment and scrutiny by the Council in the annual monitoring report. The results will be interpreted using the current practice guidance and OPD Ecological Footprint Calculator.

Phasing, Monitoring and Exit Strategy

The Management Plan contains a phased programme of works along with a monitoring and exit strategy.

The applicants' management plan provides a timeline of the key site developments, explaining what is anticipated in years 1-6 and then for year 6 and beyond, however this timeline has now slipped as the application was submitted in 2019.

The annual monitoring report will provide details of the progress made along with a re-run of the ecological footprint analysis and a condition will be included to this effect. Commitments which have not been reached will have to be evidenced in the annual monitoring report. Critical failures need to be remedied with solutions and of how quickly they can be achieved. The Council will assess the monitoring report criteria outlined in the practice guidance.

The One Planet Development Practice Guidance indicates that the management plan should outline an exit strategy if the development fails to achieve one or more of the essential characteristics of OPD over a period of two years without instituting clear and effective measures to address the identified problems.

The developer has indicated in their management plan that the aim of the exit strategy would be to return the land to solely agricultural use, in equal or better condition than the base date should the exit strategy need to be invoked. The exit strategy recognises that the residential use would need to cease and that this would involve the dwelling's removal and removal of other buildings and structures as necessary. It is proposed that any non-degradable materials would be re-used off site and any natural materials would be allowed to compost on site. The exit strategy also states that the dwelling and all other buildings and structures will be designed to be easily removed from the site to be recycled elsewhere.

Other Planning and Material Considerations

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

The dwelling would be sited to concentrate the main built development at the north east of the site and would also benefit from the screening provided by the existing mature trees to the North and East and a mature and well-kept hedgerow along the highway. The proposal's relatively concealed location also means that it is unable to be readily viewed from the wider area. The dwelling would have three bedrooms and comprise a single storey, pitched roof design with much of the south to west elevation able to maximise solar gain. The proposed length of the dwelling is 13m x 16m, and 4.2 metres high. It is not proposed to incorporate any traditional architectural features that are typical of rural dwellings, however, OPD dwellings are designed to be zero carbon and this inevitably leads to the avoiding of traditional features in favour of large glazed south facing elevations and timber facades. The dwelling intends to be zero carbon (subject to Building Regulations approval) and the proposed materials details are provided earlier in the report. On balance, it is considered that the proposed dwelling has an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area.

The proposed stable buildings are also considered to be of an acceptable scale, design, and external appearance. The proposed buildings would again be sited in the mid-eastern portion of the site which would not concentrate the built development in one place in order to reduce any visual impact in this countryside location. Concerns have been raised by

objectors that the existing screening of the site is largely provided by deciduous trees. Whilst there will be times of the year when the screening of the site would be reduced and therefore the proposed development would be more visible, it is considered that the scale and appearance of the proposed dwelling and ancillary buildings would be acceptable, being sited with the woodland as a significant backdrop.

Residential Amenity Impacts

There are existing farm dwellings and outbuildings to the North west and South west. The distance maintained between the aforementioned and the proposed development is such that it is not considered that overlooking is an issue nor is the physical impact of the proposal upon the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. As such it is considered that the proposal would accord with Policy GP1 having regard to residential amenity.

Transportation and Highway Safety

The application site has two existing accesses which is currently in use and has historically been used by previous owners including when the site operated as part of agricultural land part of the holding at Cwmwern to the south west. The Head of Highways and Transportation has responded to consultation with no objection to the proposal on the basis that movements to and from the site are likely to be low over the course of the year. The highway conditions will be included in order to ensure the access remains acceptable having regard to highway safety. Inevitably, there will be traffic generation in the early stages of the development due to the need for transport of construction materials etc. However, given that the applicants propose to be living at the site with a significant amount of food requirements gained from the land, the need for journeys should be below that required of the conventional dwelling. Furthermore, the applicants themselves will and people visiting the site will be encouraged to use sustainable means such as public transport, car sharing and bicycle. Dedicated space for parking is shown on the submitted site plan and there appears to be ample space within the site for turning to allow vehicles to exit the site in a forward gear. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies TR3 and TR4 of the LDP

Ecology and Biodiversity

The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment by Ecologist Matt Sutton, undertaken in July 2019. The survey report concludes that there are no predicted negative impacts on existing features of ecological importance. The existing priority habitats will be kept intact, the habitat quality will improve for certain birds and foraging bats, amphibian populations are likely to increase. The ecologist concluded that the proposed development does not appear to present a significant risk to protected species, but woodland areas require protection from grazing and sensitive ongoing management.

The Authority's Planning Ecologist has noted that the applicant's Ecologist has identified the presence of the invasive sub-species. It is advised that a way forward would be to note the response and request that this information be included in a recommended invasive species management plan. It is considered that the proposal would comply with Policy EQ4 in respect of biodiversity.

Other Matters

Numerous representations have been received objecting to the proposed development. The concerns raised by objectors have been addressed in the preceding paragraphs of the report.

Planning Obligations

The application is required to be subject to a Section 106 agreement to tie the dwelling to the land and include a commitment that the dwelling will be the sole residence of the occupants. This information has been received but its contents and legal status has not been confirmed to date and no permission will be released until this has been concluded to adhere to the OPD guidance requirements.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The decision considers the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the WBFG Act). The decision takes into account the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act and it is considered that this decision is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Conclusion

After careful consideration of the scheme as submitted it is concluded on balance that the proposed development complies with Technical Advice Note 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010) and the accompanying One Planet Development Practice Guidance and policies GP1, TR2, TR3, and EQ4 of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan Adopted 2014 ('the LDP') in that the proposal is supported by sufficient information to demonstrate that there is a strong prospect that the proposal would substantially meet the One Planet Development criteria within the required timescales. The submitted information indicates that the development would achieve the overall ecological footprint as set out in the One Planet Development policy and practice guidance documents.

The Valuations Manager has raised some concern regarding a few possible issues, which the applicant has responded to and addressed, however the Valuations Mage concludes that the proposal is considered broadly acceptable and there is scope for certain aspects to be developed / improved within the first 5 years. On the basis of what has been seen to date the Valuation Manager has no objections to a consent being granted subject to the necessary monitoring and annual reports being obtained and considered.

The proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area and includes various proposals to improve the site's environment and biodiversity and would not have an unacceptable impact upon the living conditions of nearby residents and the development would result in unacceptable impacts to highway safety.

The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the completion of the applicants entering into and completing a section 106 agreement and the following conditions.

Recommendation – Approval

Conditions

- 1 The development hereby approved shall be commenced before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The above approved development relates to the following plans and documents and works shall be carried out in accordance with them unless amended by any conditions below:-
 - Location Plan 1:2500 scale, received 1 October 2019;
 - Site Plan 1:1250 scale, received 6 February 2020;
 - Front Elevation Plan 1:100 scale, received 5 February 2020;
 - Rear Elevation Plan 1:100 scale, received 5 February 2020;
 - Side Elevation Plans 1:100 scale, received 5 February 2020;
 - Floor Plan 1:100 scale, received 5 February 2020;
 - One Planet Development Management Plan received 11 October 2019.
- 3 No later than 1 April each year, commencing in the second year after development commences, the occupiers of the site shall submit to the Local Planning Authority an Annual Monitoring Report giving details of the activities carried out during the previous calendar year (1 January to 31 December), setting out performance against the One Planet Development essential criteria as stated within the One Planet Development Management Plan, received 2 October 2020. Where the report identifies that the expected performance targets against any of the essential criteria has not been met, the report shall also set out corrective or mitigating measures sufficient to address the identified deficiencies in performance. These measures shall be implemented, in full and within the timescales stated, as set out in the report, and shall form the basis of assessment, along with the original One Planet Development Management Plan for the subsequent Annual Monitoring Report.
- 4 The new vehicular access shall be laid out and constructed strictly in accordance with Carmarthenshire County Councils (Highways and Transport services) Typical Layout No. 5 specification, prior to the commencement of any other work or development. Thereafter it shall be retained, unobstructed, in this form in perpetuity.
- 5 Any access gates shall be set back a minimum distance of 5.0 metres from the highway boundary, and shall open inwards into the site only.
- 6 Prior to the residential occupation of the dwelling hereby approved, a visibility splay of 2.4 metres x 70 metres shall be formed and thereafter retained in perpetuity,

either side of the centre line of the access in relation to the nearer edge of carriageway. In particular there shall at no time be any obstruction above 0.9 metres within this splay area.

- 7 The access, visibility splays and turning area required, shall be wholly provided prior to any part of the development being brought into use, and thereafter shall be retained unobstructed in perpetuity. In particular, no part of the access, visibility splays, or turning area, is to be obstructed by non-motorised vehicles.
- 8 The parking spaces and layout shown on the plans herewith approved shall be provided prior to any use of the development herewith approved. Thereafter, they shall be retained, unobstructed, for the purpose of parking only. In particular, no part of the parking or turning facilities is to be obstructed by non-motorised vehicles.
- 9 The access shall be hard surfaced in a bonded material for a minimum distance of 5.0 metres behind the highway boundary, prior to any part of the development approved herewith being brought into use and thereafter maintained in perpetuity.
- 10 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, detailed drawings of the proposed workshop shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reasons

- 1 Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2 In the interest of clarity as to the extent of the permission.
- 3 To ensure commitment and compliance with the objectives of TAN6 and the One Planet Development Practice Guidance and to avoid the creation of an unencumbered dwelling-house in the open countryside contrary to national and local planning policies.
- 4-9 In the interest of highway safety.
- 10 In the interest of visual amenity.

Notes

- 1 Please note that this consent is specific to the plans and particulars approved as part of the application. Any departure from the approved plans will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action. You (or any subsequent developer) should advise the Council of any actual or proposed variations from the approved plans immediately so that you can be advised how to best resolve the matter.

In addition, any Conditions which the Council has imposed on this consent will be listed above and should be read carefully. It is your (or any subsequent

developers') responsibility to ensure that the terms of all Conditions are met in full at the appropriate time (as outlined in the specific condition).

The commencement of development without firstly meeting in full the terms of any Conditions which require the submission of details prior to the commencement of development will constitute unauthorised development. This will necessitate the submission of a further application to retain the unauthorised development and may render you liable to formal enforcement action.

Failure on the part of the developer to observe the requirements of any other Conditions could result in the Council pursuing formal enforcement action in the form of a Breach of Condition Notice.

- 2 This permission is subject to the clauses set out in a Section 106 Agreement that ties the dwelling to the land to ensure that the proposal complies with the requirements of the One Planet Development Policy and Practice Guidance documents and avoids the creation of an unencumbered dwelling in the open countryside contrary to national and local planning policies.
- 3 Comments and guidance received from consultees relating to this application, including any other permissions or consents required, is available on the Authority's website (www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk).

*Ardal De/
Area South*

**ADRODDIAD PENNAETH
CYNLLUNIO,
CYFARWYDDIAETH YR
AMGYLCHEDD**

**REPORT OF THE
HEAD OF PLANNING,
DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENT**

**AR GYFER PWYLLGOR CYNLLUNIO
CYNGOR SIR CAERFYRDDIN**

**TO CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**AR 22 MEDI 2020
ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**I'W BENDERFYNU/
FOR DECISION**



Mewn perthynas â cheisiadau y mae gan y Cyngor ddiddordeb ynddynt un ai fel ymgeisydd/asiant neu fel perchennog tir neu eiddo, atgoffir yr Aelodau fod yna rhaid iddynt anwybyddu'r agwedd hon, gan ystyried ceisiadau o'r fath a phenderfynu yn eu cylch ar sail rhinweddau'r ceisiadau cynllunio yn unig. Ni ddylid ystyried swyddogaeth y Cyngor fel perchennog tir, na materion cysylltiedig, wrth benderfynu ynghylch ceisiadau cynllunio o'r fath.

In relation to those applications which are identified as one in which the Council has an interest either as applicant/agent or in terms of land or property ownership, Members are reminded that they must set aside this aspect, and confine their consideration and determination of such applications exclusively to the merits of the planning issues arising. The Council's land owning function, or other interests in the matter, must not be taken into account when determining such planning applications.

COMMITTEE:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	22 SEPTEMBER 2020
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF PLANNING

INDEX - AREA SOUTH

REF.	INFORMATION ITEM
DNS/00422	DNS (DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE) - PROPOSED SOLAR PARK (DNS/3213164) AT LAND AT PENDERI, BLAENHIRAETH FARM, LLANGENNECH, LLANELLI, SA14 8PX

Application No	DNS/00422
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Application Type	Development of National Significance (DNS)
Proposal & Location	DNS (DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE) - PROPOSED SOLAR PARK (DNS/3213164) AT LAND AT PENDERI, BLAENHIRAETH FARM, LLANGENNECH, LLANELLI, SA14 8PX

Applicant(s)	Voltalia UK Limited – Kelly Clutterbuck
Case Officer	Gary Glenister
Ward	Llangennech
Date registered	08 September 2020

Introduction

Two Developments of National Significance (DNS) have been submitted to Welsh Government for solar renewable energy schemes within Carmarthenshire. The first near Llangennech and second near Tycroes. Under the DNS procedure, Carmarthenshire County Council is not the determining body, however it is a key consultee in the process.

The following is an information item regarding the Llangennech scheme which covers a site with land in the Llangennech, Llannon and Swiss Valley wards. The Tycroes scheme will be reported to the Planning Committee in October as an information item so this report only covers the Llangennech scheme.

As a consultee, this authority is required to produce a Local Impact Report (LIR) which is a technical report highlighting potential local impacts that will need to be assessed by the Welsh Government. If Planning Committee wishes to make representations expressing a view to Welsh Government it can do so under a separate cover by the 9th October 2020. This report is for information only and if Committee wishes to make observations to Welsh Government these can be noted and ratified in the minutes on the 8th October 2020.

The Head of Planning seeks delegated authority to submit the Local Impact Report on behalf of the Council.

The Proposal Overview

The scheme constitutes a solar farm with associated infrastructure. The peak capacity is 38MW of renewable energy to achieve a maximum export capacity of 30MW.

It is estimated that the proposal would generate renewable electricity for over 10,600 homes per year which is equivalent to displacement of 15,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year or 525,000 tonnes over the 35 year operational lifespan of the scheme.

An economic benefit report suggests that the scheme would be a £30m capital investment in Carmarthenshire and support 70 temporary jobs (approx. 30 directly and 40 indirectly) during an 11 month construction period and 4 full time equivalent jobs directly and indirectly for on going management of the site during operation with a gross value added to the local economy of £3.3m during construction and £1.7m over 10 years operation based on ONS figures.

Solar panels are proposed to be mounted on frames to form what are known as arrays. Arrays vary in length and have a height of 2.75m spaced so they have 3.65m clear space between them. They are orientated to the south with a tilt angle of 25degrees (when flat) to maximise solar gain. The sites are not flat, so the proposed arrays would follow the topography of the land.

Electricity generated feeds into inverters which are located in 'transformer centres' with 16 located through the scheme which are linked by cable to a sub-station proposed immediately to the North North West of the farm complex which in turn is proposed to feed directly to a National Grid 132kv overhead line which passes over the site. Linking cables are proposed to be buried in 1m deep trenches. The proposal is set within a 2m security fence with 3m high CCTV cameras to provide surveillance.

In terms of delivery access, Site B has direct access to the A476 to provide access for construction deliveries with smaller vehicles used to deliver to different parts of the site. Site A is accessed via the U2309 and Sites B and C are connected via existing farm tracks within the holding.

The cable route to the sub station from Site A includes an on-road section which crosses the Afon Morlais at the Grade II Listed Cilddewi bridge so a secondary application for Listed Building Consent is included with the DNS.

A scheme of landscaping has been submitted which includes a combination of hedgerow reinforcement with 11 individual trees and new hedgerow planting comprising 1208 linear metres of new hedgerow comprising 6040 plants.

The Site

The application site totals 96.27ha and is split into three parcels of land.

Site A is a 39.4ha parcel of land to the North of Blaenhiraeth Farm. The site is approx. 1.6km South of Llannon and 3.3km North West of Hendy. The site is accessed off the U2309. The site forms a south western facing valley side location with Gelli Wernen Wood and the Afon Morlais running to the South West. The land is improved grassland within well defined hedge boundaries. The site has properties known as Cil-Ddewi Uchaf and Cil Ddewi Fawr to the East. The site is more visible from the A476 across the valley with properties including Penderi Farm, Wayside and disused historic farm complexes of Llwynon and Gelli Wernen.

Site B is a 17.2ha parcel of improved grassland accessed directly off the A476 approximately 2km North North East of Swiss Valley. The site is also accessible internally through Blaenhiraeth Farm using farm tracks. The land is improved grassland which is used for grazing. The site would be visible from the A476 through hedge openings with land rising to a ridge then falling away towards the farm complex. No panels are proposed on the ridge to minimise visual impact. The small clusters of properties known as Medelfyw and Clochyrie

and Ferm y Cware accessed off the A476 are to the south but the topography means that they are somewhat visually detached from the proposal.

Site C is a 13.9ha parcel of land to the South of Blaenhiraeth Farm complex. The land is again improved grassland lying to the West of the main farm access road. The Farm known as Medelfyw lies to the South West accessed off the C2077, Medelfyw is on elevated ground so has a clear view of the site. A public countryside amenity known as Trosserch Woods lies to the South East with a small car park for visitors accessed off the U2309. There are Public Rights of Way passing the side which go through the applicant's land so there is public visibility.

Further land is included within the 96.27ha application site which is proposed to be used as ecological mitigation hence the total figure is higher than the sum of the three parcels described above. This ensures that there is no doubt or ambiguity over the ecological mitigation as it forms part of the proposal within the application site. The land owner has further land which is identified in blue that is not affected by the proposal.

Public Engagement

The applicants have sought pre-application advice from the local planning authority and have carried out the pre application consultation process.

The applicants have undertaken two public consultation events in the early stages of the process, the first at Best Western Diplomat Hotel and the second at Llangennech Community Centre.

There has also been without prejudice engagement with the three community councils to discuss potential community benefits. Whilst this is not a material planning consideration, good practice would indicate that a reasonable community benefit should be offered as we have seen elsewhere such as at Brechfa Wind Farm.

27 individual representations were submitted as set out in the Consultation Report. The issues raised by the public are generally in line with issues identified by the Local Planning Authority as set out below.

It should be noted that as a result of public engagement, amendments have been made to the scheme.

The Material Considerations

Climate Change

There is general support for renewable energy in local and national policy and guidance, provided all other matters are satisfactorily addressed. The policy framework is set out in the submission. The Welsh Government has set targets for renewable energy production which it is seeking to achieve and Carmarthenshire County Council has itself declared a climate emergency and is seeking to be a net zero carbon local authority by 2030.

The principle of generating renewable energy is therefore well established in both Wales and Carmarthenshire provided it is in the right place and the impact is not so great as to clearly outweigh other considerations. It will therefore be the role of the Council as consultee, to highlight any local impacts so that Welsh ministers can assess them and determine the scheme in accordance with national policy and guidance.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The scheme is set within a 96.25ha site, so there will be an impact on the local landscape. The site is set within a defined valley so any impact is largely enclosed and limited to local

views of the site rather than it being widely visible. There are however properties within this enclosed landscape, so an assessment of visual impact on these properties is material. It is noted that the site does not fall within any local or nationally defined designated landscape so the merits need to be assessed at a local level. A landscape and visual assessment has been carried out as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and photo montages produced to aid this assessment.

Residential Amenity

An assessment of residential amenity has been undertaken by the developer. As stated above, the site is within an enclosed landscape within a valley setting with a number of properties within this landscape.

Highways

The Transport Statement and Construction Management Plan assessment includes a construction routing plan which indicates delivery lorries will leave the M4 at Pont Abram, proceed on the A48 towards Hendy then cross under the M4 to join the B4306 and turn onto the A476 at Llannon. This is being assessed by the Head of Transport as a consultee, however the applicant's report suggests a condition should be imposed so that the precise details can be approved prior to commencement. Any requirements (conditions) will be determined by the Local Authority.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The submission is accompanied by a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment that will be scrutinised as part of the determination process. The EIA identifies the impact of the proposal on the area and includes recommendations of how any impacts can be minimised or mitigated. The Environmental Statement is supported by the following documents:

- Flood Consequence Assessment
- Phase 1 Ground Condition Survey
- Outline Construction Environment Management Plan
- Arboriculture Survey, Impact Assessment and Protection Plan
- Residential Visual Amenity Plan
- Extended Phase 1 Ecological Survey Report
- Wintering Bird Survey Report
- Breeding Bird Survey Report
- Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Matrix
- Construction Ecological Management Plan
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

The Non Technical summary document gives the headlines of the scheme and summarises the sections. A brief summary of relevant extracts are as follows:

Biodiversity Enhancements

3.11 Land between and beneath the panels would be used for biodiversity enhancements and seasonal sheep grazing. Tree planting would be introduced to bolster screening.

3.12 The application proposal would also include a package of landscape, ecological and biodiversity benefits that could include the installation of bird nesting boxes, bee hives, log piles and other hibernacula such as small buried rubble piles suitable for reptile species, amphibians and insect life.

Effects on Landscape Elements

5.2 *The landscape elements that constitute the landscape character of Sites A, B and C would remain largely unaffected by the proposed development. Site topography, field pattern and enclosure, woodlands, hedgerows and trees would generally remain physically intact with the solar arrays and supporting infrastructure in place. Enhancements to landscape elements would be made in terms of the maintenance and infilling of hedgerows to enhance visual screening.*

Effects on Landscape Character

5.3 *The landscape elements that constitutes the character of the LANDMAP geological, habitats, historic or cultural aspect areas within Sites A, B and C would generally remain physically unaffected by the proposed development.*

Effects on Visual Amenity

5.4 *Glimpse views of the security fencing and upper solar panels above hedgerows would be perceptible when travelling along the unclassified lane between the B4306, Cil-Ddwe-uchaf, Blaenhiraeth Farm and Troserch Wood directly to the east of Site A and C; on the unclassified lane between Porth Dafen, Carn-Hywel-isaf and the A476 Llannon Road to the south of Site C; and when travelling along the elevated A476 Llannon Road to the west of Site B. These glimpse views would be further screened through proposed hedgerow reinforcements to improve visual screening.*

5.6 *Sites A, B and C would not be visible from the settlements of Hendy, Llangennech, Swiss Valley or Horeb. Distant glimpse views of the solar arrays within Site A would be barely perceptible from Llannon located 1.6km to the north. Due to the undulating landform, hedgerows and woodland many views of the solar panels would generally be restricted to glimpses from upper floor windows from the isolated farms and residential properties directly surrounding the sites.*

Summary

5.8 *The proposed solar PV development would result in a degree of harm to the landscape character and visual amenity of the land at Blaenhiraeth Farm, Llanelli. However, the landscape and visual effects would be localised owing to the sloping landform of the valley, surrounding woodland and the limited receptors or opportunities to observe the proposed development in the wider landscape from publicly accessible viewpoints.*

Ecology and Nature Conservation

6.2 *The ecological survey identified a range of habitats on/immediately adjacent to the site, however, many of these habitats were of low ecological value. The habitats within and adjacent to the site were assessed as being suitable for a variety of notable and protected species.*

6.8 *With the successful implementation of the mitigation measures adverse impacts upon the ecological features identified can largely be reduced to a non-significant level.*

The submission also includes the following:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Consultation Report
- Noise Assessment
- Glint and Glare Assessment.

Listed Building Consent

Part of the application is seeking a secondary consent to allow a cable trench to be installed across the Grade II Listed Cilddewi Bridge to connect the Northern section of the proposal known as Site A to the substation at the farm complex and therefore gain access to the National Grid. This involves laying 3No. 11kv cables across the bridge. A methodology has been submitted within the Heritage Assessment. This is proposed to involve closure of the bridge and cutting a trench in the upper tarmac and concrete layers of the bridge, between the historic structure and the modern surface to allow a cable duct to be installed so the cabling can be installed so the high power connection can be made between sites.

Conclusion

The proposal is on a large scale and if approved would inevitably have an impact on the local area. Any impact will have to be weighed against local and national policy and targets on renewable energy in light of the climate emergency declared by the Council on the 19th February 2019. The Local Impact Report will highlight local impacts and will be scrutinised by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of Welsh Ministers who will determine the application. The determination procedure will be agreed once this consultation period is completed and the representations have been assessed.

Should Committee wish to make a representation independently of the LIR it can do so, and any comments made by Committee will be compiled and minuted so they are ratified in the minutes on the 8th October 2020 Committee and passed on the Planning Inspectorate under a separate cover from the LIR. Any representations from individual Local Members needs to be submitted by the 9th October 2020.

Recommendations

1. To note this information report and give the Head of Planning delegated authority to submit a Local Impact Report.
2. To consider whether Committee wishes to make a representation separately from the LIR and if so, comments will be compiled and minuted for submission as a representation.

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